**Home Devotions: The Sprouting Family Tree**

Aulic Presentation

Dec 4, 2017

1. Let’s have a family devotion . . .
2. Family Devotions
   1. Why
   2. Why hard? (and questions you may have)
   3. Why easy?
3. How to Start
   1. When to start having devotions
   2. When during the day
   3. Where
   4. What format or materials to use
4. Keeping the devotions going
   1. Build them into your daily routine
   2. Protect that time but be flexible and realistic
   3. Home devotions are not magic, but they are a means of grace
   4. Be a dad and mom and child, not a preacher or teacher
   5. Remember where the motivation is
   6. Be interactive and responsive (listening)
   7. You will need to plan and prepare for these devotions
   8. A family tradition of dessert: “How sweet are your promises to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” Psalm 119:103
5. Your suggestions:

Resources:

From WLS Essay file, available at wls.wels.net: Michael Koepke’s *Christ at Home: Addressing the Need for Family Devotions,* WLS Master’s Project, 2012. In this comprehensive look at family devotions, Pastor Koepke references often Richard Gurgel’s *Sharing the Promise: A Workshop to Help Parents Build a Strong Christian Home,* NPH, 1996

Structuring the Devotional Time from Koepke (p. 69 & 71):

If the family chooses to use material that does not include questions, the devotion leaders might choose to create their own by previewing the material and formulating appropriate questions. Luther's four elements of meditation could provide a simple template for doing this. The four elements are

* confession (i.e., “What sin does this lead me to confess?”)
* thanksgiving (i.e., “For what does this lead me to give thanks to God [generally focused on the forgiveness of sins in Christ and on the blessings that result]?”)
* instruction (i.e., “How does this instruct me to think?” or “What does this instruct me to do in my life?”)
* and petition (i.e., “What does this lead me to pray?”). Other suggestions to encourage participation could be to close the devotion by singing a hymn or by asking each of those present to say a prayer.

. . . .

Since God’s Word is the only vital component of a family devotion, any devotional structure that highlights God’s Word is sufficient. What is offered below is simply a suggestion for the family who would appreciate further direction in structuring their devotional time. The model that follows was suggested by Gurgel (p.235) with the exception of the first point. As indicated earlier, beginning the devotion time by asking each member of the family to share the high points and low points of their days gives family members a chance to connect with each other and share each other’s joys and burdens. If children become accustomed to this pattern when they are young, they may be less likely to close off to their parents as adolescents, when they especially need the support and guidance of their family. This pattern also establishes the habit of addressing the cares and concerns of our lives with God’s Word. One may even be pleasantly surprised to find how often the theme for that day’s devotion speaks directly to an issue that a family member had raised.

1. Ask each family member to share high points and low points from their day

2. Scripture Reading (from the Bible, or from a devotional book)

3. Involving the family in discussion of what was read. If there is a life application question, go around the table and give each person the opportunity to answer.

4. Prayer

5. Music (Hymn)

Also from Koepke

1. Appendix A—Age Specifics . . . (attached)
2. Appendix B—Literature Review and Devotional Resource Recommendations (see WLS Essay file copy)