

Leading Family Worship

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[0:00] Welcome. Thanks for coming this morning. I'm sure some others will start rolling in here as well.! This is just a one-off special class that we wanted to do called Leading Family Worship.

I appreciate you guys taking the time to be here, especially after all the eating that you probably just did. I know it's hard to get out of bed and start moving, so I appreciate you guys being here. In the summer of 2009, I got married to my college sweetheart, Elizabeth.

And just a few years before that, I had become a Christian. I grew up at a Christian home, but I don't think I put my trust in Jesus Christ until the end of high school, very end of high school.

I became a Christian and I started to have this insatiable urge to share the hope of Jesus Christ that I had experienced. I wanted to share that with other people. So I started to desire that.

I wanted to tell people about Jesus, especially in places with no believers, places that we would call unreached people groups. So with Elizabeth by my side, we set out on this trajectory to become lifelong missionaries.

[1:14] That was our hope. And specifically with an eye towards evangelism and church planting. So we really wanted to be involved in the Great Commission. What is the Great Commission?

To make disciples, right? To make disciples of all nations. And so that's what we wanted to do. We wanted to be disciple makers. So in 2011, we began living in North Africa with Muslims, doing a two year internship in the context of an unchurched, unreached people group.

And we had no kids at the time. And from my vantage point, I honestly thought that kids would just slow us down from that mission, from being a part of the Great Commission.

And so I was actually kind of happy about it because we had important things to do for the Lord. So several months into our time in North Africa, I had a friend, his name is Marcos.

He challenged me to listen to a Vodibachum sermon. I don't know how familiar you guys are with Vodibachum. We just recently went to be with the Lord. But he gave me this sermon.

[2:20] He said, man, you should listen to this. Now, I don't know if you've ever experienced this, but this one sermon caused a paradigm shift in the way I was thinking. Changed my life forever.

And his main point was basically this. Western Christians do not view children as a gift. And Western Christians have overlooked the family as the primary means of making disciples.

That was his that was his twofold assumption. Western Christians do not view children as a gift. And Western Christians have overlooked the family as the primary means of making disciples.

So he wanted to unfold this. How did we get to this place? So this was his argument. Western culture has assumed a secular, self-centered view towards marriage, family and children.

And by secular, he means this. He means a godless worldview, a godless way of seeing the world that sees life through the lens of materialism, productivity and personal fulfillment.

[3 : 33] So he's saying that's the case of Western society generally. So in a life that's driven by materialism, by gain, by productivity and by personal fulfillment, there's really if you think about it, there's really little to no incentive to make the sacrifices demanded in both marriage and having children.

That just slows you down. Right. So it's no wonder that that in Western society generally all throughout Europe, America, Australia, places like this. It's no wonder that divorce rates and non marriage just skyrocketed and birth rates plummeted all across the Western world.

So and I'd like to say it was essentially like a functional disdain for children that was just embedded into culture, into our culture. So this functional disdain for children is one of the reasons why European Union is in decline even now.

So to replace the population for the next generation, how many? What's the birth rate that you need? 2.1 at least. Right. To be able to replace yourselves.

So to replace that next generation, 2.1. France currently has the highest rates in Europe at 1.8. So even the highest in Europe is in decline.

[4 : 52] And then Italy and Spain have under 1.3 birth rates. So they're dying. Essentially, they're not replacing themselves physically. In other words, the beliefs of a person that we have about God, that we have about marriage, that we have about children and we have about purpose.

All of these things have real world ramifications for our lives personally and our culture. So Bauckham, he then points out in the sermon the fact that those from the Muslim world, which is where I was living at the time, the Muslim world, they viewed marriage and children very differently than the Western world.

They see children as a blessing from God. We found out that Muslims who immigrated to Europe, they were averaging over three children per mother.

So just absolutely blasting out of the water the Western paradigm at 1.3 in some cases. So over three children per mother. So the reason that Vodibacham was bringing all this data to light was to make this point.

