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EQUIPPING FAMILIES FOR FAMILY WORSHIP AT FIRST  
BAPTIST CHURCH IN PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS

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A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Doctor of Educational Ministry

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by  
Bryan Keith Bolton  
May 2019

**APPROVAL SHEET**

EQUIPPING FAMILIES FOR FAMILY WORSHIP AT FIRST  
BAPTIST CHURCH IN PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS

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I am forever grateful to my wife, Erin Bolton; our children, Kaitlyn and Keith Bolton; and my parents, Tom and Mary Bolton for their energy and prayers in helping me complete this project. I dedicate these pages to all of you.

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## PREFACE

I am humbled by the outpouring of support and encouragement that I have received these last four years. I want to thank my heavenly Father for the opportunity to continue my academic pursuit and for what he did to make it financially possible.

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I am also grateful for my parents and their example of God's grace throughout my life. Because of their love and support, I am a better man, husband, and minister. I am blessed to live near them and have been able to use their home for writing "get-a-ways" during the process. Thank you, Mom, for feeding me. I do not have the words to adequately thank my father for all of the hours he spent helping me through this project. He has given invaluable support to my research and writing. I can only imagine what the final project would have been like without his knowledge.

I am grateful to the faculty and staff of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary without whom I would not be receiving this degree. Among these faithful educators and supporters, I would like to thank Dr. Chuck Lewis for his willingness to serve as my supervising professor throughout the process of this project. I also want to thank my professors who poured time and effort into guiding my studies, and to the proofreaders who labored with me through the completion of this written document.

Finally, to the congregation of First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, I am eternally thankful for your generous spirit and incredible kindness to me and my family over these last four years. In so many ways you have supported me, prayed over me, and given me great comfort by looking after my family's needs when I have been away. I am grateful for each of you.

I wish I had the words and the means to appropriately express my gratitude to all the people who had a hand in helping me implement this project. I cannot thank you enough for being willing to take part in this project. I pray that God has blessed you during this process, as you have blessed me. I thank God for placing me in a church with such a heart for learning and a desire to be biblically informed in how to worship and disciple in the home. To God alone be the glory, both now and forever.

Bryan Bolton

Pine Bluff, Arkansas

May, 2019

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Worship is at the center of everything the church believes, practices, and seeks to accomplish. Worship should be now, and will be eternally, the occupation of every true believer. In worship, believers enter into communion with God, by grace, to center their mind's attention and heart's affection on the Lord, humbly glorifying God in response to his greatness and his Word.

Many seemingly faithful Christians exhibit through their actions a misunderstanding of worship as a weekly activity that can be checked off as “completed” the moment they leave the sanctuary. Their “worship” is segmented into solely what is done in an hour on Sunday. As Daniel Block notes, “True worship is expressed primarily in everyday conduct.”<sup>1</sup> God deserves more than a few moments of preparation on the way to church. Romans 12:1 exhorts Christians to live their lives in continual worship that involves every part of every day of the week. With this in mind, a major reason for the lack of spiritual involvement in our worship on Sunday is because the people are not in a spirit of worship from Monday to Saturday. Worship should be at the forefront of the agenda of every true follower of Christ. Worship should be all of what the true follower of Christ is about. Therefore, equipping families for family worship is vital.

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<sup>1</sup>Daniel J. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 81.

## **Context**

The project took place within the ministry context of First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Arkansas (FBCPB). Three factors make this project relevant to the ministry at FBCPB. First, this project helps to fill a void left by the elimination of an organized discipleship training program. This void exists because FBCPB is not the same church it was two generations ago. The city of Pine Bluff has changed dramatically during the last few years, with a population decrease of approximately twenty-five per cent. Industry has come and gone, and a new landscape has developed in the region with a changing demographic. The work of FBCPB's ministry has not evolved as the community around it has changed.

Due to a number of budgetary constraints, the church cannot financially support a full-time Minister of Education to oversee a comprehensive discipleship program. Currently, Sunday school is the primary vehicle for spiritual growth and the main relational connecting point within the church. In addition to Sunday school, FBCPB offers additional ministry areas for youth and children, such as Children's Choir, Vacation Bible School, weekly Bible study, and summer camps; however, our congregation lacks the number of active families in the age group needed to continually support these programs well. Thus, growing young disciples becomes most difficult when the membership is irregularly involved.

In recent years, FBCPB has attempted to fill the void of children's discipleship programming through the creation of Kid's J.A.M. (Jesus and Music) Session. Each session provides the means through which a new form of discipleship training will function. Further, Kid's J.A.M. has the potential to allow for parental interaction as well as musical training for the child.

Secondly, this project addresses a need to instruct parents to take an active and necessary leadership role in their children's spiritual lives. The primary place for spiritual development of children and the teaching of whole-life worship is in the home. The daily

proximity and parental influence offer many more chances to teach children how to exercise their faith as a disciple of Christ through worship and other Christian acts. Sunday school teachers and church leaders have only limited time to develop a relationship a child requires for a good learning environment, especially about spiritual matters. The home needs to be the center of spiritual activity and have a tight connection to educational growth taking place at church.

The leadership of FBCPB believes that the principles found in God's Word form a solid foundation upon which the family should be built. Moreover, the church leaders continue to communicate through expository, biblical preaching and teaching to help people put into practice the principles found in God's unchanging, trustworthy Word.

Though biblically-based and culturally-relevant instruction of FBCPB children has been on-going for many years most parents have not been directly or intentionally involved. A number of the children that attend weekly activities and worship services come with their grandparents or with other children. Staff members do not always have the opportunity to engage with the rest of their family. Thus, the responsibility for training and equipping children to love, serve, and worship God is being left up to the ministry leaders. Parents are not modeling these values and practices for their children because they are not engaged in the practices themselves or do not understand the importance of their daily responsibility to teach discipleship.

The third and final factor that makes this project relevant is the development and implementation of a curriculum that equips the parents of FBCPB with a basic understanding that worship comes from the overflow of the heart. While the importance of corporate worship is fully communicated by the pastor and minister of music (project's author), an intentional effort is lacking within the church's programs to equip parents to go beyond scripture reading and prayer in daily worship with their family. Most do not see the importance of helping their children grow in their ability to worship God in all aspects of their lives. Some parents appear to view the times their children sing in

worship as entertainment—singing a song for the congregation to enjoy instead of seeing them as sharing an offering in worship to God and being drawn to worship with them.

In addition, parents seem to have a limited understanding of what worship is, how to participate, why we gather as a church to worship, and how they can pass this teaching on to their children. Perhaps, what the parents are modeling to their children is from a lack of their own childhood memories in worship, and most have very limited experiences.

### **Rationale**

An apparent lack of parental involvement at FBCPB in the spiritual lives of the children suggests that a development of a curriculum around the family in worship at home and at church is needed in the following three ways. First, a strategy to equip parents of FBCPB for family worship will help encourage a healthier spiritual environment in the home, which in turn should provide a deeper level of corporate worship in the gathered church. A potential by-product of informed family worship is a more unified spirit when matters of corporate worship arise in the church, producing a Christ-centered, biblically informed legacy for the church for the twenty-first century and beyond.

Secondly, FBCPB parents were given foundations to disciple their children as mandated in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and were introduced to the methods necessary for adopting a better family worship practice.<sup>2</sup> Learning to worship God and live in his ways should be the regular rhythm of the family. How does FBCPB break the cycle of thinking worship happens only on a Sunday? By passing on to the parents an awareness of how to incorporate the worship of God into the everyday life of the family.

Finally, a six-session Family Worship Seminar (FWS) for parents was

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<sup>2</sup>Deut 6:4-9 provides direction for parents to teach and lead their families to worship the Lord.

developed to introduce both musical and non-musical elements of worship through which families can express their praise and thanksgiving as life-long worshipers.

Parents generally have positive influence on their children but may not fully understand the biblical mandate to nurture the faith of their children. Parents need to be informed with a better biblical understanding of their responsibilities and be equipped with the ability to develop a strategic plan with actual goals to guide them in increasing their family worship practices. By focusing the FWS sessions to strengthen the discipleship of FBCPB families, a firm foundation was laid for parents to recall that (1) worship is a life that brings honor to God—a life fully given to God and God’s purpose, (2) the content was used as a significant tool for growth in their spiritual walk with God and service to him, and (3) parents were better equipped to lead family worship and instruct their children in Scriptures.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to equip families at First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Arkansas to adopt family worship practices.

### **Goals**

1. The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among families with children who are regular attenders of First Baptist Church Pine Bluff.
2. The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to train and equip parents at First Baptist Church Pine Bluff to adopt family worship practices.
3. The third goal was to increase knowledge about the role of parents in discipling their children among member families at First Baptist Church Pine Bluff.

## **Research Methodology**

The research methodology for the FWS included an assessment survey, a pre-test, a post-test, and two evaluation rubrics.<sup>3</sup> The degree to which the goals were accomplished determined the effectiveness of the FWS. The first goal was to assess the current practice of family worship among families with children who are regular attenders of FBCPB. This goal was measured by administering a Family Worship Assessment Survey (FWAS) to measure their commitment to family worship as a practice.<sup>4</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when the participating families completed the survey and the inventory was analyzed yielding a clearer picture of the current family worship practices among FBCPB families.

The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to train and equip parents at FBCPB to adopt family worship practices. This curriculum was evaluated and validated by an expert panel of fellow ministry leaders, both within the church and sister churches, who utilized the Family Worship Seminar Curriculum Evaluation (FWSCE) rubric to assess the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.<sup>5</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria meet or exceed the “sufficient” level.<sup>6</sup> If less than 90 percent of the indicators on the rubric had scored at “sufficient” or above, the expert panel’s feedback would have been used to modify the series, after which the material would be submitted again to the expert panel for approval. This process would have continued until at least 90

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<sup>3</sup> All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project” at the start of the Research Methodology section.

<sup>4</sup> See appendix 1.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix 3.

<sup>6</sup> “Sufficient” level is achieved by receiving a score of 3 out of 4 points on the FWSCE rubric. See appendix 3.



percent of the indicators on the rubric were scored at “sufficient” or above, at which time the second goal would have been considered successfully met.

The third goal was to increase knowledge about the role of parents in discipling their children among member families at FBCPB. This goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-test which was used to measure the current discipleship practices within the home.<sup>7</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when the *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-test scores.<sup>8</sup>

### **Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations**

The following definition of a key term was used in the ministry project:

*Family worship.* Family worship will be defined as “the regular and intentional gathering of a household to worship God together and to make disciples in the home.”<sup>9</sup>

*Discipleship.* Discipleship will be defined as “a personal and intentional process in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less-mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives.”<sup>10</sup>

The only limitation on the project was the confinement to a fifteen-week timeframe. This scheduling gave adequate time to prepare and evaluate the six-session FWS curriculum, implement the six-session FWS curriculum, conduct the pre- and post-survey, and gather the information to be included in the *t*-test.

A delimitation of the project pertains to the participants. The class was

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<sup>7</sup>See appendix 2.

<sup>8</sup>A *t*-test for dependent means “involves a comparison of the means from each group of scores and focuses on the differences between the scores.” Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008), 278.

<sup>9</sup>*Guide to Family Worship 2015* [PDF file], accessed September 16, 2017, <http://forgodsname.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guide-to-family-worship-2015.pdf>

<sup>10</sup>Timothy Paul Jones, Mark DeVries, and W. Ryan Steenburg, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 17.

comprised of active families of FBCPB and have children or grandchildren under their care. During the six-session FWS, the research involved each participant in the class. This entire class served as the focus group for the project.

### **Conclusion**

Worship is a true encounter with God that enables us to experience the Almighty and meet with him to establish a concrete relationship with him, while pointing toward the significance of Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Proper implementation of corporate worship begins before the church gathers on Sundays. Every believer is to be an active participant in worship, engaging in a dialogue with Almighty God, listening to him through his Word, proclaiming with their lips his worthiness to be worshiped—praising, thanking, and petitioning him through song and prayer. Corporate worship becomes the outpouring of the believer's heart.

Through the development of family worship, every family member has the potential to be transformed for a lifetime of worship and praise. The mid-twentieth-century pastor, A. W. Tozer believed that “a local church exists to do corporately what each Christian believer should be doing individually – and that is to worship God.”<sup>11</sup> The more authentic the families' worship, the stronger the church will become. The first step towards authentic family worship can be achieved by studying the biblical and theological basis for using family worship in the home. Chapter two will focus on three scripture passages that are particularly noteworthy: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Proverbs 22:6, and Ephesians 6:1-4.

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<sup>11</sup>A. W. Tozer and Gerald B. Smith, *Whatever Happened to Worship?* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1985), 86.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

The Bible exhorts parents to spiritually disciple their children, emphasizing the home as vital in capturing the hearts and minds of the next generation and training each generation in the Lord's commands.<sup>1</sup> Family worship is one way for such spiritual discipleship to take place. Tony Kummer, Missions Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Madison, Indiana, defines *family worship* as “the regular and intentional gathering of a household to worship God together.”<sup>2</sup> Grace Fellowship of South Forsyth in Cumming, Georgia offers a helpful extension to Kummer's definition by adding “and to make disciples in the home.”<sup>3</sup>

Scripture offers extensive information about both Old Testament worship requirements and its practices as well as New Testament worship paradigms with Christ as the head of his church. Yet, neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament offers specific references to family worship nor provides instructions on its organization and format. Without these specifics, Christians are to make informed family worship decisions by looking to Scripture for guidance and examples in two areas: (1) God-ordained requisite for all forms of worship that apply to family worship in the home and (2) guidelines for children's spiritual development within the home. Synthesizing the

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<sup>1</sup>Some of the key passages that instruct Christian parents to train their children are as follows: Gen 18:17-19; 22:6-7, Josh 24:15, Job 1:5, Ps 78:1-8, 1 Tim 3:4-5, 1 Pet 3:7.

<sup>2</sup>Tony Kummer, *Family Worship Guidebook* [PDF file], 3, accessed April 25, 2017, <http://cdn.www.ministry-to-children.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/family-worship-guidebook.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup>*Guide to Family Worship 2015* [PDF file], accessed September 16, 2017, <http://forgodsname.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guide-to-family-worship-2015.pdf>.

principles of worship and principles of spiritual discipleship will provide a biblically-based family worship theology and model. The remainder of this chapter summarizes the principles of biblically-based worship that are applicable to worship in the home, exegetes three Scripture passages that lay a foundation for proper spiritual training of children, and applies these passages to family worship.

### **Requisites for Biblical Worship Applicable to the Home**

Biblically-based principles of corporate worship provide the proper framework for the establishment of family worship. In light of the vast amount of material available on corporate worship, the current project will present a cursory summary of seven fundamental requisites for biblical worship, each of which shapes family worship: salvation, focus, dialogue, unity, balance, contrition, and lifestyle.

#### **Worship Requisite 1: Salvation**

The bedrock requisite of worship upon which all others rest is salvation. Only those who have professed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior can truly worship him.<sup>4</sup> God first exhibited his love and desire for relationship with newly-created humanity in the Garden of Eden. Even after man fell into sin, God continued to demonstrate love and a desire to restore this relationship through the first covenant communicated via Moses and the second covenant through the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ. Whereas God required animal and grain sacrifices under the first covenant, under the second the crucified and resurrected Christ became the sacrificial atonement for the sins of all true believers. Salvation cannot be earned by doing good works, for salvation comes only by the grace of a sovereign God. The redeemed must therefore recognize themselves as eternal debtors to God as a result of his salvific act for which repayment is impossible.

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<sup>4</sup>Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2014), 106.

Those who receive redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, in gratitude and thanksgiving, submit themselves to the authority and sovereignty of God and seek ways to honor and glorify him through acts of worship.<sup>5</sup>

### **Worship Requisite 2: God-centeredness**

Christian worship begins with God, ends with God, and solely focusses on God. The Bible is replete with instances of worship with God as the focal point—both individual and corporate. Job’s faithfulness through extreme adversity, Isaiah’s vision, Israel at Mount Sinai, Solomon at the temple dedication, and John’s account of his revelation of eternal worship are all examples of the recognition of a holy God and his worthiness. In each of these worship encounters, God is the exclusive recipient of worship with reverence and humility resulting from the recognition of man’s own unworthiness.

Worship not only focuses on God’s worthiness and attributes but also praises him for his mighty acts. In her book *The Worship Architect* Constance Cherry states, “Worship is fundamentally the result of, and response to, great saving events performed by God. . . . Worship always begins with and focuses on what God has done to save his people.”<sup>6</sup> The God who created all human beings, knows them, and has a personal interest in them, is the same God who transcends time and space and has created the heavens and the earth. He is the Judge who understands humans’ sinful condition and sent his son Jesus to be crucified on their behalf. He is the only One who deserves the exalted place of worship. As Robert Webber writes, “the story of God initiating a

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<sup>5</sup>D. A. Carson, “Worship under the Word,” in *Worship by the Book*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 11-63.

<sup>6</sup>Constance M. Cherry, *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 4–5.

relationship and of the people responding in faith . . . comprises the very essence of worship.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Worship Requisite 3: Dialogue**

The third requisite of worship is dialogue. Worship is essentially a dialogue, a dialogue between God and man. Scripture contains God’s portion of the dialogue: God’s self-revelation and God’s plan for man. Man enters the dialogue by responding in praise, thanksgiving, contrition, and confession. These dialogic worship responses lead to the worshiper being transformed into the image of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The dialogue can occur at any place or time. In fact, any acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God over man becomes an act of worship, part of the dialogue. These acts may be brief and spontaneous as part of one’s daily life, concentrated during personal times of devotion, part of a family’s time together, or shared within a church family in a corporate setting. Regardless of the time of day or the participants, worship involves a pattern through which God reveals himself through both his Word and works to which the worshiper responds through prayer and praise.<sup>8</sup>

### **Worship Requisite 4: Unity**

Not only is an individual dialogue possible between God and man, but also a larger corporate dialogue is possible: a united body of believers practicing the pattern of revelation and response. Appropriate corporate worship emanates from a body of believers unified in obedience to the Scripture and submission to one another. In Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul encourages a spirit of unity as essential for the New Testament church. In 1 Corinthians 12, he writes of the church as one body made up of

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<sup>7</sup>Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 19.

<sup>8</sup>John Stott, *Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 311-12.

many parts that work together in unity for the cause of Christ. Without the principle of unity in operation, corporate worship becomes inappropriate, driven by personal preference rather than being a united response to God’s revelation. Corporate worship is a time for the church to assemble together, unified by a faith informed by Scripture, to say to God that he is the true and living God. Corporate worshippers join in practices as old as the church itself: Scripture reading, teaching, prayer, almsgiving, the Lord’s Supper, and baptism of believers. Cherry emphasizes the need for unity of voice and purpose in the interactive dialogue of worship when she states, “Corporate worship involves doing things together as we carry on the corporate conversation with God.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Worship Requisite 5: Balance of Spirit and Truth**

A unified corporate conversation alone is not enough. Regardless of the format, style, or number of participants, biblically-informed worship must exhibit another unifying principle: a balance between spirit and truth. Jesus clearly intimated this in his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well: “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers” (John 4:23). Scholars agree that “truth” in this passage is the intellectual side of the worship equation of “spirit and truth” as found in the theological tenets revealed through Scripture.<sup>10</sup> This intellectual side of the equation—truth—is the knowledge and acceptance of who God is and what he has done. On the other side of the equation though, Jesus’ term “spirit” has given rise to several interpretations. One of the most compelling is by Scott Aniol, Associate Professor and Chair of Worship Ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, who has

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<sup>9</sup>Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 262.

<sup>10</sup>D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 221; Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines*, 106-10.

written at length regarding the right emotional response to truth as opposed to a “raw” emotional response, i.e. an unreasoned instinct, feeling, or physical reaction. He speaks to the balance between emotion (Spirit-filled response) and intellect (response to truth) when he writes, “True worship involves responding to truth with our hearts. Christ himself said that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord with our whole being (Mark 12:30). Our affections are at the center of what it means to worship the Lord.”<sup>11</sup> In other words, worship that is true, and therefore acceptable to God, includes *affections*, i.e., proper emotional responses, *informed by comprehensive theological truths revealed in Scripture*. True worship therefore becomes more than maintaining a delicate balance between opposing emotional and intellectual factions. Rather the worshiper should strive to develop appropriate Spirit-filled emotional responses (affections) to the revelation of truth. The development of these proper affections is important, for if one expresses himself solely with visceral emotions his worship is purely zeal with no evidence of a depth of understanding. Worship that is over-intellectualized and engages only the mind implies that there is no place for heartfelt responses to the wonders of God’s revealed truth.

### **Worship Requisite 6: Contrition**

If worshipers are to worship God with their hearts, then the condition of those hearts must be considered. In Psalm 24:3, the psalmist David asks the question, “Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place?” He reveals the answer in the next verse: “He who has clean hands and pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.” David is saying that a spiritual cleansing is necessary for the proper attitude of worship to exist. This attitude can only be

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<sup>11</sup>Scott Aniol, *Sound Worship: A Guide to Making Musical Choices in a Noisy World* (Fort Worth, TX: Religious Affections Ministries, 2010), 45.



achieved through confession of sins and a humility that excludes all idols of vanity and pride.<sup>12</sup>

### **Worship Requisite 7: Lifestyle**

When believers enter worship with the right attitude and motivation, their worship of God on Sundays transfers to worshipping him daily by living a distinctively Christian lifestyle in a spirit of continual worship. Only when the believer is engaged in a lifestyle of worship can there be genuine, God-exalting worship. Whole-life worship exhibits a complete dependence on God, a longing for the peace that only he can give. Reformed pastors and authors Jason Helopoulos and Kevin DeYoung resonate with Romans 12:1 when they write, “As Christians, our lives are to be a continual act of worship.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, lifestyle worship is the continual submission of self to a way of life that brings honor to God—a life fully devoted to God and his purpose.

### **Scriptural Guidelines for Children’s Spiritual Development within the Home**

In order to effectively integrate family worship into the home, parents need to augment their understanding of proper worship with consideration of what the Bible teaches concerning spiritual development in the home. The remainder of this chapter examines three passages that provide a biblical and theological basis for children’s spiritual development within the home, followed by application of these Scriptures to family worship. Consideration of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ephesians 6:1-4, and Proverbs 22:6 will support regular and intentional family worship as a practical and meaningful way for Christian parents to model and teach the Christian life to their children.

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<sup>12</sup>Daniel I. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2014), 63.

<sup>13</sup>Jason Helopoulos and Kevin DeYoung, *A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2013), loc. 185, Kindle.

## **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

When considering the biblical and theological basis for children’s spiritual development in the home, the foundational Scripture passage is Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Moses’s goal is to remind the next generation of Israelites of the truths the previous generation had learned through both disobedience and obedience to God and his laws. The entire book of Deuteronomy is a series of messages about how God is worthy of worship and obedience. Through these messages, the nation of Israel receives a mandate to submit to God and the laws found in the renewed covenant before they enter an unfamiliar land—a land comparatively different to the one they had known. Moses exhorts parents to communicate and faithfully hand down Yahweh’s directives to their children and beyond:

Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.<sup>14</sup>

This passage articulates a desire to restore God’s people to his law and a right relationship and reminds to the Israelites of their primary calling to love and obey him while being parents who honor their covenant relationship with God by effectively instructing their children in his ways. These verses stress three important factors in the instruction of children: the mandate of covenantal fidelity, the mission of conscientious teaching, and the method of continual reminder.

**Mandate of covenantal fidelity.** A covenant is a pledge made between two or more people. The Old Covenant expressed in the book of Deuteronomy details the pledge between God and his people that will remain in effect until the coming of the New

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<sup>14</sup>Unless otherwise noted all scripture quotations are from David M. Edwards, ed., *HCSB Personal Worship Bible* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2006).

Covenant inaugurated by the person of Jesus Christ. Robert L. Cate writes in his commentary on the Old Testament that Moses’s instruction emphasizes how “Yahweh is the one sovereign God who is active in history and Israel is His one holy people, chosen by His sovereign grace to live in a covenant relation with Him.”<sup>15</sup> Each generation must embrace this covenant and confess its own personal devotion to Yahweh.

According to Deuteronomy 6:4-9, the handing down of the covenant from generation to generation requires parents and children to engage in diligent conversation and instruction in the home.<sup>16</sup> Daniel Block states that Moses expounds upon “diligent instruction” by appealing to “heads of households to declare their covenant commitment to Yahweh on three levels: (1) the personal level; (2) the domestic level; and (3) the community level.”<sup>17</sup> The passage begins with a simple decree: “Listen, Israel!” (v. 4), known as the שְׁמָעָה (*Shema*), from the Hebrew word meaning “hear.”<sup>18</sup> This call is for Israel’s undivided attention: “Israel was to cling to Yahweh alone. The Shema is a cry of allegiance, an affirmation of covenant commitment.”<sup>19</sup> Moses declares in the succeeding four words—*Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad*—that “The Lord our God, the Lord is One” (v. 4). Moses is proclaiming to Israel the first principle of faith and obedience: there is but one God.<sup>20</sup> God wants his people to remember his uniqueness—no one is like him.

The next verse in the passage—“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Deut 6:5)—is a completion of the previous

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<sup>15</sup>Robert L. Cate, *An Introduction to the Old Testament and Its Study* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987), 183–84.

<sup>16</sup>Joel R. Beeke, *Family Worship*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009), 13.

<sup>17</sup>Daniel Isaac Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2014), 115.

<sup>18</sup>Cate, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 190.

<sup>19</sup>Block, *For the Glory of God*, 100.

<sup>20</sup>Jack R. Lundbom, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), 309.

verse and is central to the establishment of a covenant with God. Rather than being a set of legalistic rules, Deuteronomy points the way for a life of service and devotion resulting in the abundant life intended for God’s people who practice willing obedience and spiritual discipline.<sup>21</sup> The simple command to love God reinforces the renewal of the covenant between the Israelites and God as a response of love and obedience to the One leading them into the Promised Land.<sup>22</sup> Clearly, parents themselves were to understand this command and relay it to their children: Yahweh is the only God of the Israelites and is to be the only object of their love. In other words, God’s people were to commit to God with their entire being, “heart . . . soul . . . and strength” (v. 5). These three elements are not disconnected units but are collectively an expression of a greater love requiring one’s total being.<sup>23</sup> The heart represents the body’s inner life and the core of all being. The soul encompasses a person’s emotions, will, and attitudes. Strength comes from one’s determination and endurance from within. True commitment to a faithful covenant with God that involves heart, soul, and strength requires one to go beyond superficial acquaintance to a deeper knowledge and relationship.

