



CALVARY

CALVARY
Kids

Back to School

FAMILY
BACKPACK

4 WEEK DEVOTIONAL

INTRODUCTION

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Back to School Backpack Family Devotional



It is that time of the year again! It's time for all of the vacations, late nights, and summer fun to begin to wind down and for dads, moms, and kids alike to begin to prepare for "Back to School". And despite the spectrum of emotions, from dread to joy, if you look closely, there is a tremendous opportunity to reset as a family and return to healthy and prosperous routines that can positively affect your family's entire year.

"Back to school" does more than provide a moment for families to get back in the flow of bus times, drop-offs, pick-ups, practice times, and homework. It also, perhaps, more importantly, provides a moment to recalibrate and establish or re-establish powerful and necessary patterns and rhythms for spiritual renewal and revival in your family.

God has ordained family. He cares immensely about family. At Calvary, we share the same care. We care about your family and your spiritual growth in every season. It is our mission for every person and family to pursue revival, build unity, release purpose, and leave a legacy. It is our heart to help supplement your family with valuable resources for every season of life. Why? Because we believe in strong families!

The reasons for creating this devotion are mentioned in everything previously expressed. Inside this devotion, you will find a total of 4 devotions; one for each week. Each weekly devotion is designed to last the entire week. Also, the duration of time spent each day is completely up to you and your family.

The heart of this devotional is meant to bring you and your family "back" into these powerful spiritual rhythms. The 4 devotionals will allow you and your family to come:

**1. BACK TO
Family Prayer**

**2. BACK TO
Family Bible Reading**

**3. BACK TO
Family Altar**

**4. BACK TO
Quality Time with Family**

The ultimate goal of each devotion is to stir your hearts and empower your family through:

- *Spiritual Information/Revelation*
- *Discussion Questions*
- *Practical Application*
- *"Family Time" Events*

It is our prayer that this devotion, with each passing day and week, will stir your hearts towards Christ and strengthen your bond as a family. Take each week at your own pace. Let the Holy Spirit lead you into your own discussion questions, applications, and family activities as you go. Revisit previous weeks, establish new habits, and create spiritual memories that become memorial stones of spiritual development.

Here's what we need from you: As you go through this devotion, have these discussions, and enjoy your time with family. We want you to document your progress by posting a picture of your experience on social media, tagging CalvaryFL, and using the hashtag #FocusedOnFamily22. For every post that tags CalvaryFL and uses the hashtag, you and your family will get 1 entry into a drawing for a free family meal. The drawing will be announced in a Calvary service and on our social media accounts.

We are beyond excited for you and your family to embark on this journey. We cannot wait to see what God will do in and through your family over the course of the next few weeks. Now, gather everyone around, it's time to go forward by going "back"!



BACK TO Prayer

DEVOTION

KEY VERSE: Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)*

Max Lucado once said, "Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference."

It is impossible to exaggerate the power of prayer. Additionally, prayer should never be undervalued. Make no mistake about it, prayer is powerful and prayer works! Your place of prayer should be a safe, still place where any and every concern, care, and issue of life, of the mind, and of the heart can be handed over to the one who can truly answer and help.

While prayer is powerful, it is also meant to be conversational. It's meant to be more than a monologue where we simply air out our complaints and problems in hopes that we have been heard. Real prayer is designed to be a dialogue enjoyed in the context of a real and intimate relationship. Real prayer is to be enjoyed not endured. Enjoying prayer comes when we put it all in the proper perspective and see it through the proper lens. As we speak to him from our hearts, we can know that God hears us and cares about every request, concern, and need. Never forget, God longs to hear from us and for us to hear from him; And he has, in his great design, chosen prayer to be one of the places for this great exchange. When we remember that the God of all the universe is present with us in our time of prayer, it doesn't just create a great time of prayer in the moment, but a continued hunger and desire to pray more and to pray often.

