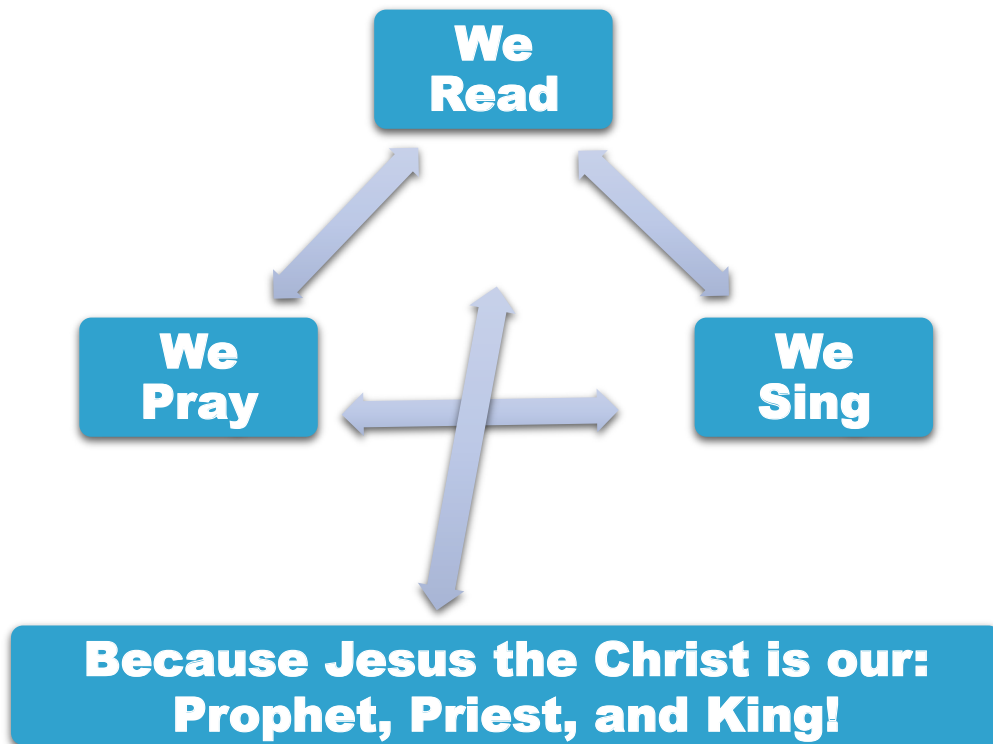


Grace Legacy Builders

EQUIPPING MEN AS SPIRITUAL LEADERS

An Introduction to Family Worship



*"It may be hoped your children will be praising God for you,
and praising God like you, here on earth,
when you are praising Him in Heaven."*

Matthew Henry

Because children come with eternal souls. Acts 16:31

Family Worship is an effective yet simple activity. The family meets to p____ to God and communicate with each other. The Scriptures are opened, r____ together and taught by the head of the family. Praise is given to God as the family s____. This is the place where we are best equipped for t____ and e____, the place where God is g____ and His people are e_____.

We Read,

We Pray,

We Sing

Because Jesus
the Christ is our:

Prophet,

Priest,

& King

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3. King

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“Did not our hearts
burn within us while
Christ talked to us on the
road, and opened the
Scriptures?”

-Luke 24:32



“Consider especially what
they [your children] are
designed for in another
world; they are made for
e_____. Every child thou
hast hath a precious and
immortal s____, that must
be forever either in heaven
or h____, according as it is
prepared in this present
state, - and perhaps it must
remove to that world of
spirits very shortly.” H____
have you prepared your
family for eternity?”

-Matthew Henry



Your Vision

Draw your family table as you were growing up.

(Who is sitting where? Is there a Bible on the table?
Who is talking? What are you talking about?)

What did you like about it? What would you have liked to be different?

Draw your family table as it is right now.

How would your wife and kids draw it? What's hindering your ideal vision?

*“For I, the Lord God, have chosen Abraham,
that he may c_____ his children
and his h_____ after him to keep my ways by
doing r_____ and j_____, so that
the LORD may bring to Abraham
what He has p_____ him.”*

Genesis 18:19

Abraham is called by God to fulfill the offices of Prophet, Priest and King as he teaches and models to his family righteousness and justice. Let's define these.

Command his Children and His Household:

As the head of the house, Abraham, is the one who leads his family in the worship of God and equips them in skills of time and eternity. As the head of the household he is the:

📖 **P**_____ who teaches and models God's will and God's way to his family through words, deeds, and emotions.

📖 **P**_____ who prays with and for his family. He stewards his time, talent, and treasure for God's glory and his family's spiritual and material needs.

📖 **K**____ who commands his family with benevolent care and wise counsel in public justice, and private righteousness. Provides, protects, and promotes.

1. In Righteousness - (Heb. sedeq; Gk. dikia) Purity of heart, integrity, and a moral life. Mostly pointing to being and doing right in the private affairs of life.

2. In Justice - The public administration of that which is right, fair, equitable, and good for human flourishing no matter one's standing in the social strata of society.

God has called Abraham and all Christian men to a very simple tasks of leadership so that the promise may come - Jesus C_____.



Masters of families, who pre-
side in the other affairs of the
house, must go before their
households in the things of
God. They must be as:

Prophets,
Priests and
Kings

in their own families; and as
such they must keep up family
d_____, family w_____
and family d_____; then
is there a church in the house,
and this is the family religion
that I am persuading you to.

-Matthew Henry (1662-1714)



Purpose of Grace Legacy Builders



The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam;

- not made out of his head to rule over him,
- nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him,
- but out of his side to be joined with him,
- under his arm to be protected, and
- near his heart to be beloved.

-Philip Henry

At Grace Legacy Builders we spell DADS:

D_____ - Rev 2: 4-5

A_____ - Acts 11:23

D_____ - I Thess 2:11-12

S_____ - Eph 5:25



The **f**_____ of everything we do at Grace Legacy Builders is to equip men as spiritual leaders. Notice we don't say to equip men *to be* spiritual leaders but **as** spiritual leaders. Dads, like it or not, your kids get their cues, impressions, and information from you as to who God is. Also girls and boys both understand their gender identity from the father. Therefore, fathers, you're a _____ to answer in your **t**_____, **w**____, **d**____, **e**_____ and **m**_____:

Is God kind and b_____, **or mean and indifferent?**

Is God involved or uninvolved in our d_____ **lives?**

Does God wink at sin or punish sin?

Is God f__ **us or against us?**

What does it mean to be a m__ **and not a w**_____?

What does it mean to be a woman and not a man?

The Importance of Fathers

Pastor Mark Gungor summarizes the importance of fathers.

The bottom line of research says that it is the father who overwhelmingly determines the **m**_____ and **s**_____ development of the children. Three separate studies that I have read come to mind: One done by the Swiss government, a second reported by the Baptist Press, and finally, a third one reported by MSNBC (hardly a Christian biased outlet). A variety of sources—the government, church, and the liberal left—yet these investigations show the same results. All three sources support the important **i**_____ **f**_____ have **s**_____, **s**_____ and **s**_____ realities.

The Mark Gungor Show - The importance of fathers.

Because children come with eternal souls. Acts 16:31

A Note to Parents - Especially D____!

This introduction to family worship will help make your family worship a simple, streamlined process so that you can begin and maintain this habit in your homes from generation to generation. You are about to build into the DNA of your lineage a family legacy of regular father-led family worship. Your family tree is being rooted and established in God's w____ and God's w____.

There are many fine seminars that you can attend or products or books that you can obtain on this subject of family worship. But, there are a few unique realities in the following material from Grace Legacy Builders.

1. They are simple and s____-saturated in style
2. They are gospel-c____ in substance
3. Father f____

Family worship is an effective yet simple activity. The family meets for prayer with God and communication with each other. The Scriptures are read and taught by the head of the family. Praise is given to God in song. It is the place where we are uniquely equipped for time and eternity.

