

Ideas for starting to lead your family spiritually at home.

Here are four small but powerful “baby steps” that begin to shift the focus of the home towards Christ. In Deut 6:4-9, God provides 4 times in which parents are to “impress” His commands on children.

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[a] **5** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **6** These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **7** Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **8** Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **9** Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates. NIV

1. Morning Prayer/Blessing - One of those times is “when you rise.” Mornings can often be rushed, crazy times as everyone is trying to get shoes tied, hair brushed, coffee guzzled and breakfast consumed. In the middle of it all, take just 30 seconds to stop with each child and pray a simple blessing like, “Lord, be with Grace today. May she know that you are with her, that you love her and that you have called her by name and may she return home full of joy and wisdom.” You will be setting the tone for the day with those simple words and reminding her just how much she is loved by you and by God.

2. Dinner Discussions – Another time God encourages us to engage with our kids is “when you sit.” It’s rare to have families in a place where they all sit down together, but sometimes dinner still gives us that opportunity. To center the conversation, our family does a “question jar” just for fun, everyone participates.

OR you could ask questions about the day: *What was your high today? What was your low? What mistake did you make? Where did you see God today?* We have had more “teachable moments” at dinner than we could have ever imagined.

3. Drive Time – God also tells parents to share with their kids as they “walk along the road.” This doesn’t happen as much as it did but we do drive along the road an awful lot.

Adventures in Odessey programs from Focus on the Family radio dramas kids love.

Sing Bible Songs (*Seeds Worship*), listen to Christian music & worship, talk about bible verses.

4. Bedtime Blessing – The final time God specifies is “when you lie down.” Kids are fantastic stallers for bedtime. Wouldn’t it be great if you got them at their own game and turned their stall time into a time for discussion and blessing?

For young children, we read the *Jesus Storybook Bible* which tells the stories of Scripture in a unique way and points out where Jesus can be found in every story.

For older kids, before they go to bed, simply ask them if anything is on their mind that they need to talk about before bed so they can sleep well. It will shock you what they are willing to share in that safe place with you. These moments will be the last thoughts before your cherub slips off to sleep; can you think of a better sendoff?

Once these four practices become habitual for you, it’ll be easier to put Christ in the center of your family activities. Your kids won’t think it’s “weird” when you turn to Scripture in everyday moments because you’ve been listening to it in the car and reading it before bed.

And before you know it, your baby steps will become faith-forming strides as discipleship happens... at home.