**Mission of conscientious teaching.** In verse 6, Moses begins to reveal how instruction within the family unit is to function. The verse begins with the following command: “These words . . . are to be in your heart.” He teaches Israel that the all-encompassing love for God begins to take shape in the heart through conscientious teaching of the truths found in his law. Therefore, the conscientious planting of God’s truths in the hearts of children will guide them to love and worship him with their whole being—intellect, emotions, and will—in accordance to his Word.

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<sup>21</sup>Gordon D. Fee and Robert L. Hubbard, eds., *The Eerdmans Companion to the Bible* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 155-56.

<sup>22</sup>Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1976), 169.

<sup>23</sup>Lundbom, *Deuteronomy*, 312.

Scholars differ on whether the phrase “these words” refers to the *Shema* (vv. 4-5) or to the entire Deuteronomic law as evidenced by Moses’s earlier exhortation to keep Yahweh’s instructions in mind.<sup>24</sup> Regardless, any acceptance of the law in the heart must first involve the introduction of that law to the mind. In the Hebrew way of thinking during Old Testament times, the heart was both the emotional center of the body and the “center of our personality, the orientation for good and evil that drives all our thoughts, decisions, and feelings.”<sup>25</sup> Proverbs 4 exhibits this same understanding of the interconnectivity of heart and mind with the admonition to “guard your heart with all vigilance” (v. 23). The heart is guarded from outside influences by first knowing the law and then intentionally obeying it.<sup>26</sup>

Moses is clearly assigning the parents of Israel this mission of conscientious teaching of truth to children’s minds and hearts. Prior to the conscientious teaching of the children, parents necessarily must embrace the commands themselves and then pass them down to their children. If parents are to make an impact on their children, they must themselves keep connected with God and his truths. Chasing after temporal things that are ultimately insignificant will often cause one to move away from things eternal. This simple reminder of keeping God’s law in the heart is a way for parents to internalize and reflect upon God’s Word. Furthermore, when parents are actively engaged in study and meditation of the law, they become better equipped to assist their children to do the same. Parents should not only teach the law to their children, but they should also display their Christian beliefs daily through their own actions, attitudes, conversations, and routines.

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<sup>24</sup>Lundbom, *Deuteronomy*, 312; Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 170.

<sup>25</sup>John M. Frame, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord: An Introduction to Systematic Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 94.

<sup>26</sup>The psalmists did not see the Law as a burden, but as protection from evil (Ps 19, 119).

**Method of continual reminder.** Verse 7 tells parents to keep the instructions of Yahweh ever before their children through repetitive oral instruction. The Hebrew word “repeat” ( נָשַׁב ) can be translated “to sharpen” and suggests a manner of diligent and persistent repetition. The concluding statement of verse 7 gives the four specific times that parents are to practice repetitive instruction to their children: “when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” The activities suggested in this verse are specified activities during which verbal instruction can take place throughout the day.<sup>27</sup> The implication is that parents are to take every opportunity to teach Yahweh’s principles about faith and life through both words and actions.<sup>28</sup> Continual reminders include instruction that informs and increases head knowledge along with appropriate responses that form and cultivate the heart.

Verse 8 provides a directive taken quite literally by the New Testament Jews: “Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”<sup>29</sup> Jack Lundbom, an Old Testament researcher, suggests in his commentary on Deuteronomy that the words of verse 8 were originally meant metaphorically, “stressing the need to keep Yahweh’s words ever in mind.”<sup>30</sup> Whether taken literally or metaphorically, the signs described in verses 7-9 indicate that both home and community were to be places to display obedience to the commandments of God as a response of love for him. The wearing and displaying of God’s Word was a constant reminder of the historic tenets of their faith while providing an instructional aid for teaching their children a better way for their future.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Lundbom, *Deuteronomy*, 313.

<sup>28</sup>Beeke, *Family Worship*, 13.

<sup>29</sup>The wearing of the capsules was a visual and physical sign of devotion to Yahweh by the Jewish people. They were to “literally [bind] them on their wrists and foreheads at times of prayer and . . . on the doorposts of their homes.” Cate, *An Introduction to the Old Testament and Its Study*, 190.

<sup>30</sup>Lundbom, *Deuteronomy*, 313.

<sup>31</sup>Telford Work, *Deuteronomy*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids:

**Application.** A general application of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 provides two important principles concerning the instruction of children through family worship and daily living. First, in order for parents to effectively teach and pass on the essential doctrines of the faith, they must do so with a theological devotion that involves the entirety of their lives rather than merely their verbal instruction. Patrick D. Miller, an Old Testament theologian, writes in his commentary, “The oneness of the Lord your God is [to be] matched by the oneness and totality of your devotion.”<sup>32</sup> Devotion to God is not easy but is reflected in how one lives one’s life. All people who call themselves Christians should have a desire and willingness to promote and include the message of God through their daily actions and consistent testimony to their children just as the Israelites provided a constant visual testimony to their children by wearing God’s Word on their wrists. Jesus linked love to obedience in John 14:15, “If you love me, you will obey my commands.” Faith, obedience, and good works are expressions of thanksgiving to God for the gift of Jesus Christ and his redemptive work rather than mandates one must fulfill to please him. Clearly, “teaching our children God’s truth and ways, instructing them by lifestyle as much as by precept” helps to grow the family in the manner God desires.<sup>33</sup> Parents should strive to bequeath to their children a love for God that is the result of understanding his sovereignty, grace, mercy, and love to the point that their children’s personal response will also be acts of faith and thankful obedience.

The second principle involves the consistent and repetitive nature of instruction. The consistency and repetition of the teaching must persist, yet parents should attempt to vary their method of teaching. Parents must look for a variety of ways to present recurring reminders of Yahweh’s laws as the truth is passed to the next

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Brazos Press, 2009), 97.

<sup>32</sup>Patrick D. Miller, *Deuteronomy*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: J. Knox Press, 1990), 103.

<sup>33</sup>*Praise and Worship Study Bible NLT* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 221.

generation. These ways may take the form of discussion, dialogue, question and answer, or traditional teaching. A form of instruction used by several denominations is applying a structured catechism in the home to teach children, over time, to place God's Word upon their hearts while learning foundational, biblical doctrine.<sup>34</sup> In his book *Family Worship*, Joel Beeke observes, "Through questions, answers, and instructions, parents and children are to daily interact with each other about sacred truth."<sup>35</sup> The goal is to help children internalize the rudiments of the faith and apply these truths to everyday life, giving them a foundation by which to live each day.<sup>36</sup> Parents need to be the model of tenacity and staying on course in order for their children to keep their eyes on God.

Moving from generally applying Deuteronomy 6:4-9 in the home to specifically looking at applications of the passage to family worship, the statutes God gave Moses concerning his requirements of the nation of Israel were myriad practices to be followed in the home. Moses gave these instructions to parents and they, in turn, passed them on to their children so that they would correspondingly honor and worship God according to his prescribed statutes. While a number of these practices were changed as a result of the New Covenant provided by the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ, parents in the present day should read and study Deuteronomy 6:4-9 to discover and apply its mandate to teach the fear of the Lord and observe all his statutes and commandments.

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<sup>34</sup> *Catechism* is "the process of teaching the basic Christian beliefs and the contents of the Scriptures either to a child who is raised in the church or to a new convert to Christianity." Stanley J. Grenz, David Guretzki, and Cherith Fee Nordling, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 24.

<sup>35</sup> Beeke, *Family Worship*, 13. Beeke is a minister of the Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is also professor of Systematic Theology and Homiletics and the President of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary.

<sup>36</sup> James W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Family-Worship* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847), 36.



The passage indicates that corporate worship and by implication family worship should express a fear and respect for the Lord resulting from an understanding of the attributes of God and the ways of God. In the context of family worship, this instruction can be aided by consistently thanking God for his acts as Creator and sustainer, while praising him for attributes of his character, including his sovereignty, omniscience, omnipresence, immortality, immutability, supreme authority, power, and all-sufficiency, among other things. Through worship the family acknowledges that in his perfect wisdom God's ways are best and his plan for each family member is perfect, even when it allows adversity.

The second part of the passage is a command to love God with the complete self—heart, soul, and strength. True devotion will not result in mere works of obedience to the command but rather in expressions of love and praise that reflect a growing relationship with him. In the context of family worship, parents should create an environment that includes specific family times for building this relationship with God. In addition, parents need to be aware of the importance of modeling their own love for God by setting the example for their children. This devotion to worshipping God with the complete self while deepening a relationship with him is passed on to the next generation and, in turn, leads to the family's engagement in continual worship of God.

In order to be in a continual state of whole-life worship, parents must add to these formal instructional times in family worship a constant awareness of their child's day-to-day concerns. These concerns can be addressed both privately and within the context of family worship, either in times of prayer, application of Scripture, or through personal testimony. By utilizing everyday occurrences as a means to share God's work in their children's lives, parents are able to help their children recognize who God is and what he has done in their lives, whether at home, at the park, in the car, or at school. No matter where the family is, the ways (commands) of the Lord are to be lived out.

Lastly, careful planning of family worship times should include over the course of time the full spectrum of doctrinal beliefs while maintaining enough consistent repetition of certain elements to firmly bind them to children's hearts and minds. Inclusion of songs in the context of worship that teach the commandments, books of the Bible, names of Bible characters, etc., can serve the same purpose within a worship context. Additionally, the inclusion in worship of a few questions from the aforementioned catechism will reinforce a child's theological understanding.

In summary, although Deuteronomy 6:4-9 does not mention family worship as a practice, the verses do offer a roadmap for parents to live out their faith in front of their children. One way of living out this faith is through times of family worship. Christian parents must realize they are to be doing more than just raising their children, they are to be raising disciples. Loving God and living for him takes intentional parental modeling of Jesus through pointing children to the need of the gospel in their lives.

### **Ephesians 6:1-4**

Moses's instructions regarding the role of parents in the spiritual education of their children remained unchanged with the institution of the New Covenant established by God through the sacrificial death and glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul expands Moses's instructions by explaining further the Christian parents' attitudes, approaches, and roles in their children's lives. He addresses both children and parents, particularly fathers, with admonitions concerning discipline and instruction in Ephesians 6:1-4:

Children, obey your parents as you would the Lord, because this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land. Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

This passage contains direct commands that must be understood in context. Chapters 5 and 6 of Paul's letter to the Ephesians reveal the household codes, a genre known as

*Haustafel*.<sup>37</sup> The household codes give the leaders of the home instructions for how to properly function as a godly family.<sup>38</sup> By addressing such issues, Paul is establishing a moral compass which the family is to follow. Paul exhorts his readers to “watch carefully how you walk” (Eph 5:15) and to “be filled with the Spirit by submitting to one another in the fear of Christ” (Eph 5:18, 21). These exhortations are somber reminders that Christians should be living their lives wisely and in direct obedience to the Lord.

Paul begins the call for an obedient lifestyle by appealing to the children in the congregation to “obey your parents (τοῖς γονεῦσιν) as you would the Lord.”<sup>39</sup> The word “obey” (ὑπακούω) is literally translated as “hear under” and describes children listening to their parents’ teaching and following their commands.<sup>40</sup> Children (τέκνα), old enough to comprehend their parent’s teaching yet young enough to still be living at home, have the responsibility to listen, observe, and follow their parents (τοῖς γονεῦσιν) because the Lord requires such an obedience.<sup>41</sup> Peter Williamson reiterates this point and adds,

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<sup>37</sup>Charles H. Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, Paideia (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 136. In these household codes, Paul reveals how to apply these exhortations – to walk carefully and to submit to one another – within the relationships found in a Christian household. He begins with the marriage relationship in Eph 5:22-33, then moves on to the mutual duties of children and parents – redefining the relations in the house to that of a relationship with Christ. He reinforces similar instructions that he gave in his letter to the Colossians with this caveat: “for this pleases the Lord” (Col 3:20). Paul addresses each family member’s role as he describes a harmonious household. He begins with the parents: wives submit to your husband “as to the Lord” (Eph 5:22); husbands should love their wives “just as Christ loved the church” (Eph 5:25). His emphasis then shifts to the role of the children, who are to listen to their parents as they direct them to love God and live their lives for Christ.

<sup>38</sup>The household passages actually include Eph 5:22-6:9 and Col 3:18-4:1. Due to the latter portions of these Scriptures dealing with slaves and masters and not the familial relationship, I will not include them in this project.

<sup>39</sup>Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 786.

<sup>40</sup>Peter S. Williamson, *Ephesians*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 180.

<sup>41</sup>Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 321.

“Obedience to parents is a responsibility that children fulfill as an expression of their relationship with Jesus.”<sup>42</sup>

By using the plural word *parents* (τοῖς γονεῦσιν), Paul is indicating that God’s plan is for both parents, mother and father, to be involved in raising the children. Since the home is where children learn about foundational principles of life, both parents play an important role in the children’s development and understanding of obedience. Both parents need to provide godly leadership to their children by modeling obedience to God’s authority and precepts.

Paul continues his exhortation to the children in verse 2 by citing the law of Moses (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16): “Honor your father and mother” (Eph 6:2a). These words, repeated four other times in the New Testament (e.g. Matt 15:4-6, 19:17-19; Mark 7:10-13; and John 19:25-27), provide further proof that Paul supports the continuance of the family structure and dynamic laid out in the Old Testament.

In verse 3, Paul provides insight into the benefits of honoring one’s father and mother: “that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land.” The original promise referred to a particular piece of land, but Paul offers a two-fold promise benefitting the believers of today. First, children who desire a deeper, happier, more useful life achieve success because of their obedience to their parents rather than their disobedience. However, the second promise has new connotations. While the original promise connected God’s people to a long life in the land of Israel, Paul is restating this Old Testament promise as an encouragement for proper behavior and conduct. Thus, the child is given instruction early in life to obey father and mother, not only for the

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<sup>42</sup>Williamson, *Ephesians*, 180.

beneficial results of obeying their parents, but ultimately as an act of obedience to a specific command of God.

In verse 4, Paul turns his attention to the responsibility of the father in two areas: (1) proper discipline (not “stirring up anger”) and (2) proper training/instruction. Both are requisites for raising children who become spiritually grounded disciples informed by the Word of God.

**Discipleship through proper discipline.** Paul specifically addresses fathers concerning their significance in raising a child. Although mothers were of equal importance, fathers, according to Greco-Roman and Jewish milieus, were ultimately responsible for the education of their children.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, during Paul’s time, the father was given “supreme authority” over his family, including the authority to let them live or die.<sup>44</sup>

Even though this and other forms of severity were legal in the Roman culture of the first century, Paul admonishes fathers not to “stir up anger in your children but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph 6:4). Other translations say, “Do not provoke,” which also shows Paul’s concern for the well-being of the child.<sup>45</sup> The original Greek word *παροργίζω* is used to admonish fathers not to act irrationally

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<sup>43</sup>Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 145.

<sup>44</sup>Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 568. Warren Wiersbe explains: “When a baby was born into a Roman family, for example, it was brought out and laid before the father. If he picked it up, it meant he was accepting it into the home. But if he did not pick it up, it meant the child was rejected. It could be sold, given away, or even killed by exposure. No doubt a father’s love would overcome such monstrous acts, but these practices were legal in that day.” Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Rich: Are You Losing the Things That Money Can’t Buy? An Expository Study of the Epistle to the Ephesians* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1976), 153.

<sup>45</sup>NIV, NLT, ESV, NASB, and KJV.

when punishing and disciplining their children, but to be reasonable in their judgment.<sup>46</sup> The emphasis is on *proper* discipline of children.

Though a necessary part of parenting, effective discipline is never enforced in anger or without cause. Parents should remain calm and intentional when disciplining a child, always seeking a positive result. Disciplining a child out of anger shows a lack of self-control that defeats the purpose of the discipline. R.C. Sproul points out that “the ultimate model of discipline and chastisement is God Himself, who always tempers His wrath with mercy.”<sup>47</sup> Therefore, fathers need to reflect the mercy of God to their families in matters of discipline. Rather than punishment, discipline should be thought of as correction to bring about a biblically reasoned result. Correction should include thoughtful counsel that helps the child understand the error of his/her behavior or actions and necessary modifications that conform to biblical principles.

**Discipleship through proper instruction.** A second facet of the term ‘discipline’ is the establishment of a course that is carefully charted for the purpose of keeping one focused on the matter at hand, as in taking a ‘disciplined approach’ to a subject. This type of discipline includes a thorough and thoughtful method of instruction proper for the maturity level of the child. This type of discipline is the kind Paul is referring to in the second half of verse 4 where he cautions fathers to “bring [their children] up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

Examining the root meanings of each phrase in Greek provides further clarity to the meaning of Paul’s words. To “bring them up” (ἐκτρέφω) is the same word translated in Ephesians 5:29 as “nourish.”<sup>48</sup> The father is therefore commanded to provide

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<sup>46</sup>Williamson, *Ephesians*, 182.

<sup>47</sup>R. C. Sproul, *The Purpose of God: Ephesians*, rev. ed. (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2011), 141.

<sup>48</sup>Wiersbe, *Be Rich*, 154.

spiritual nourishment for the family that is just as important as his attention to their physical development and emotional well-being through the provision of proper food, shelter, and clothing. The establishment of a healthy physical, emotional, and spiritual lifestyle requires the development of good habits that will provide nourishment over an extended period of time.

The next phrase contains two words that are parsed by scholars to provide a more thorough understanding. Noted New Testament scholar Frank Thielman points out that while some translate the Greek παιδεία as “training” or even “discipline,” the word carries other implications.<sup>49</sup> According to Best, the words “training” (παιδεία) and “instruction” (νουθεσία) denote objectives that go beyond mere academic learning to include areas of moral and philosophical training to deal with spiritual dilemmas of a child.<sup>50</sup> Kerry Ptacek, pastor at Covenant Family Fellowship in Hoover, Alabama, states that “nurture by the father is direct in form. It is manifested in two activities: authoritative teaching, or discipline, and admonition or warning. In both activities, the Bible is the content of instruction.”<sup>51</sup>

Other translations of νουθεσία use the words “warning, admonition, [or] counsel.”<sup>52</sup> These translations do not suggest a sense of severe discipline in the form of reprimand, but rather use terminology indicating that proper instruction includes both loving correction of improper behavior and caring counsel in order to effectively improve a child’s future decisions. Furthermore, the word νουθεσία indicates that particular

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<sup>49</sup>Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 402.

<sup>50</sup>Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, 569.

<sup>51</sup>Kerry Ptacek, *Family Worship: Biblical Basis, Historical Reality, Current Need* (Edmonton, AB: Still Waters Revival Books, 1994), 38.

<sup>52</sup>“Strong’s Greek: 3559. Νουθεσία (Nouthesia) Admonition,” accessed February 22, 2017, <http://biblehub.com/greek/3559.htm>.

content was to be planned and intentionally taught.<sup>53</sup> Instruction then, aids in “bringing them up” by including teaching, correcting, counseling, and modeling, all of which further the Christian parents’ obligation to help their children develop a solid foundation on which to build. When parents, especially fathers, give attention to creating a home environment that is firmly rooted “in the ways of the Lord,” then the family can be properly disciplined, nourished, and counseled towards a right relationship with Christ.

Effective instruction within the home will only happen in an environment of healthy relationships. Parents cultivate well-balanced relationships with their children through a balance of aforementioned proper discipline and supportive nurturing.<sup>54</sup> Whether parent or child, each family member must work to maintain a healthy relationship with all the others, but families must not ignore or diminish the importance of each one’s relationship with God. Ephesians 6:1-4 helps Christian parents, specifically fathers, understand ways to relate to Jesus Christ, their spouse, and their children. One context in which effective spiritual instruction and relationships with God and family can intersect and grow is family worship.

**Application to family worship.** When applying Ephesians 6:1-4 to family worship the first part of this Scripture indicates that the parents—not the children—should be in control of both form and content of the family worship event. A child, just as anyone who is immature in the faith, will have a natural tendency to desire more ego-centric worship geared toward entertainment of self rather than the theocentric worship modeled in the Bible.

The goal of Christian parents, ideally with the father as spiritual leader, should be for family worship to be a time of biblically based, Christ-centered acts that also

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<sup>53</sup> Jones, DeVries, and Steenburg, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 153.

<sup>54</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 797.



include and elucidate theological tenets of the Christian faith. Worship provides one vehicle through which parents teach systematic theology, albeit on a level that is understandable and meaningful to children. Through the activity of family worship, parents express their own faith and pass it down to the next generation while utilizing worship elements as found in Scripture. These include reading and application of Scripture, various types of prayer, singing, forms of personal response, and even almsgiving.

The central act of any worship time is hearing from God through his Word. Through family worship parents model how to study and apply Scripture. Every member of the family should be encouraged to use their own Bible and be instructed on how to find and read Scripture, interpret it, and discuss its context. In order to “bring up” their children into a faith in God, Christian parents must provide their children the tools necessary to successfully memorize Scripture and apply God’s Word to daily life while keeping every member of the household, youngest to oldest, involved and interested.

In addition to instruction from God’s Word, family worship should include prayer. Family worship is a natural place for the family to share their concerns and needs with each other and then bring those requests to the Lord in prayer. Parents should teach their children not to be selfish or self-centered in their prayers. Utilizing the A.C.T.S. pattern of prayer (to be discussed further in chapter 3) or a categorical pattern, the family can focus their prayers towards corporate needs and the needs of others.<sup>55</sup> Through a systematic prayer time, fathers are able to better communicate the importance of prayer as an act of worship.

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<sup>55</sup> *Guide to Family Worship 2015*, 12, 14. ACTS is an acrostic for: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. The Categorical Pattern of Prayer utilizes each night of the week as a different prayer focus. The pattern is as follows, Monday: Family, Tuesday: Friends, Wednesday: Church, Thursday: Government, Friday: Lost and Missions.

Including singing in the family worship time will strengthen the instruction and allow the family to carry “a song in their hearts” throughout the day. Song content is therefore significantly important and should be Christ-centered and full of biblical truth. Utilizing different types of songs—Scripture, praise, prayer, confession, thanksgiving, devotion, submission—involves the family in a more complete and biblical worship experience.

Along with reading the Bible, praying, and singing, one other means for fathers to impart a Godly legacy is through catechism. Catechizing offers an additional way to teach biblical truth. In utilizing a series of questions and answers that vary from day to day, fathers can reinforce theological instruction while establishing a statement of belief for the day.

When a father is able to accomplish the responsibility set before him in Ephesians 4:6, the family worship time becomes an avenue through which is built a solid foundation for the lives of their children. Through sharing and responding to the Scripture, singing songs of praise and thanksgiving, directing their family toward the heart of God in prayer, and helping others through giving or acts of service, parents accomplish all that family worship is intended to achieve.

Whether in worship or the process of daily life, the next generation must be encouraged to study the Word of God and put into practice its teachings in order to become spiritually mature adults. Voddie Baucham reminds parents, “The most important job you have as a parent is to train and disciple your children.”<sup>56</sup>

### **Proverbs 22:6**

The wisdom of King Solomon produced guidance for many spheres of life, including the proper rearing of children. Proverbs 22:6 uses a cause-and-effect statement

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<sup>56</sup>Voddie Baucham Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 119, Kindle.

to communicate to fathers and mothers the need for their involvement in teaching spiritual precepts: “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old, he will not depart from it” (NASB). This passage highlights the responsibility of parents to teach their children consistently and frequently in order for them to walk on the right path.<sup>57</sup> Warren Wiersbe, noted author, Bible teacher, and pastor, cautions that this verse must not be seen as an absolute assurance or “religious ‘rabbit’s foot’” to which parents and grandparents desperately turn if children stray from the Lord.”<sup>58</sup> Rather than a guaranteed promise, this proverb expresses a principle that a well-trained child will have a better chance of living a godly life than one with poor or no instruction. Therefore, the passage warrants further inspection to fully comprehend the manner in which parents are to proceed in their method of teaching and instructing their children. The passage offers at least three principles for spiritually training children in the home which apply to family worship: teach children systematically, teach children early, and teach children discernment.

**Teach children systematically.** Proverbs 22:6 begins with the imperative “train up a child,” clearly placing the responsibility on the parents for spiritual instruction of the child. The Hebrew phrase **חָנַךְ בְּנֶךְ** is transliterated “chanak na’ar,” implying a methodical or systematic form of training. The training of the child referred to in this verse is generally linked with the word “path” in the previous verse, “There are thorns and snares on the *path* of the crooked” (Prov 22:5a). By connecting “path” (v. 5) to the word “way” (v. 6), Solomon is reminding parents to assist their children in carefully and thoughtfully choosing the path (*derek*) God intends for their life.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Roy B. Zuck, *Precious in His Sight: Childhood and Children in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 166.

<sup>58</sup>Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Skillful* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1995), 106.

<sup>59</sup>Paul E. Koptak, *Proverbs: From Biblical Text to Contemporary Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 517.

To “train up” (*chanak*) means to be dedicated to laying the groundwork of the training in a child’s earliest years.<sup>60</sup> Training would include verbal instruction and explanation, as well as demonstrating and modeling proper behavior.<sup>61</sup> Matthew Henry proposes that Deuteronomy 6:7 reminds parents to consistently instruct children with enough repetition to ingrain the right precepts. He adds, “Train them up, not in the way they would go (the bias of their corrupt hearts would draw them aside), but in the way they should go, the way in which, if you love them, you would have them go.”<sup>62</sup> *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* further elucidates the verse by stating that the Semitic root of “chanak” includes the concept of teaching children how to narrow their choices to keep them on the right path.<sup>63</sup> Sometimes this might include experiential learning by trial and error, for life’s hurdles and setbacks are inevitable, so children must be taught perseverance by continuing to apply scriptural principles even after failures.

Parents must also give careful attention to a child’s maturity level as they guide their children’s spiritual formation. Duane Garrett, Professor of Old Testament at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, suggests that “a better interpretation [of Proverbs 22:6] is, loosely rendered, ‘Train a child in a manner befitting a child.’”<sup>64</sup> Parents generally want the very best for their children but must not rush or attempt to force the process by expecting perfection or a level of comprehension beyond their years. Forcing

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<sup>60</sup>Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book Of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 204. Not only is this phrase used here, but also in Deut 20:5; 1 Kgs 8:63; and 2 Chr 7:5.