Muslims tend to have a more accurate belief about God, marriage and children than Christians living in the West. That's shocking.

[6 : 06] That was shocking to me whenever I heard him say that, that because I was a Christian in the West, I tended towards a view, a secular view that actually had a built in disdain for children.

As opposed to the Muslims that I was trying to reach with the gospel. They loved kids and they saw them as a blessing. That was shocking to me. But as I reflected, I realized that that was true.

It was true. What Vodibacham was saying in the sermon at one point, I believed and I said that children. And this is to my shame. I actually said this children were like leeches who suck away our fun, our finances and our freedom.

I said that. About 15 years ago, that was the way I was thinking as a Christian, as a born again Christian. So to believe and to say such a thing as that is much more in line with a godless, materialistic, self-fulfillment age than the God of the Bible.

That's what I believed. I was more over here than over here with the God of the Bible. Because the Bible teaches that the building blocks of the family, both marriage and children, are gifts from God, not curses from God.

[7:21] So Vodibacham was rightly pointing out that Western Christians like myself were more influenced by the culture than by the Bible. And as a result, I mislabeled and many others mislabeled God's blessings as curses.

It's wrong. And the result of that, of mislabeled God's blessings as a curse, I was ironically missing out on one of God's fundamental strategies for carrying out the very great commission I was saying I was all about.

Making and raising children is making and raising disciples. It's built into the fabric of God's design. Let me say it again.

Making and raising children is actually making and raising disciples for the Christian household. So prior to hearing this, I thought of children as kind of this like peripheral project that was in competition with the work of disciple making.

I used to see those things as different. I thought real discipleship was mainly having conversation about a book over coffee, which glory to God, those are good things.

[8:33] We do those things. But I had that as the main function. That's the main way we do disciple making. However, the reality is that the overwhelming majority of conversions to Christ and the overwhelming majority of spiritual growth in a Christian's life are directly attributed to parents.

Parents. Let's do a quick survey. Please raise your hand if your parents were the primary influence for you becoming a Christian. Raise your hand. Look around. Primary influence.

Okay. It's amazing. And I had missed it. I was missing it. But it makes sense, doesn't it? Of course, God's design for marriage and family would be aligned with his purpose of making himself known in the world.

But for those of you who are a little bit dense like me, I needed to hear that sermon from Votie Bauckham years ago. I needed to see that children are a gift and the family is the primary means.

It's not the only means, but the primary means of making disciples. So the reason I begin with this story is because we need to rightly see the beauty and the value of the family and God's design for making disciples.

[9:50] But who bears the primary responsibility to carry that vision forward? What about your family? Who bears the primary responsibility? Is it the church?

Is it the children's ministry? Is it the youth pastor? Is it the Christian school? Who bears the primary responsibility to carry forward the vision of disciple making in your family?

Well, as wonderful as all those things can be, and those are good gifts God uses. I'd like to make the case that, and this is on your paper, this is the main point. The Lord intends for the primary responsibility to fall on husbands leading our wives and fathers leading our children to know and see Jesus Christ as our supreme authority, savior, and treasure.

I use those very intentionally. Authority, savior, and treasure. We need all three of those together. And the primary way we do this is through leading family worship.

That's why we're having this class. The primary way we do that is through leading family worship. And I'm going to define family worship as an intentional time in the day, which typically includes reading scripture, praying, and singing together.

[11:04] Just those three. Very basic. Reading scripture, praying, and singing together. So in the remainder of our time together, we're going to look at family worship in the Bible, how to lead family worship, a couple threats to family worship, and a God-sized vision for family worship.

So first, let's look at family worship in the Bible. So we will not find an explicit command that outlines this is how you should do family worship just like this.

So you're not going to see that. But it is similar to the concept of the Trinity. We are putting a name on something that is implicit throughout the Bible. So we can gain some helpful insights.