Finally, prayer is incredible for the individual but exponentially greater when done together. The Bible speaks of times of gathering for prayer or agreeing together in prayer (Matthew 18:18-20). Family is a great space to start a prayer meeting. Praying together and praying for one another only adds to the moment and the momentum of prayer. Getting back to family prayer will enhance the overall attitude of each person involved and the overall atmosphere of your home. Undoubtedly, the more you engage in the powerful discipline of prayer, you will sense and see the presence and power of God affecting every aspect of your daily lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- DAY 1: What is prayer?
- DAY 2: How do we pray?
- DAY 3: Why do we pray?
- DAY 4: What should we pray about?
- DAY 5: Has God ever answered your prayers? What prayer did God answer? How did God answer you?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- As you apply this week's devotion, here are some practical ways to implement family prayer:*
1. As a family, decide when, where, and how long you will have family prayer.
 2. Build excitement throughout the day with creative reminders about your prayer time.
 3. Create a running prayer list with contributions from each family member. Date each request.
 4. Create a running prayer answered list, and celebrate each time God answers prayer. This will build faith in the family as you see God honor your time and commitment to prayer.
 5. Create a time for each member of the family to lead the prayer moment.
 6. Implement a time of worship pre-prayer, if desired, to help set an atmosphere for prayer time.
 7. Create added discussion post prayer or the day after to gauge the impact of prayer times.
 8. Don't quit! Do your absolute best to commit to a daily time of prayer.

FAMILY TIME EVENTS

This week's family time event suggestion is "Family Dinner". Commit to eating as many meals as possible, together as a family. Be intentional to utilize the time to ask questions, have fun, and talk about life events. Be intentional to reduce screen time and any outside distractions. Be sure to post about your family and prayer time. Tag Calvary (@calvaryfl) and use the hashtag #FocusedOnFamily22

PRAYER RESOURCE

Looking for a place to start or a way to pray over your family? Pray Psalm 128 as a blessing for your family.

1. Pray for your family to walk in obedience to the Lord (Psalm 128:1)
2. Pray for God to provide for your family (Psalm 128:2)
3. Pray for your family to Abide in Christ (Psalm 128:3)
4. Pray for your family to serve the Lord (Psalm 128:4)
5. Pray for the generations coming after you. (Psalm 128:5-6)
6. Pray for the Lord's peace over your family (Psalm 128:6)



BACK TO *Bible Reading*

DEVOTION

KEY VERSES:

Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you. *Psalm 119:11 (NKJV)*

Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. *Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)*

James Merritt once said, “The primary purpose of reading the Bible is not to read the Bible, but to know God”. The Bible is God’s word. And in many ways, the Bible is God’s voice. He has decided to speak to us, his children, through holy scripture. If we ever feel disconnected from God’s presence, we are able to reconnect with him through his word. The Bible is a gathering point for encounter, enrichment, spiritual understanding, impartation, and true transformation. Why? Because God’s word is absolute truth.

Every time you choose to read God’s word, you are not just reading words on a page, but you are immersing yourself in a world that can alter your very life. God’s word carries within it the very power of God himself. The more scripture we read, the more we realize who we really are and God’s perfect intention and design for our lives. Reading, memorizing, and applying God’s word empowers us to live a victorious and overcoming life. With God’s word in our hearts and minds, we can fend off temptation and spiritual attacks. With God’s word, we can successfully navigate the trials, trauma, tribulations, and transitions of life. With God’s word, we can establish God’s kingdom on earth, in our cities, and our families. With God’s word, we can have abundant life and see God’s precious and powerful promises come to pass in our lives.

Without the knowledge and imprint of God’s word in our lives, we can potentially fall into the lies and deception of the enemy. We become vulnerable to every wind of doctrine and can wander away from truth. Without God’s word active in our lives, we will stumble along the way and not know what decisions to make or which paths to take. Without God’s word, we are truly lost and forfeit abundant life.

The Bible should be the priority in the lives and families of God’s children. Whether reading it one verse at a time or multiple chapters in one sitting, we should give time to getting into God’s word. In biblical times, families made sure to pass down this invaluable spiritual discipline to their relatives. It was innate in every man and woman that the stories, principles, and commands were passed from generation to generation. We should seek to ensure that our generation, and the next, has a deep love and commitment to knowing, reading, and applying God’s word.

Perhaps you haven’t had anyone to lead you into this discipline. Maybe you didn’t grow up reading the Bible or seeing your family know scripture. That’s ok! You can start today for you and your family and the generations to come. There are a variety of new translations that allow scripture to be more easily understood without taking away from the original content and meaning. Do your research. Find the translation that best fits you and your family. Download the Bible app for you and your children. Make it a priority to get “back” to the Bible. As you do, you and your family will find strength, joy, and power from another world.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

DAY 1: What is the Bible?

DAY 2: How do we read the Bible? What are your personal ways to study, memorize, and apply Gods word?

DAY 3: Why do we Read the Bible?

DAY 4: How is the Bible divided? How many books total? How many books are in Old/New Testament?

