

FAMILY WORSHIP

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No worthy substitute has yet been found for those daily occasions when the family comes together as a unit to worship God.

Unless our profession of Christianity as a people is to degenerate into nothing more than meeting-house religion, we must protect and cultivate family worship. The individual Christian who does not have seasons of earnest prayer will soon find himself on the backslider's list. Similarly, the home that does not maintain family worship will find itself bereft of the strength and protection that God intends it shall have.

There is abundant evidence in the Bible that devout families worshiped together, and should do so. God said concerning Abraham, "For 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 judgment" (Gen. 18:19). And it was Joshua who stated, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15).

In the New Testament we read of Cornelius, "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (Acts 10:2). The Apostle Paul exhorted: And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

Family worship is one of the most proper things we can do. As families we receive mercies from God which we ought to acknowledge. And there are blessings which we must seek. Can any one of our homes exist long without the blessing and favor of the Lord?

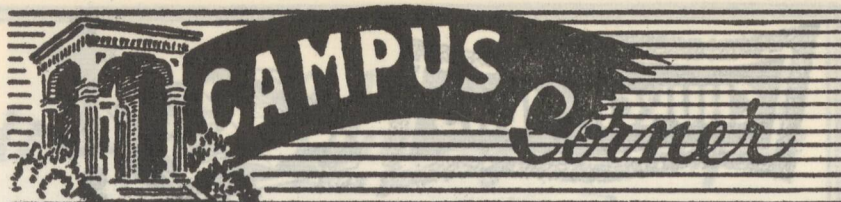
Of what should family worship consist? First there is the reading of the Scripture. This should consist of more than a verse hurriedly snatched from a scripture calendar or other brief devotional aid. Surely most of us can take time for a chapter from the Bible.

God instructed Israel, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 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. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" (Deut. 6:6:9).

It may not always be possible to have a hymn of praise in connection with our family worship, but certainly a verse or so is a fitting thing at times. The radio and the record player seem to have crowded out musical instruments, and with this change has gone the old-fashioned family sing. Maybe this is one reason why the children need to learn to sing in the home the songs of Christian faith and inspiration.

Along with the reading of the Word should come prayer. Perhaps each member of the family cannot lead in prayer each time. But certainly there are occasions when they should. All need to pray. The family needs to pray for themselves.

Some families seem to have difficulty in finding a suitable time for family worship. Let us be careful that his problem does not become an excuse. There is time for other things. Most of us shape our lives much as we want to, and if there is a proper Christian discipline and order in the family, it ought not to be difficult to find a time when the family can meet together for prayer and Bible reading.



IT IS LATER THAN WE THINK

As I begin to make a report on our Bethany Budgets I am made aware of the fact that this church year will soon be history. As you read this article, do you realize that there is only approximately six weeks left in this church year? This means that, if our churches pay their Bethany Budget in full, an excess of \$2,000 will need to be raised within the next six weeks.

At the present time sixteen of our churches have paid their budgets in full. Several of the churches have paid more than their budget allotment to Bethany. We are extremely grateful for this sort of sacrificial and visionary spirit. We feel to pay tribute to those who have been faithful in the work of the Lord.

It may surprise our people to know that 22% of the churches have PAID NOTHING on their 1958-59 Bethany Budget. This fact causes us to urge our people to make a special effort to help Bethany financially so that we might be able to balance our books on May 31st.

As we are now writing, we are faced with a number of bills which have carried over from last month which need attention. We have confidence that an announcement of our need is sufficient to bring a response from our generous people. May God bless you as you give to His cause. We are sure that our people will rally to the support of Bethany and enable us to give a balanced report at the end of the church year.

(W.E.G.)

AN ADVANCED ANNOUNCEMENT

Bethany Bible College

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

June 6 - 8

Make plans now for this big event

The service should be real and true. Wisdom indicates that it should be varied and not always a lengthy service, although there certainly are exceptions to this rule.

If the family altar is set up when the home is first established, the little children become accustomed to it. But it certainly is not family worship until the whole family gets together and unites its interests and faith in worship. It is not family worship when mother has to do it all by herself without help either of the children or the husband and father. Family worship is just what the name implies.

Such a household ministry will produce glorious results for time and eternity.