<sup>61</sup>Allen P. Ross, *Proverbs*, in vol. 5 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 1061.

<sup>62</sup>“Proverbs 22 Commentary: Matthew Henry’s Complete Commentary on the Bible,” StudyLight.org, accessed September 29, 2015, <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/view.cgi?bk=19&ch=22>.

<sup>63</sup>“Strong’s Hebrew: 2596. חָנַךְ (Chanak) to Train Up, Dedicate,” accessed July 4, 2017, <http://biblehub.com/hebrew/2596.htm>.

<sup>64</sup>Duane A. Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, New American Commentary, vol. 14 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993), 188.

a child to abide by rigid rules that go beyond his or her level of understanding may encourage that child to rebel in all areas of parental influence, including the spiritual realm. By nature, a child is born with a bent toward sin, lacking the understanding of how to function in a godly manner. Christian parents have a duty to fashion the methods of their instruction to the level of the individual child as they train them to pursue the path that God has laid out for them. Garrett says that “one should train a child using vocabulary, concepts, and illustrations that a child can understand.” He further states that the child “will build on the fundamental principles as he grows up and persevere in the right way.”<sup>65</sup>

Albert Barnes in *Barnes' Notes* goes beyond the mere consideration of maturity of the child, indicating that the more common Hebrew translation is “according to the tenor of his way.”<sup>66</sup> This suggests training should be geared towards each child’s natural inclinations, in harmony with his disposition, talents, and individual character. Instruction and training should therefore be expressed differently for every child because not every child responds to the same manner of instruction. Some children need more hands-on instruction with extended verbal explanation; others need visual reinforcements; still others can be given brief verbal instruction and be left to learn by experience. Parents must discover what method is best suited for their child and train each according to their individual needs.

**Teach children early.** Not only should children receive instruction designed to their individual learning style, but also, they need to start receiving this instruction at a very early age through the combination of teaching and modeling by the parents. A considerable amount of a young child’s assessment of right and wrong, good and bad,

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<sup>65</sup> Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, 188.

<sup>66</sup> Albert Barnes et al., *Barnes' Notes*, Heritage ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 62.

acceptable and unacceptable behavior comes from observation and imitation of their parents' model of living as a Christian within a largely non-Christian society. Eldon Woodcock, Professor Emeritus of Bible at Nyack College, suggests that "the training should begin right after birth, even before a baby learns to talk."<sup>67</sup> He continues by saying that "learning patterns may be developed very early and more advanced levels of this training added as the baby grows from infancy through childhood and adolescence into adulthood."<sup>68</sup> By laying the groundwork of character early, parents will be able to teach, explain, and demonstrate the behavior they want their children to emulate.

Parental training of a child begins in the home immediately after birth. The home is therefore the earliest 'classroom' in which training of children occurs, including spiritual training. In his short book *The Duties of Parents*, J. C. Ryle raises parents' awareness of the importance of the home in raising children in a godly way. He writes, "Home is the place where habits are formed; home is the place where the foundations of character are laid; home gives the bias to our tastes, likings, and opinions. See then, I pray you, that there be careful training at home."<sup>69</sup>

**Teach children discernment.** As part of teaching spiritual precepts early in the home, godly parents must teach the child to use biblically informed discernment when making decisions. The phrase "the way he should go" implies that the attitude of discernment is one of respect for the laws of God. Respect includes accountability to parents and to God for any actions or attitudes that go against the Scripture. Making children aware of this accountability during the early stages of life will aid in their spiritual development as they mature. They will have the knowledge as well as the

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<sup>67</sup>Eldon Woodcock, *Proverbs: A Topical Study*, Bible Study Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 173.

<sup>68</sup>Woodcock, 173.

<sup>69</sup>J. C. Ryle, *The Duties of Parents: 17 Practical Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*. (1860; repr., North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2018), 44.

understanding that the heavenly Father they were taught to love and respect in the home is the same Father that is with them into adulthood. Since parents cannot foresee specific circumstances that may arise in the future, they should always help their children see life's vicissitudes through the lens of a faith that is not based on earthly circumstances. In other words, parents are influencing and training their children's hearts by guiding them to set their "affections on things above" (Col 3:2). However, in the event that the child strays from the path in later years, the passage assures that right training provides a moral compass that helps him or her recognize decisions that "depart from" that training, even in old age.

In order to learn spiritual discernment, children must feel comfortable in discussing their choices with parents. Parents should attempt to create with their children an atmosphere of trust in which dialogue is both comfortable and expected. Constant conversation helps cultivate a relationship that places focus less on rules and more on proper choices made when one is attuned to God. Children whose parents develop this trust while providing consistent, biblical teaching will build a storehouse of spiritual truths that will influence a lifetime of biblically informed actions.<sup>70</sup>

The teaching of spiritual discernment should result in the mature children's eventual independence. As children grow in the faith they should become better equipped to navigate through difficult situations and understand the disposition of their own hearts. If parents have spent their children's formative years teaching, training, and talking about loving God in obedience, then the children are more likely to become disciples who make a difference in the world. As children grow in the faith, their focus will hopefully change from selfishness to the development of a heart for God and a desire to pursue his plan for their lives.

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<sup>70</sup>Woodcock, *Proverbs*, 173-74.

**Application to family worship.** Family worship based on biblical principles can be an important part of meeting the parental mandate found in Proverbs 22:6 to train their child “in the way he should go.” Family worship is a perfect platform for systematically laying the groundwork of a child’s spiritual formation. Effective training, whether it be for worship or for any other skill, requires discipline, effective repetition, thoroughness, and good modeling.

First, discipline when applied to worship suggests both consistent adherence to a good system and a controlled form of behavior. This discipline can come from the parents in the form of a systematic biblical approach to worship. Consistency is key to helping children understand how to offer worship to God and to model Christ-centered, rather than man-centered, expressions of faith. This consistency, however, should be creatively structured to provide as much variety and scope as possible both to maintain interest and to provide a broader understanding of God and his plan for the world.

The second aspect of good training is sufficient structure and repetition to provide children with a consistent pattern for worship that is applicable regardless of the emphasis of the day. A consistent pattern means the inclusion of all the elements of worship—Scripture reading/teaching; prayers of thanksgiving, petition, and repentance; songs of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving; alms giving; and other forms of response to God’s revelation. Repetition of form and practices in family worship with variety of specific content provides structure and environment in which elements of biblical worship become second nature to all members of the family.

A third important consideration in the training of children through family worship is thoroughness. Parents should make sure their children are gaining a *complete* vision of God and the redemption found through Jesus Christ through thoughtfully planned times of worship using carefully scrutinized materials in terms of content and theology. Over an extended period, the family’s worship time and other times of teaching should touch on all the main tenets of the Christian faith. Scripture and songs should be



used to support these tenets, as well as statements of belief found in an age-appropriate catechism that accompany the particular emphasis of the day. A systematic theological approach to worship perhaps could be combined with observance of the various seasons of the church year—an annual cycle that emphasizes the life and teachings of Christ. Regardless of method, the content should reflect upon the intricacy and all-sufficiency of God’s mercy and love, particularly in sending Jesus Christ for the salvation of believers.

Finally, an important method of training children is the parents’ modeling of the biblical approach to both family and corporate worship. Worship is “better caught than taught,” and ultimately, living with Christian parents who understand God’s sovereignty and his plan for their lives will permanently affect their children far greater than any verbal instruction. “Life moments” occurring outside of family worship offer the opportunity for parents to model how to live out what has been taught. Parents can lay claim to the promise that their child will not depart from the “way he should go” only if they fulfill their role in the proper training of the child in the ways of the Lord.

Family worship should be seen as a wonderful opportunity to respond to God’s perfect goodness and mercy, his covenant revealed through his Word, and his provision of a means of personal salvation through Christ. Moreover, biblical family worship encourages family members to become more like Christ by nurturing the fundamental principles with which they may choose the right path to follow. As a result, parents who are faithful in family worship will see their children grow up in the way of the Lord rather than following the ways of the world.

Parental instruction, correction, and modeling based on scriptural obedience and service to God has a personal salvation experience for their children as the ultimate goal. Beeke writes, “Like the connection between preaching and the salvation of souls in the congregation, there is a connection between family worship and the salvation of

souls.”<sup>71</sup> So what should be the parents’ primary purposes for the lives of their children—success, happiness, career? While all of these can be worthy pursuits, the primary purposes for children’s lives should be to know the Lord, walk with him daily, and serve his people on their own volition.

Parents should look at family worship as a time for planting seeds that will grow and become a bountiful harvest in the future. Each time the family gathers for family worship, parents have the opportunity to plant these seeds—seeds of knowing, loving, and following God—by teaching God’s ways using tools and methods that take into consideration the natural bent of the child. Family worship becomes an intricate part of fulfilling God’s design as found in the Shema, which leads to spontaneous faith interactions.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented family worship as an effective means of spiritual development for children. Because of its dialogical nature, worship gives the family the opportunity to go beyond mere learning about God to actually responding to him and his revealed truth.

The search for biblical directives concerning requirements and attitudes of worship revealed seven principles of corporate worship that also are relevant to family worship in the home. These principles include (1) a personal salvation experience; (2) placing God as the focus of worship; (3) viewing worship as a dialogue between God and man that leads to a stronger personal relationship; (4) a theological unity of believers who give praise and honor to God as response to his revelation; (5) a balance of spirit and truth resulting in worship that is response to scriptural revelation with appropriate affections; (6) contrition and penitence that allows a proper attitude for worship; and

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<sup>71</sup>Beeke, *Family Worship*, 35.

finally (7) a lifestyle that exhibits evidence of continual worship in the actions and attitudes of a believer. These principles of worship apply to each generation and tradition to form a gospel-centered stability in the worship of God that transcends time, ethnicity, and culture.

This chapter has also identified three passages—two from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament—that provide a biblical and theological basis for parental responsibility in teaching biblical principles in the spiritual formation of their children. Like the seven principles of worship, these three biblical directives have been applied to the regular practice of family worship. The examination of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ephesians 6:1-4, and Proverbs 22:6 has demonstrated the importance of parents as the primary instructors to their children, particularly in the area of spiritual growth. A significant platform for this teaching is the practice of family worship in the home. Through family worship children are encouraged through both parental modeling and personal participation to express a growing faith and desire for obedience to God’s Word.

Scripture clearly communicates that parents, especially fathers, are primarily responsible for the spiritual growth of their children. Spiritual growth is the anticipated result of the practice of family worship may include spiritual training provided in a nurturing and loving environment, moral training that teaches children right from wrong, and an atmosphere that consistently strengthens the family unit.

Family worship should be a high priority to Christian families and have as its primary purpose to keep Scripture ever before the children’s eyes, so they will understand and grow in knowledge of the Word, be nurtured by the Word, live by the Word, and want to share the Word with others. Whitney provides encouragement in prioritizing the discipline of family worship along with a spiritual warning: “The blessings of family worship are too dangerous for Satan to let pass unopposed. Nevertheless, [parents] must

stand on this bedrock truth: God deserves to be worshiped daily in our homes by our families. And for that reason, *start today*.”<sup>72</sup>

To augment the above scriptural foundation for family worship and to further equip parents in making informed decisions, additional background information will be advantageous. Chapter 3 will examine the need for family worship and present an overview of relevant historical figures, movements, and practices that should be considered when implementing worship in the home.

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<sup>72</sup>Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 52; emphasis original.

CHAPTER 3  
THEORETICAL, HISTORICAL, AND PRACTICAL  
ISSUES RELATED TO FAMILY WORSHIP

For centuries Christian families have been coming together at the end of the day for a time of reading Scripture, singing, and praying together—simply worshiping together as a family. Unfortunately, this practice has decreased markedly in modern times even among evangelical Christians, thus making it imperative to renew an understanding of the practices, purposes, and benefits of family worship.<sup>1</sup> Chapter 2 argued that the biblical purpose for this family worship time is to impress on the hearts of children a knowledge and love for God as they hear and respond to his Word. The purpose of Chapter 3 is to serve as a bridge between the biblical imperative and actual implementation of worship and family instruction in the home.

The first section of the present chapter will give evidence to the need for regularly scheduled family worship. The second section will examine historical periods in which family worship was a common practice among Christians. The inclusion of singing in family worship will require examination into some of the historical musical practices that found their way into corporate worship, which in turn influenced personal and family worship. The degree to which these practices deviated from or conformed to biblical worship principles should inform present-day decisions concerning family worship. The third section will discuss some of the foundational elements of family worship. The final section will consist of suggestions for the implementation of family worship within the fabric of the busy modern family.

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<sup>1</sup>Jerry Marcellino, *Rediscovering Family Worship* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2011), loc. 64, Kindle.

## **The Need for Family Worship**

In recent years the teaching of family worship has all but disappeared from today's evangelical culture. In a scientific survey, George Barna found that "fewer than one-twentieth of church households ever worship God outside of a church service or have any type of regular Bible study or devotional time together during a typical week."<sup>2</sup> With such an oversight by Christian parents, the church has shouldered a greater burden to disciple the children. The church is a partner with families and encourage parents to make their homes the most important place for discipling to happen. Most, if not all, of the instruction that goes on in the home is reinforced by the teaching of the church.

Family worship can provide the fuel needed for the worshipers to feel and understand God's sovereign hand guiding them through life. God wants the family to join together and worship him. Donald Whitney states, "The lives of Christian heroes testify that God deserves to be worshipped daily in our homes and by our families."<sup>3</sup> Family worship is the foundation of all worship. As discussed in chapter 2, the regular practice of family worship is rooted in the way the family worshiped in the Old Testament church and is the foundation to worship in the New Testament church. Therefore, the biblical pattern establishes not only a desire to worship individually, but also as a family, and with a local congregation. Each practice has the same goal, the glory of God.

### **Historical Periods during Which Family Worship Is Common Practice among Christians**

In order for parents to make good decisions concerning the form and content of family worship in the home, a brief review of several periods in church history during which worship was an integral part of family life (1) the early church to the end of the sixth century; (2) the Reformation in the sixteenth century; (3) seventeenth-century

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<sup>2</sup>George Barna, *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions: Why Children Should Be Your Church's #1 Priority* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2003), 125.

<sup>3</sup>Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 28.

Pietism, Separatism, and Puritanism; (4) eighteenth- and nineteenth-century spiritual awakenings; and (5) revivalism and modern evangelicalism. Common threads among these movements are of increased concern for spiritual formation in general and the practice of personal and family worship in particular. Since the present study includes the use of singing as an important element of expression and instruction in family worship, changes in attitudes and the role of music will be a significant part of the discussion that follows.

### **The Early Church**

During the first few centuries after the church was established, several church fathers wrote about the need to practice family worship. Polycarp (69–105) encouraged husbands to “instruct [their] wives to continue in the faith delivered to them and in all love and purity . . . to teach their children with instruction that leads to the fear of God.”<sup>4</sup> Even into the latter part of the fourth century, John Chrysostom (347–407) wrote that “every house should be a church, and every head of a family a spiritual shepherd.”<sup>5</sup> Augustine (354–430) shared the same idea that all fathers had a duty to act as a bishop—an overseer—to his family and that each member “continues in the true faith.”<sup>6</sup> Lyman Coleman, a nineteenth-century scholar and writer on early church history, gives a synopsis of family worship in the early church, “At an early hour in the morning the family assembled, when a portion of Scripture was read from the Old Testament, which was followed by a hymn and a prayer.”<sup>7</sup> Coleman continues, “In the evening, before

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<sup>4</sup>Polycarp, *The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians*, ed. David Robert Palmer, trans. J. B. Lightfoot and Kirsopp Lake (January 2010; repr.; May 2015), 4:2, accessed January 10, 2018, [http://bibletranslation.ws/download/Polycarp\\_Epistle\\_To\\_The\\_Philippians.pdf](http://bibletranslation.ws/download/Polycarp_Epistle_To_The_Philippians.pdf).

<sup>5</sup>Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 545.

<sup>6</sup>Schaff, 545.

<sup>7</sup>Lyman Coleman, *The Antiquities of the Christian Church* (New York: Goud, Newman & Saxton, 1841), 376; Whitney, *Family Worship*, 31.

retiring to rest, the family again assembled, when the same form of worship was observed as in the morning.”<sup>8</sup>

Unfortunately, much of the development of family worship began to experience a period of darkness in the latter portion of the early church. By the end of the sixth century, family worship all but vanished from the historical record.<sup>9</sup> With the fall of Rome and the centralization of power and authority of the bishops and pope, the church entered a period of transformation and cultural dominance, setting off a series of chain reactions that would drastically alter corporate and family worship for the next millennium.<sup>10</sup> The form of worship that developed during this time was a high-culture ritualistic model that all but excluded the congregation, now relegated to observers of the mystical and grandiose performed by those selected and trained by the church. Congregants might have been awed by the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes, but they were not active participants. The liturgy, which is by definition the “work of the people,” instead became the work of the church conducted entirely in Latin, a language appreciated only by the leaders of the religious community.

### **The Reformation**

During the early sixteenth century, the church witnessed a movement that would forever change the landscape of Christendom. Some scholarly clerics within the church, after careful examination of Scripture and comparison of it with the official teachings and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church, began to call for reform within the church. They renounced certain principles and practices that were abusive and not biblically prescribed, including some sacraments and the sale of indulgences. Those who

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<sup>8</sup>Coleman, *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, 376-77.

<sup>9</sup>Kerry Ptacek, *Family Worship: Biblical Basis, Historical Reality, Current Need* (Edmonton, AB: Still Waters Revival Books, 1994), 46.

<sup>10</sup>James F. White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 41-42.



espoused these reforms met with fierce papal opposition that resulted in persecution, excommunication, and sometimes execution. The only recourse was to break away from the Roman Catholic Church and establish a church that did not add to or deviate from biblical doctrine. Hence the movement known as the Protestant Reformation was born.

Concurrent to this movement was the timely invention of the printing press and Johannes Guttenberg's (1398–1468) innovation of moveable type. This monumental leap in technology made possible the rapid and widespread distribution of writings in both Latin and the language of the people. Reformers utilized this remarkable new tool to publish books and tracts defending their grievances and positions. More importantly, new Bible translations in the vernacular were being provided for an increasingly literate populace so that they could read and think about theology for themselves.

The confluence of theological unrest and new technology made possible a movement that could not be contained and eventually resulted in the creation of several branches of Protestantism. Foremost reformers include Martin Luther (1483–1546) in Germany, Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) and John Calvin (1509–1564) in Switzerland and France, and John Knox (1510–1572) in Scotland. These leaders purged many heretical and abusive Roman Catholic practices and instituted sweeping changes that reflected their individual perspectives on the church and its worship practices. Their desire to connect their parishioners to a deeper understanding of biblical truths resulted in new emphasis on both personal and family worship.

**Martin Luther.** Martin Luther was a German priest, biblical scholar, and seminary professor often credited with starting the Reformation by nailing his Ninety-five Theses on the church door in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. His refusal to recant the accusations of this document, along with those in other writings circulated among the populace, eventually led to his excommunication. As a result, he became the leader of a new Protestant church in Germany and set out to revise worship according to his

understanding of biblical models and imperatives. He combined acceptable established liturgy with newly created expressions that had as their goal the involvement and understanding of the people. He accomplished this by providing the laity with a German translation of the Bible and an opportunity to actively participate in worship in the vernacular.

In addition to making changes in the service itself, Luther demonstrated concern for “extra-church” religious training and development. His writings display an interest in the training of youth, with an emphasis on singing, as well as a number of contributions to personal and family worship. Among the latter was *Table Talk*, a collection of Luther’s topical dinner-time devotions and instructions to his family, which were compiled and published by his students twenty years after his death. Luther was known to gather not only his family, but also visiting guests to participate in these times of teaching about God and the Bible.<sup>11</sup>

Luther’s concern also included the discipleship of children in the home, as evidenced in the publication of his *Small Catechism* in 1531. Based on *The Catechism of the Bohemian Brethren*, which is dated between 1467 and 1521, Luther’s work included sections on daily prayers, directions for how the head of the family should teach his household to ask a blessing and return thanks, and Scriptures pertaining to the “duties” of husbands, wives, parents, and children.<sup>12</sup>

**John Knox.** Another pillar of the Reformation was John Knox, who was for a time a cohort of Calvin in Geneva. Knox carried reformed theology, along with his views of church polity through the presbytery, back to his native Scotland. As leader of the

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<sup>11</sup> Roland Herbert Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), 295.

<sup>12</sup> “The Small Catechism,” *The Book of Concord*, accessed July 6, 2018, <http://www.bookofconcord.org/smallcatechism.php>.

Reformation there, he not only instituted changes in corporate worship, but also encouraged his fellow Presbyterian ministers to take up the practice of family worship. In 1557 Knox wrote, “Brethren, ye are ordained of God to rule your own houses in his true fear, and according to his word. . . . And therefore, I say, ye must make [your family] partakers in reading, exhorting, and in making common prayers, which I would in every house were used once a day at least.”<sup>13</sup>

**The Church of England.** The Reformation in sixteenth-century England was less about theology and more about politics and power. Henry VIII wanted an unsanctioned divorce and was jealous of the power and land holdings of the church. He separated himself from the Roman Catholic Church which served his purposes on both accounts. *The Book of Common Prayer* was later written to replace Latin liturgy with an English liturgy, but much of the formality and ritualism of the Mass was retained along with the exclusion of the congregation in singing and other worship acts.<sup>14</sup> However, an English reformer from earlier in the century, William Tyndale (ca. 1494–ca. 1536), exhibited purer motives in his unlawful translation of the Bible into English in 1526. He believed that there should be a Bible in every household and that the family should be taught from it.<sup>15</sup> Although there were two earlier English translations of the Scriptures authorized by the Church of England, the appearance of the King James Bible in 1611 finally provided the public with a scholarly and reliable English translation to use for personal study and family worship.

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<sup>13</sup> John Knox, “A Letter of Wholesome Counsel, Addressed to His Brethren in Scotland, 1556,” in *The Works of John Knox* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2014), 4:137. quoted in Whitney, *Family Worship*, 32; also in Steve Wright and Chris Graves, *ApParent Privilege* (Wake Forest, NC: InQuest Ministries, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Wilson-Dickson, *The Story of Christian Music* (Batavia, IL: Lion Publishing, 1992), 67–70.

<sup>15</sup> Ptacek, *Family Worship*, 46.

## **Seventeenth-century Pietism, Separatism, and Puritanism**

With concerns and struggles to reform the doctrine of corporate worship, the Fathers of the Reformation encouraged families to restore their practice of family worship in order to sustain the families' vitality towards building a stronger Christian home. Equally vital was an emphasis on God's Word, personal holiness, and piety. The following paragraphs explore the closely related characteristics of Pietism, Separatism, and Puritanism, and their influence on family worship to the everyday life of the Christian.

**Pietism in Germany.** After the disastrous religious-political struggle known as the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), the Pietism movement arose within the Lutheran Church in Frankfurt, Germany, under the leadership of Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705). Spener believed in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the priesthood of the believer. His writings encouraged earnest, thorough Bible study and prayer time in private or small gatherings. He believed that theological training should emphasize the importance of a devotional life and a more sympathetic approach to reaching unbelievers. His influence produced a new love for the Bible, more sensitivity to the needs of the poor, and a missionary zeal.<sup>16</sup> This movement peaked around 1750 and then gradually declined to the point of almost vanishing as an identifiable Lutheran group by the end of the twentieth century. However, Pietism influenced the formation of the Methodist and Brethren movements and shared its tenets of personal piety and vigorous Christian living with the Puritan movement.

**Puritanism in Great Britain and America.** During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Church of England discovered detractors in several groups variously known as Puritans, Separatists, Dissenters, and Nonconformists. Embracing the

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<sup>16</sup>Wilson-Dickson, *The Story of Christian Music*, 97.

more Reformed theology of Calvin, these groups opposed ritual and emphasized preaching. They were concerned with a more personal encounter with God both in church and their daily living. However, the Puritans were the most adamant in their reformation of government and the legislation of their religious views, resulting in a Puritan takeover after the English Civil War (1642–1651) and the establishment of a protectorate headed by Oliver Cromwell (1653–1658).<sup>17</sup> Upon the restoration of the English monarchy under Charles II (1660), royalists returned to Parliament and began a repression of Puritans that forced many of them out of their pulpits and churches.<sup>18</sup> Those who refused to conform to the anti-Puritan monarchy pursued personal revival and were known as Nonconformists, because they did not agree with the re-establishment of the episcopal state church.<sup>19</sup> Not all Puritans remained in England to endure the religious and political upheaval of the time; many emigrated to the Netherlands and the American colonies in order to worship freely, a pattern that began as early as 1620.

Although differences existed among the various branches of Puritanism in faith and practices of the Church of England, the present study is concerned with Puritan attitudes and influence on family worship. The importance of family in the building of faith is evident in the writings of some of their leaders. Richard Baxter (1615–1691) wrote, “You are not likely to see any general reformation, till 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 prosper, nor promise future increase.”<sup>20</sup> Nonconformist minister Matthew Henry (1662–1714), who authored a Bible

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<sup>17</sup>Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Reformers and Puritans as Spiritual Mentors: Hope Is Kindled* (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2012), 121.

<sup>18</sup>Haykin, 135.

<sup>19</sup>Ptacek, *Family Worship*, 51.

