

EQUIPPING

for intergenerational ministry

Encouraging home devotions



We know that in every way and every day, Jesus is calling us into a deeper and closer relationship with him. We know that this doesn't just happen once a week for an hour at church or an hour in our small groups. As parents, we have been blessed with the joy and gift to share what we know about God's love for us with our children and families.

So what does it look like to share your faith in your home or with your family? Why is it so important? Firstly, because God has asked us to! Our first and most important mission field is our home and family. For each family or household it is going to look different, and develop differently, during the many stages of family life. Your family devotion times might be led by the same person, but this role might later change, or be shared. The important thing is to make sure someone is taking the reins of the spiritual health of your family.

While there are some great ideas below to get you started, the most important thing is that you start. No matter the season, now is the time for your family to begin sharing life and faith together. We encourage you to do some planning first. Set aside a designated time. It won't always go to plan and that is okay. Just make sure you have another go. Many of these ideas can apply to any age or life stage, so have a look and see which one feels right for your family.

For families with pre-school children.

- Choose a simple Bible storybook; snuggle up in bed or on the couch and read a story together. Talk about what the previous story was about and share thoughts of the story being read. Say a simple prayer thanking God for the Bible and the people in it.
- Bless your children before they go to sleep. Use the sign of the cross and these words 'You are God's precious child, may he bless and keep you.' Your child might like to bless you also!
- Encourage your children to say their own prayers, or repeat after you. Say the Lord's Prayer together. You will be surprised how quickly young children will learn this when they hear it often!
- Begin each meal with a simple grace – 'Thank you Jesus for our food, Amen.'



For families with primary aged children.

- During your devotion times begin with lighting a candle, talk about why you do this. The flame is a sign of God's presence with us.
- Read a story from a lengthier Bible storybook. Don't worry if they've heard it before, in fact, it's great to hear these stories again and again. The Holy Spirit is always working in our hearts. Talk about how each story connects. What does the story tell you about God?
- Try out a new grace before meals. Teach them one that you remember from your childhood or Google 'mealtime prayer' and you will find many options!
- Discuss highs and lows during the meal, and pray about them that night.
- Let your children see you reading the Bible, praying and having quiet times. Allow them to see into the 'window' of what your faith means to you.
- Keep a family prayer journal, recording prayers and answered prayers. Glue in some photos of the people you are praying for.



For families with older children.

- There will come a time of transitioning from a Bible storybook to a Bible. Take your time here and use both! Having a range of options is helpful. Choose one book of the Bible and read a chapter together at a designated time. You might want to keep individual journals to record thoughts and reflections.
- Continue to pray together and encourage individual prayer in all its forms. Talk about when you pray and the different ways to pray.
- Take a look at some of the different parts of the small catechism together and ask; What does it mean for us? Why is it important to know these things?
- Plan for regular mealtimes together to talk and share the questions of life. No one will have all the answers, but you can certainly learn together as you listen to what's on everyone's hearts.



You could use the Grow Ministries *Growing Faith at Home* resource for more ideas. Visit the Grow Ministries website for more information.

For more information about Grow Ministries resources and training, please call **08 8267 7300** or visit our website: www.growministries.org.au or Pinterest page: www.pinterest.com.au/growministries



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