We're going to do a quick survey, and you can see the headers there that essentially take you through Old and New Testament. We're not going to look at all of these in depth, but we will begin with Abraham in Genesis at the very beginning, just so you have a starting point.

In the beginning, Abraham, Genesis 18. Look at this. It says, So Abraham is expected to communicate the way of the Lord to his children and to instruct them on how they are to follow him.

[12:26] And this is a modeling and a teaching, a daily pattern of living a godly life that honors the Lord. That's what he's being commanded to do there.

And then just a few chapters later, you see in Genesis 22, now he has the promised child, Isaac, right? He's got Isaac. And if you remember the story, he's going up the hill to sacrifice Isaac, right?

God says, take him up the hill, sacrifice Isaac. So Isaac's walking up the hill with his dad, and he says to Abraham, my father. And he said, here I am, my son. And he said, behold, the fire in the wood.

But here's the question. Where is the lamb for the burnt offering? Well, why would Isaac ask that question? Because he's seen it modeled and taught again and again and again and again and again.

So much so that he understood that this isn't just any wood. This isn't just any hike that we're doing. We're going to consecrate ourselves to the living God like my dad's taught us to do all these years.

[13:31] He's following in the footsteps of his dad, knowing the implication of the fire and the wood and the missing elements that were on this hike. And so Isaac was clearly familiar with the purpose and procedure of offerings to the Lord.

So the implication in this text is that he regularly saw and understood his father's practice of worshiping the Lord. You see it? So it was commanded, and then he's actually doing it somehow, teaching his son and those in his household.

Let's look briefly at Moses. And this is probably the banner text that we should consider. Deuteronomy 6, 4-7. You're familiar with this.

Jesus calls this the greatest commandment at the very beginning before we get to the verse 7. In verse 4, he says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. So that's the first part.

[14:35] He declares that and commands that over the people, over the heads of the households of the people of Israel. The very next lines are these lines. Verse 7.

You shall teach them diligently to your children. Everything I just commanded you to love the Lord with all of your hearts, minds, and strength.

Teach that. Teach these words to your children. And it goes on and says, And you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

So you imagine this. Moses gathers the families of the believing community. And he gives what Jesus cites as the greatest commandment. Love the Lord with all your heart.

And then he places the onus on the family as the primary vehicle for teaching the children about how to love the Lord. See, that's what's happening in this exchange.

[15:41] That's what's happening in this declaration, this command. So what does it look like to honor the Lord throughout the whole day? They're supposed to be doing this, teaching this all throughout the whole day.

And it's in this context of the family that children are consistently exposed to models of godliness. Day in and day out.

There's no one else like that in these kids' lives, in your kids' lives. Day in and day out, they're watching you. So when it says, You shall teach them diligently to your children.

The picture behind this phrase is like an engraver using his chisel to etch letters into a marble stone. That takes diligence.

It takes perseverance. It takes hard work. It takes precision. It takes concentration. It takes constant repetition of hammer strokes.

[16:38] It takes patience. The same is true with training your kids and what it looks like to follow the Lord. So there's no mention of a formal structure here.

Like, here's a time we're all going to get together. There's no mention of that in these verses. However, it appears that the default rhythm would have included both formal and informal moments of teaching.

I mean, obviously, there seems to be an informal aspect that captures teaching while you're sitting, teaching while you're walking, lying down, rising up. There's all these different moments throughout the day.

Those are strewn throughout the day, informal moments. So the idea is that parents are able to teach children about the Lord any chance they get. Any chance they get.

Springboarding off of observations about the world.

Mommy, why is that person screaming at their kids in the grocery store? Why are they doing that? Why did you scream at me in the grocery store? Why did you do that? It gives opportunity to springboard from the context of our day to day to talk about sin, to talk about repentance, to talk about our need for a savior.

[17:45] That's what this is saying all throughout the day. Those are the informal moments. And those moments are precious and essential. However, I would argue that these should be coupled with intentional times of regular instruction as well.