<sup>20</sup>Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (Grand Rapids: Christian Classics Ethreal Library, n.d.), 31.

commentary still in present use, professed a similar expression: “Here [with family worship] the Reformation must begin!”<sup>21</sup>

The influence of Puritanism was significant in the creation of historical confessions and catechisms that clarified doctrine while remaining subordinate to the Bible. In 1643, the English Parliament established an assembly of English Christians to meet at Westminster Abbey to clarify and advise on matters of worship and doctrine. From this assembly came the historic *Westminster Confession of Faith* as well as the *Larger Catechism* and the *Shorter Catechism*. The *Westminster Confession* became the model for modifications adopted by Congregationalists (*Savoy Declaration*, 1658) and Baptists (*Second London Baptist Confession*, 1689). The *Westminster Confession* (in chapter XXI, section VI) addressed the issue of family worship, encouraging the heads of families to “carry out the duties of improving their own knowledge of the Bible and looking after the spiritual condition of those under their charge.”<sup>22</sup>

The writing of the *Westminster Confession* encouraged a number of assembly members to write about their own experiences with family religion, which led to the completion of another confessional document, the *Directory for Family Worship*. Published in Scotland in 1647 to standardize the practice of regular family worship, the *Directory for Family Worship* was included with the *Westminster Confession* by the Church of Scotland. The Scottish Presbyterians believed that family worship was so important that it “is expedient and necessary that secret worship of each person alone, and private worship of families, be pressed and set up.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, each member of the family had a responsibility to have a time of *personal worship* along with

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<sup>21</sup> *The Complete Works of the Rev. Matthew Henry* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 1:258, quoted in Whitney, *Family Worship*, 35.

<sup>22</sup> Ptacek, *Family Worship*, 47.

<sup>23</sup> *The Directory for Family Worship*, updated language by William H. Gross (Colorado Springs, CO, 2008), accessed October 29, 2016, [http://www.onthewing.org/user/WCF\\_Directory%20for%20Family%20Worship.pdf](http://www.onthewing.org/user/WCF_Directory%20for%20Family%20Worship.pdf).

participation in daily family worship. Furthermore, the directory encouraged the fathers to lead their family in worship and offered disciplinary action for those who chose not to participate. Those fathers would not be allowed to partake in the Lord's Supper.<sup>24</sup>

The directory gave additional encouragement by including prayer and praise as one duty, with a notable emphasis on the interpretation and explanation of Scripture by the head of the family. Scripture is not to be used merely for reading but is to be given with instruction and then discussed through catechizing and application.

In the years that followed, early Baptists developed their own confession of faith published in 1689 as the *Second London Baptist Confession*. Both the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Second London Baptist Confession* outline how the head of the household was to lead the family in worship. In relation to family worship, both of these great confessions included, "God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth; as in private families daily, and in secret each one by himself."<sup>25</sup>

Throughout their beleaguered history Puritans sought to focus on their personal piety and the spiritual development of their families in conformity to what was taught in Scripture. In his book *A Quest For Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*, J. I. Packer argues that Puritanism at its core was a "movement of spiritual revival."<sup>26</sup> The Puritans knew that God ordained the family to function in an orderly way and would be sustained further by leading the spiritual training of their sons and daughters.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>James W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Family-Worship* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847), 7.

<sup>25</sup>"The 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith," Truth for Eternity Ministries, last modified December, 1996, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://vor.org/truth/1689/1689bc00.html>; "Westminster Confession of Faith," Center for Reformed Theology and Apologetics, last modified 2017, accessed January 23, 2018, [http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf\\_with\\_proofs/](http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/).

<sup>26</sup>J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (1990; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 37.

<sup>27</sup>Packer, 270.

Packer writes about the three spheres of Puritan worship: public, domestic (family), and private. He says, “Every home should be a church, with the head of the house as its minister. Daily and indeed twice daily, the Puritans recommended, the family as a family should hear the word read, and pray to God.”<sup>28</sup> Therefore, family worship was the natural form of worship for these “little churches” and became the backbone of the whole venture of Puritan society. With the consistent practice of worship—in public and within the family—the vision of the Puritan lifestyle encompassed an understanding that family worship was an important part of how the home functioned.

In the Puritan model the father became the “pastor” to his household as he led his family in the daily worship of God. Robert Cawdrey (ca. 1538–ca. 1604), writer of one of the first English dictionaries and a Puritan sympathizer, wrote that the Puritan father was considered the “prophet, priest, and king in his instruction, prayer and rule in the family.”<sup>29</sup> The father’s direct responsibility was to “shepherd” his family in worship, like a minister would his parishioners (the church family) in corporate worship. The Puritans viewed family worship as preparation for corporate worship on the Sabbath. They focused on the Lord each day in study of Scripture in order to present themselves properly in the corporate body of worship.<sup>30</sup>

### **Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Spiritual Awakenings**

Although the Puritan way of life was the exception rather than the rule in Colonial America, other Christian groups influenced the formation and development of

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<sup>28</sup> Packer, *Quest for Godliness*, 255.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Cawdrey, *A Godly Form of Household Government*, 58-59, quoted in Ptacek, *Family Worship*, 48.

<sup>30</sup> Randy Stinson and Timothy P. Jones, *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2011), 123. Kindle.



several of the colonies during the seventeenth century that eventually led to the practice of religious tolerance.

In the late 1730s, pre-revolutionary America saw the beginnings of a movement known as the Great Awakening spurred by the great British evangelist George Whitefield (1714–1770).<sup>31</sup> He was once associated with John Wesley (1703–1791) and his brother Charles Wesley (1707–1788) at Oxford University and remained a Calvinist within the Church of England rather than agree with the Arminian bent of the Wesleys. Whitefield made numerous trips over three decades to preach to American colonists. His preaching, delivered in the open air without a script to as many as 30,000 people, emphasized conversion of the unchurched and spiritual renewal of church members. His fame and influence spread far and wide with his circle of American friends, including none other than Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790). The impact of Whitefield’s revival meetings on the spiritual lives of American colonists was widespread. Upon his death during his seventh visit to America, it is estimated that virtually everyone in the colonies had heard the “Grand Itinerant” at least once.<sup>32</sup> Whitefield’s preaching, as well as that of the notable American Congregationalist Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), is said to have helped define the values on which America’s founding documents were based. According to Harvard professor Perry Miller, “The Declaration of Independence of 1776 was a direct result of the preaching of the evangelists of the Great Awakening.”<sup>33</sup>

Whitefield’s fiery preaching was not the only thing that placed the message of personal salvation into the hearts and minds of the colonists. The inclusion of hymns by

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<sup>31</sup>The Great Awakening, at the end of the eighteenth century, was a dramatic spiritual development in which so many people were swept up in spiritual renewal that buildings could not hold them. George Whitefield was the first of a long line of revivalists, including Dwight L. Moody and Billy Sunday, continuing to recent history with Billy Graham.

<sup>32</sup>“George Whitefield,” *Christianity Today*, last modified 2018, accessed July 16, 2018, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/evangelistsandapologists/george-whitefield.html>.

<sup>33</sup>Eddie Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots: The Radical Christian Roots of American Democracy and Freedom*, ed. Susan Hyatt (Grapevine, TX: Hyatt Press, 2016), 108.

the English Nonconformist Isaac Watts (1674–1748) also aided to their understanding. Up to this time, songs sung by a congregation had come from two Reformational streams: Calvinist churches sang unison Psalm texts set in metrical poetic verse, while Lutheran congregations sang chorales. The effectiveness of Watts’s Calvinist hymns was a result of the combination of statements of essential doctrinal truth followed by a heartfelt emotional response. Church historian Douglas Bond writes, “For Watts, it is always light first, then heat. The feeling of wonder, the emotion of profound gratitude, the escalating thrill of adoration and praise always follows the objective propositional exploration of the doctrines of the gospel.”<sup>34</sup> Watts’s hymns placed emphasis on the glory and sovereignty of God, the total depravity of man, and the sufficiency of the atonement of Christ. These doctrines were memorable because of the hymn’s rhyme and melody and made readily accessible through the publication of small personal hymnals (text only) people could carry with them. They became a perfect delivery system into the hearts and homes of colonial America. They were, and still are, used to express doctrinal truth and personal response in both corporate and family worship.<sup>35</sup>

Watts also wrote children’s hymns at the request of a schoolmaster friend who wanted a better way to catechize children in biblical knowledge. The resulting collection, *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children*, was published in 1715. Watts’s use of imagery and colorful words aided even the “immature minds in grasping the transcendent truths of the gospel.”<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, several of these hymns, such as “I Sing the Mighty Power of God,” are sung by congregations today, not considered elementary or childish at all.

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<sup>34</sup>Douglas Bond, *The Poetic Wonder of Isaac Watts, The Long Line of Godly Men Profiles* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust, 2013), 154.

<sup>35</sup>Harry Eskew and Hugh T. McElrath, *Sing with Understanding*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Church Street Press, 1995), 155.

<sup>36</sup>Bond, 111.

As previously noted, the Wesley brothers were influential in the life of Whitefield while attending Oxford University. Charles became a “spiritual advisor” to Whitefield and encouraged him to join the “Holy Club”—a daily gathering of students for prayer and study.<sup>37</sup> This group practiced a personal daily devotion and piety that could serve as a rudiment model for family worship. The use of hymns in the Wesley’s daily and corporate worship was the result of their observation of Moravian brothers practicing their daily times of devotional readings and hymn singing as they journeyed by ship to America in 1735. As a result of such experiences and the adoption of Arminian views, the Wesleys emphasized a more subjective expression of worship and began to write hymns that were devotional and personal in nature. Many of the more than 6500 hymns of Charles Wesley were sung in American revival meetings and were “considered to be the greatest literary achievement of the revivalist movement.”<sup>38</sup>

American leaders of the Awakening movement evidenced in their own writings and practice the importance of family worship. Edwards believed that “every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church.”<sup>39</sup> He led a time of family worship after every meal and each morning conducted a quiz of all of his eleven children with age-appropriate questions. Before retiring for the evening, Edwards and his wife Sarah would come together in his study to pray.<sup>40</sup> Samuel Davies (1723–1761) was a colonial Presbyterian preacher who evangelized and ministered in Virginia before succeeding Edwards as president of Princeton. He revealed his passion for family worship to an assembly of pastors when he said, “I beseech, I entreat, I charge you to begin and

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<sup>37</sup> John R. Tyson, *Assist Me to Proclaim: The Life and Hymns of Charles Wesley* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), 119.

<sup>38</sup> Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 118.

<sup>39</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Edward Hickman, 2 vols. (London, 1834; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), 1:ccvi, quoted in Whitney, *Family Worship*, 41.

<sup>40</sup> Whitney, 35

continue the worship of God in your families from this day to the close of your lives. . . . Consider family religion not merely as a duty imposed by authority, but as your greatest privilege granted by divine grace.”<sup>41</sup>

### **Revivalism and Modern Evangelicalism**

From the mid-eighteenth century forward, a number of changes took place in fairly short order that individually and collectively impacted Western culture. The present study will review four rather diverse factors (two secular and two religious) that impacted the church and its worship. For the sake of brevity, this study will include a general survey of evangelical movements and the core issues and disputes regarding worship today. Many of these disputes concerning changes in the content and style of corporate worship are centered on or reflected in the style and content of music. The understanding of the substance of these disputes is significant for parents who include singing as part of their family worship and need to be equipped to make enlightened choices. Therefore, these aforementioned changes in attitudes and the role of music will foster further discussion.

This section will first present the four major movements that impacted the church and its worship during this period. Then, a brief account will be provided of representative spiritual leaders of the mid-eighteenth century to the present who have emphasized the importance of family worship. Rightly or wrongly, many of the practices of these movements continue to impact the way family and corporate worship are devised and practiced today.

**Secular influences: The Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution.** The Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason, began in the eighteenth century as an

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<sup>41</sup>“The Necessity and Excellence of Family Religion,” in *Sermons of the Reverend Samuel Davies* (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, n.d.), 2:86, quoted in Whitney, *Family Worship*, 36.

intellectual movement modeled after the reasoning and logic of the ancient Greeks. Its chief tenet held that reason and logic led to universal truth. Truth resulted from the scientific method of gathering and analysis of data and was based only upon the information provided by that data. Enlightened people believed that the intellect should control all actions and decisions as emotions were just feelings and therefore often false and misleading.

Faith and theology were well superseded by reason and science. Fifteen centuries of church-centered culture were eroded during the Age of Enlightenment. Abraham Kuyper observes that the Enlightenment was “the expulsion of God from practical and theoretical life.”<sup>42</sup> Hostility toward the church mounted in many countries, including France. During the Reign of Terror immediately following the French Revolution of 1789, church property was confiscated, priests were killed or forced to leave France, and many church buildings were ransacked, destroyed, or even transformed into temples of reason.

The adoption of the Enlightenment philosophy had a definite influence on the role and style of music played in both secular and religious institutions. New hymnody written for the use in the practice of Christian worship increasingly expressed emotion rather than truth.<sup>43</sup> The new emphasis on the significance of the individual also brought about a worship expression that had an increasing focus on man rather than God. Quentin Faulkner observes: “Music (for that matter, all the arts) had become a theological orphan. In fact, no important theological movement, either in the nineteenth or twentieth century,

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<sup>42</sup> Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures On Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1931), 23–24.

<sup>43</sup> Scott Aniol, “Two Roads Diverged,” *Religious Affections Ministries: Conservative Christianity, Worship, Culture, Aesthetics, Classical Education, Homeschooling, Family Blog*, September 15, 2010, accessed August 3, 2018, <http://religiousaffections.org/articles/hymnody/roads-diverged/>.

has concerned itself in any profound way with the significance of harmony, order, or beauty in Christian life or [worship].”<sup>44</sup>

The second major secular source of change beginning in the mid-eighteenth century and continuing through the nineteenth century was the Industrial Revolution. This societal shift resulted when the power of man’s reasoning, awakened during the Enlightenment, was applied to such areas as agriculture, production of goods, and modes of transportation. Industries using mass production techniques developed, resulting in people flocking to cities for work. A new middle class arose along with a free enterprise system based on market-driven decisions resulted in the development of secular entertainment based on popular culture.

The development of mass media with its capability to market to the masses allowed entrepreneurs new opportunities to advertise their goods and services that created “needs” for perpetual new styles and trends in order to remain profitable over the long term. One trend would be replaced by a newer and more novel one in order to keep the masses stimulated. Thus, what is generally known as “pop culture” was born, and its impact on the church has remained significant from its inception assimilating more and more popular styles of music. According to Scott Aniol, “Pop culture is essentially a sanitized version of paganism. It is an imposter that borrows liberally from Judeo-Christian tradition, Classical high art, and folk culture to create hybrid forms that slip in the back door and impose pagan values upon the listener without them recognizing them as such.”<sup>45</sup> While some regard the integration of popular styles in the church as a tool for attracting and engaging more worshippers, others see it as a disengagement from the historical church and acquiescence to secular entertainment world.

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<sup>44</sup>Quentin Faulkner, *Wiser Than Despair* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 171ff.

<sup>45</sup>Scott Aniol, “The Enlightenment and Christian Hymnody,” *Religious Affections Ministries: Conservative Christianity, Worship, Culture, Aesthetics, Classical Education, Homeschooling, Family Blog*, September 8, 2010, accessed September 9, 2018, <http://religiousaffections.org/articles/hymnody/enlightenment-christian-hymnody/>.

**Religious influences: The Sunday school movement and revivalism.** As the nineteenth century approached and both sides of the Atlantic experienced the secular influences of the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution, two religious movements—one within the church and one outside it—emerged as early manifestations of new views concerning the mission and worship of the church.

The first of these movements was the Sunday school movement that emerged in England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Sunday school was originally designed to help educate poor children in England who had little access to secular or religious education. Whereas the educational and spiritual goals were positive in theory, some of the results in relation to the family were negative. First, parents of all stations enrolled their children in these schools for four to five hours weekly, consigning to others their children’s spiritual education through Bible study and catechism. Second, many of the hymns and gospel songs written especially for children’s use in Sunday school found their way into the mainstream church when these children matured and wanted these familiar, more simplistic songs with limited theological content and catchy tunes to be included in their worship services.<sup>46</sup> These factors contributed to a change in the perception of family responsibility in spiritual matters and the need for mature theological content in congregational song. Both corporate and family worship suffered as a result.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Ed Steele, *Worship HeartCries: Personal Preparation for Corporate Worship*, 2nd ed. (n. p., Ed Steele, 2016), loc. 2289, Kindle.

<sup>47</sup>Gospel songs were being developed and centered on having personal emotional experiences (what *I* have gotten out of it) rather than who God is and what he has done. For the first time there was a commercial secular music culture (rather than folk culture) to meet the desire for entertainment and emotional stimulation—like an addiction that had to be fed continually. People wanted to carry the emotionalism of secular and revivalist music into the church service. Unfortunately, the Church was no longer influencing art culture, but was reacting to and reflecting a popular culture of the people in order to satisfy their desire to be emotionally stimulated. As a result of this change in people’s expectations of corporate worship among evangelicals, there was more emphasis on the individual than God, more emphasis on evangelism than worship, and an informal style of music that more closely resembled secular music than art music.

In America, the major catalyst for the modern evangelical movement was the spirit of revival that broke out in the “camp meetings” of 1801 in backwoods Kentucky and spread mainly through the rural South. Sometimes referred to as the Second Great Awakening, this revival movement consisted of highly emotional meetings usually held outdoors and sometimes lasting for weeks.

Camp meeting songs, called “spiritual songs” but later shortened to “spirituals,” were very simple in language and form. A repeated refrain alternated with stanzas that were often improvised spontaneously. The black spiritual frequently referred to the bondage of the Hebrew nation in Egypt (“Go Down Moses”) or alluded to the freedom that would come by crossing over the river (“Deep River”), both subjects paralleling their own bondage.

As they were refined, the songs of the revivalists became known as “gospel songs,” and soon members of evangelical churches wanted to utilize these emotional songs with their appealing stanza-refrain format in their weekly worship services. The inclusion of these revivalist songs, evangelistic rather than expository preaching, and emotional altar calls altered the very focus of the worship service itself.

As the emotionalism of secular and revivalist music found its way into worship, the church lost its stabilizing influence on high culture and found itself influenced by and reflecting a constantly changing popular culture. Many churches began to place more emphasis on the individual than God and utilized an informal style of music that more closely resembled secular music than traditional or art music. With its emphasis on evangelism, many church services now included music primarily directed in message and style to the lost individual rather than for strengthening discipleship of believers and providing corporate expressions to the Triune God in response to his nature, attributes, and truth found in Scripture.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Steele, *Worship HeartCries*, loc. 2367.



During the first two decades of the twentieth century, evangelistic campaigns became large-scale prolonged events with noted evangelist Billy Sunday and musician Homer Rodeheaver and followed by Billy Graham and his music associates in the late 1940s through the next six decades. These campaigns continued to exert influence on Sunday worship that included evangelistic preaching, gospel song literature, and extended altar calls.

The influence of secularism on the church and its expression of worship became more complicated and pronounced with the introduction and popularization of a type of rhythm-driven music referred to as “rock ‘n’ roll.” Emerging in the late 1950s, this new musical style was initially viewed as an expression of rebellion of the younger generation against everything traditional. The style entered religious circles as a “folk style” with acoustic guitar accompaniment in the Jesus movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, soon followed by the use of drums and electric guitars in accordance with the trend as rock evolved to include the many subspecies found today.

Dubbed the “praise and worship” or “celebration” era due to its emphasis on a more exciting religious experience, this more personal and emotional approach to worship and church programming has become widespread in the first two decades of the twenty-first century.<sup>49</sup> A “relational theology” of expressing love for the lost and fellow Christians through the merging of “sacred” and “secular” forms has been encouraged by the dominating influences of radio, television, concerts by popular artists, the internet, and social media.

The above summary of major Christian movements exerting influence on corporate worship in general, and more particularly music function and styles, is essential

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<sup>49</sup>Other authors who use the terms “praise and worship” or “celebration” to describe the era include Greg Scheer (“Shout to the Lord: Praise and Worship from Jesus People to Gen X,” in *New Songs of Celebration Render: Congregational Song in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. C. Michael Hawn [Chicago: GIA, 2013], 175), and Donald P. Hustad (*Jubilate II: Church Music in Worship and Renewal* [Carol Stream, IL: Hope, 1993], 265).

for its correlation to personal or family worship. In order to begin the process of narrowing the focus from corporate worship to worship in the home, a few significant family worship proponents from the beginning of the revivalist era to the present will be highlighted.

**Notable family worship proponents from 1800 to the present.** As the pace and style of life changed from the Industrial Revolution to the present, a number of religious leaders have added their voices to those of previous generations in concern over the decrease in family worship. What follows is a brief account of a cross section of more recent religious leaders who, through their preaching and writing, have provided encouragement for the practice of family worship.

During the Industrial Revolution, the family unit was beginning to show signs of suffering due to fathers going to work away from their homes. Economic needs and work demands were added pressures that men faced each day. As a result, daily instruction and, indeed, family worship began to decline.<sup>50</sup> J. W. Alexander (1804–1859), a godly and influential Presbyterian minister in New York in the first half of the nineteenth century, detected the decline of family worship in the home by the men of his church. He writes in the preface of his book *Thoughts on Family Worship*, “In a period when the world is every day making new inroads on the church, it has especially invaded the household. Our church cannot compare with that of the seventeenth century in this regard. Along with Sabbath observances, and catechizing of children, Family-Worship [sic] has lost ground.”<sup>51</sup> Alexander had such concern for what was taking place in the homes of his parishioners that he began to communicate to them the importance of family worship and its restoration in the home.

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<sup>50</sup>Ptacek, *Family Worship*, 62.

<sup>51</sup>Alexander, *Thoughts on Family-Worship*, loc. 36.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892), known as the “prince of preachers,” was a Baptist pastor in England who saw enormous blessings from God upon his ministry. Literally thousands came to Christ through his preaching. Some services drew as many as 10,000 people at a time.<sup>52</sup> When he spoke about family worship, he said, “If we want to bring up a godly family, who shall be a seed to serve God when our heads are under the clods of the valley, let us seek to train them up in the fear of God by meeting together as a family for worship.”<sup>53</sup>

In an article, Spurgeon addressed a great concern he had about parents delegating the spiritual training of their children to the church rather than taking the lead at home. He wrote:

We deeply want a revival of family religion. The Christian family was the bulwark of godliness in the days of the puritans, but in these evil times hundreds of families of so-called Christians have no family worship, no restraint upon growing sons, and no wholesome instruction or discipline. How can we hope to see the kingdom of our Lord advance when His own disciples do not teach His gospel to their own children? Oh, Christian men and women, be thorough in what you do and know and teach. Let your families be trained in the fear of God and be yourselves ‘holiness unto the Lord’; so shall you stand like a rock amid the surging waves of error and ungodliness which rage around us.<sup>54</sup>

Spurgeon’s message is just as significant today. His call for parents to take action captures the effect family worship has on society. Spurgeon knew that if a revival of family worship was to take place, the practice had to be led by the parents.

Another influential English writer and encourager of family worship was Arthur W. Pink (1886–1952). As a pastor, Bible teacher, and author, Pink wrote about and preached on many subjects dealing with the family. From marriage excellence to modest dressing, Pink expressed his biblical understanding and spiritual insights to his

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<sup>52</sup>Iain H. Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2009), 15.

<sup>53</sup>Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “A Pastoral Visit,” *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol. 54 (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1908; repr., Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim, 1978), 362-63.

<sup>54</sup>Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “The Kind of Revival We Need,” The Spurgeon Archive, last modified 2001, accessed October 29, 2016, <http://www.romans45.org/spurgeon/revival.htm>.

congregation. In his book *Family Worship*, Pink concluded his exhortation on the duty of family worship by saying,

The advantages and blessings of family worship are incalculable. First, family worship will prevent much sin. It awes the soul, conveys a sense of God's majesty and authority, sets solemn truths before the mind, and brings down benefits from God on the home. Personal piety in the home is a most influential means, under God, of conveying piety on the little ones. Children are largely creatures of imitation, loving to copy what they see in others.<sup>55</sup>

With these words, Pink conveys his concern for making family worship an important part of the home. He further argues that a well-structured family worship time is beneficial for the children and, in turn, for the next generation.

In the twenty-first century, Don Whitney has been on the cutting edge of biblical spirituality and family worship. He continues to promote family worship to the modern Christian family by offering online resources and during his speaking engagements.<sup>56</sup> As quoted in chapter 2, Whitney encourages families to prioritize family worship by acknowledging the truth that God is to be worshiped daily in the home.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, Scott Aniol provides online devotional materials for families that includes a five-day Bible narrative reading plan containing hymns, memory verses, commentary on key passages, and discussion questions.<sup>58</sup> He also provides a 52-week catechism, based on historic catechisms such as the *Heidelberg Catechism*, the *Westminster Catechism*, Benjamin Keach's Catechism, Spurgeon's Catechism, and some more recent catechisms.<sup>59</sup> Aniol encourages the teaching of core doctrines, but also inspires the family

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<sup>55</sup>Quoted in Brown and Pollard, *A Theology of the Family*, loc. 325.

<sup>56</sup>Whitney's resources can be found at [biblicalspirituality.org](http://biblicalspirituality.org).

<sup>57</sup>Whitney, *Family Worship*, 52.

<sup>58</sup>Aniol's resources can be found at [religiousaffections.org](http://religiousaffections.org).

<sup>59</sup>The Benjamin Keach's Catechism is also known as the *1677 Baptist Catechism* or *1693 Baptist Catechism*.

to take a more personal and devotional approach by addressing the heart in family worship.

### **The Foundational Elements of Family Worship**

The term “family worship” has been defined for this ministry project as “the regular and intentional gathering of a household to worship God together and to make disciples in the home.”<sup>60</sup> For purposes of this study, the author adheres to the premise that family worship should follow the foundational biblical principles for all worship, the elements of which are the reading of Scripture, biblical instruction, prayer, and worship in song, along with supplementary elements that support the worshipers’ response. Although all the above elements are not essential to every family worship time, a number of contemporary authors are in general agreement concerning these basic elements of family worship, including Tony Kummer (“read from the Bible, pray as a family, and sing together to God”),<sup>61</sup> Whitney (who advocates, “read, pray, and sing”),<sup>62</sup> pastor Jason Helopoulos (“reading the Scriptures, praying, and singing”),<sup>63</sup> and Jerry Marcellino, Pastor of Audubon Drive Bible Church (“song, Scripture, and supplication”).<sup>64</sup>

Family worship provides an environment for building domestic unity through strengthening and sustaining the faith of each member through teaching, praying, singing, and practicing faith principles. Barna’s extensive research discovered that “eighty-five percent of parents believe they are primarily responsible for the moral and spiritual development of their children. But among ‘churched’ families fewer than ten percent will

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<sup>60</sup> *Guide to Family Worship 2015*, [PDF file], accessed September 16, 2017, <http://forgods fame.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guide-to-family-worship-2015.pdf>.

