

## Lesson 6: Teach the Word at Home



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### Enrich Your Home With Scripture

Learn God's Priorities for Your Home

Work in Partnership

Create a Christian Home

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#### Introduction

Women have a wide variety of abilities, opportunities, and maturity levels. Some women are in a setting where they can teach Scripture, others are not. Not everyone has the gifts to teach Bible study or Sunday School. But teaching in the home is different. When there are children in the home it isn't an option—it is God's command. You can't say "I don't have that gift" or "I don't know enough." As a Christian parent, you are responsible for teaching Scripture to your family.

This entire training equips you to teach the Word of God, and this lesson is especially helpful as you teach Scripture in your home! Spend time in the Word, learn, grow, and then share his truth with others. It is that simple. Scripture is the source of all you teach—and you don't have to know all the answers!

You may feel some hesitation or uncertainty about your abilities but it is the Word of God that makes your teaching in the home effective and powerful.

*“So is my word that goes out from my mouth:  
It will not return to me empty,  
but will accomplish what I desire  
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)*

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

*Like newborn babies, crave the pure milk of the word so that by it you may grow up with the result being salvation.” (1 Peter 2:2)*

If you do not have a daily habit of reading Scripture and talking about it in your home, simply start. As you become more familiar with the Word of God, it will be easier for you to talk about it with others.

Every day is a new day, just keep at it to make God’s Word a priority!

It is God’s priority for your home—it is God’s work, and God will help you.

### **LEARN GOD’S PRIORITIES: WHAT, WHY, AND HOW**

There are likely three questions running through your head: What? Why? How?

This training will answer all those questions and more:

1. What is God’s priority? The salvation of souls.
2. Why is it a priority? Because Satan tries to draw believers away from God.
3. How do you make this a priority? Be in the Word.

#### **Prioritize the Gift of Salvation**

Parents want their children to be healthy, safe, and have a good education—but Christian parents are invested in God’s eternal priorities. Life on this side of heaven is temporary. Nurture Christ-centered faith in your children because everything will decay except God’s Word and people. Your children are the only thing you can take to heaven. Reinforce God’s priority to spend eternity with your child.



### God's Plan of Salvation Is His Greatest Priority

This entire training points to the great love story of Scripture. God's love given through Christ is perfect—the gift of salvation is complete. This is the central message of Scripture and the greatest desire of God.

*Turn to me and be saved,  
all you ends of the earth;  
for I am God, and there is no other. (Isaiah 45:22)*

*I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked should turn from their ways and live. (Ezekiel 33:11)*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.  
(John 3:16)*

*This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:3,4)*

### Beware of Satan's Temptations

Scripture is explicit about the danger, schemes, and desires of Satan. The devil wants to destroy faith and keep your children from receiving eternal life in heaven. Satan deceitfully plants doubt about the Word and magnifies every weakness or uncertainty. But he also strikes in broad day light with vicious, full-on attacks. Satan exploits everything for evil and never speaks the truth.

*[Satan] was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)*

*Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. (1 Peter 5:8,9)*

*Put on the full armor of God, so that you can make your stand against the devil's schemes. (Ephesians 6:12)*

*Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14)*

*But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. <sup>4</sup> For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.  
(2 Corinthians 11:3-4)*

Satan's voice is trying to reach your child, and it will never seem as loud as the moment your child leaves home. So train and equip your child with Scripture—and when they leave home you can entrust them to the Lord. The years you have at home with your children are rich with opportunities to teach them God's truth and point to the power of Scripture.

*Through the praise of children and infants  
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,  
to silence the foe and the avenger. (Psalm 8:2)*

*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. (Proverbs 22:6)*

You want your children in heaven. Equip your children with the Word.

### **Utilize the Truth and Power of God's Word**

The world resounds with Pilate's question, "*What is truth?*" (John 18:38). It doesn't believe absolute truth exists—it scoffs at the idea. But God's Word is truth. As your children learn Scripture and grow in faith, you can be confident in the inerrant, unchanging Word of God. It is perfect.