The other unique aspect of our style is writing things down. Not in a long, exhaustive format, but just enough to give you clarity in your daily preparation and laser accuracy in detailing your daily activities. We embrace the common saying: "*Thoughts become untangled before they hit the lips when they travel over your own fingertips.*" Our tools and templates motivate daily, as well as provide long-term effectiveness. Our tools are designed to help you know the Bible and make the Bible known to your family and lineage.

Parents, there are so many good activities in the church, school, and community competing for your time and energy that most couples are exhausted by the time they get home. Family time happens for most people in the vehicle commuting to these events together while each family member texts, talks, and checks social media. It is so easy to forget as parents that each child's highest priority is their eternal soul. Keep in mind that God holds parents responsible to nurture the earthly and eternal nature of each child. We are here to h____.



The primary responsibility for teaching your children about God is yours, dear p____. It is not the Sunday school's, the Church's, nor the Pastor's. God has entrusted this important work to you.

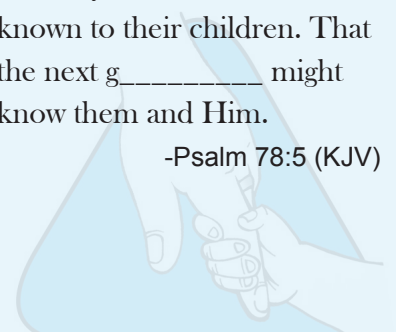
If you do not invest your time and effort to teach your children about God, be assured s____ else will.

If you do n__ teach your children truth and righteousness, be assured that there are a multitude of teachers in this world who would deceive them into thinking that "truth" and morality are relative ideas and can be s____ to fit anyone's beliefs or standards.

Dr. Tom Ascol

For God established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our f____, that they should make them known to their children. That the next g____ might know them and Him.

-Psalm 78:5 (KJV)



The Temperament for Family Worship



You are, by providence, set at the head of a family to support it, instruct it, guard it, and in every way care for its temporal and eternal good... Family worship is a coming to God not separately, but hand-in-hand with your c_____ and f_____; and from this peculiar aspect it has d_____ and advantages which are all its own.

-James Alexander

Thoughts on Family Worship



Rules without relationships lead to rebellion

-Josh McDowell

Relationships without discipleship and discipline lead to Hell.

-Bruce R Kuiper



The temperament for family worship is to be an attitude of gratitude for the gift of God's saving grace. Nothing else will do. The T_____ initiated gospel of grace is the model, mode, and means of grace in family worship. Make the attitude of the gospel come alive during family worship. Echo this attitude from G____-P____ P_____: *How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting* by William P. Farley.

"It is not the parents—their efforts, prayers, hopes, dreams—that ultimately ought to shape parenting. Instead, it is the gospel of J____ C____t. This is the power that needs to be at the center of all we are, all we do, as parents. ... We cannot effectively teach or discipline or care for our children if we ignore the g_____."

<http://www.challies.com/book-reviews/gospel-powered-parenting>

The gospel is love in action – it is the activity of our triune God's grace igniting our hearts. Every lesson should be permeated with the affections and attitude of how God sought us, Jesus bought us, and the Holy Spirit brought us into our adoption of becoming God's beloved children.

Applying biblical grace and truth into your children's lives is the vision of family worship, but it is to be done with the vigor and virtue of Christ-like leadership, mentoring and modeling grace and truth with discipline. (Discipleship = Discipline)

Dads, you are responsible for setting this t____ and t_____ as you model devotion and submission to Christ and direction and affection to your family. Remember to always be speaking the t_____ in l_____.

Mothers, you are to help your husbands lead with love so that he is not h____. Keep a close watch so that no one becomes d_____, nor angry, nor embittered in the family but built up in loving discipline and discipleship. Fathers, make this a check point in your home by taking private and frequent counsel from your w____ and make sure that you are neither passive, nor harsh and therefore making your kids miss the grace of God because of your a_____. Humbly check with your wife for what perceptions she is picking up. Encourage one another and build each other up. She is after all, your helpmate.

The Temperament for Family Worship

Parents need to work in harmony to make sure the vision of frequent father-led family worship is carried out with vigor and virtue. Family worship is a celebration of the sweet sovereignty of God wrapped up in loving humble strength. Let's unpack that with these biblical insights:

- ✚ **Ephesians 6:4 (ESV)** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
- ✚ **Colossians 3:21 (ESV)** Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
- ✚ **Matthew 20:25-26 (ESV)** But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be among you."
- ✚ **1 Peter 5:3 (ESV)** Be not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.
- ✚ **1 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)** But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.

Kids need to see fathers and mothers complement each other, meaning enhance the qualities of the other. Men and women together reflect the glory, beauty and harmony embedded in our co-eternal and co-equal Trinity. These roles contain divine dignity, distinctiveness, and delight.

The temperament of family worship should be:

- R_____ for God
- R_____ and honor for each other
- R_____ life application of the Bible to life

When kids see wives respecting their husbands and husbands loving their wives before, during, and after family worship in the home it nourishes the souls of children to be the salt and light of the world.



Dad, you are responsible for setting this tone and tenor as you model devotion and submission to Christ, and direction and affection to your family. Remember to always be speaking the truth in love.

Honor:

High Respect, Esteem

Synonyms:

D _____
P _____
P _____



The Time for Family Worship



START WITH YOURSELF

When I was young and free and my imagination had no limits, I dreamed of changing the world.

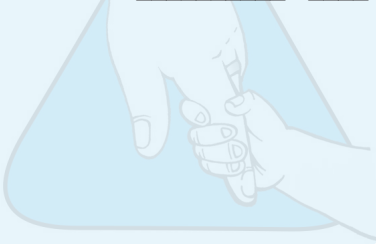
As I grew older and wiser, I discovered the world would not change. So, I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country.

But it, too, seemed immovable. And now as I lie on my deathbed, I suddenly realize:

If I had only changed myself first, then by example, I would have changed my family.

From their inspiration and encouragement, I would have then been able to change my c_____ and, who knows, I may have even changed the w_____.

-Found of the tomb of an Anglican B_____ buried in the crypts of W_____ A_____



The time spent on family worship will depend on the age of your children and their abilities to learn, discern, digest, and integrate the lessons. Family worship becomes a life force of love from generation to generation when the Holy Spirit guides us to gently m_____ the m_____ into the souls of our family.

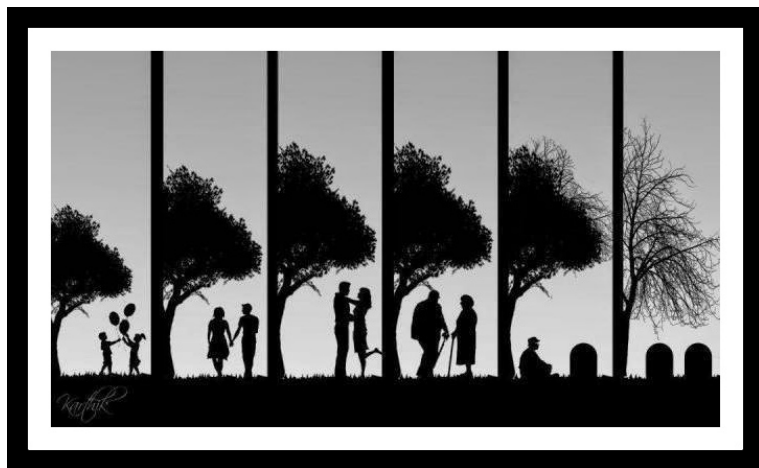
Adjustments will have to be made to accommodate how you apply the means of grace. Parents must communicate and take into account your children's ages so as to nurture their nature, as only you know how. Remember when we pray for wisdom – God is generous to give this grace to us!

Strive for R_____, not P_____

William Gouge observed that “a nail that at one blow barely enters, with many blows is knocked all the way in.” So it is with r_____ in family worship. Through the gospel, Jesus enters our lives and our families. Where He has entered, He is to be w_____. Where He is worshiped, we trust He will stay and live and work and bless.

Rev. William Boekestein Ligonier

So, Dad, before you know it, the kids will be gone. Make time. Set priorities. This life will soon pass, only what's done in Christ will last.



The Templates for Family Worship

All following templates are tools designed by men to equip men as spiritual leaders. These tools equip you to be the Prophet, Priest and King of your family!