<sup>61</sup> *Family Worship Guidebook* [PDF file], 3, accessed March 9, 2018, <http://cdn.www.ministry-to-children.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/family-worship-guidebook.pdf>.

<sup>62</sup> Whitney, *Family Worship*, 42.

<sup>63</sup> Jason Helopoulos and Kevin DeYoung, *A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2013), loc. 578, Kindle.

<sup>64</sup> Marcellino, *Rediscovering Family Worship*, loc. 227.

read the Bible, pray (outside of meals), or participate in an act of service as a family in a typical week. One out of twenty will have a worship experience as a family outside of church in a typical month.”<sup>65</sup> In light of Barna’s research, the practice of family worship among church members needs to be encouraged by leaders who recognize the importance of understanding the principles of worship not only for the church, the large family of God, but also for the home.

Home is the place where a child’s development (physical, emotional, and spiritual) initially begins. Parents have the opportunity to teach and model Christian values and morals in real time, every day, and lovingly encourage good behavior of their children and correct their bad behavior. The home is where parents fulfill the responsibility of teaching their children about God through instruction and example. Living in a Christian home means to include God and his Word as regular topics of daily conversation. Spurgeon wrote, “I agree with Matthew Henry when he says, ‘They that pray in the family do well; they that pray and read the Scripture do better; but they that pray, and read, and sing do best of all.’ There is a completeness in that kind of family worship which is much to be desired.”<sup>66</sup>

This section of the present chapter will examine the practical elements that should be included and considered in the practice of family worship. First, the basic reading of Scripture will be considered. Second, additional thoughts will be given for biblical instruction to children within the scope of family worship. Third, some practical suggestions on praying in family worship will be given to help parents establish a consistent prayer time for their children. Fourth, the inclusion of singing in family

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<sup>65</sup> Barna, *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*, 77–78.

<sup>66</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, “The Happy Duty of Daily Praise,” *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol. 32 (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1886; repr., Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim, 1986), 289, quoted in Whitney, *Family Worship*, 48.

worship as a tool in teaching spiritual truths will be examined. Finally, the use of a catechism as a way for parents to disciple their children will be discussed.

### **Read the Scriptures**

Through reading of Scripture, family worship provides a setting for discussions about God's Word.<sup>67</sup> For Christians, these discussions not only include the *Shema*, the Decalogue, and the book of Deuteronomy but also the entirety of God's story as found in Scripture. As Marcellino declares, "The Word of God is to be at the center in family worship. Our goal should be to help the members of our family develop a love for God's Word, with the hope that they will begin to feed upon every word of it."<sup>68</sup> This adherence to biblical teachings as a core value necessitates familiarity with and even memorization of Scripture in family worship.<sup>69</sup>

Beeke suggests reading ten to twenty verses from the Old Testament in the morning and ten to twenty from the New Testament in the evening. To provide variety, he recommends reading a series of parables, miracles, or historical portions. As Ryle says, "Fill their minds with Scripture. Let the Word dwell in them richly. Give them the Bible, the whole Bible, even while they are young."<sup>70</sup> Kerry Ptacek gives additional suggestions when he writes,

Bible reading can be the simplest means of exercising spiritual leadership. However, it is appropriate in some circumstances for others to read. In one-on-one Bible study with a young child one method is one in which the child (1) reads the passage silently, (2) asks questions about difficult words, (3) hears the father read the passage aloud to catch pronunciation and cadence, and (4) reads the passage aloud. The father can then ask a question, make a comment or give the child an assignment, such as finding a location on a map.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Reuben Herring, *Your Family Worship Guidebook* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1978), 28.

<sup>68</sup> Marcellino, *Rediscovering Family Worship*, loc. 251.

<sup>69</sup> Beeke, *Family Worship*, 17.

<sup>70</sup> Ryle, *Duties of Parents*, 13.

<sup>71</sup> Ptacek, *Family Worship*, 73.

Ptacek expresses the growing concern for effective Bible reading with young children. The parent's objective is to help their child read the entire Bible over a period of time.

### **Give Biblical Instruction**

In addition to reading God's Word, the teaching of the passage being read is equally as important. The family should be instructed by the father or the head of the household to study the passage further through observation (what does this passage say?); then through interpretation (what does this passage mean?); and lastly, by application (how does this passage apply to my life?).<sup>72</sup> In his book *Neglected Grace*, Helopoulos recommends asking questions that will "lead [the] children to recite the text back to [the father]. . . . [Then] take some time to apply the text and help [the] children understand the application that should flow from [the] reading."<sup>73</sup>

As discussed in chapter 2, Christian parents should use the family worship time to properly model how to study and apply Scripture. All members of the family, from the youngest to the oldest, should be encouraged to use their own Bibles during family worship. Parents should have a systematic plan to keep each member involved and interested as Scripture is read, studied, and applied to daily life.

### **Pray to God**

The third element of family worship gives opportunity for a time of daily prayer together. Just as a blessing is given to God for the nourishment of the body when the family gathers for a meal, so the father or the head of the household should pray for God's blessing of the Scriptures to bring nourishment to the individual's soul. Prayer can make children aware of their dependence on God for comfort in times of bereavement, for healing in times of sickness, for concerns over personal or national conflicts, for

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<sup>72</sup> *Guide to Family Worship 2015*, 7.

<sup>73</sup> Helopoulos and DeYoung, *A Neglected Grace*, loc. 621.



compassion and awareness of others in need, for appreciation of the love of family, and gratitude for the promise of redemption found in the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, children learn how to pray through the prayers of others. They learn to be thankful and to recognize God's provision of life and breath. By teaching children to use the A.C.T.S. acronym—Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication—parents can train their children to offer focused prayers and bring their needs before God.<sup>74</sup> At all times and in all situations, especially during family worship, prayer must become not only an important part, but also a natural expression of the home.

### **Worship in Song**

Another foundational element of family worship is singing. Daily singing the praise of God in the home provides further instruction, edification, and devotion.

Additionally, singing in family worship will develop an understanding that music is important in the worship and praise of God and a tool for growth in the family's spiritual foundation. Luther contended that next to Scripture the songs of believers are the most significant tool in teaching the truths of Christian theology.<sup>75</sup> Children certainly need to be taught theological truths during their formative and impressionable years, but traditional verbal instruction of theology can be ineffective since they are inundated by aural and visual stimuli in the contemporary environment. Because children tend to learn words and concepts more easily when set to music, age-appropriate songs that present truths of the faith should be taught and used regularly as a part of family worship.

In addition, families should consider purchasing a hymnal that contains doctrinally sound hymns and worship songs. Through singing, families are able to have better understanding of and respond to the theological truths being discussed during

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<sup>74</sup>*Guide to Family Worship 2015*, 12.

<sup>75</sup>Eric Metaxas, *Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World* (New York: Viking, 2017), 376.

family worship. They may use recorded music, internet-based delivery systems, or a family member may play the piano to accompany the singing. Ryan Martin, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church in Granite Falls, Minnesota writes in an article pleading for singing hymns during family worship: “It’s a most lovely thing for a family to sing God’s praises together. It may not always *sound* lovely (!) [sic], but it is a joy to have the singing of God’s praises a regular feature of a Christian family’s life together.”<sup>76</sup> He continues, “By singing hymns in family worship, [parents] have a real opportunity to help their children learn and love great Christian hymnody, especially if they start while those children are still young.”<sup>77</sup> Singing songs of praise, thanksgiving, confession, prayer, or response allows the family to reflect on who God is, proclaim his goodness in Christ Jesus, and give thanks to God for his mercy and love.

### **Catechism**

As discussed in chapter 2, family worship might include additional elements of training children to grow in their faith and form a desire for obedience to God’s Word. Although, not considered a foundational element by some authors on family worship, catechism has historically been viewed as a denominational form of instruction to teach foundational biblical doctrine.<sup>78</sup>

Catechisms published by denominations, including the Southern Baptist Convention, supply families with age-appropriate plans for raising God-honoring children. A recent publication to help parents is the two-book collection, *Cornerstones*.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Ryan Martin, “A Plea for Singing Hymns in Family Worship,” *Religious Affections Ministries: Conservative Christianity, Worship, Culture, Aesthetics, Classical Education, Homeschooling, Family Blog*, February 1, 2018, accessed July 18, 2018, <http://religiousaffections.org/articles/hymnody/the-use-of-a-hymnal-in-family-worship/>, (emphasis his).

<sup>77</sup>Martin, "A Plea for Singing Hymns in Family Worship."

<sup>78</sup>Whitney, *Family Worship*, 48. J. I. Packer and Gary Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 22-23.

<sup>79</sup>Brian Dembowczyk, *Cornerstones* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2018) Dembowczyk is managing editor of “The Gospel Project for Kids” at LifeWay Christian Resources. He is a graduate of

This collection consists of one book for children and the other for parents with two hundred questions and answers covering the basic doctrines of the faith. Divided into eight categories, *Cornerstones* presents theological truths to grade school kids in an understandable way.<sup>80</sup> The Parent Guide gives additional commentary to allow parents to read and understand more deeply the doctrines they are presenting to their children. Together, the books present a comprehensive approach for developing a plan towards spiritual growth and spiritual conversation at home as dictated by Deuteronomy 6. At the same time, the books provide the framework for preparing children to mature in their faith and understand who God is as well as how they can experience his life-changing love and transform to a life of spiritual maturity.

### **Implementing Family Worship**

With the stress and strain of busy schedules in the fast pace of contemporary society, much of what a family accomplishes will not only happen during family worship, but also during those everyday life situations as described in Deuteronomy 6:7.<sup>81</sup> In a scientific survey of parents with children, the Barna Group discovered that “more than one-third [of parents surveyed] say time management is one of the most difficult things about family life and raising children.”<sup>82</sup> Parents must prioritize their lives and in turn teach their children how to do the same in order to get the important things done. Moreover, parents must ask themselves if they have made room in their lives to give priority to God so that their families will benefit from worshiping the creator of the universe and everything in it, the One who sent Jesus Christ to offer salvation for their

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New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

<sup>80</sup>The eight categories are presented in a catechistic manner: God, creation, sin, Jesus, salvation, the Bible, discipleship, the church, and last things.

<sup>81</sup>Mealtime, Drive time, Bedtime, and Morning time. See Deut 6 section in chapter 2.

<sup>82</sup>*Barna Trends 2018: What's New and What's next at the Intersection of Faith and Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2017), 83.

sins. Erroll Hulse, a British Baptist leader, wrote in a 1986 article entitled “The Importance of Family Worship” for *Reformation Today*:

Like most couples, we have found that sustained time for prayer together is not easy to maintain. Not only do we live at a hectic pace, but each stage of life has its peculiar pressures. When you have two or three preschool-age children, for instance, you are up early and exhausted by evening. Still, we have tried to follow a set pattern. Quite apart from grace at meals . . . and quite apart from individual times for prayer and Bible reading, as a family we daily seek God’s face.<sup>83</sup>

Hulse’s words exemplify how a busy family must work at making time for being with God. Furthermore, to earn the respect of their children, parents need to stay faithful to a plan, pray over and with their children, and provide an atmosphere of praise to God in a regular time of worship.

Parents are given the awesome responsibility to encourage their children to think about God and his ways, while teaching them to discern appropriate actions towards ethical issues that face them. In turn, children would be shaped by their parents’ devotion and learn how to live their lives in obedience to God and his story.

Regular family worship should foster a desire to understand the importance of growing in the faith. Parents also have the opportunity to lead and disciple their children to understand and accept the doctrines they are being taught. Therefore, the children are better equipped to stand on their own faith and develop as believers before moving from under their parent’s care and influence. A balanced “diet” of academic, moral, and philosophical training will form the structure through which good habits become a way of life. In his book *Visionary Parenting*, Rob Rienow writes, “The family is the most powerful discipleship ‘small group’ in the world, where ‘spiritual growth happens in the context of relationships’ and where you will find ‘authentic community’ every minute of every day.”<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Erroll Hulse, “The Importance of Family Worship,” *Reformation Today* (November-December 1986): 9, quoted in Whitney, *Family Worship*, 36.

<sup>84</sup> Rob Rienow, *Visionary Parenting: Capture a God-Sized Vision for Your Family* (Nashville:

While parental responsibility certainly includes promoting and modeling regular attendance and committed engagement in a theologically-sound local church, true discipleship must include daily cultivation. Whitney mentions the church as one component through which spiritual nurturing takes place, while emphasizing the importance of continual nurturing through all phases of family life:

Yes, of course you do it when you bring your children to church, when you converse with them about the things of God from time to time, and some of you do it by example. But bringing children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord is not accomplished unintentionally and incidentally. Yes, it should happen and will happen throughout the day at unplanned, serendipitous occasions, but it should also happen purposefully. Without some regularity and structure and purpose, it is one of those things that we assume we are doing but never actually do. Consistent, father-led family worship is one of the best, steadiest, and most easily measurable ways to bring up children in the Lord's discipline and instruction.<sup>85</sup>

One additional significant and often overlooked result of biblically informed family worship is its function as a “training ground” for the family’s understanding of, and engagement in, public (corporate) worship at church. The children who experience family worship will understand that worship of God cannot be turned on or off as the heart desires, or only happens in an hour segment on Sunday. They will have a greater desire to participate in worship as an everyday part of their lives and live in continual worship of God. As Marcellino notes, “Since the family has already been worshipping God the previous six days in both private and family worship, public worship will be a natural outflow.”<sup>86</sup> This quotation resonates with the desired outcome of the present ministry project to teach effective family worship that also informs and influences corporate worship.

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Randall House, 2009), 9, Kindle.

<sup>85</sup> Whitney, *Family Worship*, 13.

<sup>86</sup> Marcellino, *Rediscovering Family Worship*, loc. 6.

Through personal interactions with church leaders and members the author has learned that some people are not acquainted with the term *family worship*.<sup>87</sup> Subsequent conversations revealed that most families do not have an understanding of what family worship is or how to come about implementing family worship within the home.

### **Considerations for Implementing Family Worship**

The final section of this chapter will present several considerations to aid parents in their choices for a more meaningful family worship time. These considerations give guidance to a greater understanding towards how to implement family worship.

**Be regular.** The first consideration is to make family worship a regular part of the home. Family worship needs to be conducted on a regular basis and at a specific time (morning or evening), as part of the family’s daily routine. In a recent article on worship with children, Aniol includes a section on family worship and says, “Regular family worship is essential to the spiritual life of children and the family as a whole.”<sup>88</sup> Setting a time and place for family worship establishes expectations and allows for little conflict or disruption due to sporadic scheduling. Parents should be sensitive to the daily schedules of the other family members. Whitney suggests, “Whether in the morning, at the evening meal, or before bedtime, have a set time.”<sup>89</sup> By committing to a regular time of biblical teaching, each family member will be encouraged to actively apply the principles found in God’s unchanging, trustworthy Word.

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<sup>87</sup>I am basing this statement on personal conversations with church members and pastors of associational churches concerning family worship.

<sup>88</sup>Scott Aniol, “Train Up a Child: Teaching the Next Generation to Worship” (paper presented at a music conference at the Wilds Christian Camp and Conference Center, Brevard, North Carolina, January 3, 2013), 3, accessed October 24, 2015.

<sup>89</sup>Whitney, *Family Worship*, 50.

**Be prepared.** The second consideration is that family worship will require some preparation in order to be instructive and effective. Beeke suggests having a Scripture selected before beginning the family worship time and keep the catechism books near the place where family worship will happen. He further suggests eight ways to better prepare for the reading and teaching of the Bible: (1) have a reading plan; (2) involve the family; (3) be plain in meaning; (4) encourage family dialogue; (5) be pure in doctrine; (6) be relevant in application; (7) be affectionate in manner; and (8) require the family’s attention.<sup>90</sup> Aniol recommends, “As much as possible, shape your family worship after your church’s worship, including as many of the same elements as you can.”<sup>91</sup>

**Be brief.** The third consideration is that family worship needs to be brief.<sup>92</sup> Pastor Voddie Bauchman, Jr. writes, “Family worship does not have to be a big production.”<sup>93</sup> Parents should not let the experience become tedious. They should feel free to adapt family worship according to the needs of their family, while making attempts to get every family member involved, but at the same time, they should be aware of their family’s time and attention spans. Beeke recommends to “carefully guard this time of family worship. . . . When you [the parents] can keep to your appointed times, plan carefully and prepare beforehand to make every minute count.”<sup>94</sup> Regardless of the time selected, parents are ultimately responsible to establish a regular gathering as

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<sup>90</sup> Joel Beeke, “How to Do Family Worship,” Reformed Fellowship, accessed February 28, 2017, <http://www.reformedfellowship.net/how-to-do-family-worship>.

<sup>91</sup> Aniol, “Train Up a Child,” 4.

<sup>92</sup> Whitney, *Family Worship*, 50.

<sup>93</sup> Voddie Bauchman Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 142.

<sup>94</sup> Beeke, *Family Worship*, loc. 258.

a family for Scripture reading, biblical instruction, prayer, and praise despite their busy schedules.

**Be consistent.** The final consideration is that family worship must be consistent. Whitney warns, “Every family has to flex its worship time occasionally. Just be careful . . . of inconsistency.”<sup>95</sup> As mentioned above and discussed in chapter 2, careful planning of family worship should also include the basic elements of worship in order to maintain a consistent flow towards the family’s theological understanding. Whitney explains that “both in biblical times and now, the best time for parents to teach the things of God to their children on a *consistent* basis when *all* the children are present would be in a time of family worship.”<sup>96</sup> Consistency is the key to establishing a firm spiritual foundation for the children while increasing the strength of the parents’ spiritual foundation as well.

In summary, frequent variation of the time, place, or basic content of family worship will impede the effectiveness of the experience. While parents need to understand that discipling their children is not a perfect process, consistency over time will bear much fruit.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the history of Christian family worship in relation to influencing changes in the practice of corporate worship as well as theoretical and practical suggestions for Christian parents to consider as they attempt to lay a spiritual foundation and establish worship principles for their children. Because the present study encourages the family to go beyond the scope of having family devotionals by including all acts of worshiping God (prayer, reading his Word, singing, etc.), a brief history of

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<sup>95</sup> Whitney, *Family Worship*, 50.

<sup>96</sup> Whitney, 19; emphasis original.



Christian worship was warranted. Armed with knowledge of the Word and the examples through the centuries of both adherence to and deviation from the principles contained therein, Christian parents will have a better understanding of how to teach their families proper biblical worship. Consequently, these families are more likely to change their expectations of the corporate worship experience and support a God-centered, rather than human-centered, model that encourages both hearing from and responding to God. Through their instruction about biblical worship, parents help their children become aware of a sovereign God who speaks through his Word and to whom they should respond in historical acts of worship. These acts express their personal beliefs and faith and unite them with Christians who have practiced these same acts throughout the ages.

Family worship becomes one of the most important components of family life, during which family members can block out thoughts of their busy lives and focus on God. Being in the presence of God is an act that should be taken seriously and inspire a sense of awe: “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps 46:10). Family worship is a time to reflect thoughtfully on Scripture and general discussions concerning the chosen Scripture. The practice of family worship offers a time to pray to God—praying for his blessing on every aspect of the home and on each member of the family. Prayer also allows a time of confession and restoration. Worship is also a time for praise and thanksgiving: “Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing” (Ps 100:2). The inclusion of singing during family worship aids in bringing glory to God. Each member of the family should participate with the voice God has given in response to the biblical command to “sing unto the Lord” (Ps 96:1-2). The head of the family needs to be careful to keep the focus of worship songs away from self and upward toward God, encouraging all members of the family to glorify God in songs of thanksgiving, praise, and adoration.

Family worship gives opportunity to acknowledge God in every aspect of life: “Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Acknowledge him in all your ways and He will direct your steps” (Prov 3:5-6). The result

of whole-life family worship is growth in the knowledge of and love for God through true discipleship. Those families who embrace these principles and practices will join Joshua in declaring, “As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh 24:15).

## CHAPTER 4

### DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Chapter 4 will describe specific details surrounding the project on family worship as implemented at First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Arkansas (FBCPB). The purpose of the project was to discover and quantify the current family worship practices of select FBCPB families, to develop a six-session curriculum to train and equip families to adopt family worship practices, and to increase knowledge about the role of parents in discipling their children through worship at home.

In the paragraphs that follow, I will describe the process used to assess the current discipleship practices among FBCPB families. Then, I will provide a general overview of how the Family Worship Seminar (FWS) was developed. Next, I will summarize the six teaching sessions and process used for evaluation. Fourthly, I will present the results of the data collected from the pre- and post-test surveys and the expert panel evaluations. Finally, I will describe the means by which the expert panel was selected.

#### **Assessment of Current Discipleship Practices**

In order to properly prepare the FWS, an initial survey regarding the current practices of family worship was administered to a select number of families who regularly attend FBCPB. The parents were asked to complete a survey to yield a clearer picture of the current family worship practices and to measure the current discipleship practices within the home. The results of the survey aided in developing a strategic plan to increase family worship practices among member families at FBCPB.

## **The Procedure**

The procedure for collecting data to discover the current family worship practices at FBCPB was achieved through both paper and online surveys created in Google Docs ([www.docs.google.com](http://www.docs.google.com)).<sup>1</sup> The majority of The Family Worship Assessment Surveys (FWAS) were given at the conclusion of a meeting of camp parents on Sunday, July 22, 2017. Instructions were given to answer the questions honestly and accurately. The parents were told to complete only one survey per family. Each question utilized a Likert scale with six possible responses. The responses were given numeric values as follows: never-1, once-2, a couple times-3, three to four times-4, five to six times-5, and seven or more times-6. The survey included seven questions and took three to five minutes to complete.

Eight families attended the meeting and took the paper version of the FWAS. Two additional families were identified and issued an email invitation to take the FWAS online. The email included a link to the survey website.<sup>2</sup> Only one of the two additional families responded. Another family was then invited to take the online survey and responded accordingly. A total of ten families made up the participant group. Additional personal information was not requested; thus, the surveys were anonymous.

## **Analyzing the Data**

The results of the FWAS determined that 50 percent of the parents in the participant group have never engaged their families in any family devotion or worship time. This evidence suggests that the development of a curriculum concerned with the family in worship at home and at church is needed. FBCPB parents need to be given the

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup>The email informed parents about the study and the availability of the online survey. The email requested that the parents complete the voluntary, anonymous web-based survey within a one-week period. This timeframe ensured that the parents had a reasonable amount of time to access the survey. One follow-up e-mail was sent mid-week as a reminder.

foundation to live out Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and be introduced to the methods necessary for adopting a better family worship practice.<sup>3</sup>

The data also showed that 60 percent have little to no prayer time with their families. By providing better family worship methods, parents would be encouraged how to respond to God’s revelation through prayer and praise. They would explore the three components of family worship—prayer, word, and response—while being equipped to incorporate worship time into their home life.<sup>4</sup>

One interesting factor from the questionnaire was the discovery of the number of times the parents discuss the Bible with their families. In the last month, 50 percent have read or discussed the Bible two times or less. The other 50 percent have done so five or more times. The percentage grew to 60 percent when asked about the number of times spiritual matters had been discussed with their children. However, the most encouraging data showed that 60 percent of the parents surveyed had talked five or more times with someone about their children’s spiritual development.

Based upon the analysis of the data, the FWAS fulfilled its intention to discover some of the family worship practices of families at FBCPB. Additionally, the potential to develop a seminar on family worship was met with a noticeable readiness by those surveyed to participate in such a seminar. Therefore, the process of implementation began to form.

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<sup>3</sup>“Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” David M. Edwards, ed., *HCSB Personal Worship Bible*, Pocket ed. (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2006).

<sup>4</sup>Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 44.

## **The Project**

In an effort to train and equip the families of FBCPB to adopt family worship practices, a six-session seminar was developed. The preparation for the seminar included: participant recruitment, the creation and finalization of PowerPoint slides, developing pre- and post-tests, evaluation forms, and the Family Worship Seminar Evaluation (FWSE). Each component was ready to be distributed at the appropriate time throughout the process. Upon the completion of the seminar, teaching materials and participant handouts were prepared.

The six-session seminar consisted of biblical, theological, historical, and practical issues related to family worship. Participant handouts were prepared to help facilitate the flow of each session. A pre-test survey was administered in paper form at the beginning of session one, and a link to the post-test survey, created in Google Docs, was sent via email one week after the seminar ended.

Eleven families were identified as potential participants and were sent a personal letter encouraging their participation with a description of the project's intentions. Only four families responded by the deadline date. In addition to the personal invitation letter, information about the seminar was included in the church's worship guide announcements, as well as through personal discussion with church members, and a series of church newsletter articles. Through these other forms of communication, six more families were identified and invited to take part in the seminar. A final enrollment period was established, and an online sign-up form was made available. One week after the enrollment period ended, the seminar began.

The seminar took place in FBCPB's FirstKids Ministry room. A sign-in sheet was placed on the counter at the entrance to the room. Tables and chairs were arranged in two rows to provide good sight-lines to the projection screen and aid in hearing one another during discussion periods. A table for snacks, bottled water, and homemade

chocolate-chip cookies was set up near the back of the room and made available during breaks. A continental breakfast was prepared to begin the second day of the seminar.

### **The Family Worship Seminar**

The Family Worship Seminar (FWS) took place on Friday, November 16, 2018 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. with three, one-hour sessions and continued the next day from 9:00 a.m. to noon with another three one-hour sessions. Breaks were given between each session, each day. The reason for a two-day seminar format rather than a six-week format was due to the nature of the participants. FBCPB is blessed with a number of active families and while they are committed to taking part in ongoing ministry activities, they were more likely to participate in the FWS if it were offered on two consecutive days. Furthermore, the limitations of the church calendar contributed to the decision for the two-day format.

#### **Session 1**

After a welcome to the participants, session one began with prayer and an introduction of what the seminar aimed to accomplish. A brief overview of all six sessions was given followed by this thought provoking question, “What do you do to worship as a family at home?” Then, the participants were given fifteen minutes to complete a pre-test.<sup>5</sup> During the administration of the pre-test, selections from Keith and Kristyn Getty’s new CD recording *Family Hymn Sing* were played.<sup>6</sup> For scoring and comparison purposes, participants were instructed to use the last four digits of their Social Security Number as their personal identification number. Participants were then informed that the same test would be administered again at the end of the FWS.