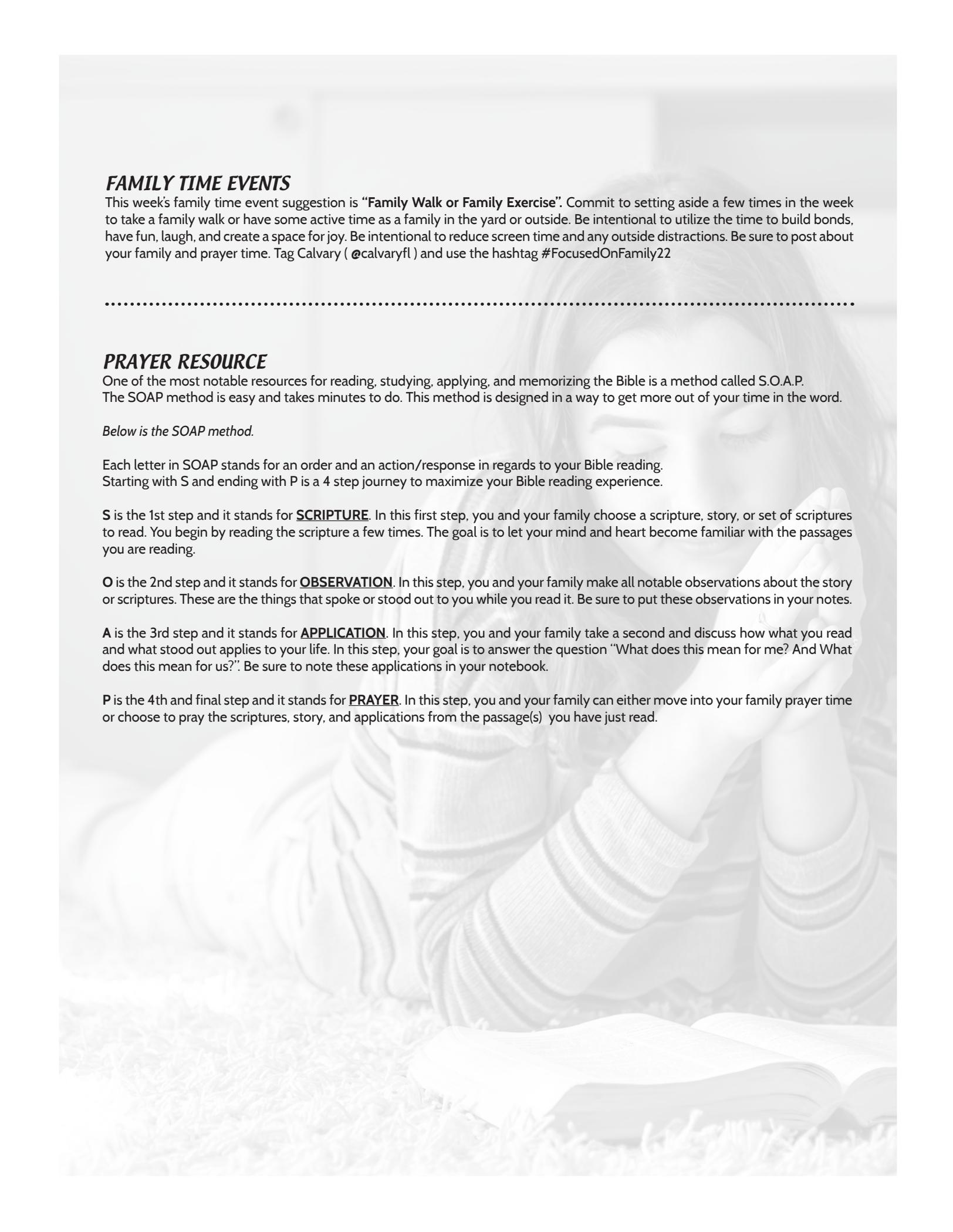
DAY 5: What’s your favorite scripture and why? What are the purposes for each of the books of the Bible and who were their writers?

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PRACTICAL APPLICATION

As you apply this week’s devotion, here are some practical ways to implement family Bible reading:

1. Pick a Bible reading plan or specific Bible study for the family.
2. Get a Notebook or something to take notes with and choose someone as a note taker for the discussion and Bible reading.
You can even designate someone new each night to be the note taker.
3. Take turns being the reader each night,
4. If your bible reading is a bible story and you have younger children, act out the story with different people being different characters.
5. Stay consistent. Pick a time to read that works for the entire family. You can even connect it with your prayer time if it works with your family’s schedule.