1. Journibles

The idea for Journibles comes from Deuteronomy 17:18, where God commands the kings of Israel to h___-w___ their own copy of the Torah, or book of the law. The purpose of this was that they would carry it with them always, read it, learn from it, and lead the people accordingly. It's interesting to note that 3,400 years later, educators have been discovering that most people learn kinesthetically; by doing or writing things out for themselves.

Grace Legacy Builders highly recommends the "Journibles Series" by Rob Wynalda. They can be purchased from Reformation Heritage Books, Baker Book House, or online. Each age-appropriate member of the family should receive one "Journible" to write in. These are a great tool for family worship because:

- a. They are short s_____ of the Bible
- b. They make the Bible easier to m_____ on and d_____ for multiple ages
- c. Family members can take them along during the day and write notes for the evening session. As an example, in our family we write about 7-__ verses in one day and discuss them that night.

The first night as the head of our household I give a commentary and have three takeaway insights. The next day we reread the previous 7-10 verses and all come to family worship that night with at least 3 insights or notes from a commentary, a devotional, and/or a study Bible. Therefore, that section is read out loud twice and written down in the "Journible" once. Insights and notes can be taken both nights and that section of God's word is more thoroughly digested into the heart, mind and soul of each member of the family. Now you have another record of God's work in your lives that is dated as a diary. It is a way for us to treasure Christ in our hearts with the aroma of a family's love and conversation interwoven as well.



Dr. VanderWeele, who has written previously about how religious practice impacts marriage, told the Institute for Family Studies that their new study found profound effects of child and adolescent prayer on the big three dangers of adolescence:

- 1-Depression
- 2-Substance abuse
- 3-Risky behaviors

As well as positive effects on

- 1 - Happiness
- 2 - Volunteering
- 3 - Having a sense of mission
- 4 - Forgiveness



The Templates for Family Worship



What was the underlying motivation that led John Paton to love his father and his faith so much? Paton answers:

How much my father's prayers at this time impressed me I can never explain, nor could any stranger understand. When, on his knees and all of us kneeling around him in F_____ W_____, he poured out his whole soul with tears for the c_____ of the Heathen World to the service of Jesus, and for every personal and domestic need, we all felt as if in the presence of the living Saviour, and learned to know and love Him as our D_____ F_____.

-Dr. Joel Beeke
Family Worship



2. Tools for Younger Children

There are so many children's Bibles that I'd encourage each family to find one that is best for them. I like...

- The Bigger Story by Kevin DeYoung
- 365 Read-Aloud Bedtime Bible Stories by Daniel Partner, Barbour Books

3. Other Tools for Young & Old

The Serendipity Bible has great primers and insights into the text as well as discussion starters for small groups.

- Family Worship Bible Guide (Reformation Heritage Books) Especially designed for family worship.
- A very simple tool is getting an ESV or King James Bible with columns for journaling. This gives everyone an opportunity to write ideas or insights as they read and use a study Bible as well.

4. Use these insights to 'prime the pump'

What was...

T____?
H_____
J____?
P____?
L_____
C_____?

What was excellent or praiseworthy for you to think about? How will you put these into practice as God's peace in you?

There are many great study Bibles to aid family worship. We just mention a few suggestions so you can read, pray and sing as a family.

The Templates for Family Worship

5. Generic Outline for Family Worship with Bible Verses

Family worship is to be warm, e_____, and reverent.

Time: _____

Place: _____

Opening Hymn or S_____

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)

Main B_____ Teaching

All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for t_____, r_____, c_____ and t_____ in r_____, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Book, Chapter, and Verse: _____

Various Helps

Sermon Notes: _____

Catechism: _____

Memorization: _____

Main thought(s) to take away:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

P_____ Time

"If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." (Luke 11:14)

Prayer concerns _____

Closing Hymn or Song

Instead, be filled with the Spirit. 19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:18-20)

- a. Close with a few words of affirmation. (Acts 11:23)
- b. Ask about calendar events and needs.

I have no greater j_____ than to hear that my c_____ are walking in the truth. (3 John 1:4)

The Master of Family Worship



The Bible makes it clear that p_____ (not Sunday school teachers, youth ministers, or teachers) are responsible for the discipleship of their children. Unfortunately, much of what we have done for the past several decades has worked against biblical d_____ in the h_____.

-Voddie Baucham

Jesus Christ is

1. Prophet

2. Priest

3. King

Jesus Christ is the master, model, and message of family worship.

1. The reason we read is because He is the object and summary of the prophets (Matt. 17:5).
2. The reason we pray is because He is our great high priest (Hebrews 4:14).
3. The reason we sing is because He is the King of Kings (Rev. 17:14, Phill 2:10-11).

Wayne Grudem put it this way:

Christ fulfills these three offices in the following ways:

P_____: Christ reveals God to us and speaks God's words to us

P_____: Christ both offers a sacrifice to God on our behalf and is himself the sacrifice that is offered

K_____: Christ rules over the church and over the universe as well

<http://life.biblechurch.org/slfejom/nurturing-publications/1909-the-offices-of-christ-prophet-priest-and-king-outline-by-wayne-grudem.html>

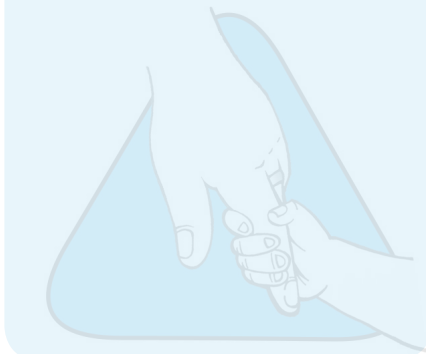
[1909-the-offices-of-christ-prophet-priest-and-king-outline-by-wayne-grudem.html](http://life.biblechurch.org/slfejom/nurturing-publications/1909-the-offices-of-christ-prophet-priest-and-king-outline-by-wayne-grudem.html)

The b_____ and b_____ as well as the profundity and simplicity of these offices is our pattern of family worship. These foundational principles come alive in the person of Jesus Christ and bring God's power and pleasure to our worship.

The CORE (Catholic, Orthodox, Reformed and Evangelical)

This understanding of Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King is so central to the Christian message that it is included in every catechism I've studied from C_____, O_____, R_____ and E_____ church bodies includes these in their catechisms.

Book 2, Chapter 15 of "The Institutes of the Christian Religion" by John Calvin highlighted these offices so clearly and powerfully that they became foundational for those who came after him from 1550 on. Yet, I have found the Puritans to be the ones that applied these truths into the fabric of their families daily lives. Pastors were to be the prophets (preachers), priests (pastors), and kings (servant leaders) in their local churches. This is especially true in the way fathers were to model Christ in their heart and home.



The Model of Family Worship

Fathers following Jesus Christ as

1. Prophet / P_____

2. Priest / P_____

3. King / P_____

God has give us a mandate, a manifesto of masculinity that needs to be heard today. Here is a framework for understanding femininity that complemented the offices of prophet, priest, and king.

- ✧ First, women are affirmed as co-h_____ of the grace of God (Genesis 1:26-28, 1Peter 3:7).
- ✧ Secondly, women are co-r_____ in ruling, subduing, having dominion, and being fruitful (Genesis 1 & 2).
- ✧ Thirdly, Women are h_____s to men (Gen 2:18, I Cor 11:9).

These identities constituted the framework for femininity. Husbands and wives, men and women, are to ideally work in harmony like a modern day sports team or an orchestra performing a symphony. The quarterback may call the plays, but only as the coach directs or the director orchestrates as the notes of the concerto allow.

The man is to p____ the m____ within the family. Husbands are spiritual leaders. Men need to be equipped as prophets, priests, and kings of their families.

1. Prophets who k____ and t____ the Bible like preachers in a church.
2. Priests who p____ for and p_____ their families best interests like pastors who build people up.
3. Kings (Prince) who p_____, p_____ for, and g_____ their families like church leaders. Servant leaders.

The wife who is a co-equal and co-regent assists him with her wisdom and unique gift mix as they nurture the nature of their lineage after them; building a legacy of grace (i.e. being: Grace Legacy Builders together).