If you think about it, if a football player desires to excel in football, he certainly will take advantage of the pickup games and throwing the ball out in the yard.

But it can't be all there is to it. He's also got to benefit from the intentional and formal moments of regular practice. Dedicated practice, concerted practice, the formal and the informal are not at odds.

They're intended to feed into one another to shape the person. The same is true for our formal and informal engagement with our kids.

So I'll just give you an example from this past week. We were reading from Kevin DeYoung's biggest story. It's what we've moved to for the learners and TG Kids. We use it at the house.

[18:47] We were going through the biggest story about Hannah having baby Samuel, who then went on to serve Eli, the priest. And that formal moment in the mornings where we're sitting there reading this story together, gathered together, it gave us the opportunity to talk about my sister who struggled through several miscarriages.

You remember that was Hannah's ordeal. She was not able to have a child. She was barren. And my sister named her son Samuel after this story that we just read. And so it gave us an opportunity to note why she named cousin Samuel that name and that she was basically consecrating her child like Hannah did in the Bible to God, a beloved son to God that he gave to her.

And that same story, it gave us an opportunity to talk about Eli's sons. If you remember, Eli had a couple of sons, Phineas and Hophni, and they were evil. They were supposed to be these good guys in the temple leveraging their authority for the spiritual good of the people.

But instead, they used their position and spiritual authority to exploit the people for selfish gain. And so Eli, their father, was held responsible for not disciplining his sons.

If you are familiar with the story, it's a fascinating story. But that conversation allowed us to help connect the dots with our kids about discipline, about discipline being a God-given responsibility and a form of loving them, even though it doesn't feel good in the moment.

[20 : 19] And so those are springboard moments that came from a formal context where we're gathered around God's word. Does that make sense what I'm saying? So formal and informal can go together and they should go together. So you can see some of these other headers from the Old Testament, Joshua, Job, Asaph.

I want to skip down to Paul for just a moment. So this is not just relegated to the Old Testament believing community.

This is also the church age, which is the age we live in as well, that we are called to this kind of paradigm. And so Ephesians 6, 4, it says, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

So you think about this. This is Paul writing. Even Paul, who is the premier evangelist to the Gentiles. This is Paul, the church planter par excellence.

This is the author of numerous books of inspired scripture. Even Paul continues to place the responsibility of disciplining and instructing children on the fathers.

[21 : 38] On the fathers. In other words, the clear expectation of scripture from front to back, from Genesis through the New Testament, is that the family will provide the primary, not only, but the primary spiritual instruction to their children.

And fathers in particular are called to lead the charge. Fathers in particular and husbands in particular are called to lead the charge. So it appears the Lord intends for the primary responsibility to fall on husbands leading our wives and fathers leading our children to know and see Jesus Christ as our supreme authority, savior and treasure.

Now, I'd like to make just a couple transitional comments before we move on to the next part. My primary focus in this talk will be on fathers with kids in the home.

So that's the primary focus. But I'd like to nuance this by addressing families in different stages here, because I know we have families in different stages even in this room. So for both the husbands without children and husbands with children in the home.

Okay. Those two guys. It's still a priority to lead your wives with these principles. Though there may not be as much of a teaching component in those seasons of your life, it seems that the New Testament accentuates leading our wives in worship within the family.

[23 : 06] You're still a family. Even without children, you're still united to another. And so in Ephesians chapter five, Paul makes his famous analogy of comparing a husband and wife to the roles of Christ in the church.

Right. We hear this at weddings all the time. If you notice, the husband is to sacrifice himself for the good of his bride and to continually set her apart with the washing of the word.

It's an interesting phrase. The washing of the word. He's the sanctifier. It says, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he may sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.

So it appears that husbands are to cultivate a home that worships the Lord before children come and after children are gone.

