



# • SUMMER • FAMILY TIME

This summer, my prayer is that your family will find refreshment in time together and time with God. The contents of this year's summer reading plan can be done sitting around in the living room, before everyone chooses to put on a television show or go off into their separate spaces, it can be done sitting on a bed as an evening family devotion time, it can be done while sitting at the table for whichever meal your family has gathered together for, it can be done while driving together in the car, or hiking on a trail.

The point isn't where you do it. The point is that you do it – together – as a family.

Try to make a habit of having family time every day, but if you miss a day – give yourself and your family grace. It's okay. Pick it up the next day and start again.

## **Contents:**

### **Habits of the Household**

In the book, “Habits of the Household,” author Justin Whitmel Earley practically walks through what it looks like to have healthy, spiritual rhythms and routines that will bring your family closer together and closer to God. The subtitle for the book is “Practicing the story of God in everyday family rhythms.”

I would highly encourage you to read this book, but in case you don’t, I have included the main ideas from each of the chapters. Hopefully, these main ideas will help you find purpose in daily family rhythms and help you in discipling your family.

### **Characteristics or Attributes of God**

#### **Godly Character Traits**

These characteristics or attributes of God and Godly character traits are borrowed from “Family Discipleship,” by Matt Chandler and Adam Griffin. I also highly recommend this book.

My desire is that as your family reads the verse(s) of the day, every member of the family will take time to see what characteristic of God they see in the verse and what Godly character trait God is asking them to work on or be encouraged in.

I would recommend printing out each list and spending time going over them with your family to help conversation flow more smoothly. Going over the lists as a family may be the first couple of days of family time. Make sure these lists are readily available on the coffee table, the kitchen table, the bed or wherever you choose to have family time.

#### **Daily Reading**

I have printed out the verse(s) in the CSB Translation, but I would encourage you to have different family members take turns looking up the verse(s) in an actual Bible with paper pages and read them aloud.

#### **Question of the Day**

Each question is simply meant to start the conversation. They typically have nothing to do with the verse. You can use them at the beginning of your family time, you can use them at a different time in the day, or you cannot use them at all. It’s totally up to you.

## **Bonus Material**

- Some jokes to help improve your “dad” game
- Family adventure ideas
- Quotes for couples
- Questions for couples

## **Extra Advice**

- Don’t rush through family time. Enjoy the moment.
- Take time to pray. At the beginning. At the end. Both!
- Ask how you can pray for each other. A great way to start this is by asking what a win was that day and what a struggle was that day? These simple questions give us one thing to ask God for and one thing to thank God for.
- Every family is different. There is no perfect way to have family time. Do what works for your family.
- Don’t let awkward beginnings deter you from pressing on. It will get easier as everyone in the family gets used to doing it together.

## **Section 1: Habits of the Household**

### **Habits of Waking**

Waking up is a spiritual reality as much as it is a physical one. We cannot be good parents of children until we are children of God. Spiritual disciplines help us pull back the curtains and see reality as it actually is. The goal is to awaken to the reality of God's love for us and be sent out to parent in that reality.

### **Habits of Mealtimes**

Coming to the table is the keystone habit of forming relationships. When we make the table the center of gravity, it not only helps order the household, it pulls others in, turning strangers into friends.

### **Habits of Discipline**

Ordinary moments of discipline can build a life of discipleship. But Discipline often becomes about our controlling our kids' behavior. Habits help interrupt bad instincts of control and anger and build new patterns of love and discipleship of the heart.

### **Habits of Screentime**

The fight for screentime is the fight for formation. but getting rid of screens is not the solution, curation is. This means choosing rhythms that function as limits and then choosing good content to fill those limits.

### **Habits of Family Devotion**

When it comes to family devotions, it is not about perfect practice, it is about doing something rather than nothing. Grace means that God loves small, messy things like us and our kids. Making a habit of teaching simple truths and praying short prayers is one of the smallest and most powerful rhythms a family can practice.