*The law of the Lord is perfect,  
refreshing the soul.*

*The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,  
making wise the simple.*

<sup>8</sup> *The precepts of the Lord are right,  
giving joy to the heart.*

*The commands of the Lord are radiant,  
giving light to the eyes.*

<sup>9</sup> *The fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever.*

*The decrees of the Lord are firm,  
and all of them are righteous. (Psalm 19:7-9)*

*All your words are true;  
all your righteous laws are eternal. (Psalm 119:160)*

*Your Word is truth. (John 17:17)*

*If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (John 8:31,32)*

Enrich your home with Scripture and trust the Word of God to strengthen faith.

*Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. (Romans 10:17)*

*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)*

*But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as first fruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.<sup>14</sup> He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 2:13,14)*

God's Word is our great heritage  
 And shall be ours forever;  
 To spread its light from age to age  
 Shall be our chief endeavor.  
 Through life it guides our way,  
 In death it is our stay.  
 Lord, grant, while worlds endure,  
 We keep its teachings pure  
 Throughout all generations. (public domain)

Encourage your children to trust in Scripture and inwardly digest its truth. As Christians learn Scripture the Holy Spirit renews God's image within them. God's thoughts are planted in the hearts of believers. Transformed with God's thoughts and his unchanging truth, discernment becomes a fruit of faith. Scripture equips believers to distinguish the lies of the world around them. Scripture arms God's people against the lies of Satan—and even the deceitful whisperings of self.

Listen to the voice of God as he speaks through the Word—and train your children to hear it. Thoughtfully and thoroughly discuss what is true. Learn how to carefully critique messages from the world. Teach your children to discern Satan's lies. Teach them to hear the voice of the Shepherd as he loves and leads his sheep through the Word. Learn alongside them.

*The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.<sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. (John 10:3,4)*

*And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,<sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,<sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9,10)*

The Word of God is not only true, it is powerful, eternal, and unfailing.

*As the rain and the snow  
 come down from heaven,  
 and do not return to it  
 without watering the earth  
 and making it bud and flourish,  
 so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,  
<sup>11</sup> so is my word that goes out from my mouth:  
 It will not return to me empty,  
 but will accomplish what I desire  
 and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:10-11)*

The power of God's Word strengthens faith and equips your children for hardship. The difficulties will come. Make sure your children are prepared.

*In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. (1 Peter 1:6,7)*

*Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. (Romans 5:3-5)*

The task of teaching your children about grace through Christ, discernment of truth and how to prepare for hardship is overwhelming. Remember this is the work of God, his Word is the source and power. You are the one who gets to share it with your children. But you are not alone. The next section of this lesson will point you to the partnerships given by God to help you.



### **Activity: Learn God's Priorities for Your Home**

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It's your turn to **Learn God's Priorities for Your Home**

Step One: List at least three non-verbal ways that you communicate your faith and love for God in your home. (Hint: What do you do or have that demonstrates your faith and the value of God's Word?)

Step Two: Finding time and having good resources to share God's Word are common obstacles that keep people from talking about Scripture at home. Explain how your personal devotion time can help overcome these obstacles.

Step Three: List several common situations in life where you have an opportunity to teach your children discernment. When do they see you make a choice between right and wrong? When do they see you look beyond human barriers to love others? When do you talk about what influences your decisions?

## **WORK IN PARTNERSHIP**

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Before you get started on these renewed priorities for your home, it helps to remember you are not alone. You will easily get discouraged or burned out if you try to do all of this yourself. God designed people to work in partnership with others.

When you think about building a Christian home in partnership, a Christian marriage is likely the first relationship that comes to mind. It is indeed a wonderful blessing—and you'll hear more about it in this training. But not everyone has an active, engaged Christian husband. You will learn to value partnerships in the home and church as important blessings that equip and encourage you to keep God's Word a priority.

This training equips women in any situation to keep God's Word a vital part of their home with wisdom, confidence, and support.

A quick note—though this training explains God's design for Christian homes, no one lives up to God's standard. All parents (with or without Christian spouses) may struggle to teach their children Scripture. God's Word gives guidance and encouragement to share Scripture in your home. This is not meant to shame you with guilt or cause frustration because you don't live in an ideal situation. Rather, it is meant to encourage you to prioritize the teaching of Scripture in your home. The final section in this lesson gives concrete ideas of how to do it.