FAMILY TIME EVENTS

This week's family time event suggestion is "Family Walk or Family Exercise". Commit to setting aside a few times in the week to take a family walk or have some active time as a family in the yard or outside. Be intentional to utilize the time to build bonds, have fun, laugh, and create a space for joy. Be intentional to reduce screen time and any outside distractions. Be sure to post about your family and prayer time. Tag Calvary (@calvaryfl) and use the hashtag #FocusedOnFamily22

PRAYER RESOURCE

One of the most notable resources for reading, studying, applying, and memorizing the Bible is a method called S.O.A.P. The SOAP method is easy and takes minutes to do. This method is designed in a way to get more out of your time in the word.

Below is the SOAP method.

Each letter in SOAP stands for an order and an action/response in regards to your Bible reading. Starting with S and ending with P is a 4 step journey to maximize your Bible reading experience.

S is the 1st step and it stands for **SCRIPTURE**. In this first step, you and your family choose a scripture, story, or set of scriptures to read. You begin by reading the scripture a few times. The goal is to let your mind and heart become familiar with the passages you are reading.

O is the 2nd step and it stands for **OBSERVATION**. In this step, you and your family make all notable observations about the story or scriptures. These are the things that spoke or stood out to you while you read it. Be sure to put these observations in your notes.

A is the 3rd step and it stands for **APPLICATION**. In this step, you and your family take a second and discuss how what you read and what stood out applies to your life. In this step, your goal is to answer the question "What does this mean for me? And What does this mean for us?". Be sure to note these applications in your notebook.

P is the 4th and final step and it stands for **PRAYER**. In this step, you and your family can either move into your family prayer time or choose to pray the scriptures, story, and applications from the passage(s) you have just read.



BACK TO *Family Altar*

DEVOTION

KEY VERSES:

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. *Hebrews 10:23-25 (ESV)*

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. *Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV)*

Family is God's design. From the very beginning, God set the parameters and established his idea for a stable, prosperous, and spiritually healthy family. Family happens in the context of "home". We must never forget that the environments we create and the events that happen inside our houses are truly life transforming.

Family is formative. Every conversation, moment of teaching or discipline, and action helps to shape our marriages, our children, and the way we view the world. In reality, what happens in our homes ultimately helps to shape our society. What we produce in our families are great indicators of what future societies and cultures become.

With that in mind, we, as believers, must be very intentional about the environments of our homes. We must become conscious of what permeates the atmospheres of our homes, and what behaviors and habits are being developed as a result. We have the power, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to create and shift atmospheres to bring heaven to earth and shift our families, cities, schools, and communities. But where does it start? With the family...in the home...and at the Family Altar.

Family Altar is not a new term, but for many, it is relatively unfamiliar. Family Altar is a place and time where the family gathers to worship, pray, and read the Bible for the purpose of entertaining God's presence, establishing Godly atmospheres, building spiritual disciplines, and creating a foundation of God first in all that your family says and does.

Biblically, altars matter to God. They are places of worship and sacrifice. They are places of honor to God. Altars matter because altars are places of transformation and change.

When you create a Family Altar, you give God a space to inhabit and an atmosphere to dwell in. In a lot of ways, the Family Altar says, "God we desire you and you can meet us HERE!" With the hustle and bustle of life, it's fair to say that the Family Altar is needed. With the onslaught and attacks of the enemy against our families and children, it's fair to say that Family Altar is necessary. Undoubtedly, our adversary despises ideas such as the Family Altar. He sees it as a real threat to his deceptive and destructive work.

As you create your Family Altar, your life, your children's lives, and your home will begin to change. As you honor God in this way he will indeed honor you with his presence, power, and glory. Because of your Family Altar, your family's church and ministry experiences will only be enhanced. So, today, build your Family Altar and watch God shift your family.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

DAY 1: What is an altar? What happens at an altar in the Bible?

DAY 2: Why should we have and gather together as a family at the Family Altar?

DAY 3: Why is it important to create great environments and healthy environments for spiritual growth?

DAY 4: What are the benefits of a Family Altar (Worship, Prayer, and Bible Reading)?

DAY 5: Break down and discuss Romans 12:1-2.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

1. Choose a place, time, and frequency for your Family Altar.
2. Build an "order" of what you want to do during your Family Altar time.
3. Don't be afraid to include new moments in your Family Altar like Testimony Time, Sharing what God has put on someone's heart, etc...
4. Don't be afraid to use YouTube or Music Apps for help with worship.
5. Combine as many or as few elements as you desire. You don't have to do everything, every time.
6. Stay consistent. This is a great place for moms and dads to be a great example for their children. Don't miss your opportunity.
7. Write down great Family Altar moments in your prayer or bible reading notebooks.

