



WALKING WITH GOD AS A FAMILY

As for me and my house we will serve the Lord





*Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

*These commandments that I give you
today are to be upon your hearts.*

Impress them on your children.

*Talk about them when you sit at home
and when you walk along the road,
when you lie down and when you get up.*

Deuteronomy 6:7

Ideas!



At home talk and pray about what is going to happen, discuss behaviour expectations and considering the needs of others.

Sit as near the front as you can. Children will find it easier to see, hear, engage and join in nearer the front.

Bring a few small toys and books for toddlers, think about using Bible story books etc

Consider the particular Hill Church expression that week and share with the children why we do it.

Sit together so you can worship and join in as a family.

Help them find an appropriate time to bring a contribution e.g. a Bible verse or a prayer. If they are not confident enough to speak out encourage them to pray or speak quietly, reminding them that Jesus can still hear them.

Discuss with the children how they can be involved, e.g. by playing an instrument, singing, listening, dancing or serving.

Lead by example in everything, but take them with you in the process. You are their role model.

Arrive on time, it helps not to be rushed and stressed!

Explain what is going on as it happens, e.g. complicated song words, tongues or prophesy.

Don't worry if they appear not to be fully engaged all the time. It is amazing what they pick up even when they look like they are not listening.

Aim to get seated a few minutes before the start, remind the children of the things you talked about at home and pray together.

Make up actions, dances, sign language to songs, and encourage the use of fairly quiet instruments - small African style drums are ideal.

Following Jesus as a family, in the home

Setting aside specific time as a family to pray, worship or study the Bible together is a very helpful ingredient in developing our children's spiritual maturity. However, it can often be a challenge! It has to be appreciated that the style, quantity, emphasis and timing of this discipline will vary considerably. After all, people are all different and so are families.

A good principle is to make such times a regular and normal part of family life. Think creatively about the timing and location. It is helpful to include regular practices (e.g. memory verses) to help the children focus. You will know best whether routine or variety is the best way to engage your children. Naturally, younger children will adapt easier to a suggested routine. However, do not be discouraged if you are beginning these disciplines with an older child. Start small, communicate well, and you will discover that there are no age limits to devotional time as a family.

Remember the discipline is meant to serve the disciple and

not the other way round. Don't feel restricted by routines. Often flexibility and creativity are helpful to bring refreshment.

It might be helpful to remember that devotional time as a family is very much like God's intended design for the individual – all the time! God created us to live in regular moment-by-moment communion with him. Probably our best moments will come when least expected. The challenge is to spot the opportunity and go for it. This is what Moses said when he encouraged families to talk about God when they sit at home and when they walk along the road, when they lie down and when they get up.

"From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger."

Psalm 8:2



Ideas!



Read a Bible passage and ask questions like 'What does this mean?' or 'what can we learn from this?'

Use other Christian stories, magazines or Bible reading notes.

Discuss a Proverb each day at breakfast, then reflect on it again the following day. Did we see it in action?

Learn a family memory verse, put it to a tune or rhythm to help you remember it.

Read a prayer newsletter as a family and pray for the family concerned.

Sing, use CDs or play instruments.

Tell Bible stories or share some of your own experiences of God during meal times.

Talk to other families, share what works, seek out their recommended resources or books.

Animate or act out a story from the Bible

Tell Bible stories or share some of your own experiences of God during meal times.

Create a 'Family Prayer Journal' Include what was prayed for and answers to prayers.

Make up Actions, signs or dances to worship songs.

Go for a walk in the woods/ on the beach/ in the fields and look at God's beautiful creation.

Use creativity and arts to get you thinking about a topic before you pray

Use other Christian stories, magazines or Bible reading notes.

Make use of the internet for ordering books and resources. There are lots of websites full of ideas.

Explore different ways that we can communicate with God, like all praying out loud together, speaking in tongues, singing spontaneous songs and listening to God.

Make sure 'Serving the Family' sheets and other resources get sent home from Hill Kids.

Make use of the internet for ordering books and resources. There are lots of websites full of ideas.

Following Jesus as a family, with the church family

Some meetings are more challenging than others. This depends on the content and context of the meeting, but also just as much on the circumstances of the family. For example, tired children are harder to engage than energised children. But energised children are harder to manage than tired children! Sometimes it is vice versa! But our aim each time we come together as a church family is to engage with God and others in a way that builds faith and has life.

A very parent carries the burden and joy of helping children engage with that process. It is a burden sometimes, when your own participation is limited because you are fully focused on the children under your care. It is a joy however when you see children engaged and making their own contribution to a gathering.

Those who have successfully gone before us will say that "turning up and hoping for the best" is not the best approach! Many times you can feel yourself swaying between too much focus on your family and so being unable to participate yourself, to the other extreme of too much focus on your own participation,

while your family is unfocused, disengaged and possibly even distracting others. Parenting is a tough business. Perhaps that is why God said he will 'gently lead those that are with young' (Isaiah 40:11)?

There is an approach that can really help. By spending just a few minutes talking to our children before a meeting we can help prepare them emotionally, mentally and spiritually for what is to follow. Encourage them to think about how they may contribute to the gathering and how by being engaged they will honour Jesus and strengthen the church. Participation and enjoyment in the body-life of the church

should be the anticipated norm for every disciple of Jesus, regardless of age. It is certainly not something we are only meant to do when we are adults.

"So, brothers and sisters, what should you do? When you meet together, one person has a song. Another has a teaching. Another has new truth from God. Another speaks in a different language, and another person interprets that language. The purpose of all these things should be to help the church grow strong."

1 Corinthians 14 : 26



Families following Jesus



One of the values of Hill Kids is 'Serving the Family'. This means that we want to build the church by being active in supporting the parent/guardian in their primary role to develop the spiritual growth and maturity of their children.

Our aim is to help and encourage one another in our role as parents or guardians. We have been charged by God to impart the timeless truths of our faith in a timely way to our ever-developing children. We are seeking to do this

in this booklet by providing practical advice on making the most out of two areas of life: Firstly, in any devotional time as a family. Secondly, when we meet together either as a large community at Hill Church Together on a Sunday or as smaller communities in the week. For many who are new to following Jesus, focusing our parenting on one or both of these areas may be uncharted territory. This may make the task seem even more daunting. We may have many questions and challenges as to how to involve or encourage our children in their own faith.

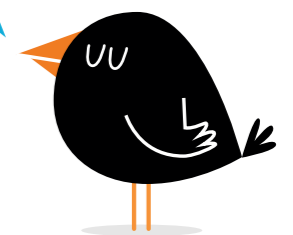
Alternatively you may have been practising and developing ideas for some time. If so, we

hope this booklet will provide much needed encouragement. Regardless where you begin, our desired destination is the same – to impress the glory and hope of personally knowing and following Jesus Christ, upon our children.

The purpose of this booklet is to help contribute to that process.

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6

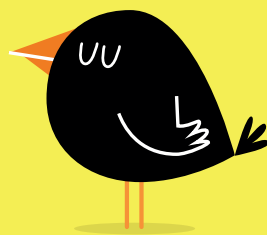




This group serves our children who are in school
years X to X (ages 5 to 11)



This group serves our children who are in school
years X to X (ages 11 to 15)



www.the-hill.co | info@the-hill.co