### **Value God's Design for Christian Families**

A Christian marriage is a lighthouse for the Christian family and home. It stands strong with a light that gives guidance, offers security, and provides protection. Like the fortress of God's Word, it is a rich blessing.

Just as the committed love of a marriage spills over into a home, the intentional and humble efforts to prioritize God's Word will cascade rich blessings to your family. Just as spouses invest time and make sacrifices for marriage, the efforts and work you put into family devotions will produce fruit. Just like marriage, you may need guidance from others or appreciate resources to enrich your relationship—the same is true of family devotions.

As a spiritual leader, a Christian husband is responsible for the spiritual growth of his wife and spiritual education of the children. This important role can seem insurmountable, but it is God's design for leadership in the home. The husband's holy calling includes both authority and accountability.



*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her<sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,<sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.<sup>28</sup> In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.<sup>29</sup> After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church.” (Ephesians 5:25-29)*

*Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)*

Though God has given this important responsibility to fathers, Christian couples share spiritual goals—especially for their children. A Christian wife contributes, supports, and works toward those goals along with her husband as they seek to build their children’s faith together.

A family mission statement may help a family set clear goals and understand their purpose. It can help you evaluate choices and priorities. It may also identify distractions. It will lead you to answer the question, “What are we doing and why are we doing it?”

Most importantly, attend worship as a family and partake of the Lord’s Supper.

Active participation in your congregational life is also important. Don’t just show up and then leave right away. Be a part of God’s family. Know what is going on at church and enjoy wholesome fellowship with your church family. Build friendships and relationships with other believers. Those conversations and friendships are part of the learning process as you grow in understanding how to talk about your faith.

### **Thrive Even in the Absence of a Godly Father**

God’s intentional design and holy desire is that men provide loving spiritual headship to their families, but it does not always happen.

A Christian home may not have the blessing of a strong Christian father.

- A Christian father may be absent or does not live in the home.
- A Christian father may be reluctant or unable to fulfill his responsibility as a spiritual leader.
- A father might be an unbeliever. He may or may not be supportive in matters of faith.
- A father may not be in the picture.

What can you do?

First, remember you are not alone. A lot of people live in situations like this and raise godly children! Don't ever give up. You may need to make adjustments as you teach your child spiritual truths but the plan is still the same—teach the Word. It may look different in your home, but the Holy Spirit is present in the Word.

Next, recognize it is an intimidating responsibility and a husband may doubt his ability to care for the spiritual health and welfare of his family. There are many reasons he may shy away or not step up. Your support and loving encouragement will be especially important if this is something new for him.

If your husband does not want to have family devotions or doesn't get around to it, you can still have devotions with the children. Be sensitive in this type of situation but don't feel guilty about teaching your children Scripture. Keep praying that your husband will be encouraged by your example and moved to participate more actively. Do it in a way that draws him to be a part of your family's spiritual journey—don't be arrogant or bitter with him.

God may be working in your husband's heart as you teach your children Scripture. Talk to your pastor if you need guidance in navigating how to show respect to your husband if he doesn't want to have family devotions or just doesn't do it. Don't give up—continue to work toward encouraging your husband and children.

*“Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>3</sup> Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. <sup>4</sup> Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. <sup>5</sup> For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup> like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.”*  
(1 Peter 3:1-6)

It is difficult to manage decisions that will show respect to your husband and maintain your commitment to the spiritual training of your children. There are no easy answers, but your loving and merciful Father in heaven watches, comforts, and guides you on the journey. He wants the people you love to be in heaven—even more than you do.

Be patient and do your best. Shine with humility and grace. Pray for wisdom and confidence. *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power”* (Ephesians 6:10). Never forget that God is with you. Meet him daily in the Word.

### **Engage As Partners With Your Church to Train Your Children**

Enjoy congregational life with your family! Be aware and engaged in the ministry work planned to nurture children and families. The partnership of your church is invaluable as you train your children.

Make sure your children know the pastor and understand his important role in their life. Speak well of him to encourage them in a healthy spiritual relationship with your pastor.

Build relationships with the elders, leaders, and spiritually mature men in your congregation. Those relationships are designed by God to bless you and your children. Appreciate the godly leaders and male role models in the family of Christ and your local congregation. The support and counsel of these men are wonderful gifts as you train your children with spiritual truths.

