

7 MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1

More time at home equals more family discipleship.

1. Discipling children is not merely an unexpected blessing of having to be home more. It is the biblical calling of every parent, in every season.
2. Additional time at home will not necessarily produce in a parent the heart posture needed for family discipleship.
3. Intentional discipling requires more than merely spending time and making memories.

2

Family discipleship happens once per week when we worship as a family at home.

1. Family discipleship describes a parent's total commitment to training disciples in the instruction of the Lord.
2. Family worship times are part of a family's comprehensive strategy of training disciples.
3. Faith training requires habits, rhythms, and practices which occur daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly.

3

Only the spiritual elite among us have what it takes to do family discipleship.

1. Family discipleship is a biblical command for every parent.
2. Introductory family discipleship involves simply following Jesus and bringing your family along with you.
3. Family discipleship is spiritual work. We cannot control the results, only our faithful effort. In our weakness (perceived and actual), Christ fortifies our work.

4

I want my children to love God, so my strategy is to simply keep them in church.

1. The Bible places primary responsibility for the intentional spiritual development of children in the hands of parents, not church leaders.
2. Twenty-five years of social science research concludes that homes that employ this strategy rarely produce adult disciples.
3. Discipling cannot be effective in merely 1-2 church teaching moments per week.

5

Between school, sports, events, and activities, there is simply no time for family discipleship.

1. Getting a child's priorities out of order early leads to heartache later.
2. An honest look into the future reveals that of all of the earthly hopes and dreams they have for their child, parents would trade them all if, in adulthood, their child had rejected Christ.
3. This honest look into the future should yield a biblical prioritization with discipleship in the highest position.

6

We pray before meals, before bed, and we attend church together. Aren't we doing better than most?

1. The biblical pattern for making disciples involves the formal passing along of truth and the informal modeling of that truth in everyday life. Truth is more caught than taught.
2. ~75% of kids who grow up in the church will be inactive in their faith by the end of their first year of college.
3. The faith of many churchgoing kids proves too hollow to endure in the world.

7

Mom's got this.

1. The Bible commands fathers to take an active leadership role in the spiritual development of children.
2. Researchers have consistently proven the hypothesis that "as the father goes, so goes the family."
3. Many fathers have become selfish and passive, leaving their wives and children spiritually malnourished. A father who loves God and shares that heart with his family is the greatest disciple making force on earth.

TIPS & RESOURCES FOR LEADING FAMILY WORSHIP

HYMNS

Choose songs that are Christ-centered, theologically rich, and focus on the Gospel message. Look for concepts like creation, sin, the cross, salvation by faith, life with Christ, personal holiness, mission, and eternity.

Start with the same 1-2 songs each family worship time and add a new song as the first two are close to memorized.

EXAMPLES OF CHRIST-CENTERED SONGS

Young Children

Nothing But the Blood
Amazing Grace
Holy, Holy, Holy
Doxology
Cornerstone

School Age Children

In Christ Alone
How Great Thou Art
Blessed Assurance
I Stand Amazed in the Presence (How Marvelous)
Jesus Paid It All

Teenagers

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing
There is a Fountain Filled With Blood
It Is Well
Be Thou My Vision
How Deep the Father's Love For Us

TIP:
Plug your family songs into a random song generator app on a phone or tablet.

READINGS

Be sure that the Bible is your central reading material. When using a devotional book, be sure it is driven by texts of Scripture. By reading Bible stories (and sections of Scripture as kids get older), parents make bible reading a part of the normal family rhythm. Opening the Bible reminds parents and children that we believe that they are under the authority of the Word of God.

EXAMPLES OF BIBLE READINGS

Young Children

The Bible
The Rhyme Bible
Jesus Storybook Bible (Lloyd Jones)
The Biggest Story ABC (DeYoung)

School Age Children

The Bible
The Big Picture Story Bible (Helm)
Jesus Storybook Bible (Lloyd Jones)
Beginner's Gospel Story Bible (Kennedy/Mahoney)

Teenagers

The Bible
CSB Study Bible
ESV Study Bible
The One Year Christian History (Rusten)

TIP:
Try it! For 21 consecutive days: Read, sing, and pray as a family (10-15 mins)

CATECHISM (Faith Training)

Consistency is critical in family worship. For example, it is much better to gather together for ten minutes each night before bed than it would be to gather the family once per month for one hour. When family worship is consistent, learning is enhanced through repetition. Ask children to recite Bible verses, answers to short theology questions.

TOOLS FOR FAITH TRAINING

Scripture Memory

Seeds Family Worship
My ABC Bible Verses (Hunt)
FighterVerses.Com

Biblical Foundations

Faith Foundations Catechism (IBCLR)
Reformed Reader Catechism
New City Catechism
30 Days to Understand Your Bible (Anders)

Prayer

Operation World
The Valley of Vision (Bennett)
Every Moment Holy (Peterson)

TIP:
When the whole family does the same verses/questions, everyone is practicing together.