FAMILY WORSHIP: Joshua 24:14-15

INTRODUCTION

THE POINT OF THIS SERMON IS TO SHOW YOU,

The duty, how to, motives, arguments, and blessings of family worship.

- Q1. How can we best actively obey the First Commandment, from which the rest of the Ten Commandments flow?
 - A. Daily Family Worship.
 - JOHN ANGIER: "The more we worship God in secret, the fitter shall we be for family worship, and the more we worship God in our families, the fitter shall we be for public worship."
- Q2. Parents, how can you best train up your children in the way they should go, so that when they are old they will not depart from it?
 - A. Daily Family Worship.
 - CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON: "If we want to bring up a godly family, who shall be a seed to serve God when are 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"
- Q3. What can we do to take part in reforming society at large, society that is in such shambles as we find them in the second decade of the 21st century?
 - A. Daily Family Worship.
 - RICHARD BAXTER: "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 much future increase."
- Q4. How can we do our part to see revival and reformation in the church both locally and at large?
 - A. Family Worship.
 - 1689 PREFACE: "There is one spring and cause of the decay of [Christianity] in our day. . .and that is the neglect of the worship of God in families."
 - As it was in the late 1600's so it is (and far worse!) today.
 Most professed Christian adults grew up never even hearing the phrase family worship, much less practicing it in their homes.

But that must not be so with the next generation!

- Q1. Do you want to obey the First Commandment with this one life God has given you?
- Q2. Do you want your children to be swept away in a tide of carnal Christianity at best or blatant wickedness at worst, or do you want the next generation to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in fear and gladness?
 Q3. Are you OK with society going to hell in a hand-basket or would you see justice and righteousness roll down like the waters?
 Q4. Do you wish that the Church would stand firm in the faith and remain faithful to Christ?

- Choose this day what you are going to do about it!

- Turn with me to Joshua 24:14-15.

Q. What is meant by family worship? A. Family worship is the daily use of prayer, Scripture, catechism, and song by a family, led by the head of the household, to worship the one true God for His glory and your good!

If you still live with your parents, it is your duty to participate in Family Worship, so you need to understand it.

If you are single and do not live with your parents, it is your duty to do these same things by yourself, as you prepare to one day lead (men) or participate in Family Worship.

If you are married with no children, Family Worship will be you and your wife for now.

If you have children or other relatives in your house, this will be the entire family.

I. THE DUTY OF FAMILY WORSHIP (Josh. 24:14-15)

I) You are commanded to worship the LORD in sincerity and faithfulness, putting away all your former idols (Joshua 24:14).

Joshua 24:14 "Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord."

- (I) You and I must worship the LORD because He created us! (Rev. 4:11)
 - "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and

were created." Revelation 4:11

- (II) You and I must worship the LORD because He deserves it! (Psalm 29:2)
 - "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness." Psalm 29:2
- (III) In Christ, you and I must worship the LORD because that is the chief activity He has redeemed us for! (Psalm 71:23)
 - "My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have redeemed." Psalm 71:23
- (IV) You and I must worship the LORD because that is the reason Jesus died and was raised! (Psalm 22:27)
 - "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you." Psalm 22:27
 - BOYS AND GIRLS: Jesus died for the sins of His people, was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will return again to make everything happy and holy—He did all of that so that we would worship Him and enjoy Him!

Oh! The privilege of being able to worship the Lord! You and I must not neglect this great privilege!

II) Do not be deceived, you will worship something or someone (Joshua 24:15a).

Joshua 24:15a "And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell."

- Q. Who or what do you worship?

III) Those who worship the LORD, should do so with their household (Joshua 24:15b).

Joshua 24:15b "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

The duty of family worship is exemplified and expected of saints many places in Scripture!

(I) Abraham commanded His household to keep the way of the LORD and offered sacrifices to Him!

 Genesis 18:19 "For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."

- Q. What did that look like? A. Genesis 22 makes it plain. Isaac knew how to worship the LORD.
 - Genesis 22:6-7 "6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

(II) Jacob set up a family altar by God's command and worshipped the LORD with his household!

Genesis 35:1-3 "God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau." 2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone."

