

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 2024

**Series Title:** God's Plan for the Family

**Lesson Title:** How to Help Your Family Get Closer to God

**Key Scripture:** James 4:8

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### INTRODUCTION

As it is often said, Christianity starts at home.

Of all the people that you come into contact with, your own children and spouse are those you have the closest connection with and the potential to have the greatest impact on.

Living with people who you call family gives you one of the best ministry opportunities to live out your authentic faith and show them God's love and care in a profound way.

Here are some ways to encourage your family to stay close to God.

### PRAY TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

**Matthew 18:18-19 (KJV) – “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.”**

You've probably heard the phrase “A family that prays together stays together”. Well, this statement has become widely popular in the Christian faith because there is something powerful that happens when a family joins together to seek God in prayer.

God is sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, and is the one who supplies all of our needs. When families truly understand that God is the source of all their needs, it causes them to draw close to Him in prayer. He becomes the one they rely on to move in their situations when they face the challenges and storms of life.

A family's faith in God is strengthened as they lay out their prayer requests before the Lord and see Him move on their behalf. They grow spiritually, become more unified and grow closer to God as they experience the exponential power of corporate prayer in their day-to-day living! To plainly say it – when families show up for prayer, they realize God shows up too!

## **GO TO CHURCH TOGETHER**

**Hebrews 10:25 (KJV) – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”**

Going to church together as a family is a big deal! The entire worship experience is designed to bring the family closer to God. Worshipping together, hearing the Word of God together, praying together, fellowshiping with others, giving in tithing and offering, and coming to the altar empowers and strengthens us to grow in our relationship with Christ and spiritually strong as a family.

When you miss church, you miss out on receiving what God designed for you. Outside of church, you will get spiritually weak, carnal, distracted and lose your focus. And if this is what happens to us individually, imagine how an entire household is impacted when the members of the family are not in church. The enemy can easily step in to destroy that family, get them in bondage and entangled with sin and so far outside of God's Will. Because of this, it is so important that you value and recognize the power of the church!

Church is the very thing God is using to shift the mindset of your family members, protect your family from the enemy's agenda, develop your

family's faith in Christ and is ultimately the life system God is using to draw your family closer to Him.

## **SPEND MEALTIMES TOGETHER AS A FAMILY**

**Deuteronomy 8:10 (KJV) – “When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.”**

Who would have ever thought that a family eating around the table together could bring you closer to God? Well, it can! In the Gospels there are at least fourteen separate occasions when Jesus ate meals with others. He often used those times for teaching moments to bring people closer to God.

Whether He was the host or the guest, He understood that gathering around a table and sharing a meal together created a powerful time for teaching, connection, discipleship, fellowship and more.

Busy schedules, screentime on our media devices and more can easily lead to family members living separate lives and being in their own world. However, if we follow Jesus' example, we can utilize something as simple as coming together around the table for a meal as a special ministry opportunity to connect, talk about life, learn about issues that require prayer, teach, laugh together, grow as a family and draw closer to God.

## **HOST FAMILY MONDAY**

**Joshua 24:15 (KJV) – “...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”**

Family Monday is a way to bring church to your home! We pray, we praise, we worship, read scriptures, get empowered with the Word and more! It is simply one of the best ways to bring the whole family together to grow in Christ.

From using their gifts and talents and learning about the Word to engaging in various aspects of the lesson and enjoying a great time of fun and fellowship – Family Monday creates the perfect environment for family members to become strong in Christ and draw closer to Him as a family.

Participating in the weekly lessons is doing more in your home spiritually than you may realize. It creates an environment for parents to become a Godly influence in their children's lives. Family Monday provides a platform to build a spiritual foundation in your family, opens the lines of communication within the family and so much more!

People of God, we cannot afford to neglect this God-intentional program. Make sure you download the lessons weekly from our church website [www.harvestlife.org](http://www.harvestlife.org), and get your family involved. Always remember, the spiritual seeds you sow today will produce the harvest for tomorrow.

## **FAMILIES SERVE TOGETHER IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**

**Joshua 24:15 (KJV) “...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”**

In the scripture, Joshua made a resolution to serve God together with his whole family. Well, he could speak for his family because He knew them very well and had influence over them. He was much like Abraham who had a great godly influence over his family that God Himself testified about: *“For I know him, that he will command his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him”* (Genesis 18:19).

As in the days of Joshua, so it is with us today. Through serving at the local church, we grow spiritually, get to know our church family better and enjoy being used by God to touch others' lives. At Harvest Life, there are many ways you can serve; Community Outreaches, Customer Service Teams, Facility Care Ministries, Kids and Youth Ministries, Worship and Fine Arts, Life Groups, Film Productions, Sanctuary Teams, Parking Lot Teams, etc.

