

Grace Notes

Family Matters

06.02.09



These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7, hcsb

Family devotions.....

Think about that phrase for a moment. What comes to mind? If you're like most families – nothing comes to mind. Personally, I don't have a single childhood memory of my parents leading any type of family devotional time.

Biblically, family-worship was never an option.

....watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen.... Teach them to your children.... Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when He said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear My words so that they may learn to revere Me as long as they live in the land and may teach [My words] to their children." Deuteronomy 4:9-10

What follows is a devotional I received last year written by pastor/teacher, Jim Hardwicke: (Jim is the man under whom I surrendered to the ministry in 1980.)

What ever happened to family devotions--where parents simply read a portion of the Bible to their family, talk about it with them, and pray together?

In his book, *While God is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers*, author Steven E. Woodworth writes, 'Religious worship was by no means limited to the church or confined within the walls of houses of worship. 'Family prayers,' held each evening in each Christian home, were as important to nineteenth-century Christians as any of the corporate worship services of the church... Vermont soldier Wilbur Fisk noted that reading a chapter of the Bible and praying together had been his family's 'custom from time immemorial.' Deep in the South, not far from Atlanta, James A. Connolly and other Union officers found themselves quartered with a Southern family, in whose house the Army of the Cumberland's headquarters was located. That evening, Connolly and other staff officers joined the family in their regular evening prayers, including the singing of hymns'.

Family devotions don't have to be long. In fact, more than 10 minutes, or so, might be too long. But any of us can read at least a few verses from the Bible and pray together, for the needs of our family members, our church, our nation, and/or our world. Why not start this week? Why not aim for family devotions at least 5 out of 7 days a week?

When our children see real Christianity lived out in a daily way in our homes, it will change them forever.

Not enough time? Schedules too crazy? Don't feel qualified to lead something like this? Relax – if that's what is going through your mind right now, you're normal. It also means that Satan is both furious - and terrified – hoping that the frantic thoughts with which he's trying to fill your mind will lead you to do.....nothing.



Soli Deo Gloria, Nick