

LifeWay
CHRISTIAN STORES

Family Devotion Guide



Parents desire that their children grow into young adults who love the Lord and follow Him wholeheartedly. Research indicates that reading the Bible and praying regularly as a child substantially impacts his or her spiritual life as an adult. Parents can encourage and model Bible reading and prayer through family devotions. Family devotions are a practical way to incorporate both reading the Bible and prayer.

What Is a Family Devotion?

Family devotions are a time of worship. They look different for each family. One family's devotion time may look different than another family's devotion time. The family's schedule, number of children, and age of children are some of the factors that impact what each family's devotion looks like. Typically, a family devotion time includes reading a story from the Bible, singing songs, and praying.

What Does the Bible Say?

Although it doesn't speak directly about family devotions, the Bible explicitly shares that parents are to be the spiritual leaders of their children.

"Listen, Israel: The LORD our God,
the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God
with all your heart, with all your soul, and
with all your strength. These words that
I am giving you today are to be in your
heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk
about them when you sit in your house
and when you walk along the road, when
you lie down and when you get up."

— Deuteronomy 6:4-7, CSB

(continued on next card)

What Does the Bible Say? **(continued)**

In Deuteronomy 6:4-7, the Bible says parents are to teach their children about God. They are the primary spiritual leaders of their family. Parents have the most significant influence over a child's life and development. When parents make family devotions a priority, children learn to love the Lord their God with their heart, their soul, and their strength.

9 Tips for Beginning & Maintaining a Regular Family Devotion Time

1. **Intentionally schedule devotions.**

Make this time a priority by writing it on your calendar. While looking at the calendar, select a time that works best for your family, such as at breakfast, in the evening, or during the day.

2. Be realistic. Keep in mind the ages and developmental stages of your children. Devotions with young preschoolers will look very different than devotions with school-age children. Family devotions can range from a few minutes up to 15 minutes.

(continued on next card)

9 Tips... (continued)

3. Plan your time together. Consider using your child's activity pages from church as a starting point. Select a Bible story to read and review. Choose a Bible verse to learn together as a family. Write down worship songs your family can sing together.

4. Be flexible. Family devotions will not always go according to plan. The important point to remember is that your family is spending time with God.

5. Give yourself grace. If you miss the family devotion one day, give yourself grace. Start back fresh the next day to help establish the routine.

(continued on next card)

9 Tips... (continued)

6. Be creative. If a family member isn't able to be present due to travel or scheduling, use technology to include him/her in the family devotion time. Technology can also be used to include grandparents and other out-of-town family and friends from time to time.

7. Keep devotions fresh. Include variety in your family devotions. After reading a Bible story, incorporate activities such as making a Bible marker or playing a game to review a Bible verse.

(continued on next card)

9 Tips... (continued)

8. Focus on the Bible. The Bible is central to the family devotion. Use a Bible translation your child can understand. Allow him or her to hold the Bible and to help find and read the Bible passage.

9. Reinforce lessons during daily activities. As opportunities arise throughout the day, remind your child of what you have been talking about and learning during family devotions.

Getting Started

A great time to begin family devotions is during the Advent season. Use an age-appropriate Advent calendar to create interest and excitement leading up to Christmas morning.

The following are simple examples of age-appropriate devotions for different family stages.

Families With Preschoolers

- Families can begin a devotional time even with young babies.
- Read the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-7.
- Choose a song about Jesus, such as "Jesus Loves Me" or "Away in a Manger."
- Close in prayer.

(continued on next card)

Getting Started **(continued)**

Families With Preschoolers and School-age Children

- Read the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-7. (Your preschooler can open the Bible to the passage, and your school-age child can read the Bible passage.)
- Talk with your children about how the shepherds felt visiting Jesus.
- Allow your children to sing a song about Jesus, such as "Jesus Loves Me" or "Away in a Manger."
- Close in prayer.

(continued on next card)

Getting Started **(continued)**

Families With School-age Children

- Allow your children to take turns reading the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-7.
- Ask questions about the Bible story.
- Talk with the children about how the shepherds felt visiting Jesus.
- Together, as a family, sing a song about Jesus' birth, such as "Away in a Manger" or "Go Tell It on the Mountain."
- Pray together as a family.

Helpful Resources

Read to Me Bible

Use the prepared Bible stories to read to your preschooler.

The Big Picture Interactive Bible

Use the downloadable free app to scan the illustration, then watch and hear the Bible story come to life visually and audibly.

Bible Skills for Kids and Levels of Biblical Learning

Resources to help parents understand age-appropriate biblical skills and concepts.

LifeWay Kids Curriculum Apps

Each of these free apps provide family devotion options.

Notes • Thoughts • Ideas

Special thanks to the
LifeWay Kids team for
sharing its knowledge,
guidance, and expertise.

LifeWay[®]
Kids

LifeWay[®]
CHRISTIAN STORES