

see the faith of the parents on a daily basis. Do not allow the enemy to rob us of the sacred duty. According to **Jeremiah 10:25**, families who do not call upon the name of the Lord are subject to God's wrath, and are in the same class as the heathen, if they know the Word of God and refuse to obey it.

Conclusion

The elements of family worship should be Bible reading (**Psalms 119:11**), prayer (**Matthew 6:11**) and singing (**Colossians 3:16**). Ideally, family worship should be done twice a day (morning and evening) which best fits the worship pattern of the Old Testament economy. Each day began and closed with offerings and prayers (**Psalms 92:1-2**). But each family must determine what is best for them. Whatever time we choose, we need to be consistent. We must not allow the phone, events, business, etc, to interfere with devotion time. Family worship does not have to be a long drawn out process, maybe 15-30 minutes would be sufficient. There are many materials available to be used in our daily worship with our family: Bible, Psalter, song book, catechisms, confessions of faith, devotionals, etc. The main point is to get started, be consistent, and enjoy God's blessings and reap the fruit as the years pass by. Amen.

"Would you keep up your authority in your family? You cannot do it better than by keeping up religion in your family. If ever a master of a family looks great, truly great, it is when he is going before his house in the service of God, and presiding among them in holy things. Then he shows himself worthy of double honor, when he teacheth them the good knowledge of the Lord, and is their mouth to God in prayer, blessing them in the name of God."

- Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Matthew 6:33



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*"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
Acts 16:31*

The RICHIES

OF GRACE

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"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

Family Worship

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua 24:15

+ Domestic Religion +

Family worship is religious activities in the home on a daily basis, ideally led by the father in instruction, prayer, and praise. Each family is a small church with the father as the pastor. Family worship draws families together, edifies one another, and prepares us for public worship. The family is the seminary of church and state. The church will be only as strong as the family and the state will be only as strong as the church. If the home fails, then every thing miscarries. God is honored and well-pleased when there is religious activity in the home. The family altar is a forgotten practice in the last 200 years and the decay of religion is clearly seen in our society. Families must not complain of ministers and magistrates when they themselves neglect their duty. May God help us in this matter and renew our hearts in truth and righteousness.

"We deeply want a revival of domestic religion. The Christian family was the bulwark of godliness in the days of the Puritans; but in these evil times hundreds of families of so-called Christians have no Family Worship, no restraint upon growing sons, and no wholesome instruction or discipline. How can we hope to see the kingdom of our Lord advance when His own disciples do not teach His gospel to their own children?"

-Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)

This article will consider the Biblical foundation, the historical basis, and beneficial results of family worship. There are three types of worship: secret or individual, public or church, and private or family worship. In our obedience to God, we must not forsake any of them. According to one religious survey, the study reveals that 88% of children that grow up in their denomination leave the church. That means that each generation has to be evangelized. Something must change, we cannot win the world and at the same time lose our children. This problem can only be solved by parents being concerned for the welfare of their own children.

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

The theological foundation of family worship is in Scripture. The Bible speaks much about the importance and responsibility of the home (**Deuteronomy 4:23-25; 6:1-12, 24-25; 11:18-19**). According to these Scriptures, there is to be religious activity in the home. The Word of God is to be a part of our family lives from the moment we rise up in the morning to the time we lie down at night. This truth is the key to the spiritual health of the entire family. Matthew Henry said, "Here the reformation begins," that is, in the home. There is a bumper sticker that says, "The family that prays together stays together," this is very true. One writer also stated, "As goes the home so goes the church, as goes the church, so goes the nation." The primary duty of domestic religion is entrusted to the head of the family. The father is a prophet, priest, and king to his home and is responsible for the household's welfare (**Exodus 12:26-27**). Covenants in the Bible were made with families and the responsibility of heads of families were to instill their faith in their children. The covenant blessings are passed to the next generation by the covenant head (**Deuteronomy 5:1-5, 8-10, 31-33; Genesis 12:3; 17:9-10; 18:17-19**). Abraham, Noah, and Job all built altars to God for their family. The reason that family worship is so important is that blessings or curses will flow to the children from the parents. A good example of this is the comparison of Abraham and Eli. According to **Malachi 2:15**, God instituted the family to seek a godly seed, that is, holy children.

THE HISTORICAL BASIS OF FAMILY WORSHIP

The Bible, in **Psalm 78:2-11**, speaks of establishing a testimony from one generation to the next. God carries out His purpose and plan

generationally. They were to teach their children about the Word of God and the works of God. The patriarchs of the Old Testament practiced family worship. It is seen throughout Hebrew history. The early church fathers spoke on the subject. Many associated with the reformation such as John Calvin, John Knox and Martin Luther wrote on the matter. For example, John Knox, a student of Calvin, said in his First Book of Discipline, "Every master of every household is to instruct his family in private houses at morning and at night."

The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, which is The Second London Confession of 1677, stated that "God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and truth; as in private families, daily, in secret one by himself, so much solemnly in public assemblies." Most denominations in the past practiced and promoted family worship.

The church of Scotland adopted the directory for family worship and the session appointed elders to see to it that fathers led their family in worship. If they refused to do so, they were kept from the Lord's table. Many Presbyterian parents were required by the church to make a vow to raise their children in the Lord. This was usually done by a public profession at the child's baptism.

Many Puritan parents had to sign their church covenant when they made a profession of faith that pertained to maintaining worship in their homes and instructing their children. Many Scriptures in the New Testament speak of piety in the home and the instruction of children (**Acts 10:2,24,31; I Timothy 3:4-5,12; 5:4; II Timothy 1:3-5; 3:14-15; I Corinthians 7:14**).

THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS OF FAMILY WORSHIP

The beneficial results of family worship is the salvation of the family. According to **Psalm 127:1-2**, there is safety and protection only if the Lord builds the house, "*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.*" The Lord must be the foundation of our home, church, and nation in order to have success. The enemy is lurking on every side and we must put on the whole armor of God (**Ephesians 6:10-20**). The true benefits of family worship are numerous: joy, peace, comfort, increased spirituality, edification, unity, harmony. It brings peace in the home and teaches children to sit quietly and reverently while preparing them for public worship. It also allows the children to