FAMILY TIME EVENTS

This week's family time event suggestion is "**Family Game Night**". Commit to setting aside a time or times in the week to play games. These can be board games, card games, family-wide video games, or sports games. Be intentional to utilize the time to build bonds, have fun, laugh, and create a space for joy. Be intentional to reduce screen time and any outside distractions. Be sure to post about your family and prayer time. Tag Calvary (@calvaryfl) and use the hashtag #FocusedOnFamily22

FAMILY ALTAR RESOURCE

Read and re-read devotion and practical application as a resource for family altar.



BACK TO *Quality Time*

DEVOTION

KEY VERSE: So he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" *Luke 10:27 (NKJV)*

Someone once said, "Love is spelled T.I.M.E." The impact of this statement and its incredible amount of truth is profound. Time is invaluable and once it is spent it is gone forever. God calls us to be intentional with our time, to be good stewards of our days and years. With those we love the most, it's not always our quantity of time, but our quality of time that makes the difference.

Over the last few decades, it seems as though life and specifically our family lives have become busier and busier. We have unintentionally found ways to fill up our calendars and schedules. We come home exhausted, go to bed tired, and even wake up weary. Our busyness makes us attendees of most things, but not truly present enough to enjoy them. This is not God's intention for our lives. We, by God's design, are human beings, not human doings. Our continued restlessness and weariness don't honor God and it certainly doesn't improve our quality of life and family. We must be intentional to slow down, live purposefully, be present with our spouses and children, and make time with family a true priority.

God himself set the perfect example of rest from the very beginning. In the first few chapters of the book of Genesis, it is clear to us that God, after his work was complete, rested (Genesis 2:1-2). If God prioritized rest, then we should as well. Rest is more than sleep or a vacation. It is the place our souls recuperate and our body is re-energized. Real rest can even be found in moments where you are active, as long as that activity results in quality time being spent with the ones you love doing the things you all love to do.

The second thing God exemplified to us in the book of Genesis was the gift of his present presence. God, our creator, and father, spent quality time with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The Bible seems to imply that God, before the fall of man, had continuous, and even daily fellowship with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8). The bible also calls God "our very present help..." (Psalm 46:1). God, from a place of perfect love, has chosen to give us the gift his presence in our lives; and make no mistake, his presence makes a difference. God who is our eternal Father, and he exists outside of time, chooses to give us himself in time as an act of love. So, it is true! LOVE is spelled T.I.M.E!!! And if God has invested in rest and quality time with his children, that is, his family...we should as well. Quality time with those we love is Godly and holy. If our first ministry is our families, then we must be invested in them with the currency of quality time.

As we finish up the final week of this devotion, take some time to be intentional about quality time with your family both spiritually and non-spiritually. It is our prayer that you have taken the time to invest and build new and fresh habits and rhythms in both ways. But no matter the type, be intentional to spend not just great quantities of time, but a great quality of time. In doing so, you will exemplify our heavenly Father and strengthen the bonds of Family!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- DAY 1:** What does quality time mean to you?
Ask everyone in the group.
- DAY 2:** What does quality time mean for you?
Ask everyone in the group.
- DAY 3:** What are your favorite things to do as a family? Ask everyone in the group.
- DAY 4:** How often do you need quality time?
Ask everyone in the group.
- DAY 5:** What are your greatest family memories spiritual and non-spiritual?
Ask everyone in the group.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

1. In your notebook, be sure to collect the answers to your discussion questions. This has the ability to spark future plans and quality time events with family.
2. Plan a quality time event together as a family. Utilize everyone's ideas and thoughts. Bring everyone in on the journey.
3. Create ways to discuss the needs and desires of everyone's quality time. Use this time to set boundaries and create realistic expectations. This will generate family health and maximize the quality time moments.

FAMILY TIME EVENTS

This week's family time event suggestion is "Family Night Out". Commit to setting aside a time or times in the week to plan and go "out" as a family. This can be dinner, a movie, a sports game, a beach trip, etc...Be intentional to be present. Use this time to build bonds, have fun, laugh, and create a space for joy. Be intentional to reduce screen time and any outside distractions. Be sure to post about your family and prayer time. Tag Calvary (@calvaryfl) and use the hashtag #FocusedOnFamily22

QUALITY TIME RESOURCE

Read and re-read devotion and practical application as a resource for quality time.

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