The encouragement and influence of your pastor and other men in the church are an important blessing to your children—especially if their father is not active in this role. God designed the family of Christ to stand together in love and faith. It is a place where believers mentor and influence each other with the Word.

You can also build healthy relationships with Christian women who are mature, wise and compassionate. Find comfort and hope in their advice. Study God's Word with them if you are able. Ask God to provide those women in your life. Other "spiritually single" mothers can walk by your side to mentor you with godly wisdom.

Your church's partnership also brings your children the blessing of relationships with Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, Lutheran elementary school staff, and other members. Pray for God to send those people into the lives of your children and ask him to bless them. Others in your extended family may offer encouragement as well.

*I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel<sup>28</sup> without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. (Philippians 1:27,28)*

Express your thankfulness for the support and partnership you receive in raising your children for the Lord. Speak well of those who serve and watch what you say about them. Speak highly of the church.

There is one more final and loving encouragement to remember as you seek God's plan of partnerships in raising children.

The church is designed to be a partner that equips and supports parents in the training of their children. God gives the parents responsibility to train children and gives "the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

A previous Home Depot® slogan captures the thought well, "You can do it. We can help." Your pastor and church stand ready to equip and assist you in the spiritual training of your children. But God has given the responsibility to parents.

Sunday school, Christian education and confirmation are all ways that the church supports the training of your children. This training is meant to support and enrich your children's understanding of Scripture, not replace the teaching done at home.

**Clumsiness is not an excuse**

"Clumsiness is not an excuse to ignore your role as the primary spiritual leader in your household. Spiritual education is not something to be outsourced to those whom we think are more eloquent or more learned. In other words, we cannot send our children to church, Sunday school, or any type of Christian education and check the "done" box. While these influences are indeed great blessings and valuable, they cannot replace parental influence." —Pastor Bill Monday (myfamilytable.org)



### Maximize the Blessings at Church

Here are a few more ideas to make the most of your blessings at church:

- Ask your children about what they discussed at Sunday school, confirmation or youth group. (It may be easier for them to talk about what they “discussed” rather than what they “learned.”)
- Learn the memory work that is assigned at Sunday school or in confirmation. Learn it as a family if you don’t know the assigned memory passages.
- Review the homework or worksheets assigned to your child and talk about the lessons with your child. Ask them questions about it.
- Allow your children the opportunity to tell a Bible story they learned and explain it to you. This is a great learning tool!
- Show interest in the things that are happening at church.
- Talk to your pastor or look up the Bible readings for the upcoming Sunday to discuss them as a family and build anticipation for worship.
- Learn about and discuss the liturgy at church and talk to children about the church year and festival services.
- Learn about hymns and find arrangements to listen to. If you or your child plays piano or an instrument, learn to play hymns. Learn about the composer or look up the history of the hymn—many stories are fascinating!
- Pray for the people who are serving your children at church (Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, etc.).
- Verbally thank your pastor and teachers for their service.
- Send cards of appreciation and consider a gift card or gift (like a devotion book to encourage them in their faith!). Remember they are a gift and blessing to you. Thank and encourage them.

Accept your parental responsibility with humility—and accept the assistance of the church with grateful appreciation.

But there is also something you can give in thankful response.

You can encourage men to be godly leaders in the church.

Women play a valuable and influential role in building the family of Christ as they encourage and affirm the value of men. Create and enable opportunities for men to be a spiritual influence to others. Some men may be new to faith and uncertain about their influence. Build them up to fulfill their role. Encourage husbands, pastors, leaders, and godly men to be the influence and role model God intended. Help them actively engage in the leadership and responsibilities they have been given.



### **Encourage Christian Men to Be An Influence**

It is important for you to see the value of encouraging Christian men to be an influence. Help them see and respond to the places and relationships where they can be a witness. Treasure the model and example Christian men set for a world that doesn't understand the beauty and blessing of a believing man.

It is not just a man's leadership that influences others—it is the grace of God and love of Christ alive in his heart that make him a radiant witness.

Even more important than the influence and fellowship of others, the church proclaims Christ in the Word and sacraments. The church is the place you are taught, strengthened, and nurtured.



