

THE VALUE OF FAMILY WORSHIP

BIBLE TEXT : Deuteronomy 4:9,10; 6:3-15; Joshua 24:15; Job 1:1-5; Psalm 78:1-8; Matthew 14:19; 15:36; I Timothy 5:4.

LESSON 270 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "They that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" (Malachi 3:16).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Deuteronomy 4:9-10

⁹ Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

¹⁰ *Specially* the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.

Deuteronomy 6:3-15

³ Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:

⁵ And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

⁶ And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

⁷ And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

⁸ And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I The Purpose

1. Family worship should be used to plant in the hearts of the children the record of God's Word and mighty works, Deuteronomy 4:9, 10; Psalm 78:1-8.
2. The whole duty of man to God must be taught in family worship, Deuteronomy 6:3-5.
3. The Lord is a jealous God, and He will not give His glory to another, Deuteronomy 6:10-15.

II The Place: The Home

1. A child should learn piety first in the home, I Timothy 5:4;
Proverbs 31:1
¹ **The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.**
Isaiah 38:19
¹⁹ **The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.**
Ephesians 6:4
⁴ **And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.**
Colossians 3:21
²¹ **Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.**
2. The proper teaching of God in the home will be a strong inducement to godliness,
Proverbs 22:6
⁶ **Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**
Deuteronomy 31:13
¹³ **And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.**
1 Kings 2:1-4
¹ **Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,**
² **I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;**
³ **And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:**
⁴ **That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.**
3. The home becomes God's dwelling place as the result of true family worship,
Luke 10:38-42
³⁸ **Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.**
³⁹ **And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.**
⁴⁰ **But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my**

shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

⁹ And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

¹⁰ And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,

¹¹ And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

¹² Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

¹³ Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

¹⁴ Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you;

¹⁵ (For the LORD thy God *is* a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

Joshua 24:15

¹⁵ And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Job 1:1-5

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and

sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

⁴² But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Matthew 18:20

²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

III The Time: Every Day

1. The Israelites were instructed to teach their children at every opportunity, Deuteronomy 6:7.

2. The foundation for godliness can be laid in the hearts of the very young,

Isaiah 28:9-10

⁹ Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

¹⁰ For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and there a little:*

Mark 10:14

¹⁴ But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

John 21:15

¹⁵ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son of Jonas*, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

Acts 2:39

³⁹ For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

3. The great warriors for God found it necessary to worship Him often, Job 1:1-5;

Joshua 1:8

⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Psalms 55:17

¹⁷ Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

Daniel 6:10

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Acts 2:46-47

⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

⁴⁷ Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 6:4

⁴ But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Acts 12:12

¹² And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

IV The Method

1. The Word of God should be a very important part of family

eschewed evil.

² And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

³ His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

⁴ And his sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

⁵ And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings *according* to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Psalm 78:1-8

¹ Give ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

² I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

³ Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

⁴ We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

⁵ For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

⁶ That the generation to come might know *them*, *even* the children *which* should be born;

worship, Deuteronomy 6:8, 9.

2. Family worship, to produce the desired results, should be led by one whose life is clean and exemplary, Joshua 24:15.

3. God gives the Word; it is the duty of His people to distribute it faithfully, Matthew 14:19; 15:36.

NOTES:

Benefits

"Who is God?" "Where does He live?" "What does He look like?" "Is He interested in me?" A hundred and one honest questions about God, His existence, and His relationship to mankind, fill the mind of every child. There is something in the nature of a child that yields freely to the worship of God, and the child who has the heritage of a Christian home and teaching will be happy. When a child is left to find his own answers to the natural questions of his heart and mind, the devil will be on hand to load him down with so many theories and false explanations that he may never come to the right knowledge of the truth. For this reason family worship has been a mighty bulwark for the cause of right against wrong throughout the ages, and it must necessarily be so until Jesus comes back to this earth again.

The succeeding generations, from the dawn of history to the present hour, have proved the fact that all men are born into the world with a sinful nature. Man's natural tendencies are away from God, not toward Him. Until a change is made in that nature, man cannot begin to live up to God's expectations. But God has made provision for the redemption of man's soul and the eradication of his sinful nature. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

The sons of men do not naturally merit this most wonderful gift of God, nor do they obtain salvation without seeking diligently for it. Mankind is born with a capability to serve the true and living God, but before he can serve God he has to be taught how to find God. The sooner this teaching is accomplished in a life, the better will be the chances of that soul's redemption. The Bible states: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

Parental Duty

The Law of Moses made it mandatory on the part of every parent to teach his children the wonderful works of God and the commandments that He gave to govern their lives. God did not reveal Himself on Mount Sinai for the benefit of the recently liberated servants of Egypt alone, but for the many generations of Israelites to come. The Covenant of Sinai was open to every son of Abraham, from the time of Moses to the time of Christ. The Children of Israel had great joy and prosperity, both spiritually and physically, as they followed the commandments of God. When the fathers were faithful to follow the Lord and tell their children God's expectations of them, and when the children in turn were careful to follow their father's instructions and serve the Lord faithfully, then the blessing of the Lord followed from one generation to the next. This has been God's plan from antiquity. It is disrupted only as the fathers fail to instruct their children in the ways of the Lord, or the children fail to walk in the instructions they receive about godliness.

Family worship is one of the best ways to impart the knowledge of God to the children, and to answer the questions that come seriously to the children's hearts. God deemed this duty of teaching the children of such importance that He

who should arise and declare *them* to their children:

⁷ That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

⁸ And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

Matthew 14:19

¹⁹ And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

Matthew 15:36

³⁶ And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

1 Timothy 5:4

⁴ But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

instructed the Israelites to talk of the ways and words of the Lord "when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deuteronomy 6:7). In other words, they were to teach the children at every opportunity.

