



Starting and Leading Family Devotions

We have all heard that it is our responsibilities to oversee the spiritual nurture our family. Deuteronomy 6 spells that out to us pretty clearly.

Yet, talk to Christian parents anywhere and they will tell you that they struggle with leading their families in "family devotions". Many of us feel guilty about this area of our lives. We feel that we have failed and for some reason we never start the process. What can we do? Here are a few suggestions we talk about in our parenting seminar ...

What can we do?

The first step is to **find a regular time and place** when you can get the whole family together. The best time will be different for each family. Some will find after dinner at the table a prime time; others before bedtime. It does not matter when or where ... just so that it is planned to happen (and does happen!) on a regular basis.

We meet in our boys' room before bed. Our goal is to have this time more nights a week than not. We realize that there will be some nights we miss. We tried not to set unrealistic expectations.

Keep it simple: this is a key to make devotions happen! Don't get bogged down by making this time more complex than it needs to be. You don't need to be professional clergy to lead your family in a meaningful time around God's Word. Use a prepared family devotional book to help you get started. You simply open the book to the page of the day and it guides you through the process. No pre-meditation, extensive preparation, and no excuse for not getting it done!

We **take turns** reading the scripture passage and reading from the book. We all share a little about how we can apply the passage to our specific lives. Then we each pray. It is that easy. You can always graduate to a more detailed study of the Word as your family grows. You can also begin to keep a family prayer journal of what you are praying for and what God has done in answering those prayers.

Pebbles of Truth is a ministry of House on the Rock Family Ministries (www.hotrfm.org).

This worksheet is designed to complement the Pebbles of Truth radio feature heard on WJTL Saturday, May 30, 2009. If you missed the spot, or want to hear it again, you can listen to it on our website <http://www.pebblesoftruth.com>.

Make it fun! If you have young children you may want to act out some of the Bible stories. Or have them color some pictures of what is happening in the story. Don't bore them with God's Word. Yes, you need to teach your children to respect the Word. But we do not want to teach them that the Word is boring either!

Make the time "relational". Use this time to get to know family members better. What are your children struggling with at school or work? Who are the people in your lives that you are praying for and why? As parents we need to model vulnerability here. Let your children know that you struggle with issues in your life ... that you are burdened for lost friends and family members. It has been fun to see how the Lord is answering the prayers about our children's friends. We have taken a real interest in our sons' friends as we begin to pray for them on a regular basis.

Keep Going: Don't let a missed times end your devotional life. Get started again. Find another couple within your church to help you stay accountable. Make it a Sunday school project to keep one another going in this vital area of your spiritual lives.

Why not start today?! Here are some suggested steps to get going ...

- Talk to your spouse about your desire to get this process started.
- Pray together for wisdom and strength to begin.
- Look for a time in your schedule for this to happen.
- Order a devotional book from our online resource center or pick one up at your local Christian bookstore.
- Find another couple to hold you accountable.
- Set your starting date ... GO !



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