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<sup>5</sup>See appendix 1.

<sup>6</sup>Keith Getty and Kristyn Getty. *Gettys Kids Hymnal: Family Hymn Sing*. Getty Music KHFHS.ASDDL.US, 2018, digital album. Selections from this recording were utilized throughout the six sessions of the Family Worship Seminar.

The first session was titled “Introduction to Family Worship.” This session broadened the focus of family worship by asking a question about the word “worship” “What comes into your mind when you hear the word ‘worship’?” Discussion of various answers took place while the participant materials were distributed. An explanation of what worship is and what worship is not was beneficial to the introductory material. The participants learned the Hebrew and Greek words for “worship” along with supportive quotes from Warren Wiersbe and Romans 12:1-2. The session continued by including definitions of the word “worship” from leading authors in the field of worship studies.<sup>7</sup> A reminder of how worship represents Jesus Christ through re-presentation as seen in Revelation 4 and 5 was given.<sup>8</sup> An illustration of how worship is a form of communication between God and man gave foundational cause for discussion on the approaches to worship, the elements of private and corporate worship, as well as the models of Old Testament and New Testament worship. The participants were introduced to a side-by-side comparison of the *Normative Principle* and *Regulative Principle* in worship.<sup>9</sup> The focus shifted to the final element for discussion, “Why a Seminar on Family Worship?” This portion of the session was to encourage an understanding of what a gospel-centered family can gain from the use of the word “worship” in the right way and to establish the remaining sessions that would equip the heads of the family to lead family worship and instruct their children in Scriptures. The session ended with a break to enjoy the refreshments and some light conversation.

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<sup>7</sup>The definitions of Bryan Chapell, Constance Cherry, Scott Aniol, and Robert Webber were given.

<sup>8</sup>Bryan Chapell. *Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 116, 120.

<sup>9</sup>The normative principle teaches that if the Bible does not forbid a particular act of worship, it is permitted, as opposed to the regulative principle, which teaches that only biblical materials are allowed to be used in the worship of God.



## Session 2

Session 2 was titled, “The Foundation of Family Worship.” As the participant material was distributed, the question was asked, “How many of you have heard the term ‘Family Worship’?” A few of the participants raised their hands. A clarifying statement about ‘what family worship is not’ was given in order to establish the foundational statements that followed. Additional statements for the participants to answer were issued with the intent to facilitate discussion, such as (1) Growing up, my family would—sometimes, never, or always—read the Bible together and (2) Yes, not—really, no—Worshipping together as a family is important.

Next, the question of “what is family worship?” was presented and defined as “the regular and intentional gathering of a household to worship God together and to make disciples in the home.”<sup>10</sup> The participants were encouraged to make the worship of God a priority in their lives. The central theme of this session was that family worship is no different in intention and purpose than corporate worship and requires the same attention and motivation. The biblical principles of worship were discussed briefly in order to make the point that God deserves to be the focus of worship, whether corporately through the church or by the family. This inclusion of corporate worship was framed with occurrences and references to biblical acts that clearly supported such a claim.

The session moved to an understanding of how the worship of God on Sundays can transfer to worshipping him daily by living a distinctively Christian lifestyle in a spirit of continual worship. The essential point was that Christians are to live their lives as a continuing act of worship. This, then, frames the understanding of how to worship in the context of the family.

Based on the reaction of some participants, much of what was presented in Session 1 and reinforced in Session 2 garnered a new outlook on worship in general, and

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<sup>10</sup> *Guide to Family Worship* [PDF file], accessed September 16, 2017, <http://forgodsname.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guide-to-family-worship-2015.pdf>.

family worship in particular. These opening sessions not only informed the parents of what they have already known, but also motivated them to contemplate what could take place in their future personal and corporate worship.

### **Session 3**

Session 3 was titled “The Need for Family Worship” and began with the distribution of the participant materials. A review of the first two sessions was given as a way of transitioning from general observations about worship to specific biblical mandates for family worship. This session examined the three passages chosen for this project to underscore the biblical and theological basis for children’s spiritual development within the home. Some attention was given to help apply these Scriptures to family worship.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 was the first passage to be discussed. After reading the selected verses, the three main points were given: (1) the mandate of covenantal fidelity, (2) the mission of conscientious teaching, and (3) the method of continual reminder. Careful attention was given to the theological ramifications of parents’ living out their faith through times of family worship. Supportive passages and commentary quotations were introduced, and the four specific times that parents are to practice repetitive instruction to their children in verse 7 were discussed. Participants were reminded that they are to be doing more than just raising their children; they are to be raising disciples.

The next passage was Proverbs 22:6. Discussion began by focusing on how this passage highlights the parent’s responsibility to teach consistently and frequently in order to raise their children to understand the ways of the Lord. Three principles for training children spiritually in the home were given: (1) teach children systematically, (2) teach children early, and (3) teach children discernment. The quotation from Matthew Henry’s commentary about the passage gave weight to the truth for the participants.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>“Train them up, not in the way they would go (the bias of their corrupt hearts would draw

This increase in their awareness drew the discussion to a better understanding that this proverb expressed more than a promise, but a principle on which to live a godly life. Other authors were quoted to aid in the discussion and bring the focus back on the family gathering in worship to plant seeds of knowing, loving, and following God.

After some introductory statements about Ephesians 6:1-4, the participants were directed to consider the three ways that the Apostle Paul explained the Christian parents' attitudes, approaches, and roles in their children's lives: (1) proper conduct, (2) proper discipline (not "stirring up anger"), and (3) proper training/instruction. This portion of the session put special emphasis on specific areas of the parent-child relationship and began the process of understanding that the primary place for spiritual instruction and growth is in the home. The session ended with the reminder that parents are given the responsibility for the spiritual instruction of their children and the church is to reinforce what is being taught.

#### **Session 4**

The fourth session, "The Importance of Family Worship," began with a recap of the previous day's sessions. An explanation was given that the focus of this session would be on the historical development of views and practices, as well as abuses of what is called "worship" in the church over the past 2000 years. Because of time restraints, details about all the doctrines, theological interpretations, and abuses that have occurred since the early days of the church could not be fleshed out. So, a broad summarization or historical overview was given.

Some historical religious movements and their deviations of true worship were presented and discussed, along with characteristics of how church leaders have fallen

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them aside), but in the way they should go, the way in which, if you love them, you would have them go." "Proverbs 22 Commentary: Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary on the Bible," StudyLight.org, accessed September 29, 2015, <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/view.cgi?bk=19&ch=22>.

under the influence of adding to what the Bible says about worship, while not specifically going against what it says implicitly. Further discussion was facilitated surrounding the historical “pendulum of worship” and how the Reformation and Revivalism played important roles in the realm of corporate worship.<sup>12</sup>

After the broad historical sweep, the second half of this session focused on family worship and presented a list of historical figures, along with a brief description of historical documents which emphasized the matters of worship and doctrine. The importance of family worship was further emphasized through quotes by spiritual leaders from the Puritan movement to the present.

### **Session 5**

The fifth session was titled “The Elements of Family Worship.” The session began with the participant materials being distributed. The participants were reminded of the family worship definition chosen for this ministry project. The first part of the session discussed the foundational elements of family worship—reading Scripture, biblical instruction, prayer, and worship in song. The inclusion of the use of catechism was described as “an additional element to support the worshiper’s response.” The next section examined some of George Barna’s research that supports the importance of parental involvement in the spiritual development of children, and how to implement the aforementioned elements of family worship in the home. Detailed ideas and additional thoughts for each element were given. The final section included the benefits of family worship and some personal stories about how a family is affected by following the foundational elements covered.

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<sup>12</sup>Daniel Sharp, “The Free, Evangelical Tradition of Worship,” in *The Worshiping Church: A Hymnal*, Worship Leaders’ ed. (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing Company, 1990), xxv-xxxii.

## Session 6

Session 6 was titled, “Resources for Family Worship” and began with a list of suggested resources for effective family worship. After showing an online demonstration of family worship, the participants were prompted to discuss and comment on what they had seen leading into a question and answer period. The remainder of the session consisted of describing, showing, and passing around some of the resources utilized in the previous sessions. The participants received a number of handouts and were encouraged to use them in their own family worship time. The handouts included a copy of “The Baptist Catechism”;<sup>13</sup> the “Religious Affections Catechism”;<sup>14</sup> a 31-day prayer guide, “Praying Daily for Our Children” by Bob Hostetler ([www.bobhostetler.com](http://www.bobhostetler.com)) to be used by parents outside of family worship;<sup>15</sup> the “52 Family Dinner Discussions,” a free online booklet from the Parent Ministry website ([ministrytoparents/dinner.com](http://ministrytoparents/dinner.com));<sup>16</sup> and a copy of the 2010 SBC Resolution on Family Worship.<sup>17</sup> At the conclusion of the session, each participating family received Don Whitney’s book, *Family Worship* as a thank you gift.<sup>18</sup> The session closed with a word of encouragement for each family to develop a strategic plan to begin family worship in their homes.

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<sup>13</sup> See appendix 5, “The Baptist Catechism: A Catechism for Boys and Girls” (n.d.); Tom J. Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts: The Study of Catechisms in Baptist Life* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> See appendix 6, Religious Affections Ministries, “Religious Affections 52-Week Catechism,” *Religious Affections Ministries: Conservative Christianity, Worship, Culture, Aesthetics, Classical Education, Homeschooling, Family Blog*. December 30, 2017, <http://religiousaffections.org/publishing/religious-affections-52-week-catechism/>.

<sup>15</sup> See appendix 7, Bob Hostetler, *Praying Daily for Our Children* [PDF file], accessed November 23, 2018. [www.bobhostetler.com](http://www.bobhostetler.com).

<sup>16</sup> See appendix 8, *52 Family Dinner Discussions* [PDF file], accessed November 23, 2018, <https://ministrytoparents.com/dinner>.

<sup>17</sup> See appendix 9, *Southern Baptist Convention: On Family Worship* [PDF file], accessed April 25, 2017, <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/1200/on-family-worship>.

<sup>18</sup> Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016).

## **The Evaluation Process**

One week after the completion of the FWS, an online version of the pre-test was sent via email to each participant. This test was identical to the paper version given during the first session of the seminar and was renamed as a “post-test” to provide comparative data for analysis. In a separate email, the FWSE was sent to each participant to measure the perceived effectiveness of the six-session seminar and whether participants were encouraged to adopt family worship practices in their homes. The FWSE also included a measure to determine how the materials were organized and presented. The tool included a section for additional comments. The participants were given one week to complete the post-test and the FWSE. The following are some of the comments received from the participants.

One participant wrote,

The Family Worship Seminar was very well organized and presented. We learned several things about the historical background of Christian education in the home and the early church. The presentation of available resources for starting a Family Worship time in our homes were very user friendly and explained thoroughly. From a time-management point of view, Bryan presented all his research smoothly allowing time for questions and discussion. We would highly recommend this seminar be replicated.

Another participant remarked, “Informative and could now easily answer any questions to someone that did not know the importance of Family Worship.” And finally, this response, “The materials handed out to us and the presentations themselves were well-organized and presented in a very understandable manner. Brother Bryan did an outstanding job preparing for and presenting this information.”

Additional comments were made through personal conversations with participants. Upon completion of the FWS, one couple travelled to the LifeWay Store in a neighboring town to purchase some of the recommended resources. The feedback from the evaluation tool was mostly encouraging and valuable to improve the FWS for future presentations.

## **The Project Results**

The pre- and post-tests contained twenty-three questions utilizing a Likert six-point measuring system. The pre-test was administered during session one to the thirteen participants of the FWS with the purpose of evaluating their knowledge of worship and their preparation for family worship. The post-test was sent to the thirteen participants via email one week after the completion of the seminar. Twelve of the post-tests were completed by the given deadline. The collected data from the twelve returned tests was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and analyzed using a *t*-test for dependent samples. The assessment of the data would determine the effectiveness of the project.

The assessment process began by comparing the mean of the before (pre-test) score of 103.3333333 to the after (post-test) score of 123.6666667 and confirming that the mean did increase. Next, the *t* Stat result (-5.035089016) was compared with the *t*-critical two-tail value (2.20098516). Then, confirmation was established that the *t* Stat was larger than the *t*-critical value, and the *p* value was less than .05 (0.000380894). The results of the data analysis determined that the teaching of family worship to the select group of median adults made a statistically significant difference resulting in the increase of their biblical knowledge of family worship ( $t_{(11)} = 5.035, p < .0003$ ).

## **The Expert Panel**

Prior to the implementation of the Family Worship Seminar, an informal inquiry was extended to a list of possible panel members. Three “experts” in the field of Christian worship and family ministry were identified and invited to participate in this portion of the project’s process. Dr. Ken Gabrielse, Rev. Mike Manning, and Dr. Ben Phillips were sent an email requesting their comments on the FWS material.<sup>19</sup> They were

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<sup>19</sup>Ken Gabrielse is the dean and professor of music in the Felix Manz School of Music at Truett McConnell University in Cleveland, GA. Mike Manning is the director of missions for the Harmony Baptist Association of Churches in Pine Bluff, AR. Ben Phillips is the pastor at First Baptist Church in Murphy, TX. He previously served as the Marriage and Family Ministry Consultant for the Evangelism and Church Health Team for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

instructed to use the Family Worship Curriculum Evaluation Tool (FWCE) to evaluate the seminar's content for clarity, biblical accuracy, and theological consistency.<sup>20</sup> The panel of professionals were given two weeks to complete their evaluations and record their comments to the online form accompanying the email. In relation to clarity, biblical accuracy, and theological consistency, all three panelists scored at either a sufficient or exemplary level. Ben Phillips commented, "You bring an element of teaching on worship in the family that most preacher-types would struggle to bring to the table." He wrote on the final evaluation form:

You introduced me to a few resources I was not familiar with. You provided families with a wealth of resources that provide many practical ideas and tools for them to begin and sustain family worship in their homes. Families, fathers in particular, will need to take initiative to make it happen. . . . Thanks for allowing me to participate in this part of your project. I'm thankful for men like you who have a passion to help parents become the primary disciple-makers in their homes.

By providing the families of FBCPB with instruction and assistance towards implementing consistent family worship, the FWS served as a step toward encouraging and empowering parents as the primary disciplers in their family's spiritual lives. The seminar attempted to teach families the importance of family worship, to communicate reasons to establish family worship, and to offer practical assistance in instituting the foundational elements of family worship. Moreover, the seminar aided families to a better understanding of both biblical and historical references to family worship, offered them encouragement on how to respond to God's revelation through prayer and praise, and ultimately fulfill Scripture's command to lead and teach the coming generations to follow and obey the Lord.

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<sup>20</sup>See appendix 2.



## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Chapter 5 will give a personal evaluation regarding the Family Worship Seminar (FWS) project conducted at First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Arkansas (FBCPB), and some reflective statements on the process leading up to the implementation of the project. FBCPB ministers in the ninth largest city in Arkansas and the county seat of Jefferson County. Pine Bluff is situated on the banks of the Arkansas River around 45 miles to the southeast of Little Rock. Established in the mid-1800s, the city is proud of its heritage and is “known for its beautiful scenic grove of pine trees that encompasses its surroundings. It’s a place where the rich and cherished history of the past is blended into the contemporary ideals of the present.”<sup>1</sup>

FBCPB exists to “connect people in our community to Jesus and His church, to grow them to Christ-like maturity, and to strengthen the church family through loving fellowship, so that we may impact our community and world with Christ’s love and message as disciple makers.”<sup>2</sup> This project on family worship was developed to complement the mission statement by equipping FBCPB families with a biblical understanding of worship and discipleship at home.

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<sup>1</sup>“A little about Pine Bluff,” Downtown Different, last modified 2018, accessed January 3, 2016, <https://downtowndifferent.com/pinebluff/arkansas>.

<sup>2</sup>The FBCPB church mission statement.

### **Evaluation of the Project's Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to equip the families at FBCPB to adopt family worship practices based on biblical principles. The development of this project addressed the need to instruct parents to take the proper leadership role in their children's spiritual lives and help them grow in their ability to worship God in all aspects of their lives. The FWS helped equip families to cultivate a healthier spiritual environment in the home, which in turn provided a deeper level of understanding for corporate worship in the gathered church.

Furthermore, the seminar gave participants the foundation to live out Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and introduced them to the methods to be adopted for a better family worship practice. The participating families indicated a better awareness of how to incorporate the worship of God into their everyday lives. While introducing both musical and non-musical elements of worship, the seminar provided participants with resources enabling families to better express praise and thanksgiving as life-long worshippers of God.

### **Evaluation of the Project's Goals**

The project was driven by four primary goals, which were used to determine the effectiveness of the project. The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among families with children who are regular attenders of FBCPB. The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to train and equip parents at FBCPB to adopt family worship practices. The third goal was to increase knowledge about the role of parents in discipling their children among member families at FBCPB. The final goal was to develop a strategic plan to increase family worship practices among member families at FBCPB. In order to determine if the project's goals were met, an examination of each was conducted using an assessment survey, a pre-test, a post-test, and two

evaluation rubrics. Upon the completion of the examination, all four goals were deemed to have been successfully met.

### **Goal 1**

The first goal was to assess the current discipleship practices among families with children who are regular attenders of FBCPB. This goal was measured by administering a Family Worship Assessment Survey (FWAS) to measure the commitment to family worship as a practice.<sup>3</sup> For this goal to be considered successfully met, participating families had to complete the FWAS and the inventory be analyzed in order to yield a clearer picture of the current family worship practices among FBCPB families.

The responses to each survey question are as follows: Question 1: “Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past WEEK have I prayed aloud with any of my children?” Only 10 percent responded with seven times or more, 10 percent responded “five to six times,” and 20 percent responded “three to four times.” The most common answers were “a couple of times,” and “never” at 30 percent for each response.

Question 2: “How many times in the past WEEK has my family eaten a meal together with television, music, and other similar media turned off?” The greatest response was “never” at 30 percent. The remaining responses of “a couple times,” “five to six times,” and “seven or more times” all had a 20 percent response. Only 10 percent answered “once.”

Question 3: “How many times in the past MONTH have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?” The responses of “once” and “seven or more times” totaled 30 percent, while a 20 percent measure went to both “a couple of times” and “five to six times.”

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<sup>3</sup>See appendix 1.

Question 4: “How many times in the past MONTH have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?” There was a noticeable difference between the responses of this question and the previous one. Thirty percent responded, “a couple of times,” while another 30 percent responded “five to six times.” Twenty percent have discussed biblical or spiritual matters while engaged in day-to-day activities seven or more times. Only 10 percent responded “once,” and 10 percent responded “never.”

Question 5: “How many times in the past TWO MONTHS has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?” By far the most common response was “never” at 50 percent. Forty percent responded “a couple of times,” and 10 percent responded “three to four times.”

Question 6: “How many times in the past TWO MONTHS have I talked with my spouse or with a close friend about my children’s spiritual development?” No one answered “never,” which was an encouragement to this researcher. Ten percent responded with “once,” 20 percent responded that they had talked a couple of times with someone about their child’s spiritual development. Another 10 percent responded that they had discussed the development of their children spiritually three to four times. The majority of responses were “five to six times” and “seven or more times” at 30 percent for each response.

Question 7: “How often in the past YEAR has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child’s spiritual growth?” Forty percent said that they had been contacted seven or more times by a church leader with encouragement to help their children spiritually. Twenty percent said “three to four times.” Ten percent said “a couple of times.” However, 30 percent said that they had never been contacted by a church leader to help them engage actively in their child’s spiritual development.

## **Goal 2**

The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to train and equip parents at FBCPB to adopt family worship practices. The goal was measured by an expert panel of fellow ministry leaders, both within the church and from sister churches, who utilized the Family Worship Curriculum Evaluation (FWCE) rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.<sup>4</sup> The panel of professionals consisted of a professor of music in the field of worship and education studies, a director of missions with a passion to provide the churches of the association with opportunities for discipleship and spiritual growth, and a pastor who previously served as a denominational consultant in family ministry. Each panelist recorded their comments to the FWCE and provided supportive suggestions for future growth of the project. For this goal to be considered successfully met, a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria had to meet or exceed the sufficient level. The indicators on the rubric were scored at “sufficient” or above, therefore, the second goal was met.

## **Goal 3**

The third goal was to increase knowledge about the role of parents in discipling their children among member families at FBCPB. This goal was measured by administering a pre-test during session one of the FWS.<sup>5</sup> An identical post-test followed one week after the completion of the seminar. Both tests contained twenty-three questions utilizing a Likert six-point measuring system to provide a comparative form for analyzing the participant’s responses. Table 1 shows the scores of the twelve participants that completed both the pre- and post-tests.

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<sup>4</sup>See appendix 2.

<sup>5</sup>See appendix 3.

Table 1. Pre- and post-test scores

Participant	Before	After
1507	116	125
1164	97	132
1323	92	130
1923	113	127
2676	104	116
6204	103	112
6732	113	115
6989	93	129
7046	98	119
8133	110	127
8564	89	132
9524	112	120

The responses to the post-test show evidence that the FWS achieved the goal of increasing the participant’s knowledge about the role of parents in discipling their children. The FWS further fulfilled its intention to equip families and assist them in leading family worship and beginning a transformation toward a lifetime of worship and praise. Table 2 shows the statistical results of increased biblical knowledge as a result of the FWS.

Table 2. T-test: paired two sample for means

	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	103.3333333	123.6666667
Variance	88.78787879	48.78787879
Observations	12	12

Pearson Correlation	-	
	0.441541836	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	11	
t Stat	-	
	5.035089016	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000190447	
t Critical one-tail	1.795884819	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000380894	
t Critical two-tail	2.20098516	

The *t*-test indicated that the teaching of family worship to the select group of median adults made a statistically significant difference resulting in the increase of their biblical knowledge of family worship ( $t_{(11)} = 5.035, p < .0003$ ).

### Summary

In summary, I deem the FWS project to have been successful and attribute its success to the following factors:

1. The FWS met a need for discipleship and worship training among FBCPB families and inspired some to start the practice of family worship in their homes.
2. The information I provided during the FWS has continued the conversation on family worship, not only among the participants but with other church members and Sunday school classes.
3. The FWS brought to light the ongoing need for FBCPB families to incorporate the worship of God into their everyday lives, which in turn would strengthen their understanding of and participation in weekly corporate worship of the gathered church.

## **Strengths of the Projects**

Throughout the process of reflection and evaluation, several strengths were identified. The first strength was how the project helped fill a void left by the elimination of an organized discipleship training program. As mentioned in chapter 1, Sunday school is still the primary spiritual growth ministry and relational connecting point within the church. While FBCPB offers additional ministry areas for youth and children, the growing of young disciples needs to be taught at home. Therefore, the project gave participants the materials needed to implement what they learned and the confidence to nurture their child's faith.

A second strength was equipping parents to take the proper leadership role in their children's spiritual lives. By introducing and discussing the project's three main passages, Deuteronomy 6, Ephesians 6, and Proverbs 22:6, participants were able to see the biblical mandate for discipling and leading their families in worship at home.

A third identified strength was providing parents with the historical perspective of discipleship and family worship. Several FWS participants were familiar with the historical figures presented, but they had not connected all of them with the subject of family worship.

A fourth strength was the provision of helpful resources to further the participants' study and implementation of family worship in their homes. Each resource provided practical ideas and tools reinforced by the session materials. As mentioned in chapter 4, one of the participants drove to the nearest LifeWay Store after the final session of the FWS and purchased a number of the suggested resources. This action was encouraging and served as supporting evidence of the need for such a resource list.

A final strength was revealed by the number of conversations that continued after the completion of the FWS, including discussions with the pastoral team, associational leaders, and other families within the church (who were unable to participate in the original seminar) towards future FWS possibilities. Several of the



participants commented to the pastor that the FWS needed to be replicated on an ongoing basis.

### **Weaknesses of the Project**

One major weakness of the project was related to the change in the FWS's format as planned months before the implementation. The original plan was to conduct the FWS over a six-week period to allow time for participants to implement what was presented in each session. While the multiple week format was desirable, the decision to conduct the FWS in a two-day format was based on both the availability of the participants as well as the church calendar. Therefore, a two-day extended format was designed out of necessity rather than by choice.

Another weakness identified was the lack of follow-up with the participants. While there were well-executed methods for gathering research information throughout the undertaking, as yet there has not been a survey to determine the number of participants who have instituted family worship in their homes after finishing the FWS. This was partially due to the proximity of the FWS to the many activities associated with the Christmas season.

### **What I Would Do Differently**

The most significant change that I would make is to adjust the time schedule of the FWS sessions from the two-day format to a more manageable six-week format. This change would enable the participants to initiate family worship and gradually incorporate the material after each weekly session. At the next FWS session, a group discussion would allow participants to share what worked in their previous week's family worship time and what needed to be improved. Furthermore, the instructional material would be structured distinctively with more weight given to dialog and application, without

diminishing the main focus of discipling and training children in the home as an act of worship.

A result of the aforementioned change would be to include weekly homework assignments along with a “Family Worship Guide” that would assist the participant’s progress throughout the series of seminars. This guide would incorporate some examples of how to include the practical elements of family worship—reading of Scripture, biblical instruction, praying, and singing—for parents to disciple their children at home.

Another change in future iterations of the FWS would be to broaden the scope of participants to include not only families with children and youth under their care, but also singles, couples without children, and grandparents. Such an inclusion would allow more members of FBCPB to become involved in family worship.

Since the purpose of the project was to equip the families to adopt family worship, a final change would be to include a measuring tool that would determine new habits made by participating families. This form of measurement would add greater insight to the effectiveness of the project. Additionally, the tool would generate a means for follow-up and accountability to encourage the families to stay focused and apply what they learned within the home after the conclusion of the seminar.

### **Theological Reflections**

I have learned many new things about the discipline of family worship throughout the course of this project endeavor. I have grown personally while preparing the seminar material and feel somewhat closer to Christ in my walk with him. I have also been made aware of many new strategies through my understanding of worship and how to incorporate them into my family discipleship efforts. The materials and resources used as the foundation for this project helped me better understand the true nature of family worship and the subject matter correlated with my present ministry. Three core concepts have strengthened my understanding of what it means to worship God at home.

The first concept is that parents, not the church, are the most effective way to facilitate spiritual growth in their families through instruction, relationship building, and accountability. While the church has its place in spiritual instruction of the family, parents are given the biblical mandate, as discussed in chapters 2 and 3, to model and teach the ways of God to their children.