Following this model motivates men. Men are spiritual leaders. Family worship is the expression of these roles and must be the goal of any m_____ man in Christ.



The “chief householder” acts “in Christ’s stead to his family” and exercises the offices of Prophet - in his instruction, Priest - in prayer and King - in the family government.

Westminster Devine - Daniel Cawdrey, in “A Godly Form of Household Government”



God gave leaders to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to **MATURE MANHOOD**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12-13 (ESV)



The Method of Family Worship



The piety of ancestors conveys no hereditary blessing to their children. Nor do we believe it to be the purpose of God to connect perpetuity of faith with any form of external service, however excellent. Yet we are deeply persuaded that among the means which He is deeply persuaded that among the means which He is pleased to use for this end, one of the most prominent is family worship.

*James Alexander,
Thoughts on Family
Worship*

The method of family worship is coming together as a family daily and reading, praying and singing. This is how parents build their homes into little churches, fulfilling their c_____ as husband and wife.

Biblical manhood nurtures and matures the masculine identity and offices of being:

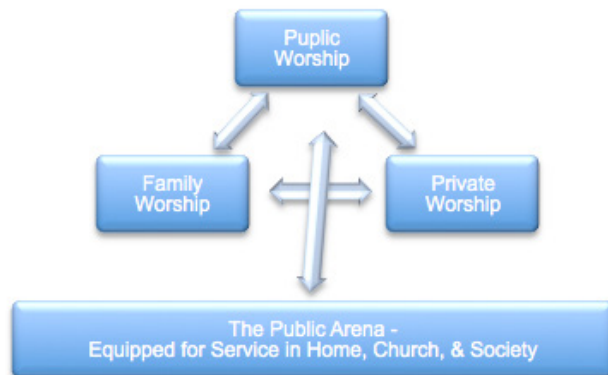
1. Prophets (Deuteronomy 6:6)
2. Priests (Acts 10:1-8)
3. Kings (Genesis 3:9 & 20)

Biblical womanhood cultivates and enriches the feminine identity and offices of being:

1. Co-Heirs (Gal 3:28)
2. Co-Regents (Genesis 1:26-31 & 2:14-23)
3. Helpmates (Genesis 2:18-20)

Together, men and women reflect the glory, beauty, and harmony embedded in our co-eternal and co-equal Triune God. These roles contain divine: d_____, d_____, and d_____. Family worship is living out who we are p_____ and personally as God's saved and royal priesthood. His adopted.

Grace Legacy Builders model and mold their families in p_____, p_____, and f_____ worship. While public worship, where the preaching of the word is pr_____ and the primary means of grace are expressed in p_____, b_____, and c_____, family worship is the first of the s_____ means of grace God calls us to utilize and is the order of first importance.



The Method of Family Worship

1. Reading

Reading the Bible: Jesus is our Prophet

The role of the prophet was primarily to relate to the people the character and attributes of God. The prophet had a relationship with God that was intimate and personal. God spoke His word into the prophet and he, in turn, would communicate to the people the tone and tenor of the information so that integration and transformation took hold of them - their h____, h____, and h____. It was a heart to heart form of communication. The incarnational process of speaking the word of God to His people was one persistently communicated by words and deeds. This was so that the listener was marinated with the word until they emanated the grace and truth of the words in their own thoughts, words, and deeds; as well as their emotions and motives. Again, Jesus is our example as He came and dwelt with us as God's representative and the perfect prophet.

† Luke 9:33-35 (Geneva Bible)

³And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: let us therefore make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah, and wist not what he said. ³⁴While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them, and they feared when they were entering into the cloud. ³⁵And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is that my beloved Son, hear him.

The Grace Legacy Builders templates are designed to facilitate discussion by asking questions:

1. **What does this passage say about G__?**
2. **What does this passage say about m__?**
3. **What does this passage say about other r_____?**
 - △ **Is there a promise to claim?**
 - △ **An example to follow?**
 - △ **A command to obey?**
 - △ **A warning to heed?**
 - △ **A teaching to study?**
 - △ **A sin to avoid?**

Taught by Rev. Tom Groelsema



And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 3:16-17 (KJV)



I agree with Matthew Henry when he says they that

- pray in the family do w____;
- pray and read the scriptures to b____;
- but pray and read and sing do b___ of all.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon



The Model of Family Worship



The primary emphasis of biblical Christianity is the teaching that the infinite-personal God is the ultimate reality, the Creator of all else, and that an individual can come openly to the family of God upon the basis of the finished work of Christ and that alone.

Francis Schaeffer

In love God the Father predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, (our brother) according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which God has blessed us in and as His Beloved.

Ephesians 1:4-6

Adoption is how we went from enemies of God to become His children. Ephesians 1 & 2 give a very simple explanation of how, when, and why God did what 1 John 3:1 declares:

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called c_____ of G__; and so, we a___.”

2. Praying

Praying: Jesus is our Priest.

His victory on the cross was the final sacrifice that satisfied the wrath of God for His people (Rev. 12:10). He now intercedes for us at the right hand of God and gives us strength (Heb. 4:15-16). We can follow the simple A.C.T.S. outline when we pray:

- A**doration: The Trinity - Characteristics & attributes
- C**onfession: Sins of commission and omission
- T**hanks-giving: For all He provides spiritually & physically
- S**upplication: For all requests as an adopted child of the King

To make sure your time doesn't get stuck or stale you may want to follow this helpful framework for your prayer time.

- △ Sunday Church Staff and their Families
- △ Monday Employer and Co-workers
- △ Tuesday Teachers and Coaches
- △ Wednesday Church Teachers and Leaders
- △ Thursday Family and Friends
- △ Friday Government Officials
- △ Saturday Sunday's worship, discipleship workers and edifying fellowship

I suggest that you close at least twice a week with the Lord's Prayer.

The Model of Family Worship

3. Singing

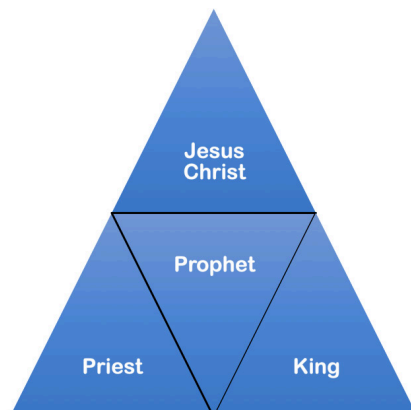
Singing: Jesus is our King

Singing is an important part of worship. We sing because it humbles us and gives us the frame of heart to give Him praise. This is by far the most difficult aspect for most families, including mine. Start with baby steps. Use what is edifying, age appropriate, and useful for your family to honor the Lord in singing. Make sure the songs you're singing are theologically and doctrinally correct. Our family usually just begins by singing the chorus of "Open The Eyes of My Heart". Because not everyone is as "musically gifted" as others, you may want to utilize other tools:

- Psalms online with music: www.cgmusic.org
- Hymnals online with music: www.nethymnal.org
- Hymnal online with music: www.hymnary.org
- The Family Worship Book: A Resource for Family Devotions (Terry Johnson, Christian Focus, 2003)
- <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/conference-messages/leading-family-worship> Dr. Beeke with John Piper
- Google Search "Family Worship Resources"
- YouTube

**The Master & Message of Family Worship is
Jesus Christ Our:**

- 1. Prophet**
- 2. Priest**
- 3. King**



When God transforms a man's heart to lead Family Worship:

1. M_____ are rekindled
2. C_____ get fired up
3. C_____ are reformed
4. The c_____ experiences revival

-Bruce R Kuiper



WORSHIP:

We worship what we de_____ to become
and we become what we w_____.



The Mentors of Family Worship



God gave pastors to equip the saints and build the church, to mature manhood in Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Ephesians 4:13



You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone.

Exodus 18:18

A Note to Pastors

This section comes from Richard Baxter's classic "The Reformed Pastor", Chapter 1, Section 1, The Nature of this Oversight, point 4 - We must have a Special eye upon Families.