So don't let off the gas when your kids get out of the house and go to the college. Don't don't just wait until you have kids to begin cultivating a home that worships the Lord. Start doing this with your wife if you haven't started already.

[24 : 16] And for those of you who do not have a believing husband. This is for you to let me encourage you to step into the void.

There might be times, too, where dad's off or gone on work trips. Step into the void. But particularly I'm thinking of those. I was thinking of Jana actually haven't having a series of years living as a widow, stepping into a void with her own children.

If you're in a situation where there is not a believing husband around, then I invite you to step into the void. Remember how Paul commends the believing women in Timothy's life.

And second Timothy, a fascinating text. If you look at it, you can check it out later. I'll just read it to you for now. He addresses Timothy and he says, I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois.

And your mother Eunice. And now I am sure dwells in you as well. So where there is no believing husband or father to take that lead, then women should step into the void and continue that process to cultivate.

[25 : 29] It's wonderful whenever we see examples like this. And so I want to commend you to step into that gap. The Lord's pleased with that. The Lord is not pleased when women step into a gap that's left because of men not stepping into it that are there.

OK, so we will talk about that in just a little bit. But I want to I want to encourage the ladies now. So the question for us is, how can this be done? How can it be done?

How can we lead family worship? So I want to demystify this as much as possible. It's it's straightforward. It's it's not that difficult. The steps aren't that difficult.

It's difficult to follow through. And so I want to lay these things out. And I want to actually start not with just the practical day to day stuff. I want to start upriver with your own heart.

That's really got to be step one is pray for your own heart. And that might seem like a strange place to begin. But the goal of leading family worship is not merely an information transfer.

[26 : 32] It's not just getting them knowledge. We want our families to know and see Jesus Christ as our supreme authority, savior and treasure. That's what we want, not just information exchange.

So in order to do that, we must continually beg the Lord for this to be a growing reality in our own personal lives. We have to do that. We love to talk about the things we love the most, don't we?

Just think about the recipe for the smoker or the amazing adventure that you went on or hunting trip or something like that. It's satisfying to share the joy of these with other people.

How much more important is it that our own souls delight more and more in Jesus Christ and that we just spill over into our conversations with our kids? I mean, you've probably heard it said that there's a lot more caught than taught.

It's so true. It should be a primary goal to kindle our hearts toward the Lord so that our families are drawn to the warmth that they see and that they feel, the glow that's inside of us because of being near to Christ ourselves.

[27 : 39] So begin by asking the Lord to convict you, to encourage you, to strengthen you. Ask for help to lead in spite of weakness and vulnerability and insecurity and all those things that can crop up in our minds to be barriers to step forward and lead.

Cry out to him. He is so faithful to answer these. And not only that, he will work in spite of your weakness and your vulnerability and your ignorance and your lack of it, but all the things.

He delights to work in your weakness. So cry out to him. So that's step one. The second thing that's upriver is to make a plan, to make a plan. And by that, I mean, get the when and the where.

If you can get the when and the where, you will be on your way to sharing the gospel regularly with your kids. So during this season of your family's life, when is the best time to meet for 10 to 20 minutes?

10 to 20 minutes is what we're looking for. Something in that ballpark. And this season of your life, your family's life, when is the best time to meet for 10 to 20 minutes? Is it early in the morning before everybody goes in different directions?

[28 : 48] Is it around the supper table or maybe it's right before going to bed? You need to get everybody together in the living room or something like that. You may need to create a time.

It might not just be laying around. This is part of leadership. You might need to make the time, cultivate the time. Say, hey, we're going to we're going to do this. I want us to do this because it's important and carve out 10 to 20 minutes.

So you might need to shift some things around to make space in the schedule. And that's OK. That's not a big deal. Figure out something that works best, but figure something out and then guard it.

So right now, for my season of life with our kids are still pretty small. Something around the breakfast table works best. So we sit around the breakfast table most mornings. This won't last forever, but it's working right now.