### **Habits of Marriage**

The covenant love of marriage is the foundation of love in the family. Habits of working on covenant love reveals the core truth of the family: binding love sets us free.

### **Habits of Work**

We were created by God for good work. Parents should think carefully about how they can teach children the spiritual dignity of work and showcase all the good work there is to be done, inside and outside of the household.

### **Habits of Play**

Getting lost in fun and imaginative play is an echo of the kingdom to come, a sign of a world that is full of joy. Practicing good habits of play is a of cultivating a more Christian imagination that foreshadows the kingdom to come.

## **Habits of Conversation**

Conversation is the rhythm that turns family into friends and friends into family. Teaching habits of conversation is the way to begin teaching habits of friendship.

## **Habits of Bedtime**

Bedtime is a moment, for parent and child to acknowledge that at the end of the day, God loves us. No matter what our failures, we can rest in grace. Bedtime liturgies use habitual prayers to find words (and actions) that incorporate the truths of the gospel into our routines – especially at the moments of the day when we are tired and most likely need them.

### **Bedtime Bonuses:**

#### *A Bedtime Blessing*

Parent to Child:

God loves you. Jesus died for you. And the Holy Spirit is with you. Goodnight.

So I too will love you. I too will sacrifice for you. And I too will never leave you.

#### *A Nightly Prayer for Parents*

Lord help me. May I be parented by your grace, and in turn give them the same. Amen.

## Section 2:

### Characteristics or Attributes of God

1. *Wise*. God knows what is best.
2. *Generous*. God gives what is best.
3. *Loving*. God does what is best.
4. *Good*. God is what is best.
5. *Unchanging*. God was, is, and always will be the same.
6. *Creator*. God made everything and everyone.
7. *Just*. God is right to punish sin.
8. *Faithful*. God always does what He says He will do.
9. *Provider*. God meets the needs of his children.
10. *Merciful*. God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.
11. *Attentive*. God hears and responds to the prayers of his children.
12. *Almighty*. Nothing is too hard for God.
13. *Compassionate*. God sees, cares, and acts when his children are in need.
14. *Worthy*. Only God deserves all glory.
15. *Deliverer*. God rescues his children.

### Godly Character Traits

1. *Patience*. Being slow to anger, waiting kindly and quietly.
2. *Joy*. Delighting in things that honor God.
3. *Peace*. A calm confidence in God's goodness and power.
4. *Love*. A caring commitment to God and others over yourself.
5. *Goodness*. Doing the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason.
6. *Kindness*. Being generous with your possessions, your words, and your actions.
7. *Gentleness*. Expressing compassion in words and actions.
8. *Self-Control*. Freedom from obedience to our sinful thoughts and emotions.

### Section 3: Daily Reading

1. *“But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name”*  
John 1:12
2. *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!”*  
2 Corinthians 5:17
3. *“I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*  
Galatians 2:20
4. *“He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,”*  
Ephesians 1:5
5. *“Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.”*  
Galatians 6:9-10
6. *“Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ.”*  
Colossians 3:23-24
7. *“Be silent before the Lord and wait expectantly for him; do not be agitated by one who prospers in his way, by the person who carries out evil plans. Refrain from anger and give up your rage; do not be agitated – it can only bring harm. For evildoers will be destroyed, but those who put their hope in the Lord will inherit the land.”*  
Psalm 37:7-10
8. *“He said to them, ‘I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Look, I have given you the authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy; nothing at all will harm you. However, don’t rejoice that the spirit submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’”*  
Luke 10:20