I have provided this primer to Pastors and Elders so that together you can better understand the strategy of Family Worship and the strategic role it needs take in order to shape you so that you can shape those under your care and charge. Rev. Baxter understood that GRACE was the base for going to Heaven. He was a discipler of men who influenced men from generation to generation. Hear the clarion call of God through his Biblical wisdom and so that you can come to a general understanding of how the classic book on pastoring educates pastors and encourages pastors to be mentors to the men of our churches in a strategy of F____-Led Family Worship.

1. A Special Eye upon Families

We must have a special eye upon families, to see that they are well o_____, and the duties of each relation performed. The life of religion, and the welfare and glory of both the c_____ and the s_____, depend much on family government and duty. If we suffer the neglect of this, we shall undo a___.

What are we like to do ourselves to the reforming of a congregation, if all the work be cast on us alone; and masters of families n_____ that necessary duty of their own, by which they are b_____ to help us? If any good be begun by the ministry in any soul, a careless, prayerless, worldly family is like to stifle it, or very much hinder it; whereas, if you could but get the rulers of families to do their duty, to take up the work where you left it, and help it on, what abundance of good might be done! I beseech you; therefore, i_ you desire the reformation and w_____ of your people, do all you can to promote family religion. To this end, let me entreat you to attend to the following things:

- A. Get information how each family is ordered, that you may know how to proceed in your endeavors for their further good.
- B. Go occasionally among them, when they are likely to be most at leisure, and ask the master of the family:
 - Whether he p_____ with his family?
 - Whether he r_____ the scripture to them?
 - What does he do to e_____ his family biblically?



The Mentors of Family Worship

Labor to convince such as neglect this of their sin; and if you have opportunity, pray with them before you go, and give them an example of what you would have them do. Perhaps, too, it might be well to get a promise from them, that they will make more conscience of their duty for the future.

- C. If you find any, through ignorance and want of practice, unable to pray, persuade them to study their own wants and to get their hearts affected with them. In the meanwhile, advise them to use a form of prayer, rather than not pray at all. Tell them, however, that it is their sin and shame that they have lived so negligently, as to be so unacquainted with their own necessities as not to know how to speak to God in prayer and, therefore, that a form of prayer is but for necessity, as a crutch to a cripple, while they cannot do well without it; but that they must resolve not to be content with it, but to l_____ to do b_____ as speedily as possible, seeing that prayer should come from the feelings of the heart, and be varied according to our necessities and circumstances.
- D. See that in every family there are some useful moving books, beside the Bible. If they have none, persuade them to buy some: if they are not able to buy them, give them some if you can. If you are not able yourself, get some gentlemen that are ready to do good works, to do it. And engage them to read them at n_____, when they have leisure, and especially on the Lord's day.
- E. Direct them how to spend the Lord's day
- ✎ How to despatch their worldly business, so as to prevent e_____ and d_____, and when they have been at church.
 - ✎ How to s_____ the t____ in their f_____. The life of religion depend much on this, because poor people have no other free considerable time; and, therefore, if they lose this, they lose all, and will remain ignorant and brutish.



In 1647 on the 24th August, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland approved guidelines for Family Worship. The Assembly doth further require and appoint ministers and ruling elders to make diligent search and enquiry, in the congregations committed to their charge respectively, whether there be among them any families which use to neglect this necessary duty; and if any such family be found, the head of the family is to be first admonished privately to amend his fault. And in the case of his continuing therein, he is to be gravely and sadly reproved by the session; after which reproof, if he be still found to neglect family worship, let him be, for his obstinacy in such an offence suspended and debarred from the Lord's supper, as being justly esteemed unworthy to communicate therein, until he amend.

(This quote is not to introduce church discipline for neglect of family worship but only to show how important some took this wonderful means of grace.)

The Mentors of Family Worship



And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Acts 6:7



“As I grew to m_____, I was inflamed with desire for a surfeit (excess) of hell’s pleasures. . . . My family made n_ effort to save me from my fall. Their only concern was that I should learn how to make a g___ speech and how to persuade others by my words. My father took no trouble at all to see how I was growing in your sight [O God] or whether I was c_____ or not. He cared only that I should have a fertile tongue.”

St. Augustine of Hippo
Quoted by John Piper

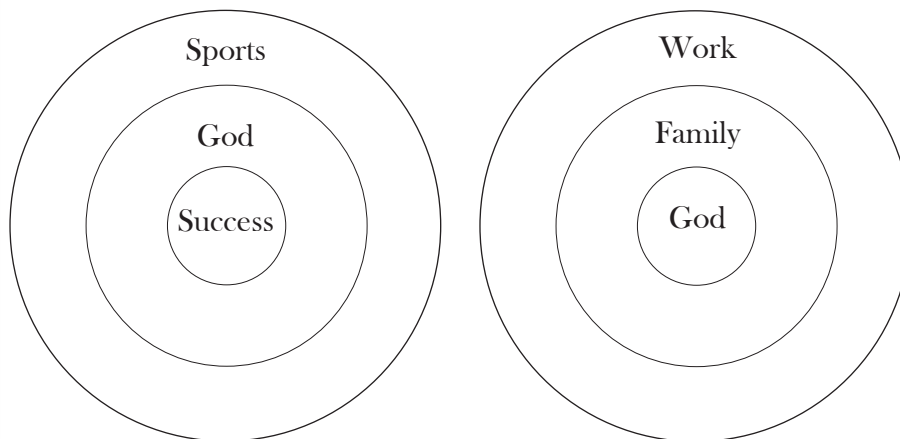


✂ Persuade the master of every family to cause his children and servants to repeat the Catechism to him, every Sabbath evening and to give him some a_____ of what they have heard at c_____ during the day.

Neglect not, I beseech you, this important part of your work. Get m_____ of families to do their d____, and they will not only spare you a great deal of labor, but will much further the success of your labors. If a captain can get the officers under him to do their duty, he may rule the soldiers with much less trouble than if all lay upon his own shoulders. You are not likely to see any general reformation until you procure family reformation. Some little religion there may be here and there; but while it is confined to single persons and is not promoted in families, it will not p_____ nor promise much f_____ increase. (End of Baxter Book)

2. God Centered Families

Look at these two circles. Which will your children say is your family? Is your family a God-Centered Family? If not, then be like me when I had to have a gut check and realized sports, church, or school activities had pushed God out of being #1. That’s the day Grace Legacy Builders began.



“If you were to die tomorrow, the company you work for could replace you in a week. But your wife and children would feel the loss for the rest of their lives. Yet, many of us pour ourselves more into our jobs than our families...an unwise investment.” - Dennis Borg

The Mentors of Family Worship

3. Priorities & Current Statistics

Hot Buttons (Has the church caught on to what appeals to men? by Brian Mavis) Statistics show that if a father is the first in the family to become a Christian:

1. There is a 93% probability everyone in the household will follow.
2. The likelihood drops to 17% if it is the mother;
3. 3.5% if it is the child.

Quest and the Fraternity (Robert Lewis)

These statistics were part of a strategy for reaching groups. Below you will find the percentage of success for having families join your church:

1. 25% chance of reaching the family if you reach a c_____
2. 29% chance of reaching the family if you reach the wife/m_____
3. 95% chance of reaching the family if you reach the husband/f_____

David Murrow, Director, Church for Men

Research is clear: the bigger your man shortage, the more likely your church is in decline. The denominations with the largest gender gaps are also those that are losing the most members. Look at the evidence: mainline churches suffer huge gender gaps and they are losing tens of thousands of members each year. Meanwhile, non-denominational mega churches are growing fastest – and they are also the most likely to attract men.

Bible based churches of the Reformed persuasion attract men as well. Men are attracted to the tension of high-minded theology that is practical and warm hearted all at the same time.



What do you want to be remembered for? I'm always asking that question. It is a question that induces you to renew yourself, because it pushes you to see yourself as a different person - the person you can become. If you are fortunate, someone with moral authority will ask you that question early enough in life so that you will continue to ask it as you go through life.

-Peter Drucker



Grace Legacy Builders blueprint for Cultural Renaissance through:

1. Regeneration & Repentance of Men's Hearts
2. Renewal & Reformation of Servant Father-Led Homes
3. Reformation of Gospel-Centered Churches
4. Revival of Human Flourishing in our Community

-Bruce R Kuiper

The Mentors of Family Worship



If you want to see something last for a season; plant a flower plant.