And later on, troubleshoot it. If it starts to not work and you're like, this is not a good time, change it. It's OK. You can shift. And God's got grace for that. Shift with the seasons. But find something that you can do regularly.

[29 : 50] So those are both upstream. Pray for your own heart. Make a plan. And then we get into the kind of what do you actually do? The nuts and bolts of the time together. So read, pray, sing.

Those are the big three. Read, pray, sing. So read. Find something that works for your family's ages. Like I said, my kids are still pretty young. So we usually use the young's biggest story.

And it actually includes kind of a distilled Bible story. And it has a brief prayer that we kind of riff off of that's in the actual book. For older kids, use the Bible.

It's excellent. It's an excellent option. You can begin by reading a chapter in a gospel like John. We're starting the gospel of John today. John 1 for Advent series.

You can select a New Testament letter. I like Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, General Electric Power Company. Those are great ones. They're short. There's a lot of meat there. It's so helpful. You can read Psalms.

[30 : 49] They're nice standalones. Proverbs, the same thing. They're nice standalones. Any of those are a good place to begin. And I'd encourage you to take turns reading and then have a brief discussion.

If your kids are reading age, go around the table, have them read. And then the question is, what do we talk about after we do the reading part? That part sounds easy, but then what? This may sound intimidating to you, but we have some guiding questions that you can use to get rolling.

You might have noticed at the front or back, whatever you call this, whenever you came in, there's these bookmarks. We just use these in our youth as well. It has a series of essentially four questions that helps generate thoughts, conversation on a text.

God is the main character. Everything flows from him and revolves around him. And so we start with God. What does this text, what is it we just read about? What does this teach us about who God is?

What does it show us about his character? What does it show about what God is doing in the world in this text? What is it showing that he's concerned about? What things, events, people is he concerned about in this text?

[31:59] You see, so you can riff off of these questions. You can just leave this thing parked in your Bible and you can have a ready-made guide for reading and discussion with your kids, with your family, with your wife.

You can have it right there. So it goes through, what does this text teach us about God? And it has some sub points there. What does this text teach us about people? And it has some sub points there.

And then it says, all right, well, how do these relate? How do people relate to God? So in this one, it has some sub points relating to God.

It says, what are some things to praise and thank God for? This is a great one to go around the table. Go around the horn. What's one thing you want to thank God for from yesterday or one thing from today?

What's one thing that you're thankful to God for? What's one sin to confess and repent? Parents can model this. We can do this and say, hey, I shouldn't have yelled at you earlier.

[32:56] This is wrong. It was wrong for me to do that. And I'm so thankful we have a Savior that's changing my heart. And he can change your heart too. I want you to love and know Jesus like I love and know Jesus because he came for us.

Then there's this last category, not just relating to God, but relating to others as well. How should we interact with and treat others? What does this text reveal about that?

What are ways that this text shows us to pursue reconciliation with others? What are ways that we can love, serve, and care for others based on this text? So that's a way that you can springboard out of conversation about the Bible into a discussion.

I actually heard that as kids got older, one family, they got different study Bibles for their kids, like different versions of study Bibles so that they could all just draw from the different notes and then kind of a community discussion around the table.

That was kind of an interesting way to do it. But the point is there's lots of ways to do this. The main point is to read and to discuss. That's it.

[34:00] Read and discuss. So hopefully those will be some tools that you can leverage in the coming days. So that's the first thing. Read. And then the next thing would be to pray. We respond by praying together.

You can pray something straight out of that text. Maybe it's something from the discussion you riff off of. You could pray for a burden that's on your mind, on your heart. You could pray out of the TGC prayer directory.

I love seeing Matthew. I don't remember which kid it was, but he had a kid in your lap in the slideshow. You guys were looking at the prayer directory together. I just thought that was so cool. What a beautiful picture to be able to not just personally engage, but to draw your family into that prayer directory.

