

## YOU'RE INVITED TO FAMILY DEVOTIONS

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My husband Mark's family always did devotions together at the close of a meal. It usually involved reading a Bible passage or story and saying a prayer. This practice was a new experience for me when Mark and I started dating. I still remember hopping out of my seat to help clear the table and realizing dinner wasn't quite over. Honestly, reading the Bible after a meal felt a little forced—I thought of devotions as personal, private time with God.



Mark and I chose to carry on his family's tradition with our own children. From a young age, our little ones expected to hear a Bible story after dinner. And since kids generally love stories, they loved devotions too. As a parent, I grew to appreciate the rhythm it created at mealtime and realized it didn't have to feel forced.

When the kids were young, we kept it simple; we didn't make too many rules. We let them choose the story and act it out as one of us read. We all giggled when Gideon's army blew their horns to win a battle. We relished Mary's excitement as she ran to share the resurrection news with her friends. Once each child learned to read, we invited them to lead *us*. The more ownership we gave our three children, the more invested they became.

Now that our kids are teenagers, we read through books of the Bible, one chapter at a time. With everyone's busy schedules, the five of us can't always eat together, so reading a single book can take months. Yet, the connection Mark and I feel to our children's faith walks when we do devotions together still feels essential. Valuable.

Sometimes, what we read prompts our kids to make connections to their own lives or ask hard questions. We've had honest conversations about challenging issues and what the Bible says—or doesn't say—about them. Sitting with the complexity of our shared questions has benefits, reminding our kids (and us) that trusting God with their doubts is a natural and healthy part of becoming mature Christ-followers.

Once upon a time, devotions around the table seemed like an imposition. And that *can* happen. But when we make the experience invitational for our kids—when faith, in general, is invitational and rooted in our relationships with them—then regular devotion time can become a precious part of any family's rhythm.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Creating Worship Practices at Home](#).

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