When the family serves God, it fosters unity, strengthens bonds, and promotes spiritual growth. It encourages shared values, instills a sense of purpose, and promotes love and compassion. This collective commitment can inspire others and lead the family closer to God.

## **MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE**

**Joshua 1:8 (KJV) – “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”**

It is important for the whole family to memorize the scriptures because they serve as a platform in your spirit that the Holy Spirit can draw from when you need it. And, believe me, there will be times that you will face situations and you will need to draw from the Word of God that is within you.

The Word of God is powerful because it is literally “God-breathed” from the mind of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and when we fill our minds with His words by memorizing Scripture, we avail ourselves of the most powerful spiritual tool there is.

The Word of God is an anchor. The more Word you have in you, the stronger you become and get closer to God.

## **ESTABLISHING A SPIRITUAL CULTURE IN YOUR HOUSE**

**Deuteronomy 11:19-22 (KJV)**

**19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**

**20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:**

**21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.**

**22 For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;**

If you are going to keep your family connected and devoted to God, you must establish a strong spiritual culture in your house. The kind of culture that results in – a “knowing” concerning the principles of Christ. The idea of God’s presence and your family members being Christian is so ingrained in their hearts and minds – so much so – that they don’t ask these types of questions:

- “Are we going to church?”
- “Should I tell a lie in this situation?”
- “Is prayer something I should do?”
- “Should I be saved?”

You already know these things because you live in a Christian culture that is saturated in the household. The father and mother lead by word and example to the point that the children see this lifestyle as a way of life. The atmosphere of spiritual conversations, righteous direction, prayer and fellowship is in the home!

The vision of the house is built on a Biblical foundation that leads to positive practical actions:

- Come to Sunday School
- Come to Worship Service
- Treat people right
- Give tithe and offerings to support the Kingdom
- Serve in the church and community
- And, of course, participate in corporate praise and worship

These actions lend themselves to helping the family members live a Christian life outside of the home – because the whole house revolves around the basic core values that are found in Christ!

## **CONCLUSION**

While individual time with God is very important, meeting with God as a family is also essential. As family members, you can help each other remain focused on Christ.

Helping your family become closer to God is a wonderful experience. It can help improve communication and deepen your relationship with your loved ones. Additionally, it can provide opportunities for personal growth, spiritual enrichment, and empowerment.

By taking the time to pray together, read the Bible, and serve others together, you can help your family grow closer to God and experience all the benefits that come with it.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

### Lesson: How to Help Your Family Get Closer to God

#### Pray Together as a Family

1. **Circle the Correct Answers** – When a family prays together, the following things happen:
  - a. They grow spiritually
  - b. They become more unified
  - c. Their faith is weakened
  - d. They grow closer to God as they experience the exponential power of corporate prayer in their day-to-day living

#### Go To Church Together

2. **True or False** - The entire church worship experience is designed to bring the family closer to God.
3. **Answer the Question** – List two ways God uses church to minister to the family.
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Spend Mealtimes Together as a Family

4. **True or False** - We can utilize something as simple as coming together around the table for a meal as a special ministry opportunity to connect, talk about life, learn about issues that require prayer, teach, laugh together, grow as a family and draw closer to God.



### **Host Family Monday**

5. **Fill in the Blanks** – Joshua 24:15 (KJV) says “...but as for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, we will \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord.”
6. **Circle the Correct Answers** – Participating in the weekly Family Monday lesson brings the whole family together to grow strong in Christ because it:
  - a. Creates an environment for parents to become a Godly influence in their children’s lives
  - b. Provides a platform to build a spiritual foundation in your family
  - c. Opens the lines of communication within the family
  - d. All of the above

### **Families Serve Together in the Local Church**

7. **Answer the Question** – List three ways serving together in the local church blesses the family.
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Memorize Scripture**

8. **Fill in the Blanks** - Joshua 1:8 (KJV) says “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt \_\_\_\_\_ therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way \_\_\_\_\_, and then thou shalt have \_\_\_\_\_.”
9. **True or False** - The more Word you have in you, the **weaker** you become and grow **further** from God.

## **Establishing A Spiritual Culture In Your House**

10. **Answer the Question** – List three positive practical actions that happen in a family when the vision of the house is built on a Biblical foundation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Conclusion**

11. **Circle the Correct Answers** - Helping your family become closer to God is a wonderful experience because it can:

- a. Help improve communication
- b. Make your family spiritually weak
- c. Deepen your relationship with your loved ones
- d. Provide opportunities for personal growth, spiritual enrichment, and empowerment