If you want to see something to last for a lifetime; plant an apple tree.

But, if you want to see something last for this generation and into eternity; plant a seed of family worship in your life and in your congregation”.

-Rev. Wilson P Mathai

Cultivating a Culture of Grace:

- Sow a gracious thought,
Reap a gracious act
- Sow a gracious act,
Reap a gracious habit
- Sow a gracious habit,
Reap a gracious character
- Sow a gracious character,
Reap a gracious eternity



The presence of enthusiastic male worshipers is statistically associated with the following outcomes:

- Congregational growth
- Congregational health
- Unity in the church
- Increased giving
- Retention of young men and women

According to a study from Hartford Seminary, gender-b_____ congregations are three times as likely to be growing as female-d_____ churches.

The politically incorrect truth

Jesus showed us how to grow a healthy church: focus on men first. Christ l_____ women and children, but he spent most of his time and energy developing a handful of men. He knew a truth we've forgotten: if you transform men, you t_____ the f_____, the c_____ and the s_____. Draw a man to church, and you often get the family in the equation.

No father – no family – no faith. - Robbie Low is Vicar of St Peter's, Bushey Heath, Diocese of St Alban's

“If any good be begun by the ministry in any soul, a careless, prayerless, worldly family is like to stifle it, or very much hinder it; whereas, if you could but get the rulers of families to do their duty, to take up the work where you left it, and help it on, what abundance of good might be done! I beseech you, therefore, if you desire the reformation and welfare of your people, do all you can to promote family religion / worship.”

Baxter, Richard. The Reformed Pastor (pp. 73-74). Fig. Kindle Edition

Family Worship as the Trinitarian Means of Grace

1. God's Benevolence in Adoption
2. Christ's Benefits of Adoption
3. Holy Spirit's Blessings by Adoption

God has adopted us and we are to include our lineage. He began our legacy with His igniting love before the foundation of the earth (2 Timothy 1:9). He chose you to bear fruit, fruit that will last. He has given you Christ as a brother to imitate and illuminate the eyes of your heart with the Holy Spirit as a deposit to guarantee our family inheritance in this age and the age to come (Eph. 1:18 & Psalm 119:18).

Remember fathers, this is your p_____ responsibility. You will be judged in time and eternity on your obedience, so be p_____, d_____, and g_____. Lead with

Devotion, Affirmation, Direction, and Sacrificial Service

Let me just encourage you to be benevolent fathers like our father which art in Heaven. Lay out for your family the benefits that Christ won for us on the cross. Bless your children through the power of the Holy Spirit. The following quote takes most people a few times to read and a while to fully comprehend. Yet, it is profound and worth the time.

No F _____

No F _____

No F _____

A Church that is conspiring against the blessings of *patriarchy not only disfigures the icon of the first person of the Trinity, effects disobedience to the example and teaching of the second person of the Trinity and rejects the Pentecostal action of the Third Person of the Trinity but, more significantly for our society, flies in the face of the sociological evidence! No father – no family – no faith. Winning and keeping men is essential to the community of faith and vital to the work of all mothers and the f_____ salvation of our c_____.

Robbie Low is Vicar of St Peter's, Bushey Heath, in the Diocese of St Alban's.

*Male leadership styled from the Trinities mutual e_____, dignity and d_____ in the midst of diversity and an order of submission. – BRK 1 Cor. 11:3



Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession.

Cheap grace is
grace without discipleship,
grace without the cross,
grace without Jesus Christ.

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Grace Legacy Builders

God's Gospel of Grace

Building up Men of Grace

By the Holy Spirit's Means of Grace

Built upon Jesus Christ -
The Man of Grace



Final Thoughts



Mark Dever gives a most conclusive and convincing insight:

“It is my best and most sober judgement that this position (egalitarianism) is effectively an undermining of - a breach in - the authority of Scripture...It seems to me and others (many who are younger than myself) that this issue of egalitarianism and complementarianism is increasingly acting as the watershed distinguishing those who will accommodate Scripture. You may disagree, but this is our honest concern before God. It is our sober conclusion from observing the last 50 years. Of course there are issues more central to the gospel than gender issues. However, there may be no way the authority of Scripture is being undermined more quickly or more thoroughly in our day than through the hermeneutics of egalitarian readings of the Bible. And when the authority of Scripture is undermined, the gospel will not long be acknowledged.”



The Means of Grace & Family Worship

The **G**_____ of **G**____ is how God s_____ sinners and a_____ them into His family. The means of grace is how God uses methods to get the message to us.

Means of grace are instruments that **G**__ uses to convert and bless people like the reading and preaching of the word, prayer, singing (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; Acts 16:25; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), enjoying the beauty of God's creation, baptism, and the Lord's supper.

“The ‘**m**____ of **g**____’ that the Bible talks about are His Word (*the word of His grace*, Acts 20:32), His Spirit (the Spirit of grace, Hebrews 10:29), prayer made to the *throne of grace* (Hebrews 4:16), and the grace that is given to the saints which enables them to build up another (Ephesians 4:7; 1 Peter 4:10).”

http://www.theopedia.com/Mean_of_grace

So, when we speak of the means of grace in the context of the Church today, we mean those **o**_____ instruments given to the Church by which the Holy Spirit communicates the **b**_____ of Christ. See more at: <http://americanvision.org/8429/what-do-you-mean-by-means-of-grace/#sthash.6QlpmRvt.dpuf>

Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 88.

What are the **o_____ and **o**_____ means by which Christ gives to us the benefits of redemption?**

A. The outward and ordinary means by which Christ gives to us the benefits of redemption are His ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer, and all these are made effective in the *salvation of the elect*. *Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-42*

<http://matt2819.com/wsc>

Final Thoughts

Family Worship is the primary means of grace in the home where hearts are best shaped for time and eternity. The sociological evidence overwhelmingly supports the importance of fathers being there for their children's moral, spiritual and social development. Dads, if you are thinking that you may abandon your post or abdicate your role for what you think are good reasons, chew on this:

National Center for Fathering in Kansas City, MO, www.fathers.com, is loaded with facts like this:

Some fathering advocates would say that almost every social ill faced by America's children is related to fatherlessness. Six are noted here. As supported by the data, children from fatherless homes:

1. Are more likely to be p____
2. Become involved in drug and alcohol a_____
3. Drop out of s_____
4. Suffer from health and emotional p_____
5. Are more likely to become involved in crime (b____)
6. Are more likely to become pregnant as teens (g____)

There is no greater practice that a family could begin and maintain than frequent Father-led Family worship. Consider these statistics that:

- 1 of 2 marriages will end in divorce
- Yet, only 1 of 42 will end in divorce if the couple will regularly attend church together
- But, 1 out 1,015 will only end in divorce if they regularly read the Bible and pray together

Men, you must i_____ this. God has said that this is what he expects from the time he called Abraham. "For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has promised him." (Genesis 18:19 [ESV]) When God came to the garden for an account He does not ask "E__ where are you?" but specifically and individually A____ (Gen3:9). Men, hear the call and practice the promise.



"Praying together is the most powerful predictor of marital happiness that r_____ have yet discovered."

-Andrew Greeley

Consider These Verifiable Statistics:

Consider what happens among married couples who raise their commitment to pray together from "sometimes" to "a lot":

- People who say, "My spouse is r_____" goes up 21%
- People who say, "My spouse d_____ in me" rose 30%
- The "q_____ and q_____ of lovemaking" is 20% higher
- 21% more say they are 'trying to make their marriages b_____!'
- People who say, "My spouse is my best f_____" goes up 17%
- The fear of d_____ among couples who pray together 'a lot' is 0%



Final Thoughts



In research for a recent book, George Barna demonstrates that parents who pass along to their children the baton of spiritual maturity and vitality have one thing in common:

They “take God’s words on life and family at face value and apply those words f_____ and c_____.”



If you want to leave an eternal legacy to your lineage, then you must live for those things worth dying for. You must live for the e_____.