9. *“Do everything without grumbling and arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world,”*  
Philippians 2:14-15
10. *“Watch out, brothers and sisters, so that there won’t be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage each other daily, while it is still called today, so that none of you is hardened by sin’s deception.”*  
Hebrews 3:12-13
11. *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*  
1 John 1:9
12. *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves.”*  
Philippians 2:3
13. *“If anyone speaks, let it be as one who speaks God’s words; if anyone serves, let it be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”*  
1 Peter 4:11
14. *“The Lord is good, a stronghold in a day of distress; he cares for those who take refuge in him.”*  
Nahum 1:7
15. *“Jesus responded to them, ‘Do you now believe? Indeed, an hour is coming, and has come, when each of you will be scattered to his own home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world.’”*  
John 16:31-33
16. *“Therefore, we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”*  
2 Corinthians 4:16-18
17. *“I will bless the Lord who counsels me — even at night when my thoughts trouble me. I always let the Lord guide me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices; my body also rests*

*securely. For you will not abandon me to Sheol; you will not allow your faithful one to see decay. You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures.”*

Psalm 16:7-11

18. *“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand.”*

Isaiah 41:10

19. *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*

Matthew 6:33-34

20. *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you. Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.”*

1 Peter 5:6-9

21. *“The one who lives with integrity lives securely, but whoever perverts his ways will be found out.”*

Proverbs 10:9

22. *“Lying lips are detestable to the Lord, but faithful people are his delight.”*

Proverbs 12:22

23. *“Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “yes” mean “yes,” and your “no” mean “no,” so that you won’t fall under judgment.”*

James 5:12

24. *“But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone hits you on the cheek, offer the other also. And if anyone takes away your coat, don’t hold back your shirt either. Give to everyone who asks you, and from someone who takes your things, don’t ask for them back. Just as you want others to do for you, do the same for them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do what is good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting*

*nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For he is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”*

Luke 6:27-36

25. *“Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to give recognition to those who labor among you and lead you in the Lord and admonish you, and to regard them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brothers and sisters: warn those who are idle, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient with everyone. See to it that no one repays evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all. Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Don’t stifle the Spirit. Don’t despise prophecies, but test all things. Hold on to what is good. Stay away from every kind of evil.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:12-22

26. *“My life is down in the dust; give me life through your word. I told you about my life, and you answered me; teach me your statutes. Help me understand the meaning of your precepts so that I can meditate on your wonders. I am weary from grief; strengthen me through your word. Keep me from the way of deceit and graciously give me your instruction. I have chosen the way of truth; I have set your ordinances before me. I cling to your decrees; Lord, do not put me to shame. I pursue the way of your commands, for you broaden my understanding.”*

Psalms 119:28

27. *“Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Matthew 11:28-30

28. *“Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.”*

Revelation 21:3-4

29. *“I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

John 13:34-35

30. *“And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.”*

Hebrews 10:24-25

#### **Section 4: Question of the Day**

1. What was one thing that made you smile today?
2. What is one thing you have never done, but would like to try?
3. Who in your life inspires you the most? Why?
4. What was the most difficult part of your day today?
5. What memory always makes you smile?
6. What would you order at your favorite restaurant?
7. What talent do you wish you had?
8. What superpower would you like to have?
9. If money wasn't involved, what hobby would you like to pursue?
10. If you had no responsibility tomorrow, what would you want to do?
11. What's the best movie, you've recently seen?
12. What's one thing you admire about your grandparents?
13. What's one concert, you would drop everything to go to?
14. What is/was your favorite subject in school?
15. What is one act of kindness someone has recently done for you?
16. If money wasn't a concern, what one thing would buy right now on Amazon?
17. What vacation would you like to go on this summer?
18. How do you most like to express your creativity?
19. Which of your five senses do you value most?
20. Which musical instrument do you wish you could play?
21. What's one healthy habit you want to get better at?
22. What TV show can you watch over and over and it never get old?
23. What's the best compliment someone has ever given you?
24. What is your favorite summer activity?
25. What one snack do you have a hard time not eating too much of?
26. What costumes do you think your whole family should wear this Halloween?
27. What is your favorite way to relax?
28. Which season is your favorite? (Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring) Why?
29. What is your favorite song right now?
30. If money wasn't a concern, what gift would you like to buy for someone right now?