Be able to pray for these folks in the room and around the sanctuary and the gym. And it's a wonderful way to knit our hearts together. You could take turns just expressing thanks to the Lord.

You know, he said, what's one thing you're thankful for? And they might say that to you. But now let's say it back to God. Let's respond to the Lord in thanksgiving. Some people have used the acronym ACTS, A-C-T-S, as a helpful prayer guide.

[35 :11] So let's say you're stumped and you're like, I don't really know what to pray or how to pray. ACTS is a wonderful place to start that can help guide you. Adoration. You're declaring, you know, attributes of God.

God, you're powerful. You're our sustainer. You're just declaring true things about the Lord back to him. Thank you for these things. Confession is just like we were talking about.

Maybe there's something that you failed and you didn't take leadership. You didn't take ownership. It's okay to confess those things and to model that with your kids.

They need to see that. We need to be able to be a humble people, able to recognize our own sin and then to turn and to cast those things to the Lord.

He cast them as far away as the east is from the west. What a wonderful promise to model for our kids. You don't have to be shackled by the guilt or shackled by the pride that comes from not confessing sin.

[36 :09] We can be released of those things. So we model confession and prayer. Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, which is what we've just been talking about a little bit. And then supplication is the S.

Supplication is like where you're asking for God to intervene in different ways in people's lives and in your own life. God, would you do this? Would you act? Would you change the situation?

So ACTS, that's a wonderful guide for prayer I think could be helpful. The final thing here is to sing together.

Now this one might seem kind of like a weird one to include in this. And maybe you feel incompetent as a singer, especially if you're around your own table and you're the lead vocalist.

I know I feel vulnerable in that moment to be the lead vocalist. But it's a way that we respond to the revealed word of God. And singing, if you think about this, singing is a uniquely and wonderful Christian way to demonstrate unity around a common truth.

[37 :16] That's what you're doing whenever you sing. You're demonstrating unity around common truth. And not only that, it helps our hearts meditate on a truth about the Lord.

And it brings everybody together into that. That's what we're about to do in just a few minutes. We're going to go in there. We're going to sing around a common truth.

Meditating. It's a wonderful way. So that, to me, outweighs the awkwardness and the burden of being the lead vocalist.

That's more important. So if someone in your family or you play an instrument, you could play a song. Otherwise, you can sing acapella or you can sing along to music from an album.

And I just listed out a few that we've enjoyed over the years. And those resources are also at the end if you're interested in checking some of those out. Now, briefly, I want to talk about two threats to family worship.

These are always there. They're always looking to take us out in this trajectory to help our kids see and savor Jesus Christ. The first one is busyness.

[38 : 22] Busyness. We are all busy. All of us are busy. But the question we've got to ask is, are we busy about the most important things?

Are we busy about the most important things? C.J. Mahaney was so helpful. I read this book a number of years ago, Biblical Productivity. Listen to how he captures this.

Busyness does not mean I am diligent. Busyness does not mean I am faithful. Busyness does not mean I am fruitful. The sluggard can be busy.

Busy neglecting the most important work and busy knocking out a to-do list filled with tasks of secondary importance. When considering our schedules, we have endless options.

But there are a few clear priorities and projects derived from my God-assigned roles that should occupy the majority of my time during a given week.

[39 : 21] And there are a thousand tasks of secondary importance that tempt us to devote a disproportionate amount of time to completing an endless to-do list.

And if we are lazy, we will neglect the important for the urgent. Oh, it's such a helpful, clarifying vision of what it is that I'm prioritizing day to day.

We're all busy. But are we busy with the most important thing? So whether it's work, whether it's projects, extracurricular activities, or schedules, we can be scattered and frenzied.

Can't we? But we all make time for what's most important to us. So let me urge you to consider the place of family worship in your list of priorities.

I'm going to briefly touch on the second threat, which is passivity. Passivity. And the reason I bring this up is because in many areas of our life, we outsource to the professionals.

