

*We must recognize that public worship flows most beautifully when the people of God also meet with the Lord in private, as individuals or families.*

—ARP Church Directory of Public Worship

## Family (and individual) Worship

### **Broadly speaking:**

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*  
(1 Corinthians 10:31)

### **Beginning to narrow:**

*If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*  
(Colossians 3:1, 2)

### **Children and Families:**

*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*  
(Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

## Why Children? *God has chosen to operate in families.*

### **Examples**

The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.”  
(Exodus 34:6, 7)

He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.  
(Psalm 78:5-7)

For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.  
(Acts 2:39)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.  
(Ephesians 6:1-4)

# Why prayer?

## What is prayer?

Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q&A98)

## Prayer reveals the Gospel

- 1) Everyone has desires (*our desires unto God*). Are they right or wrong (*things agreeable to his will*)?
- 2) Who is Jesus, why is his name on your lips (*in the name of Christ*)?
- 3) What is sin, why are we talking about what we did wrong (*confession of our sins*)?
- 4) With God, there is an answer to all of these question (*acknowledgement of his mercies*).

## Just a few benefits as mentioned by John Calvin:

1) Zealous hearts fired up again by God's grace, 2) changing of our desires to fit God's will, 3) preparation to receive God's answer with thankfulness, 4) which leads to more worship of him when he answers, 5) which leads to even more thankfulness for whatever was obtained, and, finally, 6) that we might grow in assurance of a God who is living and active on our behalf.

## Just a few reasons why prayer is important, as mentioned by James Montgomery Boice:

1) Because there is a devil that we resist through prayer, 2) God's way of obtaining what we need from him, 3) the apostles thought it important, 4) Jesus prominently displayed a vibrant prayer life in his earthly ministry, 5) Jesus is still praying for his people, 6) mercy and grace flow from prayer, 7) fullness of joy flows from prayer, 8) freedom from anxiety (peace!) flows from prayer, 9) appointed method of obtaining the fullness of the Holy Spirit, 10) keeps God's people watchful and alert, 11) used by God to promote spiritual growth.

## How can we do all this for our kids (or ourselves)? *Only you and the Lord know.*

God has blessed his people with different and unique personalities. The same is true for family units. What works for one family does not work for another. In other words, the foundation of Jesus Christ stays the same, but the houses look quite different! For example, if the Smiths love music, and all three of their children are gifted musicians at the ages of 10, 8, and 6. Longer times of song singing fit well for them. On the other hand, the Brown children love coloring. They bought a coloring book filled with Bible stories to talk about. But what about little Susie? She loves story time! Thankfully, God's True Word is filled with wonderful stories from start to finish. In all instances, the foundation is Jesus Christ, but the methods are quite different.

**The same is true with prayer. As you grow in your knowledge of prayer and worship, grow also in your desire to apply it well to unique circumstances.**