### **Activity: Work in Partnership**

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It's your turn to Work in Partnership

Step One: Write down two open-ended questions to create a conversation with your husband about family devotions. (These questions are not condemning, nor do they lead to a specific answer. Write down how to start the conversation.)

Step Two: How could you support to a woman who is without a godly leader in her home? How can you help those who are "spiritually single" at your church or in your neighborhood?

Step Three: What questions could you ask in the car on the ride home after church to reinforce the message(s) at worship or in Sunday school?

## CREATE A CHRISTIAN HOME

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A Christian home is a place where a believer dwells.

There will be identifiable traits or characteristics in a Christian home, but those are merely the fruits of faith. The home is not Christian because of how believers live. The home is Christian because God's grace and forgiveness are alive in the heart of a person in the home.

Your family's unique interests, gifts, and abilities will be reflected in your home and can include a wide variety of styles, interactions, and conversations. Your home looks different as your family grows and changes, but you will find there are many, many ways to reflect Christ in your home.

Consider how adoptive families incorporate food, customs, and stories from their child's native culture. Words from the child's native language are spoken in tender acknowledgment of their homeland, connecting a child to a home they've never known. In the same way, Christian families will incorporate the messages of Scripture in a variety of ways as a reminder of our heavenly home.

But there are also fruits of faith that are consistent with the gift of grace given by God. Forgiveness and repentance reign in a home with humility and grace. Christian living flows from those who have received his mercy and responded with trust and hope. Devotion time and conversations about the Lord are woven into daily living with an eagerness for God's Word.

### **Practice Forgiveness and Repentance**

The unique hallmarks of forgiveness and repentance adorn a Christian home.

Parents and children make mistakes and fall short of God's commands. Courtesy confessions or dismissive absolutions are easily spoken. "Oh, sorry!" "No problem, don't worry about it!" Such comments are quite appropriate in our society or homes and generally reflect an spirit of kindness.

But many times a Christian home can include more meaningful expressions like "I'm sorry, will you forgive me?" Can you hear the difference when someone says, "I forgive you" rather than "It's okay"? It emphasizes the important model of grace and Christ's forgiveness. It reminds others of the forgiveness given to us so freely by God. It reflects his love.

When parents are wrong, they have a wonderful opportunity to model true confession and repentance. There may be a time for you to ask forgiveness of your spouse in front of your children. Other times you may apologize to your children when you've wronged them. Everyone sins and treats others poorly—let your Christian faith guide how you handle those situations. Respond in a way that draws attention to the truth and grace of God.



These forgiving and kind words are rare in homes today. People will notice that your home is different—they notice the spirit and countenance of your home. Your home is a reflection of what is important to you.

### **Live in a Way that Reflects Christ**

Listen again to Moses describe when and where the Israelites were to teach their children. Hear the daily living that encompasses expressions of faith.

*Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:7-9)*

There are many ways to put this verse into practice.

Be visible in your personal devotion time if possible so your children can see your priorities and understand what it looks like. Little eyes are watching all the time, excited to mimic their parents. Let them see your love for the Word. Allow them to see the deep connection that a husband and wife can share as believers. What you do is as important as what you say.

Allow your children to hear the conversations you have with your spouse about Scripture and matters of faith. Model healthy conversations about God's Word.

Pray out loud with your family and listen to the prayers of your spouse and children. You will hear the thoughts of their hearts and understand what is important or concerning to them.

You may have decorations on your walls that reflect your faith or have books on your shelves or coffee table that are a witness to what you believe.

Remind your children that God is present in your hearts and your home throughout your day but don't always expect that children will respond with eagerness. It may seem like your words and actions fall on deaf ears but don't give up. Don't expect that fruits of faith will always flourish. Keep living your faith every day, be mindful of your influence, and trust the power of the Word.

Discuss as a couple what the consistent expectations are for children's behavior during church. Is the goal to keep them quiet? Actively participating (standing, sitting, or folding hands)? Look for opportunities to grow as a Christian parent and attend workshops or read books for ideas of how to deal with children in a way that has reasonable consequences and consistency between parents.

Encourage your children to serve at church and look for ways they can be involved and active. Whether it is a children's choir or church cleaning, there are many ways for children to live their faith. Lead them to see they are an important part of the church family.