(III) Asaph, in Psalm 78, says fathers are to instruct their children in the glorious deeds of the LORD!

- Psalm 78:3-7 "things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. . . that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments;"

(IV) In Psalm 118, David says the LORD's praises are in the houses of the righteous!

- **Psalm 118:15** "Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous."

- **BOYS AND GIRLS:** Christ's people are singing people, and our songs should fill our houses! Our neighbors walking by should be able to hear the praises of Christ being sung from yours and your parents lips!

(V) Paul exhorts us all not to be drunk, but to be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs!

 Ephesians 5:18-19 "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,"

(VI) Paul expects husbands to wash their wives in the water of the Word of God!

- **Ephesians 5:25-27** "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word"
- (VII) Paul commands fathers to instruct their children!
- **Ephesians 6:4** "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
- (VIII) Peter expects husbands to pray with their wives!
- 1 Peter 3:7 "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

The duty of family worship is exemplified and expected of saints many places in Scripture! Will you join with the saints and worship the Lord with your families? God deserves it!

II. THE HOW TO OF FAMILY WORSHIP (Deut 6; Job 1;

Heb. 6; Rom. 6:17; Ps. 118:15-16)

- **Plan. Be disciplined.** It will not happen if you do not plan and stay disciplined. Set a time, and make it happen.
- **RICHARD CECIL:** "Let family worship be short, savory, simple, plain, tender, and heavenly." *It does not need to be more than 10-20 minutes.

I) Pray, thanking God and interceding on behalf of your family (Job 1:5).

Job 1:5 "[Job] would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of [all his children]. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually."

- HUSBANDS AND FATHERS: Do not pass your duty on to someone else. You pray on behalf of your family. You teach your wife and your children to pray and what to pray for according to the general directions of Scripture, and the special direction of the Lord's Prayer. *Mothers, if your husband is not a believer, or you do not have a husband, this is your duty.
 - **THOMAS BROOKS:** "A family without prayer is like a house without a roof, open and exposed to all the storms of heaven."

II) Read the Scriptures, explaining and applying to the best of your ability (Deut. 6:4-7).

Deuteronomy 6:7 "You shall teach [the scriptures] 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."

- All of you, the Scriptures are food for the soul. Feast on them daily!
 - HUSBANDS AND FATHERS: It is your duty to teach your wife and your children the Scriptures! Open the book. Read a section or a chapter. Explain it. Apply it, all to the best of your abilities.

Get a good Study Bible (or four!). Get good commentaries to help. Listen to sermons on Monergism or Grace to You or Sermon Audio or the Ekklesia Muskogee app. Prepare beforehand and trust God with the results. *Mothers, if your husband is not a believer, or you do not have a husband, this is your duty.

- WILLIAM GURNALL: "Even when the Christian through weakness of memory cannot remember the very words he hears...he keeps the power and savor of them in his spirit, as when sugar is dissolved in wine, you cannot see it, but you may taste it. . . . so you may taste the truths the Christian heard."
- MANTON to Fathers: "[Fathers, will you] beget children, and keep families, merely for the world and the flesh, [or will you bring up a child for God, and govern a family as a sanctified society?"
 - MANTON to Mothers: "Especially women should be careful of this duty; because as they are most about their children, and early and frequent opportunities to instruct them, so this is the principal service they can do to God in this world, being restrained from more public work. And doubtless many an excellent magistrate hath been sent into the Commonwealth, and many an excellent pastor into the Church, and many a precious saint to heaven, through the happy preparations of a holy education, perhaps by a woman that thought herself useless and unserviceable to the Church."
- PARENTS: You have 6,570 days before your children turn 18. 6,570 days to teach them the Word of God before they leave your house! Make the best use of them.

III) Catechize, memorizing the most important questions and answers you can ask (Selected Scriptures).

- The words Catechize and Catechism come from the New Testament word for "instruct" and "instruction." To catechize means to teach by using questions and answers, like set forth in *The Baptist Catechism* of 1693, *An Orthodox Catechism* of 1680, or *The Baptist Catechism for Boys and Girls*.