The second concept is that worship occurs in every aspect of life, not just on Sundays. Every time the family thinks of God, talks of God, prays to God, or works for God, they are worshipping God. What takes place on Sundays is the culmination of a week of the family worshipping him. The entire family has greater opportunity to mature in their faith as they learn to express their love for God through worship.

The third and final concept is that parents need to make intentional plans to protect and build up the family with God's message. There should be a desire and willingness for all people who call themselves Christians, including myself, to promote and proclaim the message of God through our daily actions and testimony to our families and others.

### **Personal Reflections**

The daily worship of God should be a necessary part of every Christian's life. Being the son of a music minister and educator, I was taught the importance of living a Christ-centered life. One of the many ways my parents demonstrated such a lifestyle in everyday life was through the practice of prayer. For most of my elementary and middle school years, my parents would lead our family to have a daily prayer time together. As I got older and more involved in things at school and church, our prayer times became increasingly difficult to continue. We always said a prayer before meals, but the practice of a set time for devotion and prayer got lost amid a busy schedule that often-included night-time activities. Every family experience trials and tribulations, but through the

power of prayer we were able to get through them. Had my parents not taught me to pray, I would not be in ministry today.

I have made numerous attempts to establish a consistent family prayer time with my wife and children, but we have not committed to it on a regular basis. As I have immersed myself in this project on family worship, I have been convicted to make a stronger commitment to a regular family worship time. The very discipline that has brought me to this point in life is what is needed for my children and their spiritual growth.

I have also been convicted to have a more intentional time of reading, studying, and responding to God's Word. While serving at a previous church, I established the practice of going to the church's prayer room for time alone with God before starting my daily work. I would use various devotional books and Bible studies to help me focus on God. I also found great comfort and strength through the reading of hymn texts. I was encouraged by the stories that inspired the hymn writers to pen their texts. Regretfully, I have not continued this practice at my current ministry position. I have tried to apply what I discovered through my research and to rekindle the desire to continue a pertinent devotional experience in order to improve my relationship with Christ.

God wants me to read his Word, study it, learn it, and apply it so that I can be the best person and Christian I can be. Even though I may fall short, God has provided instruction through his Word for me to become all that he has created me to be. The Bible is full of amazing stories, lessons, and promises that God uses to teach us. While I have studied for many years, I still at times read a passage or story and think, "Wow, I didn't realize that." The more I learn and train, the more I am equipped to share with my family and help in doing God's work.

At the onset of my project, I knew that I wanted to utilize my dual church position as music minister and children's minister to better equip the families in my ministry context. I wanted to take the basic family devotion time to another level by focusing on the worship aspect and make a real difference in how the families of FBCPB would approach God. In order to be effective in this endeavor, I needed to commit to close examination of my own walk with Christ. By proclaiming the truth of his Word and engaging my family in worship, in service, and in discipleship, I was opened to being personally transformed by that truth so that together we could express our love and faith with both heart and mind. I wanted to see my family grow in conviction, character, and competency. Competency is a means to the ultimate goals of salvation, discipleship, and worship (Eph 5:25-27).

Through God's providence and absolute perfect timing, I discovered the newly released CD recording *Getty Kids Hymnal: Family Hymn Sing* by Keith and Kristyn Getty. This recording is the third in a series of recordings, beginning in 2016, for use in family worship. By locating and utilizing this recording, I anticipated that my seminar materials could be further heightened by its inclusion as "background music" during the gathering time, the administration of the pre-test, and during the breaks between sessions. I believe that the Holy Spirit used this recording to further my cause for a better understanding of the use of singing within the structure of family worship. While the Getty's music has been a part of our home for many years, this recording has become more relevant as a result of this project. My children have grown to enjoy listening to this recording.

Lastly, the process of doing research for this project has acquainted me with some great authors of the past as well as those of the present and has made me more aware of what resources on family worship are available for further study. Taking the time to studying such writings as J. C. Ryle's *The Duties of Parents*, James Alexander's

*Thoughts on Family Worship*, and Don Whitney's book *Family Worship* gave me valuable insights to structure the seminar's material. Among other resources with which I have interacted is the two-book collection by Brian Dembowczyk, *Cornerstones*, which presents theological truths in a catechistic format that promotes spiritual growth and prompts spiritual conversations within the home. Two other valuable resources I discovered were *Foundations for Kids* by Robby Gallaty and the *Jesus Story Book Bible* by Sally Lloyd-Jones. Both resources are not directly related to family worship but contribute to the overall experience of family worship by helping to embrace the gospel more fully and apply it to everyday life.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this project was to equip families at FBCPB to adopt family worship practices. The purpose was accomplished and the goals set in chapter 1 were achieved.

Chapter 1 provided the rationale and research methodology for implementing the project on family worship at FBCPB. Chapter 2 provided the scriptural basis for equipping families for family worship. Chapter 3 examined the historical, theoretical, and practical issues related to family worship. Chapter 4 described the results of the project as well as the details related to the seminar curriculum. Chapter 5 reflected the evaluations of the completed project.

The opportunity to provide this project to the families of FBCPB allowed me to set forth a plan and execute it according to God's will. Family worship was the answer to a great need in my ministry. Building a better relationship with God through reading Scripture, biblical instruction, praying, singing, and creating stronger bonds with other members of the family is not only a way to build a healthier family unit, but also lays the foundation for a healthy worship life that ultimately impacts the corporate worship of the church.

The curriculum resulted in a realization that family worship is a process. In the big picture, family worship, as a way of discipleship, is a process of moving persons from being nonbelievers to being maturing disciples. While each parent has different functions and roles within the family, they must recognize that only by good relationships with God and with each other can they lead their family in the fulfillment of its biblical responsibilities.

My prayer has been and will continue to be for the families of FBCPB to grow closer to God and to one another, being changed by his truth so that they can express love and faith with their hearts in worship. As they begin to try to conform to God's Word and his will and achieve a life of integrity, may they be encouraged by Paul when he urged the Christians at Rome "in view of God's mercy, to offer [our] bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. . . . [and] do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom 12:1-2). God's purpose in our lives is to conform us to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). Christians must stay on course, keep their eyes on God, and serve him only. May this project on family worship give families a clear understanding of how to proclaim their faith in this life and through future generations by what they say and how they live.

## APPENDIX 1

### THE FAMILY WORSHIP ASSESSMENT SURVEY<sup>1</sup>

#### **Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current practices of family worship in your home. This research is being conducted by Bryan Bolton for the purpose of collecting data for a research assignment. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this assignment.

Directions: Answer the following questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer. For the purposes of this survey, “church leaders” include pastors, ministers, deacons, teachers, or small-group leaders.

1. Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past WEEK have I prayed aloud with any of my children?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. Never
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b. Once
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c. A couple of times
  - \_\_\_\_\_ d. Three or four times
  - \_\_\_\_\_ e. Five or six times
  - \_\_\_\_\_ f. Seven or more times
  
2. How many times in the past WEEK has my family eaten a meal together with television, music, and other similar media turned off?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. Never

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<sup>1</sup>“Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey,” in Timothy Paul Jones, Mark DeVries, and W. Ryan Steenburg, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 202–3.



- b. Once
- c. A couple of times
- d. Three or four times
- e. Five or six times
- f. Seven or more times

3. How many times in the past MONTH have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?

- a. Never
- b. Once
- c. A couple of times
- d. Three or four times
- e. Five or six times
- f. Seven or more times

4. How many times in the past MONTH have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?

- a. Never
- b. Once
- c. A couple of times
- d. Three or four times
- e. Five or six times
- f. Seven or more times

5. How many times in the past TWO MONTHS has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?

- a. Never
- b. Once
- c. A couple of times

- d. Three or four times
- e. Five or six times
- f. Seven or more times

6. How many times in the past TWO MONTHS have I talked with my spouse or with a close friend about my children's spiritual development?

- a. Never
- b. Once
- c. A couple of times
- d. Three or four times
- e. Five or six times
- f. Seven or more times

7. How many times in the past YEAR has any church leader made contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child's spiritual development?

- a. Never
- b. Once
- c. A couple of times
- d. Three or four times
- e. Five or six times
- f. Seven or more times

This concludes the survey, Thank You!

## APPENDIX 2

### THE FAMILY WORSHIP SEMINAR PRE- AND POST-TESTS

This survey is to be completed by the participants both before and after the FWS.

#### **Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding and practices of family worship in your home. This research is being conducted by Bryan Bolton for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. *Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.*

**Directions:** Answer the following questions using the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = disagree somewhat, 4 = agree somewhat, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree. Please circle the appropriate answer.

For scoring and comparison purposes, please use the last 4 digits of your SSN as your personal ID number. \_\_\_\_\_

1. I understand what it means to worship God.

1      2      3      4      5      6

2. I understand what it means to worship in spirit and in truth.

1      2      3      4      5      6

3. I understand why it is important to worship God.

1      2      3      4      5      6

4. The primary source for understanding worship is the Bible.

1      2      3      4      5      6

5. I understand the difference between the use of the regulative principle and the normative principle in worship.

1      2      3      4      5      6

6. I understand the biblical requirements and practices of corporate worship.

1      2      3      4      5      6

7. The primary goal of worship is to bring the lost to salvation.

1      2      3      4      5      6

8. I understand what it means to use a catechism.

1      2      3      4      5      6

9. I am equipped to lead my child to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

1      2      3      4      5      6

10. I believe that the Scriptures give a mandate for parents to disciple their children.

1      2      3      4      5      6

11. I am confident that I can lead family worship with my children.

1      2      3      4      5      6

12. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching.<sup>1</sup>

1      2      3      4      5      6

13. Parents—and particularly fathers—have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children.

1      2      3      4      5      6

14. Church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children and teaching them to share the gospel with others.

1      2      3      4      5      6

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<sup>1</sup>Questions 12-14, copyright © Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011). Used by permission.

15. I understand what the Bible teaches regarding how to raise my children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

1      2      3      4      5      6

16. I have access to resources to aid in my leading of family worship.

1      2      3      4      5      6

17. There is a difference between family devotions and family worship.

1      2      3      4      5      6

18. I am comfortable having spiritual conversations (i.e. the Bible, theology, convictions, etc.) in the home with my spouse and/or child.

1      2      3      4      5      6

19. It is important to teach doctrinal theology to children.

1      2      3      4      5      6

20. In choosing songs for use in worship, the most important factor is musical style.

1      2      3      4      5      6

21. I believe songs can be used to help children memorize scripture.

1      2      3      4      5      6

22. I believe singing is an opportunity to explain theology to children.

1      2      3      4      5      6

APPENDIX 3

FAMILY WORSHIP CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

<b>Family Worship Curriculum Evaluation Rubric</b>					
<b>Lesson Number ____ Evaluator _____</b>					
<b>1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary</b>					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The lesson is clearly relevant to the issue of family worship in the home.					
The material is biblically accurate.					
The material is theologically consistent.					
The goal of the lesson is clearly stated.					
The points of the lesson clearly support the goal.					
The lesson contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the lesson is clear.					

## APPENDIX 4

### FAMILY WORSHIP SEMINAR EVALUATION

Directions: Answer the following questions using the following scale: SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, DS = disagree somewhat, AS = agree somewhat, A = agree, SA = strongly agree; please circle the appropriate answer.

- |   |    |   |    |    |   |    |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. The Family Worship Seminar is applicable and served a practical purpose in my family.                          | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 2. The Family Worship Seminar communicated the steps to adopting family worship in my home.                       | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 3. The Family Worship Seminar uncovered the basic principles to leading family worship in my home.                | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 4. The Family Worship Seminar has encouraged me to adopt family worship in my home.                               | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 5. I would recommend the Family Worship Seminar be considered as an ongoing discipleship training class at FBCPB. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

Additional Comments:

## APPENDIX 5

### THE BAPTIST CATECHISM: A CATECHISM FOR BOYS AND GIRLS<sup>1</sup>

#### Part I: Questions about God, Man, and Sin

1. Q. Who made you? A. God made me (Gen 1:26, 27; 2:7; Eccl 12:1; Acts 17:24-29).
2. Q. What else did God make? A. God made all things (Gen 1, esp. verses 1, 31; Acts 14:15; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16).
3. Q. Why did God make you and all things? A. For his own glory (Ps 19:1; Jer 9:23, 24; Rev 4:11; 4:15).
4. Q. How can you glorify God? A. By loving him and doing what he commands (Eccl 12:13; Mark 12:29-31; John 15:8-10; 1 Cor 10:31).
5. Q. Why ought you to glorify God? A. Because he made me and takes care of me (Rom 11:36; Rev 4:11; cf. Dan 4:39).
6. Q. Are there more gods than one? A. There is only one God (Deut 6:4; Jer 10:10; Mark 12:29; Acts 17:22-31).
7. Q. In how many persons does this one God exist? A. In three persons (Matt 3:16, 17; John 5:23; 10:30; 14:9, 10; 15:26; 16:13-15; 1 John 5:20, 2 John 9; Rev 1:4, 5).
8. Q. Who are they? A. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 20, 21).
9. Q. Who is God? A. God is a Spirit, and does not have a body like men (John 4:24; 2 Cor 3:17; 1 Tim 1:17).

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<sup>1</sup>Tom J. Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts: The Study of Catechisms in Baptist Life* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1998).



10. Q. Where is God? A. God is everywhere (Ps 139:7-12; Jer 23:23, 24; Acts 17:27, 28).
11. Q. Can you see God? A. No. I cannot see God, but he always sees me (Exod 33:20; John 1:18; 1 Tim 6:16; Ps 139 esp. vv. 1-5; Prov 5:21; Heb 4:12, 13).
12. Q. Does God know all things? A. Yes. Nothing can be hidden from God (1 Chron 28:9; 2 Chron 16:9; Lk 12:6, 7; Rm 2:16).
13. Q. Can God do all things? A. Yes. God can do all his holy will (Ps 147:5; Jer 32:17; Dan 4:34, 35; Eph 1:11).
14. Q. Where do you learn how to love and obey God? A. In the Bible alone (Job 11:7; Ps 119:104; Isa 8:20; Matt 22:29; 2 Tim 3:15-17).
15. Q. Who wrote the Bible? A. Holy men who were taught by the Holy Spirit (1 Pet 1:20, 21; Acts 1:16; 2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:10, 11).
16. Q. Who were our first parents? A. Adam and Eve (Gen 2:18-25; 3:20; 5:1, 2; Acts 17:26; 1 Tim 2:13).
17. Q. Of what were our first parents made? A. God made the body of Adam out of the ground, and formed Eve from the body of Adam (Gen 2:7; 21-23; 3:19; Ps 103:14).
18. Q. What did God give Adam and Eve besides bodies? A. He gave them souls that could never die (1 Cor 15:45; Eccl 12:7; Zech 12:1).
19. Q. Have you a soul as well as a body? A. Yes. I have a soul that can never die (Matt 10:28; Mark 8:34-38; 12:30).
20. Q. How do you know that you have a soul? A. Because the Bible tells me so (Matt 10:28; Mark 8:34-38; 12:30).
21. Q. What is your soul? A. My soul includes all of me that should know and love God (Mark 8:34-38; Eph 3:16-19).
22. Q. In what condition did God make Adam and Eve? A. He made them holy and happy (Gen 1:26-28; Ps 8:4-8).

23. Q. Did Adam and Eve stay holy and happy? A. No. They sinned against God (Gen 3:1-7; Eccl 7:29; Hos 6:7 where “men”=Adam).
24. Q. What was the sin of our first parents? A. Eating the forbidden fruit (Gen 2:16, 17; 3:6).
25. Q. Why did they eat the forbidden fruit? A. Because they did not believe what God had said (Gen 3:1-6; cf. Heb 11:6).
26. Q. Who tempted them to this sin? A. The devil tempted Eve, and she gave the fruit to Adam (Gen 3:1-13; 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:13, 14; cf. Rev 12:9).
27. Q. What happened to our first parents when they had sinned? A. Instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable (Gen 3:14-24; 4:1-24; Jas 1:14, 15).
28. Q. What effect did the sin of Adam have on all mankind? A. All mankind is born in a state of sin and misery (Ps 5 1:5; Rom 5:12, 18, 19; 1 Cor 15:21, 22; 1 John 5:19).
29. Q. What do we inherit from Adam as a result of this original sin? A. A sinful nature (1 Kings 8:46; Ps 14:2, 3; 58:3; Eccl 9:3; Matt 15:18-20; John 2:24, 25; Rom 8:7).
30. Q. What is sin? A. Sin is any transgression of the law of God (1 John 3:4; Rom 3:20; Jas 2:9-11).
31. Q. What is meant by transgression? A. Doing what God forbids (1 Sam 13:8-14; 15:22, 23; Hos 6:7; Rom 1:21-32).
32. Q. What does every sin deserve? A. The anger and judgment of God (Deut 27:26; Rom 1:18; 2:2; Gal 3:10; Eph 5:6).
33. Q. Do we know what God requires of us? A. Yes, he has given us his law both in our hearts and in writing (Rom 2:14-15).

## Part II: Questions about the Ten Commandments

34. Q. How many commandments did God give on Mt. Sinai? A. Ten Commandments (Exod 20:1-17; Deut 5:1-22).

35. Q. What are the Ten Commandments sometimes called? A. God's moral law (Luke 20:25-28; Rom 2:14, 15; 10:5).
36. Q. What do the first four commandments teach? A. Our duty to God (Deut 6:5, 6; 10:12, 13).
37. Q. What do the last six commandments teach? A. Our duty to our fellow men (Deut 10:19; Mic 6:8; cf. Gal 6:10).
38. Q. What is the sum of the Ten Commandments? A. To love God with all my heart, and my neighbor as myself (Deut 6:1-15; 11:1; Matt 22:35-40; Jas 2:8).
39. Q. Who is your neighbor? A. All my fellow men are my neighbors (Luke 10:25-37; 6:35).
40. Q. Is God pleased with those who love and obey him? A. Yes. He says, "I love them that love me" (Prov 8:17; Exod 20:6; 1 John 4:7-16).
41. Q. Is God pleased with those who do not love and obey him? A. No. „God is angry with the wicked every day“ (Ps 7:11; Mal 2:17; Prov 6:16-19; 1 Cor 16:22).
42. Q. What is the first commandment? A. The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7).
43. Q. What does the first commandment teach us? A. To worship God only (Isa 45:5, 6; Matt 4:10; Rev 22:8, 9).
44. Q. What is the second commandment? A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them: for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments (Exod 20:4-6; Deut 5:8-10).

45. Q. What does the second commandment teach us? A. To worship God in the right way, and to avoid idolatry (Isa 44:9-20; 46:5-9; John 4:23, 24; Acts 17:29).
46. Q. What is the third commandment? A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain (Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11).
47. Q. What does the third commandment teach us? A. To reverence God's name, word, and works (Isa 8:13; Ps 29:2; 138:2; Rev 15:3, 4).
48. Q. What is the fourth commandment? A. The fourth commandment is, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exod 20:8-11; 23:12; Deut 5:12-15).
49. Q. What does the fourth commandment teach us? A. To keep the Sabbath holy (Lev 19:20; 23:3; Isa 58:13, 14).
50. Q. What day of the week is the Christian Sabbath? A. The first day of the week, called the Lord's Day (Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10).
51. Q. Why is it called the Lord's Day? A. Because on that day Christ rose from the dead (Matt 28:1; Mark 16:9; Luke 24:1-6; John 20:1).
52. Q. How should the Sabbath be kept? A. In prayer and praise, in hearing and reading God's Word, and in doing good to our fellow men (Is 58:13, 14; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Luke 4:16; Matt 12:10-13).
53. Q. What is the fifth commandment? A. The fifth commandment is, Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16).

54. Q. What does the fifth commandment teach us? A. To love and obey our parents (Matt 15:3-6; Eph 6:1-3; Co 3:20).
55. Q. What is the sixth commandment? A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill (Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17).
56. Q. What does the sixth commandment teach us? A. To avoid hatred, all that leads to it, and all that follows from it. (Matt 5:21-24; 1 John 3:15; Jas 4:1-3).
57. Q. What is the seventh commandment? A. The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery (Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18).
58. Q. What does the seventh commandment teach us? A. To be pure in heart, language and conduct (Matt 5:27, 28; Eph 5:3-5; Phil 4:8, 9).
59. Q. What is the eighth commandment? A. The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal (Exod 20:15; Deut 5:19).
60. Q. What does the eighth commandment teach us? A. To be honest and not to take the things of others (Exod 23:4; Prov 21:6, 7; Eph 4:28).
61. Q. What is the ninth commandment? A. The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor (Exod 20:16; Deut 5:20).
62. Q. What does the ninth commandment teach us? A. To tell the truth and not to speak evil of others (Ps 15:1-3; Zech 8:16; 1 Cor 13:6; James 4:11).
63. Q. What is the tenth commandment? A. The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's (Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21; Rom 7:7).
64. Q. What does the tenth commandment teach us? A. To be content with what we have (Phil 4:11; 1 Tim 6:6-8; Heb 13:5).

65. Q. Can any man keep these Ten Commandments? A. No mere man, since the fall of Adam, ever did or can keep the Ten Commandments perfectly (Prov 20:9; Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:19, 20; James 2:10; 1 John 1:8, 10).

66. Q. Of what use are the Ten Commandments to us? A. They teach us our duty, make clear our condemnation, and show us our need of a Saviour (1 Tim 1:8-11; Rom 3:20; Gal 3:24).

67. Q. Does God condemn all men? A. No. Though he could justly have done so he has graciously entered into a covenant to save many (Rom 3:19, 20, 23-25; John 17:11, 12; Isa 53:11).

### Part III: Questions about Salvation

68. Q. What is a covenant? A. A covenant is an agreement between two or more persons (e.g., 1 Sam 18:3; Matt 26:14, 15).

69. Q. What is the covenant of grace? A. It is an eternal agreement within the Trinity to save certain persons called the elect, and to provide all the means for their salvation (Gen 17:1-8; Rom 11:27; Heb 10:16, 11; 13:20, 21; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:25-28).

70. Q. What did Christ undertake in the covenant of grace? A. Christ undertook to keep the whole law for his people, and to suffer the punishment due to their sins (Gal 4:4, 5; Heb 6:17-20; 7:22; 9:14, 15; 13:20, 21).

71. Q. Did our Lord Jesus Christ ever sin? A. No. He was holy, blameless and undefiled (Heb 7:26; Luke 23:47; 1 Pet 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

72. Q. How could the Son of God suffer? A. Christ, the Son of God, took flesh and blood, that he might obey and suffer as a man (John 1:14; Rom 8:3; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:7, 8; Heb 2:14, 17; 4:15).

73. Q. What is meant by the atonement? A. The atonement consists of Christ's satisfying divine justice, by his sufferings and death, in the place of sinners (Mark 10:45; Acts 13:38, 39; Rom 3:24-26; 5:8, 9; 2 Cor 5:19-21; Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 3:18).

74. Q. For whom did Christ obey and suffer? A. Christ obeyed and suffered for those whom the Father had given him (Isa 53:8; Matt 1:21; John 10:11, 15, 16, 26-29; 17:9; Heb 2:13).

75. Q. What kind of life did Christ live on earth? A. Christ lived a life of perfect obedience to the law of God (Matt 5:17; Rom 10:4; 1 Pet 2:21, 22).

76. Q. What kind of death did Christ die? A. Christ experienced the painful and shameful death of the cross (Ps 22; Isa 53; Gospel records).

77. Q. Who will be saved? A. Only those who repent of sin and believe in Christ will be saved (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 2:37-41; 16:30, 31; 20:21; 26:20).

78. Q. What is it to repent? A. Repentance involves sorrow for sin, leading one to hate and forsake it because it is displeasing to God (Luke 19:8-10; Rom 6:1, 2; 2 Cor 7:9-11; 1 Thess 1:9, 10).

79. Q. What is it to believe in Christ? A. A person believes who knows that his only hope is Christ and trusts in Christ alone for salvation (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5; 1 John 5:11, 12).

80. Q. How were godly persons saved before the coming of Christ? A. They believed in the Saviour to come (John 8:56; Gal 3:8, 9; 1 Cor 10:1-4; Heb 9:15; 11:13).

81. Q. How did they show their faith? A. They offered sacrifices according to God's commands (Exod 24:3-8; 1 Chron 29:20-25; Heb 9:19-23; 10:1; 11:28).

82. Q. What did these sacrifices represent? A. They were symbolic of Christ, the Lamb of God, who was to die for sinners (Exod 12:46 cf. John 19:36; Heb 9 & 10; John 1:29; 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pet 1:19).

83. Q. What does Christ do for his people? A. He does the work of a prophet, a priest and a king (Heb 1:1-3; Rev 1:5; Matt 13:57; Heb 5:5-10; John 18:37).

84. Q. How is Christ a prophet? A. He teaches us the will of God, reveals God to us, and really was God in human flesh. (Deut 18:15, 18; John 1:18; 4:25; 14:23, 24; 1 John 5:20).

85. Q. Why do you need Christ as a prophet? A. Because I am ignorant (Job 11:7; Matt 11:25-27; John 6:67-69; 17:25, 26; 1 Cor 2:14-16; 2 Cor 4:3-6).

86. Q. How is Christ a priest? A. He died for our sins and prays to God for us (Ps 110:4; 1 Tim 2:5, 6; Heb 4:14-16; 7:24, 25; 1 John 2:1, 2).

87. Q. Why do you need Christ as a priest? A. Because I am guilty (Prov 20:9; Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:19-23; Heb 10:14, 27, 28; 1 John 1:8, 9).

88. Q. How is Christ a king? A. He rules over us and defends us (Ps 2:6-9; Matt 28:18-20; Eph 1:19-23; Col 1:13, 18; Rev 15:3, 4).

89. Q. Why do you need Christ as a king? A. Because I am weak and helpless (John 15:4, 5; 2 Cor 12:9; Phil 4:13; Col 1:11; Jude 24, 25).

90. Q. What did God the Father undertake in the covenant of grace? A. By His goodness and mercy, God the Father elected, and determined to justify, adopt and sanctify those for whom Christ should die (Exod 33:18, 19; Eph 1:3-5; Rom 8:29-33; Gal 4:4-7; Heb 10:9, 10; 1 Cor 1:8, 9; Phil 1:6; 1 Thess 4:3, 7; 5:23, 24).