God's Interest

It was a glorious and miraculous history of God's mercy and love that they should teach, a history of great deliverances and providential care. Israel's God was One nigh at hand, One whose Spirit could be felt and whose voice could be heard. Why should not the fathers tell the children of such a Being who was so undeniably interested in their welfare? God reminded Israel of this fact by saying: "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? . . . Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Deuteronomy 4:7, 9).

These words of instruction from the Law can surely be used to advantage by the Christian today. Those who are careful to give their children the proper teachings in the fear and love of God, out of a treasure-filled heart of experiential knowledge, will find God's blessing resting upon their lives; but any parent who fails in this important obligation will find God's pleasures and judgment at the end of life's road. God said to Ezekiel: "If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand" (Ezekiel 33:6). Surely the Lord has placed upon the parents the responsibility of watchmen and guardians of the home and family.

Proper Schooling

This world would be a much happier place in which to live if God could have the same confidence in every Christian family as He had in Abraham's family! What did God say in regard to Abraham? "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgement; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Genesis 18:19). Proper schooling in the Scriptures lays the foundation for the work of godliness in the lives of children, young men, and young women; but too many times parents neglect to heed this most important admonition.

Examine the success that family worship has brought to multitudes, who, have travelled through the strait gate and narrow path to Heaven. See how profitable this privilege of having an altar in the home really is. Millions of souls are in Heaven because they secured the right start toward the Celestial City through family worship. The earliest recollections of many ministers include the Bible stores told them by a godly mother and father. A majority of the missionaries telling the good news of salvation to the people in darkness in heathen lands heard and learned the Gospel story first in the environs of their father's house. The list of successes through family worship could go on and on: Christian workers, Sunday School teachers, home missionaries, cones-crated musicians. Their testimonies ring out: "I learned about Jesus during family worship when I was a small child"; or, "I was saved while I prayed with my father and mother

at the family altar.” Would God that every parent was diligent to fulfil this most fruitful duty! God tells us: “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (I Timothy 4:16).

“In Christ’s Stead”

We are told in the Bible, that, “children are an heritage of the LORD” (Psalm 127:3). God has literally placed an immortal soul into the parents’ charge for a few short years. It is the absolute responsibility of the parents to teach that soul **about** God, and they must teach him also to the best of their ability **for** God. The sinful nature within the child will drive him away from God unless the excelling values of godliness are clearly taught, and the terrible penalties of evil are plainly set forth in contrast.

Some people might wonder how soon a child should be taught of God and the things of Heaven. The Prophet Isaiah, through the inspiration of the Spirit of God, declared that the knowledge of God should be taught little by little to the child as soon as he is weaned. Jesus said of the infants that were brought to Him: “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:15, 16). As soon as a child begins to talk, why should not the parents talk to him about the best things – the things of God? A speaking child is very soon a reasoning child, and thus the Truth of God will shine in upon the soul of the child long before most people would think it possible. It is never too early to begin talking to the child about the things of God, but there is great danger if it be put off too long! The modern public schools have slyly instilled evolution and atheism into the studies of even the first-grade students. Unless your child has a confidence in, and a clear understanding of the Scriptures, his faith may be overthrown.

Read the Word of God to your children often, and discuss the beautiful stories of the Bible. Lay a real foundation of love and respect for the Scriptures in their hearts. Keep ever before the family the extreme values of serving God, and encourage everyone of the household to pray. God has promised that His Word will not return unto Him void.

Every Day

How often should family worship be held? From a thorough study of God’s Word, it seems clear that family worship should be held at least once a day. God’s greatest warriors were always very exacting in this detail. Abraham was careful to build an altar unto God as his very first act whenever he moved into a new locality, that he and his family might have a place to pray at all times during his sojourn there. Job rose up early in the morning to offer burnt offerings for his children, continually. David wrote, “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice” (Psalm 55:17). Daniel, too, prayed three times every day, and God witnessed mightily to his prayers.

Many families hold family worship in the morning before the family disperses for the day, and again in the evening when all gather home. Some families have their service in the morning only, while others have it in the evening. God’s truth is clear. Just as the Children of Israel gathered their manna fresh every morning, except on the Sabbath, so must the Christian daily secure that true Bread that comes down from Heaven, to keep his spiritual health and well-being. The true man of God will do all in his power to provide spiritual food for his family as well as for himself. The Bride of Christ — the Virtuous Woman — “riseth also

while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens" (Proverbs 31:15).

By Example

Nature teaches many of her children from example, and thus should the Christian teach his children. It is easier for the child when he can follow the example of a truly godly father and mother. Joshua was one who offered a true example of godliness to his children; and he exerted an influence, too, to see that the children walked in God's ways. He said to the Children of Israel: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15). In olden days the fathers took a leading role in teaching their children about the Lord. Why should fathers think that this important duty can be delegated to someone else today? As the fathers take a more active interest in family worship, teaching their sons and daughters more about God and His wonderful works, new life will come to the Church — new names will be written down in Glory from day to day.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is family worship such an important part of a Christian's service to God?
2. How often should family worship be held?
3. How did Job conduct the worship service for his sons and daughters?
4. Which of God's warriors said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"?
5. If a man is faithful to teach his children in the ways of the Lord, what is God's promise to him?
6. Name several things that made Abraham the outstanding man of God that he was.
7. How many times a day did Daniel pray? Find the verse in the Bible that will prove your statement.
8. What was God's commandment to the Israelites in regard to teaching their children?