Hebrews 6:1 says there are "Elementary doctrines (principles)" of the faith. Romans 6:17 "You have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed." 2 Timothy 1:13 "Follow the pattern of sound words which you heard from me." 2 Thessalonians 2:15 "Stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us."

- **BOYS AND GIRLS:** You need to memorize the most important questions and answers in the world, and these questions and answers are in *The Baptist Catechism* and *The Baptist Catechism for Boys and Girls*.
 - FATHERS AND MOTHERS: If you do one question per week, focussing on the same one every day, you can get through The Baptist Catechism at least 8 times with your children before they leave the house.
 - YOUNG ADULTS AND ADULTS: You and I are way behind, unless of course your parents actually catechized you. We need to catch up!
 - Get Thomas Watson's three books where he preaches through the Catechism (A Body of Divinity, The Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer).

Get also Thomas Boston's first two volumes of his Complete Body of Divinity where he also preaches through the entire Catechism.

IV) Sing, lifting your voices in praise with a Psalm, Hymn, or Spiritual Song (Ps. 118:15-16, Eph. 5:18).

Psalm 118:15-16 "**15** Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly, **16** the right hand of the LORD exalts, the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!""

 FATHERS: One of the manliest men to ever live, who killed bears and lions with his own hands, was a singer. Men sing. Men lead others to sing. Israel would sing as they marched into battle. Lead your family in singing. Teach your children to sing. *Singing Psalms will full chests and full hearts is one of the manliest things you can do!*

Most men these days are Tone Deaf because they did not grow up singing in the home! Do not let that happen to your kids.

Look up YouTube videos for voice lessons if you cannot sing. It is

possible to learn to sing in a way that is on key, many just never give the time to learn.

"Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous"

- THOMAS MANTON: "Self-love may lead us to prayers, but love to God excites us to praises."
 - THOMAS WATSON: "Praising God is one of the highest and purest acts of religion. In prayer we act like men; in praise we act like angels."
- Day and night the angels never cease to sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD God almighty." Join the song in your homes!

III. MOTIVES FOR FAMILY WORSHIP (Thomas Doolittle) – THOMAS DOOLITTLE (1630-1707):

I) You should pray to God daily in your families because we receive every day family-mercies from the hand of God (Ps. 68:9).

II) You should pray to God daily in your families, because there are sins committed every day in your families (Ps. 51:3).

III) You should pray in your families daily unto God, because you have many daily family-needs, which none can supply but God (Matt. 6:11).

IV) You should pray in your families daily because of your families' daily employments and labors (Ps. 127:1-2).

V) You should pray to God in your families daily, because you are all every day liable to temptations (1 Pet. 5:8).

VI) You should pray in your families daily because all in your families are liable to daily hazards, casualties, and afflictions (Jn. 16:33).

VII) You must pray to God in your families daily, or the very Heathen will rise up against you Christians and condemn you (observations of the devotion of adherents to pagan religions).

I would simply add, **VIII)** You must worship God daily in your families because He is worthy of worship!

BOYS AND GIRLS: God deserves our worship!

IV) ARGUMENTS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP (Oliver

Heywood)

- OLIVER HEYWOOD (1630-1702) — The Family Altar.

 I) Suppose a grave and pious minister, or Christian friend lodge with you, would you not reach him a bible, and desire him to go to prayer with you, lest he should suspect you to be prayerless at other times? And will not God's authority and presence have the like influence, and awe upon your spirits?