91. Q. What is election? A. It is God's goodness as revealed in his grace by choosing certain sinners for salvation (Eph 1:3, 4; 1 Thess 1:4; 1 Pet 1:1, 2).

92. Q. What is justification? A. It is God's regarding sinners as if they had never sinned and granting them righteousness (Zech 3:1-5; Rom 3:24-26; 4:5; 5:17-19; 8:33; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 8:12; Phil 3:9).

93. Q. What is righteousness? A. It is God's goodness as revealed in his law, and as honored in Christ's perfect obedience to that law. (Exod 33:19; 34:6; Ps 33:5; Hos 3:5; Rom 11:22).



94. Q. Can anyone be saved by his own righteousness? A. No. No one is good enough for God (Prov 20:9; Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:10-23; Eph 2:8-10; Phil 3:8, 9).

95. Q. What is adoption? A. It is God's goodness in receiving sinful rebels as his beloved children (John 1:12; Eph 1:5; Eph 5:1; Gal 4:7, 31; 1 John 3:1-3).

96. Q. What is sanctification? A. In sanctification God makes sinners holy in heart and conduct so that they will demonstrate his goodness in their lives (John 17:17; Eph 2:10; 4:22-24; Phil 2:12-13; 1 Thess 5:23).

97. Q. Is this process of sanctification ever complete in this life? A. No. It is certain and continual, but is complete only in heaven (Phil 3:12-15; 2 Pet 1:4-8; 1 John 3:1-3).

98. Q. What hinders the completion of sanctification in this life? A. The Scripture says "The flesh lusts against the Spirit so that you cannot do the things you would" (Gal 5:17).

99. Q. Since we are by nature sinful, how can one ever desire to be holy and to gain heaven where God lives? A. Our hearts must be changed before we can be fit for heaven (Eph 4:17-24; Col 3:5-12).

100. Q. Who can change a sinner's heart? A. Only the Holy Spirit can change a sinner's heart. (John 3:3; Rom 8:6-11; 1 Cor 2:9-14; 2 Thess 2:13, 14; Titus 3:5-6).

101. Q. What did the Holy Spirit undertake in the covenant of Grace? A. He regenerates, baptizes, and seals those for whom Christ has died (Eph 2:1-8; 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 1:13, 14; Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22).

102. Q. What is regeneration? A. It is a change of heart that leads to true repentance and faith (Gal 5:22; Eph 2:5-8; 2 Thess 2:13).

103. Q. Can you repent and believe in Christ by your own power? A. No. I can do nothing good without God's Holy Spirit (John 3:5, 6; 6:44; Rom 8:2, 5, 8-11; 1 Cor 2:9-14; Gal 5:17, 18; Eph 2:4-6).

104. Q. How does the Holy Spirit baptize believers? A. He puts them into the body of Christ by making them a living part of all those who truly believe in Him (1 Cor 12).

105. Q. How does the Holy Spirit seal believers? A. He comes to live within them to guarantee that they will receive the wonders God has promised those who love Him (Rom 8:9-11; Eph 1:13, 14; Eph 4:30; 2 Tim 1:9; 2 Cor 1:22).

106. Q. How can you receive the Holy Spirit? A. God has told us that we must pray to him for the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:9-13; John 4:10; 16:24); but the evidence of His presence is seen most clearly in our trusting and loving the Lord Jesus Christ. (Luke 12:8-10; John 3:3-5, 16, 20, 21; 14:17-21; 1 Cor 12:3; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 John 5:6-12).

#### Part IV: Questions about Prayer

107. Q. What is prayer? A. Prayer is talking with God (Gen 17:22; 18:33; Neh 1:4-11; 2:4; Matt 6:6; Rom 8:26, 27).

108. Q. In whose name should we pray? A. We should pray in the name of the Lord Jesus (John 14:13, 14; 16:23, 24; Heb 4:14-16).

109. Q. What has Christ given to teach us how to pray? A. The Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-13).

110. Q. Can you repeat the Lord's Prayer? A. "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

111. Q. How many petitions are there in the Lord's Prayer? A. Six.

112. Q. What is the first petition? A. "Hallowed be thy name" (Matt 6:9; Luke 11:2).

113. Q. What do we pray for in the first petition? A. That God's name may be honored by us and all men (Ps 8:1; 72:17-19; 113:1-3; 145:21; Isa 8:13).

114. Q. What is the second petition? A. "Thy kingdom come" (Matt 6:10; Luke 11:2).

115. Q. What do we pray for in the second petition? A. That the gospel may be preached in all the world, and believed and obeyed by us and all men (Matt 28:19, 20; John 17:20, 21; Acts 8:12; 28:30, 31; 2 Thess 3:1).

116. Q. What is the third petition? A. “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:10; Luke 11:2).

117. Q. What do we pray for in the third petition? A. That men on earth may serve God as the angels do in Heaven (Ps 67; 103:19-22; John 9:31; Rev 4:11).

118. Q. What is the fourth petition? A. “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt 6:11; Luke 11:3).

119. Q. What do we pray for in the fourth petition? A. That God will give us all things needful for our bodies (Ps 145:15, 16; Prov 30:8, 9; 1 Tim 4:4, 5).

120. Q. What is the fifth petition? A. “And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us” (Matt 6:12; Luke 11:4).

121. Q. What do we pray for in the fifth petition? A. That God will pardon our sins, and help those who have sinned against us (Ps 51, Matt 5:23, 1 John 4:20, 21). Us to forgive (24; 18:21-35).

122. Q. What is the sixth petition? A. “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matt 6:13; Luke 11:4).

123. Q. What do we pray for in the sixth petition? A. That God will keep us from sin (1 Chr 4:10; Ps 119:11; Matt 26:41).

#### Part V: Questions about the Word, the Church and the Ordinances

124. Q. How does the Holy Spirit bring us to salvation? A. He uses the Bible, which is the Word of God (1 Thess 1:5, 6; 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15, 16; James 1:18; 1 Pet 1:22, 23).

125. Q. How can we know the Word of God? A. We are commanded to hear, read and search the Scriptures (1 Pet 2:2; Rev 3:22; Matt 21:42; 22:29; 2 Tim 3:14-17).

126. Q. What is a church? A. A church is an assembly of baptized believers joined by a covenant of discipline and witness who meet together regularly under the preaching of the Word of God (Matt 18:20; Acts 2:42).

127. Q. What two ordinances did Christ give to his Church? A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Mt 28:19; 1 Cor 11:24-26).

128Q. Why Did Christ give these ordinances? A. To show that his disciples belong to him, and to remind them of what he has done for them (Mt 28:19; 1 Cor 11:24-26)

129. Q. What is Baptism? A. The dipping of believers into water, as a sign of their union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection (John 3:23; Acts 2:41; 8:12, 35-38; Col 2:12).

130. Q. What is the purpose of baptism? A. Baptism testifies to believers that God has cleansed them from their sins through Jesus Christ (Acts 22:16; Col 2:11-14).

131. Q. Who are to be baptized? A. Only those who repent of their sins, and believe in Christ for salvation should be baptized (Acts 2:37-41; 8:12; 18:8; 19:4, 5).

132. Q. Should babies be baptized? A. No; because the Bible neither commands it, nor gives any example of it.

133. Q. What is the Lord's Supper? A. At the Lord's Supper, the church eats bread and drinks wine to remember the sufferings and death of Christ (Mark 14:22-24; 1 Cor 11:23-29).

134. Q. What does the bread represent? A. The bread represents the body of Christ, broken for our sins (Mt 26:26; 1 Cor 11:24).

135. Q. What does the wine represent? A. The wine represents the blood of Christ, shed for our salvation (Mt 26:27, 28; 1 Cor 11:25).

136. Q. Who should partake of the Lord's Supper? A. The Lord's Supper is for those only who repent of their sins, believe in Christ for salvation, receive baptism, and love

their fellow men (Matt 5:21-24; 1 Cor 10:16, 17; 11:18, 20, 27-33; 1 John 3:24-27; 4:9-11).

#### Part VI: Questions about the Last Things

137. Q. Did Christ remain in the tomb after his crucifixion? A. No. He rose from the tomb on the third day after his death (Luke 24:45-47; 1 Cor 15:3, 4).

138. Q. Where is Christ now? A. Christ is in heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father (Rm 8:34; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 10:12; 12:2).

139. Q. Will Christ come again? A. Yes. At the last day he will come to judge the world (Matt 25:31-43; 2 Thess 1:7-10; 2 Tim 4:1).

140. Q. What happens to men when they die? A. The body returns to dust, and the soul goes to be with God or to a place of suffering and waiting for judgment (Gen 3:19; Eccl 12:7; 2 Cor 5:1-6; Heb 12:22,23; Phil 1:23; 2 Pet 2:9; Rm 2:5).

141. Q. Will the bodies of the dead be raised to life again? A. Yes. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:14, 15; John 5:28, 29; Dan 12:2).

142. Q. What will happen to the wicked in the Day of Judgment? A. They shall be cast into hell (Ps 9:16, 17; Luke 12:5; Rm 2:8, 9,12; 2 Thess 1:8, 9; Rev 20:12-15).

143. Q. What is hell? A. Hell is a place of dreadful and endless punishment (Matt 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-31).

144. Q. What will happen to the righteous in the day of judgement? A. They shall live with Christ forever, in a new heaven and a new earth (Is 66:22; 1 Thess 4:16, 17; 2 Pet 3:10-13; Rev 21:1-4).

145. Q. In light of these truths, what should you do? A. I should strive with all my energy to repent of sin and believe savingly in the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk 13:23, 24; John 6:27; Acts 16:31).

## APPENDIX 6

### RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS CATECHISM<sup>1</sup>

1. Who made you? God made me. What else did God make? God made all things.
2. Why did God make you and all things? God made me to glorify him and enjoy him forever.
3. How did God make you and all things? God made all things out of nothing, by the Word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.
4. What is special about God's creation of you? God made me in his own image.
5. Who is God? God is a spirit and does not have a body like man. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.
6. What is God like? God is the first and best of beings. He is holy, powerful, and good.
7. Are there more gods than one? There is only one true and living God.
8. In how many persons does this one God exist? God exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in essence, power, and glory.
9. What are the decrees of God? The decrees of God are his eternal purposes, whereby for his own glory he has ordained whatever comes to pass.
10. How do you know there is a God? The light of nature and the works of God plainly declare that there is a God, but only his Word and Spirit effectually reveal him to me for my salvation.

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<sup>1</sup>Religious Affections Ministries, "Religious Affections 52-Week Catechism," Religious Affections Ministries: Conservative Christianity, Worship, Culture, Aesthetics, Classical Education, Homeschooling, Family Blog. December 30, 2017, <http://religiousaffections.org/publishing/religious-affections-52-week-catechism/>.

11. What rule has God given to direct you how you may glorify and enjoy him? The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only rule to direct me how I may glorify God and enjoy Him.

12. How can you glorify God? I can glorify God by loving him and doing what he commands.

13. What is the greatest commandment? The greatest commandment is to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, and mind.

14. How can you come to know God and what he has made? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

15. What is sin? Sin is any transgression against the law of God.

16. Can you keep the law of God perfectly? No. I am inclined by nature to hate God and my neighbor.

17. What are the results of sin? Because of sin, all mankind lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, resulting in the miseries of this life, death itself, and the pains of hell forever.

18. Is there any way to escape the punishment of God and be again received into communion with him? God's justice demands that I make full payment, either through myself or through a Redeemer.

19. What kind of Redeemer must you seek? I must seek a Redeemer who is a true and righteous human and who is at the same time true God.

20. Why must the Redeemer be a true and righteous human? The Redeemer must be a true and righteous human because the justice of God requires that only one with a human nature who has not sinned may pay for my sin.

21. Why must the Redeemer be at the same time true God? The Redeemer must be true God so that by the power of his divine nature he might bear the burden of God's wrath and restore to me righteousness and life.

22. Who is that Redeemer who at the same time is true God and a true and righteous human? My only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who became human and died to pay the penalty for sin.

23. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become human? Christ, the Son of God became human by taking to himself true human nature, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary.

24. How did Christ satisfy God's just wrath for sin? Christ suffered the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross.

25. Why was it necessary for Christ to humble himself even unto death? Christ humbled himself unto death because the justice of God required that satisfaction for my sins could be made in no other way than by the death of the Son of God.

26. Did Christ stay dead? No. Christ rose again from the dead on the third day.

27. How are you made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ? I am made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ through repentant faith in him and his substitutionary atoning death.

28. What is faith in Jesus Christ? Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, by which I receive and rest upon him alone for my salvation.

29. What is repentance unto life? Repentance unto life is a saving grace, by which I turn from my sin to God, promising to strive after new obedience.

30. What benefits in this life come from repentant faith in Jesus Christ? Those who repent and believe in Jesus Christ partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification.

31. What is justification? Justification is an act of God's free grace in which he pardons all my sins and accepts me as righteous in his sight only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to me.

32. What is adoption? Adoption is an act of God's free grace in which I am received as a child of God with all its rights and privileges.



33. What is sanctification? Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit by which I am renewed after the image of God and am enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

34. What do you believe about the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is true and eternal God together with the Father and the Son.

35. What does the Holy Spirit do for you? The Holy Spirit unites me to Christ, convicts me of sin, comforts me, and sanctifies me.

36. Since you have been saved by grace alone through Christ, without any merit of your own, why must you yet do good works? I must do good works because Christ also renews me by his Holy Spirit to be his image, so that I might show thankfulness to God for his mercy.

37. What is prayer? Prayer is an offering up of my desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of my sins and thankfulness for his mercies.

38. What is the church? The church is a community of believers in which the gospel is truly preached and the ordinances are rightly administered.

39. What is the gospel? The gospel is the good news that those who repent and believe in the death and resurrection of Christ for their sins will be forgiven.

40. To whom should you preach the gospel? I should preach the gospel to all people in all nations to the end of the earth.

41. What are the ordinances of the church? Baptism and the Lord's Supper were specially instituted by Christ to represent the benefits of union with him by visible and outward signs.

42. What is baptism? Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be a sign of the believer's fellowship with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection.

43. What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized? It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to join themselves to some visible and orderly church of Jesus Christ.
44. What is the Lord's Supper? The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be a sign of the believer's communion with Christ and his church through his broken body and shed blood.
45. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death? Believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and immediately pass into the presence of God forever.
46. What will be done to the wicked at death? The wicked will at their death be cast into the torments of hell.
47. Where is Christ now? Christ ascended into heaven and sits at the Father's right hand.
48. How does Christ's resurrection benefit you? Christ's resurrection is a certain promise of my glorious resurrection.
49. How does Christ's ascension into heaven benefit you? Christ is my advocate in heaven before his Father and my certain promise that he will take me up to himself.
50. Will Jesus Christ come again? Jesus Christ will come a second time in power and glory, which is the joy and hope of all believers.
51. What will happen to believers after Christ comes again? Believers will live with Christ forever in a new heaven and a new earth.
52. What is your only hope in life and death? My only hope in life and death is that I am not my own but belong to God and to my Savior Jesus Christ.

## APPENDIX 7

### PRAYING DAILY FOR OUR CHILDREN<sup>1</sup>

1. Salvation—"Lord, let salvation spring up within my children, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." (Isa. 45:8; 2 Tim. 2:10)
2. Growth in Grace—"I pray that my children may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18)
3. Love—"Grant, Lord, that my children may learn to live a life of love, through the Spirit who dwells in them. (Gal. 5:25; Eph. 5:2)
4. Honesty and Integrity—"May integrity and honesty be their virtue and their protection." (Ps. 25:21)
5. Self-Control—"Father, help my children not to be like many others around them, but let them be alert and self-controlled in all they do." (1 Thess. 5:6)
6. Love for God's Word—"May my children grow to find Your Word more precious than much pure gold and sweeter than honey from the comb." (Ps. 19:10)
7. Justice—"God, help my children to love justice as You do and act justly in all they do." (Ps. 11:7; Mic. 6:8)
8. Mercy—"May my children always be merciful, just as their Father is merciful." (Luke 6:36)
9. Respect (for self, others, and authority)—"Father, grant that my children may show proper respect to everyone, as Your Word commands. (1 Pet. 2:17)

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<sup>1</sup>Bob Hostetler, *Praying Daily for Our Children* [PDF file], accessed November 23, 2018, [www.bobhostetler.com](http://www.bobhostetler.com).

10. Biblical Self-Esteem—"Help my children develop a strong self-esteem that is rooted in the realization that they are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:10)
11. Faithfulness—"Let love and faithfulness never leave my children, but bind these twin virtues around their necks and write them on the tablet of their hearts." (Prov. 3:3)
12. Courage—"May my children always be strong and courageous in their character. (Deut. 31:6)
13. Purity—"Create in them a pure heart, O God, and let that purity of heart be shown in their actions." (Ps. 51:10)
14. Kindness—"Lord, may my children always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else." (1 Thess. 5:15)
15. Generosity—"Grant that my children may be generous and willing to share, and so lay-up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age." (1 Tim. 6:18–19)
16. Peace-Loving—"Father, let my children make every effort to do what leads to peace." (Rom. 14:19)
17. Joy—"May my children be filled with the joy given by the Holy Spirit." (1 Thess 1:6)
18. Perseverance—"Lord, teach my children perseverance in all they do, and help them especially to run with perseverance the race marked out for them." (Heb. 12:1)
19. Humility—"God, please cultivate in my children the ability to show true humility toward all." (Titus 3:2)
20. Compassion—"Lord, please clothe my children with the virtue of compassion." (Col. 3:12)
21. Responsibility—"Grant that my children may learn responsibility, for each one should carry his own load." (Gal. 6:5)
22. Contentment—"Father, teach my children the secret of being content in any and every situation, through Him who gives them strength." (Phil. 4:12–13)

23. Faith—"I pray that faith will find root and grow in my children's hearts, that by faith they may gain what has been promised to them." (Luke 17:5–6; Heb. 11:1–40)
24. A Servant's Heart—"God, please help my children develop servant's hearts, that they may serve wholeheartedly, as if they were serving the Lord, not men." (Eph. 6:7)
25. Hope—"May the God of hope grant that my children may overflow with hope and hopefulness by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15:13)
26. Willingness and Ability to Work—"Teach my children, Lord, to value work and to work at it with all their heart, as working for the Lord and not for men." (Col. 3:23)
27. Passion for God—"Lord, please instill in my children a soul that 'followeth hard after thee,' one that clings passionately to You." (Ps. 63:8)
28. Self-Discipline—"Father, I pray that my children may acquire a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair." (Prov. 1:3)
29. Prayerfulness—"Grant, Lord, that my children's lives may be marked by prayerfulness, that they may learn to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers." (1 Thess. 5:17)
30. Gratitude—"Help my children to live lives that are always overflowing with thankfulness and always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. 5:20; Col. 2:7)

## APPENDIX 8

### 52 FAMILY DINNER DISCUSSIONS<sup>1</sup>

#### Fun

1. If we could have any celebrity over for dinner whom would you want us to have over? Why them? What do you think we would serve them? Why that?
2. If you could plan a dinner for our family at any location in the world, where would you plan it and why?
3. If our family had our own cooking show on TV, what would be our specialties and style of food?
4. What is one restaurant that we have never been to as a family that you would like to try sometime?
5. If you could be any food item, what food item would be and why?
6. If we as a family were stuck on a deserted island for a week and we could have an unlimited supply of only one food item, what would you want it to be?
7. If you were to jump off a tall building and safely land in a pool filled with a soft food, what would you want it to be?
8. What is a famous food or beverage factory that you would love to go visit and see how it is made?
9. If you could create your own candy bar, what would it be made out of and what would its name be?

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<sup>1</sup>52 *Family Dinner Discussions* [PDF file], accessed November 23, 2018, <https://ministrytoparents.com/dinner>.

10. If you were to open a restaurant, what kind of food would you serve? What would the name of the restaurant be?

#### School

11. Tell us one thing you loved about today and one thing you didn't like about today?

12. Who is someone you got to know better today? What did you find out new about them?

13. If you could rewind and do one thing different this last week, what would it be and why?

14. Who is one person (student or adult) at your school that seems like they are having a rough week, that we as a family could do something to encourage next week?

15. What is one thing you are thankful for about your school year so far? Why?

16. If you were a teacher, what subject would you teach? What is one fun thing you would do as a teacher to make that subject more interesting?

17. If you could change or add one thing to your school, what would it be? (Be positive)

18. If you could build a school in a country around the world where would you build it? Why?

19. What is one topic or subject you have never had in school, which you would love to take or learn about?

20. If Jesus were to attend your school tomorrow, what do you think would happen? What do you think your friend's reactions would be to Him?

#### Family/Home

21. When you start a family of your own, how many kids do you want to have? How many boys & how many girls?

22. When you are a parent, what do you think is going to be your most important rule you are going to have and have to enforce?

23. If you were to switch roles with me for a day and I had to attend your school, how do you think I would do?
24. If you were to switch roles with me for a day and you had to do what I do all day, how do you think you would do?
25. If you were going to plan our next family trip or vacation, where would we go and what would we do?
26. Jesus had brothers and sisters, what do you think would be the hardest thing about being Jesus' little brother or sister?
27. If our family were on a reality show? What show would it be and how do you think we would do?
28. What is your favorite family memory/memories?
29. What is one thing you look forward to, when you are a parent? Why?
30. What is one thing you don't look forward to, when you are a parent? Why?
31. If our family would go away on a mission trip together, where would you want to go and what would we do there to serve others?
32. If you could add one room onto our house, what kind of room would it be and how would we decorate it?

#### Spiritual Life

33. What is one thing God has taught you or shown you lately?
34. What is one verse that you have read or heard that has really been your favorite?
35. What is your favorite praise and worship song or Christian song lately? Why is it your favorite?
36. Tell me what you learned in church/youth group/Sunday School today/this week?
37. If you could be a Bible character who would you be?



38. What is one question you have had about Christianity or God lately that we as a family could study and find out more about?
39. Who is one person in your life right now that you could share Christ with?
40. What is one way we can encourage you this week in your Spiritual Life and walk with Christ?
41. If you could have dinner with Jesus, what is one question you would ask Him?
42. What is one thing you are excited about when it comes to heaven and eternity with God?
43. Of all the miracles that Jesus did, which one would you have wanted to be there for and why?
44. If you could memorize a whole book of the Bible, which one would you want to know by heart?

#### Personal Thoughts

45. If you could solve one global problem in our world, what would it be? Why?
46. If you could sit down and be absolutely honest with someone in your life right now, and you knew they wouldn't get mad- who would you sit down with and talk to?
47. If you could sum up who you are right now in one word, what would be the word?
48. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would you change?
49. If you could change one thing about your life right now, what would you change?
50. When you grow up, what is one thing you would like to do or accomplish for God?
51. When was the happiest moment you have ever had?
52. What is one thing about our family dinner times that you think is the best?

## APPENDIX 9

### 2010 SBC RESOLUTION ON FAMILY WORSHIP<sup>1</sup>

WHEREAS, The Bible teaches the spiritual discipline of family worship for the glory of God, the strengthening of the church, and the spiritual nourishment of the family (Deut 6:1-18; Ps 78:1-8; Eph 4-6); and

WHEREAS, Scripture pictures the Christian home as a place in which parents are instructed to teach and disciple their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Deut 6:1-18; Eph 6:1-4); and

WHEREAS, Family worship has been a cherished Southern Baptist principle reflected in church covenants which have called believers “to maintain family and secret devotions” and “to religiously educate” their children; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, family worship has been emphasized in The Baptist Faith and Message, which states that “Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth”; and

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<sup>1</sup>Bryant Wright. <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=1200>. The Southern Baptist Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida (June 15-16, 2010) for the annual meeting of the messengers. Among other topics discussed and resolutions passed was this one on family worship.

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists have launched major initiatives which have brought to the forefront the need for families to pray, read from the Bible, memorize scripture, and give praise to the Lord within their homes; and

WHEREAS, In 2009, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention included family worship as a key catalyst for a Great Commission resurgence calling on Southern Baptists “to build gospel-saturated homes that see children as a gift from God and as our first and primary mission field”; and

WHEREAS, Family worship is integral to laying a foundation for multi-generational faithfulness to the gospel (Psalm 145:4) and a necessary complement for the strengthening of the local church to fulfill its commission (Matthew 28:18-20); and

WHEREAS, Family worship serves as an important preparation for the corporate worship of the local church on the Lord’s Day (Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:25); and

WHEREAS, In recent generations, the act of family worship has been neglected, evidenced by the breakdown of the family in our time; and

WHEREAS, The embracing of the spiritual discipline of family worship in the Christian home has the capacity to nurture stronger families, a stronger church, and a stronger nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 15-16, 2010, encourage churches and families to rekindle the spiritual discipline of family worship; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we define family worship as the regular meeting together of a family for a time of prayer and Bible reading, which may include other activities such as

scripture memorization, singing spiritual songs and hymns, and discussing biblical truth and Christian mission; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage families to cultivate not only structured times of worship together, but also ongoing intentional and informal conversations about the things of the Lord; and be it further

RESOLVED, That as we call families and churches to embrace family worship, we urge fathers particularly to fulfill their divinely mandated responsibility to lead their families toward spiritual maturity (Eph. 5:22-6:4; Col. 3:19-21); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage all parents to consider times of family worship to be an opportunity to introduce their children to the gospel, to train their children to seek the salvation of their friends and neighbors, and to pray for the nations; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage churches and families to make use of the many resources produced to aid in family worship; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we urge the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention and their pastors to promote family worship and encourage the families of their congregations to place the highest priority on embracing this foundational spiritual discipline for the well-being of families, the spread of the gospel, the making of disciples, and the glory of God.

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## ABSTRACT

### EQUIPPING FAMILIES FOR FAMILY WORSHIP AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019  
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Charles T. Lewis Jr.

The purpose of this project is to equip families at First Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, Arkansas to implement family worship in their homes. Chapter 1 provides the rationale and research methodology for the project. Chapter 2 provides the scriptural basis for equipping families for family worship. Chapter 3 charts the historical, theoretical, and practical issues related to family worship. Chapter 4 describes the results of the project. Chapter 5 is the evaluation of the completed project.

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