-Bruce R Kuiper

CHRISTIANITY is a patriarchal religion. That means that it is father-centered. But patriarchy is in steep d_____. According to a recent report, for every male attending an evangelical church in North America, there are two females. The ratio is one to four in the African-American church. If this trend is left unreversed, the Church as we know it will not s_____. When men a_____ church and home, it is a sign that the wheels have come off. That is because male servant leaders energize the Christian church and family.

William P. Farley,

Gospel-Powered Parenting: How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting.

Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing Company, 2009. 125

A Call to Father-led Family Worship

The gospel is counterintuitive and we must challenge Christians to become counter cultural. The purpose of this booklet is the same - to challenge men to be counter cultural by focusing on Trinitarian-based, gospel-shaped, and grace-paced masculinity in leading family worship in the roles of prophet, priest, and king. Father-led family worship is both the cure and the call to masculinity defined by the offices of prophet, priest and king. It is God’s prescription for each home.

“I know not any thing that will contribute more to the furtherance of this good work than the bringing of family religion (Family Worship) more into practice and reputation. Here the reformation must begin. Other methods may check the d_____ we complain of, but this, if it might universally obtain, would c___ it.” -Oliver Heywood

A Burning Question & Challenge to Men

Consider especially what they [your children] are designed for another w____; they are made for eternity. Every child has a precious and immortal soul, that must be forever either in heaven or hell, as it is prepared in this present state, - and perhaps it must remove to that world of spirits very shortly.” How have you prepared your family for eternity?
- Matthew Henry

“Be strong and show yourself a man” (1 Kings 2:2-3) and be the prophet, priest and king in your heart, home, church, and culture. Be a man of grace that is Trinitarian-based and Gospel-shaped as you lead your family w_____ to p_____ worship and d_____ in family worship!



Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he. - Proverbs 29:28

Men, do you have a moral v_____ (a written dream) for your families? A zeal for the house for the Lord? A magnificent commitment to the advancement of the kingdom? An a_____ dream for the mission of the church and a tenderhearted t_____ to make it real? You can't lead a Godly woman without this. She is a grand being!

-John Piper

Draw your family table as you want it to be remembered at your funeral.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.: 2 Timothy 4:7

There once was a bloodhound. He started out chasing a great d____ but a fox crossed his path, so he started to chase the f__ i_____. After a while a rabbit crossed his path, so the hound c_____ the r_____. Yet later, a mouse crossed his path and the hound c_____ the m____ into a hole.

The bloodhound, which began his hunt on the trail of a magnificent deer, ended up watching a mouse hole.

STAY FOCUSED!

THE FATHER ABSENCE CRISIS IN AMERICA

There is a crisis in America. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 24 million children in America—one out of three—live without their biological father in the home. Consequently, there is a “father factor” in nearly all of the societal ills facing America today. Research shows when a child is raised in a father-absent home, he or she is affected in the following ways...

POVERTY



**4X GREATER
RISK OF
POVERTY**

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

**MORE LIKELY
To Have
BEHAVIORAL
PROBLEMS**



MOM-CHILD HEALTH



**2X GREATER
RISK OF
INFANT
MORTALITY**

INCARCERATION

**MORE LIKELY
TO GO
TO PRISON**



CRIME



**MORE LIKELY
TO COMMIT
CRIME**

TEEN PREGNANCY



**7X MORE LIKELY
TO BECOME
PREGNANT
AS TEEN**

CHILD ABUSE

**MORE
LIKELY
TO FACE**



ABUSE AND NEGLECT

SUBSTANCE ABUSE



**MORE LIKELY
TO ABUSE
DRUGS
AND ALCOHOL**

CHILD OBESITY

**2X MORE LIKELY
TO SUFFER
OBESITY**



EDUCATION



**2X MORE LIKELY
TO DROP OUT OF
HIGH SCHOOL**

A Crumpled Photograph

By Philip Yancey

One holiday I was visiting my mother, who lives seven hundred miles away. We reminisced about times long past, as mothers and sons tend to do. Inevitably, the large box of old photos came down from the closet shelf, spilling out a jumbled pile of thin rectangles that mark my progression through childhood and adolescence: the cowboy-and-Indian getups, the Peter Cottontail suit in the first grade play, my childhood pets, endless piano recitals, the graduations from grade school and high school and finally college.

Among these photos I found one of an infant, with my name written on the back. The portrait itself was not unusual. I looked like any baby: fat-cheeked, half-bald, with a wild, unfocused look to my eyes. But the photo was crumpled and mangled, as if one of those childhood pets had got hold of it. I asked my mother why she had hung onto such an abused photo when she had so many other undamaged ones.

There is something you should know about my family: when I was ten months old, my father contracted spinal lumbar polio. He died three months later, just after my first birthday. My father was totally paralyzed at age twenty-four, his muscles so weakened that he had to live inside a large steel cylinder that did his breathing for him. He had few visitors – people had as much hysteria about polio in 1950 as they do about AIDS today. The one visitor who came faithfully, my mother, would sit in a certain place so that he could see her in a mirror bolted to the side of the iron lung.

My mother explained to me that she kept the photo as a memento, because during my father's illness it had been fastened to his iron lung. He had asked for pictures of her and of his two sons, and my mother had to jam the pictures in between some metal knobs. Thus, the crumpled condition of my baby photo.

I rarely saw my father after he entered the hospital, since children were not allowed in polio wards. Besides, I was so young that, even if I had been allowed in, I would not now retain those memories.

When my mother told me the story of the crumpled photos, I had a strange and powerful reaction. It seemed odd to imagine someone caring about me whom, in a sense, I had never met.

During the last months of his life, my father had spent his waking hours staring at those three images of his family, my family. There was nothing else in his field of view. What did he do all day? Did he pray for us? Yes, surely. Did he love us? Yes. But how can a paralyzed person express his love, especially when his own children are banned from the room?

I have often thought of that crumpled photo, for it is one of the few links connecting me to the stranger who was my father, a stranger who died a decade younger than I am now. Someone I have no memory of, no sensory knowledge of, spent all day every day thinking of me, devoting himself to me, loving me as well as he could. Perhaps, in some mysterious way, he is doing so now in another dimension. Perhaps I will have time, much time, to renew a relationship that was cruelly ended just as it had begun.

I mention this story because the emotions I felt when my mother showed me the crumpled photo were the very same emotions I felt that February night in a college dorm room when I first believed in a God of love. Someone is there, I realized. Someone is watching life as it unfolds on this planet. More, Someone is there who loves me. It was a startling feeling of wild hope, a feeling so new and overwhelming that it seemed fully worth risking my life on.

That's the way life goes sometimes.

When I was ten, my parents got a divorce. Naturally, my father told me about it, because I was his favorite. [Notice that Vicki did not say, "he was her favorite."] "Honey, I know it's been kind of bad for you these past few days, and I don't want to make it worse. But there's something I have to tell you. Honey, your mother and I got a divorce."

"But Daddy—"

"I know you don't want this, but it has to be done. Your mother and I just don't get along like we used to. I'm already packed and my plane is leaving in half an hour."

"But Daddy, why do you have to leave?"

"Well, honey, your mother and I can't live together anymore."

"I know that, but I mean why do you have to leave town?"

"Oh. Well, I got someone waiting for me in New Jersey."

"But, Daddy, will I ever see you again?"

"Sure you will, honey. We'll work something out."

"But what? I mean, you'll be living in New Jersey, and I'll be living here in Washington."

"Maybe your mother will agree to you spending two weeks in the summer and two in the winter with me."

"Why not more often?"

"I don't think she'll agree to two weeks in the summer and two in the winter, much less more."

"Well, it can't hurt to try."

"I know, honey, but we'll have to work it out later. My plane leaves in 20 minutes and I've got to get to the airport. Now I'm going to get my luggage, and I want you to go to your room so you don't have to watch me. And no long good-byes either."

"Okay, Daddy. Good-bye. Don't forget to write."

"I won't. Good-bye. Now go to your room."

"Okay, Daddy, I don't want you to go!"

"I know, honey. But I have to."

"Why?"

"You wouldn't understand, honey."