Don't forget to consider what type of entertainment your family listens to. It isn't just what you say, you should also think about what kind of music is playing, what is on TV, or what movie is playing. Compare those things to Philippians 4:8 and ask, "Is it pure, lovely, admirable, noble, true, excellent or right?" Those media choices are important and influential. Be conscientious about what you listen to.

### **Build Family Devotion Time Into Your Day**

Now you are motivated. Now you know what kinds of things you want to do and what you want to change, but how do you start and what do you do?



#### **Four Steps to Start**

**(Then pick additional ideas that are a good fit for your family!)**

1. Bibles for everyone. Find one that is a good fit for the age and reading level of your child. (With small children, this may be a picture Bible or Bible storybook.)
2. Ask questions about the Bible stories you read so your children learn to think about what you are reading.
3. Teach them to pray. Prayers recited at mealtimes and bedtime are important, but also include personal prayers of thankfulness.
4. Memorization is a great way to incorporate God's truth into your heart and home. Learn Scripture passages or hymn verses together!

The WELS Northeastern Wisconsin Adult Discipleship Committee shares a wealth of encouragement and resources on their website [www.myfamilytable.org](http://www.myfamilytable.org).

The home page will link you to "[Envision the Future](#)" where Scripture guides your priorities and points you to what is important in your child's future. "[Embrace Your Influence](#)" is filled with encouragement from Scripture to see the influence you have as a parent and a role model. The page "[Establish Patterns](#)" is a fantastic reminder that your spiritual routines and daily habits like bedtime prayers have an important and long-lasting influence on your children.



### Let's Talk About Radical Parenting

[www.MyFamilyTable.org/table-talk](http://www.MyFamilyTable.org/table-talk)

Our society has little time for quiet family time. Activities are scheduled every day of the week, a tremendous centrifugal force that could only be countered by a worldwide pandemic. Only the most courageous families say “no” to a coach's schedule or other activities that pull family members away from one another. (“You won't be at the game because you are going to *church*?”) What used to be traditional activity for families, like church on Sundays or gathering at the family dinner table, is now radical.

My family is not immune from these powerful forces. My husband and I went through these same struggles as parents. Chasing a want or a dream for our children, we didn't always make the right choices. We second-guessed many of our decisions. We asked for forgiveness often.

Now, our children are teens and twenty-somethings. I treasure those moments before bedtime, reading Bible stories and praying together. What I wouldn't give for more of those tender moments—more time to share God's Word with them, trusting that the Holy Spirit would do his work in their hearts. My husband and I still pray every day that the Holy Spirit would continue working in our young adult children and never let them go. Our active parenting days may be coming to an end; our prayers continue.

One thing's for sure: We as parents treasure the grace God extends for all of our shortcomings and doubts. As we've grown older, we've come to appreciate grace more and more. We look back on our parenting now and we are so very, very thankful for that grace. We've come to realize that it wasn't all of our routines or our formulas that held our children close to the Lord. It has been God's grace all along, flowing from the root, Christ Jesus. Grace has always been flowing to us and through us, even when we didn't notice it. For that we are so very thankful.

Here are just a few ideas to help you start or continue your family devotion time and develop the spiritual life of your children. Start small and do what works for your family. Continue to work toward a routine of daily Bible reading in your home and add ideas or resources that are a good fit for your family.



### Ideas to Add to Your Family Devotion Time

- Find a few moments at the beginning of the day to spend time with Jesus. Look for time during the day and at the end of the day—create as many opportunities as you can!
- Family devotions might be done at a set time in the day, at the supper table, or just before bed. You could read directly from the Bible, Catechism, or a devotion resource.
- Read a Bible story book every night when you put your kids to bed. Use a bookmark to keep track of where you are and just read one story each night. Discuss it as much as you can or ask them a question to think about as they fall asleep.
- Don't be overwhelmed, just keep working towards a routine so that talking about faith, Jesus, and Scripture are a natural part of your home. Make it your own.
- Include a variety of styles as you share the Word. You could read a section from Psalms responsively or sing a hymn.
- You could speak the words of the blessings to your children as a final good-night. The blessing in Numbers 6:24-26 will likely be most familiar to your children:

*The LORD bless you*

*and keep you;*

<sup>25</sup> *the LORD make his face shine on you*

*and be gracious to you;*

<sup>26</sup> *the LORD turn his face toward you*

*and give you peace.*

- You may just want to start with conversations about God's Word throughout the day. Ask your children about Daniel in the lion's den or the account of Noah and flood. Make those conversations enjoyable learning opportunities.
- Make the most of devotional materials or helps that are available. *Forward in Christ* provides a wealth of encouraging articles and Scriptural studies!