- II) Suppose your friends and relations should quite disown, and disclaim you, unless you would pray in your family, would you not make a hard shift to do something that way, rather than be accounted unworthy of human society? And shall that prevail more than God's disclaiming you, or disowning converse with you?
- III) If your landlord should turn you out of your house, or your father should disinherit you, if you set not up this family altar, could you be content to suffer both, rather than do it? And shall a threatening of your Father in heaven, or great landlord, to reject or eject you out of heaven avail nothing?
- IV) If a law were imposed upon you to pay five shillings every time that you neglect prayer in your family, would you forfeit that sum as oft as you go prayerless to bed; would you not fear that would beggar you? And shall not greater losses and heavier penalties deter you from this omission?
- V) If the king or a nobleman should promise you five pounds every time that you call your family together, read a chapter, sing a psalm, kneel down and pray to God, would you not strain hard to procure that money? And will not a greater profit from Almighty God prevail with you to perform this exercise to obtain a reward ?
- VI) Suppose a brand were set upon your foreheads, like Cain's, or a dreadful trembling should seize upon your bodies for such a neglect...would not this shame you out of your criminal omission?
- VII) Suppose the next time you go prayerless to bed, your loveliest child and darling should be snatched away by a sudden stroke of death, as it was in Egypt, when the first-born of Pharaoh and others died, and there was a great cry.* Would not this move you into a better course? Oh, but a greater evil befalls you, your own precious souls are endangered by neglect.
- VIII) Suppose a red cross, with a "Lord have mercy upon us," were set upon your doors, and the pestilence were within your house, seizing on you, one after another, and you had nothing else to do but to get ready to die would you not spend some time in prayer with yourselves and families? Behold a worse plague is upon you, the plague of sin, and will you not pray?
- IX) Suppose, upon every omission of family prayer you should lose a limb, or member of your body, first one finger, then a toe should be cut or torn off, till all be gone, and you dismembered; would not this force you to this duty? and yet your precious souls, which are ten thousand times more worth than a limb, yea,' than the whole body, are in

hazard by willful nealect.

- BOYS AND GIRLS: What if every day your Father or Mother did not lead you in Family Worship, one of their fingers or toes would fall off? Do you think they would do it, then? What if every day you did not participate in family worship, one of your fingers or toes would fall off? Yikes!
- X) Suppose a gallows were set at your door, and you must be hanged thereupon the next time you go out of your door, when you have not prayed in your family; would you venture to be hanged rather than omit this duty? do you love your lives no better? Oh! but eternal death is far more dreadful, and are eternal torments, that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, nothing to you?* Is the second death easy?

V. THE BLESSINGS OF FAMILY WORSHIP (Selected

Scriptures)

I) Daily family worship will glorify God, which is why you exist and therefore will bring you and your family great joy (Isaiah 43:7).

- Isaiah 43:7 "everyone who is called by my name... I created for my glory,"

II) Daily family worship will soberly remind you and your family of both the sinfulness of sin and the sufficiency of Christ (Romans 6:23).

- Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

III) Daily family worship will constantly nourish you and your family with spiritual food (Matthew 4:4).

- Matthew 4:4 "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

IV) Daily family worship will help you and your family keep your eyes fixed on Christ and His kingdom (Colossians 3:2).

- **Colossians 3:2** "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."

V) Daily family worship will instruct you and your family as to what is right and wrong, and therefore equip you to love God and neighbor in holiness (Psalm 119:105).

- Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

VI) Daily family worship will give you a clear conscience in life and death (Acts 20:26-27).

- Acts 20:26-27 "I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God."

CONCLUSION

If you have not made Family Worship (or private worship if you are single) a daily practice in your home, today is the day. Start today.

Beloved, please come to me with your questions concerning your present circumstances, and I promise I will labor to help you find the answers.

Q. Will you say with Joshua, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord?"

A. I pray to God you will for Christ's sake.

(If there is time) PRACTICAL HELP FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

- I) Read the Scriptures.

- **IDEAS: For younger children especially, narrative is helpful.** The gospel accounts, Acts, Genesis, Exodus, etc. all the way through the Historical books of the Old Testament.
- The Ten Commandments. (Watson)
- The Lord's Prayer. (Watson)
- The Attributes of God. (Pink)
- Advent season, do a series through the beginning of Matthew or Luke.
- Leading up to Good Friday and Easter, do a series on one of the gospels, specifically a latter part, focusing on Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.
- HOW TO: Read it carefully and clearly, having your kids even read verses here and there. Make special note of certain things that need to be explained.

- II) Teach the Doctrines that are revealed in the Scriptures.

- LIKE WHAT?

I) God's attributes (get A.W. Pink's book on God's attributes as a primer).

II) The sinfulness of sin (get Jeremiah Burrough's book the Evil of Evils as a primer).

III) Our need for Christ. Justification by faith. God's covenant with His people. The work of the Spirit. The electing love of the Father. The death of Christ. The resurrection of Christ. The Lordship of Christ. (get Thomas Watson's book A Body of Divinity as a primer to solid doctrine).