"Yes, I would."

"No, you wouldn't."

"Oh well. Good-bye."

"Good-bye. Now go to your room. Hurry up."

"Okay. Well, I guess that's the way life goes sometimes."

"Yes honey. That's the way life goes sometimes." After my father walked out that door, I never heard from him again. (Reprinted by permission from American Girl, a magazine for all girls published by Girl Scouts of the USA)

A young Jewish boy who grew up in Germany many years ago, had a profound sense of admiration for his father, who saw to it that the life of the family revolved around the religious practices of their faith. The father led them to the synagogue faithfully.

In his teen years, however, the boy's family was forced to move to another town in Germany. This town had no synagogue, only a Lutheran church. The life of the community revolved around the Lutheran church; all the best people belonged to it. Suddenly, the father announced to the family that they were all going to abandon their Jewish traditions and join the Lutheran church. When the stunned family asked why, the father explained that it would be good for his business. The youngster was bewildered and confused. His deep disappointment soon gave way to anger and a kind of intense bitterness that plagued him throughout his life.

Later he left Germany and went to England to study. Each day found him at the British Museum formulating his ideas and composing a book. In that book he introduced a whole new worldview and conceived a movement that was designed to change the world. He described religion as the "opiate for the masses." He committed the people who followed him to life without God. His ideas became the norm for the governments of almost half the world's people. His name? Karl Marx, founder of the Communist movement. The history of the twentieth century, and perhaps beyond, was significantly affected because one father let his values become distorted.

Psychoanalysis...daily demonstrates to us how youthful persons lose their religious beliefs as soon as the a _____ of the father b _____ down. Sigmund Freud, Leonardo da Vinci

Between Pitches

By Daniel Schantz, Moberly, Missouri, Guideposts

You can have the World Series. The crowds, the instant replays. The six-million-dollar contracts, the Hall of Fame. I had something better than all of these. I had a father who played catch with me.

He wasn't much to look at, dressed in gray work slacks torn in the seat and an old dress shirt that parted at the navel where a button was missing. On his left hand he wore a plain, flat ball glove that looked like it had been run over by a truck. His smiling face was crowned with shiny black hair combed straight back.

But when my father played catch with me, he made me feel like the most important person in the world. After all, my father was a very busy man—minister of a sizable church, among other things. Other people had to make appointments with him, but not I.

My father taught me how to throw, but sometimes I got a little too creative: fastballs, knuckleballs, screwballs. They seemed so simple for him, but at least half my attempts sailed out of control. I was always embarrassed, but he never complained. He simply trotted across the street to rescue the ball.

And when I got a pitch right down the middle, he always let me know I had done well: One side of his mouth would get a special sly grin that said "Whitey Ford couldn't have done better." I glowed at the sight of that grin, and in my mind I could hear the roar of the crowd in the stands.

Some days I didn't feel like setting any sports records. I just wanted to be with my dad. As the ball rhythmically glided back and forth between us, I felt very close to my father and found myself opening up to him.

"Dad, why won't Mom let us ride motorcycles?"
"Mothers have a nose for danger. Trust your mother."
"Where do people go when they die?"
"The apostle Paul says that to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord" if you're a christian.
"Jesus said He was the way, the Truth and the Life and that no man can come to the Father except thought Him"

His answers were brief—telegraphed phrases that escaped between pitches. Answers that forced me to think through the questions for myself. I don't think Dad even realized he was teaching me. It was an

instinct with him. Everything was an occasion to hold class. Like the way he taught me to care for my equipment:

"Here, rub some of this neat's-foot oil into your glove. It stinks a bit, but it will keep the sun from drying out the leather.

"Don't leave the ball out in the rain; it will turn hard as a rock. A new one will cost you two dollars. Money doesn't grow on trees. Take care of your equipment and it will last a long time."

Once, when the ball hit the end of my middle finger and jammed it painfully, he taught me how to cry. With his arm around me he sympathized the tears out of me. "Doesn't feel a bit good, does it? Not a bit good." Then he taught me how to laugh. "Funny, I don't feel a thing." Then he suggested I stop crying and get on with living. "The best way to handle pain is to keep your mind busy with something else."

Now that I'm grown up I find myself practicing those side-yard lessons as if they were the Ten Commandments. When I get a little too creative as a teacher in the classroom and my methods fizzle, I remember how many times Dad chased my overthrows until I learned it's more important to spend time with my students, just chatting or shooting baskets, than it is to drive them to scholastic achievements that will fade with time.

I try to take good care of my equipment. My car has 120,000 miles on it and it looks like new. Money still doesn't grow on trees.

Sometimes life hursts so bad that I just sit down and bawl. Then I make a joke and get busy.

You might think my father's sideyard coaching started me on a career in athletics, but it didn't. I flunked Little League. Too slow, Too polite, Too awkward. I don't have a single ribbon or trophy for anything I ever did in sports. But down in the basement, above my workbench, I have a rusty old can of neat's-foot oil, and every time I see it I hold it tenderly and play in my mind the happy hours I spent with my father out on the lawn.

You see, I have something better than all the awards in the Baseball Hall of Fame. I have memories. Memories of a father who always had time to play catch with me.

Make Each Day Your Masterpiece

When I was teaching basketball, I urged my players to try their hardest to improve on that very day, to make that practice a masterpiece.

Too often we get distracted by what is outside our control.

- You can't do anything about yesterday.
- The door to the past has shut and the key is thrown away.
- You can do nothing about tomorrow. It is yet to come.
- However, tomorrow is in large part determined by what you do today.

So make today a masterpiece. You have control over that.

This rule is even more important in life than in basketball. You have to apply yourself each day to become a little better. **By applying yourself to the task of the becoming a little better each and every day over a p_____ of time, you will become a l__ b_____.** Only then will you be able to approach being the best you can be. It begins by trying to make each day count and knowing you can never make up for a lost day.

If a player appeared to be taking it easy in practice, I told him,

“Don't think you can make up for it by working twice as hard tomorrow. If you have it within your power to work twice as hard, why aren't you doing it N__?”

If you seriously try to do your best to make each day a masterpiece, angels can do no better.

John Wooden – The Wizard of Westwood

“I always tried to make clear that basketball is not the ultimate. It is of small importance in comparison to the total life we live. There is only one kind of life that truly wins, and that is the one that places faith in the hands of the Savior. Until that is done, we are on an a_____ course that runs in circles and goes n_____.”

This idea was instilled into him by his father. At the end of a long hard day of farm work Mr. & Mrs. Joshua Wooden would settle down with their four boys. Mrs. Wooden would bake cookies while Mr. Wooden read from the B____ and then some poetry along with other l____ a_____ writings. (Every Wooden boy graduated from College with English majors)

God's Hour

*I've only just an hour,
Only sixty minutes in it.
Graced upon me, can't refuse it,
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,
But it's up to me to u__ it.
I must suffer if I l____ it,
Give an account if I a_____ it,
Just a tiny little hour,
But eternity is in it.
Bruce R. Kuiper*

**The seeds in an apple can easily be counted.
But, who can count the apples in a seed?**



**Family Worship is like the apple's seeds
that will p___ & r___ Godly fruit
for generations to come.**



*Because Children Come with Eternal Souls
Acts 16:31*

Drift with The Devil or Become a Grace Legacy Builder

Men, Satan wants you to stay the same as you are right now. If you are unsaved, he wants you to drift with the culture; over the cliff into hell and take as many people with you. Even if you are saved his desire is to keep you dull so that you will yield little Kingdom impact by making you:

- Spiritually and intellectually impotent by teaching half-truths about the Bible that are just enough to repeat vogue cultural clichés that weakens your witness.
- Either androgynous in your manhood or a supercharged macho man so that you don't lead your family as a man should.
- As spineless as possible concerning you and your family's salvation responsibilities.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Stop drifting with the Devil and heed the call of God to change the world. Become a gospel shaped man in your heart and live out your manhood in Christ in your home, your church and the culture.

Realize your path to God's purpose, passion and priorities for your life as a man. Live the life:

- *God e_____
- *Women t_____
- *Children t_____
- *Other men truly r_____

L___ Family Worship Today