

# A 15 Minute Family Devotional Guide

## 1. Read the Bible (5 Min)

Read an age-appropriate Bible for your family and seek to apply it to their lives. It may be a few verses or a paragraph or two. Make it upbeat, lively, and fun. Engage younger children through picture Bibles and creative voices. Engage older children through a discussion of current events or ideas.

## 2. Sing to the Lord (3 Min)

If you feel comfortable singing, pick a song or two that is age-appropriate for your family.

## 3. Memorize a Verse (2 Min)

Pick a verse from your own quiet time for your family to memorize over a week. Review the verse together, saying it multiple times so that everyone learns it. The complexity of the verse you choose should be age-appropriate.

## 4. Take Requests (2 Min)

Allow a couple of minutes for each member of the family to give a prayer request for which other family members can pray.

## 5. Pray (3 Min)

Have each family member take turns daily, praying aloud the requests you have just collected. Use this time to teach your children to pray; consider using the ACTS model—Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication.

# What Resources will I Need?

## 1. A Good Study Bible

If reading from an adult version of the Bible, at least one parent will need a copy of a good study Bible, to assist in understanding the Bible “on the fly.” Consider the “ESV Study Bible.”

## 2. An Age Appropriate Bible for All

If your child can to calmly hold a book, he or she should have their own Bible. For pre-readers, consider “The Big Picture Story Bible” by Crossway. For school-aged children, consider the “ESV Seek & Find Bible” or the “NIRV Adventure Bible.” Children junior high & older will need an adult Bible, preferably a study Bible.

## 3. A Bible Map/Atlas

Having a Bible map or atlas at hand will help all understand the location of biblical places.

## 4. A Prepared Heart

Parents should have already spent personal time with God before a family devotional time. God’s Word will need to be impressed on their own heart before they seek to impress it on their children’s hearts (Deut. 6:6-7).

## 5. A Determined Attitude

Prioritizing a family devotional time is a difficult task! Be determined to have a family time at least 5 times a week.



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# Feeding Your Family

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Deut. 6:6-7 ESV)



# Why Should I Begin a Family Devotional Time?

## 1. Believers are Called to Provide for Their Own Families

1 Timothy 5:9 tells us to provide for our families: “But if anyone does not provide for his relative, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (ESV).” While the immediate thought concerns material needs, in light of eternity we should consider it worse to neglect spiritual needs.

## 2. Parents are Responsible for the Spiritual Development of their Children

Though there are many supplements to the parents role in their children’s spiritual growth—the church, VBS, Sunday School, AWANA, Junior Church, Christians Schools, and more—the Bible places the responsibility for the spiritual development of children on parents, especially dads. Ephesians 6:4 confirms this idea: “Father do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

## 3. Our Children are Leaving the Faith in Mass Numbers

Several studies estimate that 80% of “Christian” children will leave the faith in college into adulthood. Yet, a George Barna study of more than 1,000 Christian couples, whose children remained strongly committed to the faith into adulthood, concluded that formal, regular Bible study and prayer was the human essential to keeping children in the faith.

# What Important Ideas Should I Consider?

## 1. Make it a Priority

There are simply too many individualistic pursuits and activities in the family today. If you are to take seriously your God-given calling to instruct your family, you must make it a priority. Often a family devotional time cannot be added to an already too full family schedule; something of lesser value must go. Make the difficult choice to honor God!

## 2. Keep it Short & Sweet

A family devotional time should last no more than 15-20 minutes. Any longer would not be conducive to growing in God’s Word and may teach that God and His Word are boring and dull.

## 3. Don’t Get Too Complicated

Long lesson plans are not needed for family devotions—in fact, they may hurt rather than help! Follow the plan in this brochure as a starting place and then adapt as necessary for your unique family. Little to no preparation time is needed!

## 4. Plan Your Family Devotional Time Around a Meal or Other Gathering

Though some families successfully have a family devotional time before bed, it is often too difficult at the end of a long day (when everyone is cranky) to remain committed to this task for most. Consider having a family devotional time around a family meal or other time that your family regularly gathers.

## 5. Variety is Your Friend

Feel free to vary your approach. Though the Bible should be your staple, consider reading other Christian books, biographies, and classics together. Let older take a turn leading the devotions occasionally. Cut some elements out some days and add others in or focus on one item. Make certain the time does not become predictable, routine, or monotonous!