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- Talk to your children about their baptism—remind them of the forgiveness and grace they received. Show them pictures and teach them about baptism. Tell the story of their baptism and explain what happened. You can even do this at bath time!  
*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)*  
*From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 3:15)*
- Infants and toddlers enjoy songs like “Jesus Loves Me” and “I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb.” Sing spiritual songs to your little ones and speak soothing prayers with them. Tell them stories and use board books to share stories from Scripture. Talk to them about Jesus’ faithful love for them.
- Use rhymes to help children learn and remember Scripture.
- Use Luther’s Catechism to lead discussions about the commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and other important truths. Read the passages and discuss the topic. If you don’t know an answer, ask your pastor!
- Consider talking to sons about men in the Bible or what God says to and about men. Talk to your daughters about women in the Bible and what God says to and about women. Teach them to value and esteem both men and women, show them how men and women work together. Teach them to appreciate God’s unique designs.
- Many parents find themselves shuttling children throughout the day. Enrich that time with Christian music, devotion podcasts, Bible trivia questions or stories.
- Strive for consistency with table and bedtime prayers. Teach children the Lord’s Prayer, Luther’s Morning or Evening Prayers.
- Pray for the spontaneous needs you see with your children. Pray for police officers or EMTs if you see an accident. Pray when you pull over for an ambulance or drive by a school or nursing home.
- Incorporate evangelism and mission awareness into your family lifestyle. Learn about missionaries ([wels.net/missions](http://wels.net/missions)) and keep them in your prayers. Cultivate a love for neighbors and unbelievers next door and around the world.



### Key Resources to Help With Family Devotion Time and Discussions

[Myfamilytable.org](http://Myfamilytable.org) is a fantastic resource!

Younger children will enjoy *The Story Bible* by Concordia Publishing or other Bible story and Bible history books. Check out your church library for ideas or talk to your pastor to begin building your own library.

*Meditations* – a daily devotion book for individuals and families

*Forward in Christ* – a monthly magazine with a variety of articles

WELS Family Devotions – a podcast for families

Bible story or Bible history books – teach Old Testament stories

*Luther's Catechism* – a simple instruction book for families.

Your family will enjoy movies such as:

- [The Chosen](#) (YouTube: several seasons with multiple episodes)
- [The Road to Emmaus](#) (YouTube)
- *Come Follow Me* (available at NPH)
- *My Son, My Savior* (available at NPH)
- *To the Ends of the Earth* (available at NPH)

Branches Band – songs for younger children to learn God's Word

Koine – Christian hymns and contemporary music for reflection



### **Activity: Create a Christian Home**

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It's your turn to Create a Christian Home.

Step One: Write a brief mission statement for your family or identify the three things that are most important for your Christian home.

Step Two: Identify the key areas you want to address first as you strengthen your Christian home. Scripture? Spiritual conversations? Speech? Forgiveness? Time management? Conflict resolution? What part of God's Word addresses that topic?

Step Three: Find "The Chosen" on YouTube so you can watch the first episode.



### Notes: Teach the Word at Home

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## **Your Turn to Teach the Word at Home**

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It's your turn to Teach the Word at Home.

### **Review and Exercises**

Items flagged with arrows require action on your part. If you are uncertain how to proceed, reread the appropriate section in this lesson.

### **Learn God's Priorities for Your Home**

- List at least three non-verbal ways that you communicate your faith and love for God in your home.

### **Work in Partnership**

- How could you support to a woman who is without a godly leader in her home? How can you help those who are "spiritually single" at your church or in your neighborhood?

### **Create a Christian Home**

- Find "The Chosen" on YouTube so you can watch the first episode.