[40 : 25] At least I do. I think I need help with my car. I'm going to find a mechanic. When I need medicine, I find a doctor. When it comes to raising children to know and love the Lord, we cannot, we cannot, we cannot outsource to the professionals.

Ephesians 4, it reminds us that God institutes leaders in the local church to equip the saints for ministry, to equip Christians for ministry.

So in other words, you and I, we cannot lean on the church's programming to be the primary discipleship tool in our kids' lives.

That makes sense? That makes sense? We can't rely on the church's programming. Just think about the time itself. Even if you went to everything in a given month, it's only like six hours total of formalized programmatic things.

That's woefully insufficient to disciple your kids. You are positioned to do this by God's good design. Now, I'm saying that because the church programming and the church community are a glorious support and supplement to God's work in your kids' lives.

[41 : 37] I'm going to look around this room and just think of all the touch points of different dads and other kids in my kids' lives that I'm so thankful for. So I'm not trying to minimize that at all.

It's a wonderful support. It's not just one or the other. It's both and, but the primary, the primary cannot be shouldered by the church. The church family is intended to help the biological family.

It's one of the characteristics I love about this church. So the goal for the pastor, like in this case, it's to teach, to distill information, to give biblical principles, to get them to you so that you will be equipped to do this for yourself and for your family.

That's why we're having this class. This is one of the reasons that we're doing this so that this can be a catalyst for faith-filled, grace-filled, motivated action in your own families.

Lastly, I want to end with a God-sized vision for family worship. I don't know if you've ever heard this phrase, but I think it's helpful because we live in a microwave culture with a crockpot God.

[42 : 49] What that means is that we want, I want, my heart wants immediate and measurable results.

I want, I want to see change now. If I'm going to do this and it's going to be hard and I'm going to feel awkward and vulnerable, I want to see results now. And we're going to be tempted to give up.

We will. We will be tempted to give up in this area because it may seem ineffective and unfruitful. And God's especially, we might have this compulsion to say, well, I could do the same amount of energy and work in the workplace.

And there's a much better payoff and people will be patting me on my back along the way. Don't, don't give into that. Don't give into that. This is precious. This is hard, but God is at work in it.

He's doing something incredible beneath the soil. He is bringing growth and life and transformation. Don't give up. Let me call us to not only begin, but to keep going.

[43 : 50] Keep going. The Lord will do his slow work. We keep going and we entrust the results to him in his timing. I love for you to consider the words of Charles Spurgeon.

He saw spiritual formation in the home as one of the key battlegrounds for revival. Then he wrote this little booklet called *The Kind of Revival We Need*.

Think about this revival breaking out. And he's saying one of the key battlegrounds is in the home around this topic of leading families and family worship. Listen to what he says.

We deeply want a revival of domestic 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, 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.

[44 : 57] 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.

What a helpful depiction of what's actually happening when you engage in this task. It's a battleground. Brothers and sisters, we will all be dead in 100 years.

Everyone in this room, we will all be dead likely in 100 years. Most everything that we worried about, everything that we fought for, fought about, most of those things are going to be forgotten and will fade away.

But may our children and our children's children be led to know and see Jesus Christ as their supreme authority, savior and treasure. So our deeds, our deeds may be forgotten.

Our names may be forgotten, but may we labor and lead in such a way that our Lord's name and deeds may never be forgotten. So if you would join me and say, ask for me in my house, we will serve the Lord.

[46:17] Lord, then let's begin today and let's endure to the end. Lord, we pray these things in the name of Jesus that you will keep us, that you will help us.

You promised that our labor in the Lord is not in vain. This is a labor in your name. And so we want to entrust these things to you. Help us to begin and to keep going.

Lord, I pray for all these that are in here. I pray that you will reward them richly, even just for coming. Lord, would you help bolster their faith, encourage them today as they ponder, how can we do this and then get into the trenches to stake this out so that their kids might know and love you with all their hearts.

Pray these things in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen.