

## Family Prayer – Preservation, Privilege, Protection and Priority

In last week's article, I encouraged every family to begin spending time in God's word together. This week, the challenge is to make time for prayer in your household. Below, is a clip from an article about family prayer that I found on the website [www.allaboutprayer.org](http://www.allaboutprayer.org). I hope you find it beneficial to your family. Remember, the family that prays together, stays together.

A family unit is established upon divine creation and Satan utilizes any circumstances that promote disputes and destruction within a relationship (Ephesians 4:26–27, 1 Peter 5:7–8). The majority of families rarely participate in activities together, directing their attention to the television or computer. In forfeiting dialogue with family members, parents and children lack unity from God through prayer.

We may recall the familiar child's family prayer, *"God is great, God is good. And we thank Him for this food."* As a child facing the probability of a "creature" hiding under my bed I prayed, *"If I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."* Some families may choose prearranged prayers or repetition, while others may prefer spontaneous, less structured prayers. In both cases, prayers are a privilege that require a commitment between parent and child as well as God. Including God in daily circumstances helps both child and parent to understand one another. With the freedom of praying together, families are partners, building strong spiritual foundations in their homes (1 Corinthians 3:9, 11).

Family prayers extend beyond meals and bedtime. Our needs extend beyond food and fears. Families should discuss and pray together on a variety of issues. By integrating a Bible verse(s) (Ephesians 6:1–3) with prayer, children can be encouraged to ask God to help them obey their parents. Parents show their obedience to God by respecting and honoring each other (1 Peter 3:7). Children experience security as they witness their parents praying for God's help as well. As the mother seeks to please God in her prayers, God rewards her family (Proverbs 31:10–12, 28–29). As the father assumes his place as spiritual leader in the home, God blesses the family (Genesis 18:19). By example, their children will approach the Lord regularly as if they were crawling up into a loving Father's lap.

In family prayer, it is important to remember that our Heavenly Father loves to talk with children and cares deeply about their problems. Knowing that He protects and rescues us from our fears provides invaluable peace and unity to a family. Praying together allows children to voice their concerns to both an earthly parent and their *"Father, dear Father"* (Romans 8:15) simultaneously. Prayer plants a hedge of protection around families.

Though family prayer is effective in strengthening members, it's often difficult to find a specific prayer time. Parents approach family prayer with the best of intentions, only to find schedule conflicts. A parent may feel unqualified to lead in prayer, believing that they will appear ineffective communicating with God. So are there guidelines to establishing family prayer as priority each day?

- Talk about whatever is bothering you, no matter how small (1 Peter 5:7).
- Invite God to reveal His purposes, plans, and desires for your life (1 John 5:14–15).
- **M**ake God the head of your home (Deuteronomy 6:5–9).
- **E**xpect God to respond as you humble yourself before Him (Mark 11:22–25).

Family Prayers . . . all it takes is **T.I.M.E.**