- HOW CAN I GET HELP?

I) Be much in private study, preparing the day before.

II) Get a good study Bible (or four!).

III) Get the Family Worship Bible Guide.

IV) Get Calvin's Commentary set (print or Kindle) or Matthew Henry's Commentary set.

V) Use Monegism.com or SermonAudio.com and listen to sermons.

- III) Exhort and Apply the Scriptures.

- Application and exhortation is when you take what the text says and

the doctrines presented there and then say, "Therefore" or "So what?" What does this mean for us today? How then should we think? How then should we live? How then should we feel? What must I repent of? What must I do? <u>Application must always be applying</u> <u>Christ crucified in some way or another to the hearer!</u>

OLIVER HEYWOOD's motivations to Family Worship (The

Family Altar)

- This devotional altar will be the best ornament to your houses; no pictures, stately rooms or household goods will be such neat and splendid furniture as this worship of God.
- 2. This is not only the ornament, but muniment and defense of a family.
- **3.** This is the way and means to bring spiritual and eternal salvation to your houses.
- **4.** Family worship will make up a defect in, or want of public ordinances.

- OLIVER HEYWOOD: "The passage which you mean to read with your family, read carefully over beforehand; and consider what are its most striking points and most useful lessons; and a little practice will make you a good family expositor."
- JOHN ANGIER: "The more we worship God in secret, the fitter shall we be for family worship, and the more we worship God in our families, the fitter shall we be for public worship."
- PHILIP HENRY: "Those do well that pray morning and evening in their families, those do better that pray and read the scriptures, but those do best that pray and read and sing the psalms."
- WILHELMUS A BRAKEL: "The father or if he is absent or unable to do this, the mother — must read a chapter, speak about it, catechize

children. . .sing a psalm together, and bow and offer prayer — all in accordance with the ability the Lord grants each one. Joshua desired to serve the Lord with his house (Josh. 24:15), and Cornelius feared God with all his house (Acts 10:2). One must make of his home a small church, for then the Lord will bless the home. Children. . .will learn to fear the Lord and thus will experience salvation. It will beget mutual love, there will be mutual respect, restraining everyone from sin, and one will exemplify godliness to each other and follow each other in this way."

- CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON: "If we want to bring up a godly family, who shall be a seed to serve God when are 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"
- J.W. ALEXANDER: "Every father of a family should consider himself as charged with the souls of those with whom he hopes to leave behind him, and as contributing to the future propagation of the truth, by every act of devotion performed in his house. Wherever he has a tent, God should have an altar."
- RICHARD BAXTER: "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 much future increase."
- **THOMAS BROOKS:** "A family without prayer is like a house without a roof, open and exposed to all the storms of heaven."
- ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE: "If you do not worship God in your family, you are living in positive sin; you may be quite sure you do not care for the souls of your family. If you neglect to spread a meal for your children to eat, would it not be said that you did not care for their bodies? And if you do not lead your children and servants to the green pastures of God's Word, and to seek the living water, how plain is it that you do not care for their souls? Do it regularly, morning and evening. It is more needful than your daily food more needful than your work."
- BAXTER: "God's stewards must give an account of their stewardships, Luke xvi. 2. Christ telleth us of all our talents in general, Luke xii. 48, that "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." And of our words in particular Christ tells us, Matt. xii. 36, that "of every idle word men shall give an account at the day of judgment." Much more for denying to use both our tongues and hearts in God's worship, when he gives us such opportunities."

https://thewestminsterstandard.org/directory-for-family-worship/

https://www.apuritansmind.com/the-christian-walk/the-christian-family/ seven-reasons-families-should-pray-by-rev-thomas-doolittle/

https://www.monergism.com/how-may-duty-daily-family-prayer-be-bestmanaged-spiritual-benefit-every-one-family

http://www.digitalpuritan.net/Digital%20Puritan%20Resources/Baxter, %20Richard/ The%20Practical%20Works%20of%20Richard%20Baxter%20(vol.19)/[RB] %20The%20Poor%20Man's%20Family%20Book.pdf

George Swinnock - A Christian mans calling