## Section 5: Bonus Material

### Knock-Knock Jokes

Knock Knock!

Who's there?

Abby

Abby who?

Abby C-D-E-F-G

Knock Knock!

Who's there?

Ari

Ari who?

Ari-S-P-E-C-T! Find out what it means to me!

Knock Knock!

Who's there?

Neil

Neil who?

Neil down to your leader!

Knock Knock!

Who's there?

Alaska

Alaska who?

Alaska Jesus in my prayers tonight!

Knock Knock!

Who's there?

Barbie

Barbie who?

Barbie Q time!

## **Monster Jokes**

How does a monster begin a fairy tale?

Once upon a slime.

On what day of the week do monsters eat people?

Chewsday.

What does a monster do when he loses his head?

He calls a head hunter.

What do you call a monster living in your nose?

A little boogey.

What do you do if a monster runs through your front door?

Run out the back door!

## Family Adventure Ideas

These are just a few ideas. Maybe you can go through them and see what stirs in your adventuring spirit and then make a summer bucket list as a family. How many family adventures can you go on this summer?

- Tie-dye t-shirts
- Write Bible verses on rocks and leave them around for others to find
- Bake something
- Complete a puzzle
- Campout in the backyard (or living room)
  - Pro-level: Don't just sleep in a tent, make all your food over a fire (don't forget the s'mores!)
- Have a water gun/balloon fight
- Go for a picnic at the park
- Visit a National Park
- Go for a hike (or a walk)
- Fly some kites
- Find a food truck and try something new
- Go to a sporting event
- Beach day!
- Visit the library and everyone has to find a book
- Play mini-golf
  - Pro-level: Create your own mini-golf to play
- Have a drive-in movie night (all you need is a projector and a sheet or empty wall)
- Go ice-skating
- Go to a concert in the park
- Take a road trip
- Go fruit picking or berry picking
- Hunt for treasures at garage sales
- Host a paint night (tons of fun and wine not needed)
- Go for a bike ride
- Build something (birdhouse, coffee table, anything)
  - Pro-level: make something out of only materials found around the house
- Play in the sprinklers
  - Pro-level: make a slip-n-slide for the whole family

## Quotes for Couples

Borrowed from “Love that Lasts” by Jefferson and Alyssa Bethke

*Love creates. Love overflows. Love is abundance. Love is life.*

*How you view yourself will flow into every relationship you have, especially [your marriage].*

*We are setting ourselves up for failure if our significant others are everything to us.*

*Waiting is an opportunity to grow our faith.*

*We are terrified of being [fully] known, not realizing that’s exactly where joy is hiding.*

*If you want to know what love looks like, look to Jesus.*

*Hiding is the death blow to intimacy.*

*Marriage is crazy good, crazy hard, and crazy fun!*

*Sex isn’t intimacy. You can live without sex. You can’t live without intimacy.*

*A healthy relationship doesn’t have to manipulate, because you’re each seeking the good of each other.*

*The very same thing that can destroy us also has the power to heal us.*

*Marriage isn’t meant to make you happy. It’s meant to make you holy.*

## Questions for Couples

1. If we started a podcast, what would it be about and what would it be called?
2. If we could go on a mission trip anywhere in the world, where would we go and what would we do?
3. What's one simple way, I can show you that I love you today?
4. Where are you not feeling at peace and how can I come alongside you?
5. When do you feel most aware of God's presence in your everyday life?
6. What has God been revealing to you recently?
7. How can I better help you become who God is calling you to be?
8. Which fruit of the Spirit am I best at?
9. Which fruit of the Spirit can I get better at?
10. How can we intentionally invite God into our marriage/family?
11. What hurt from your past/our past do you not want to carry anymore?
12. Are we intentionally inviting God into our decision making?
13. How have you seen God's faithfulness in our story together?
14. If we opened a coffee shop or bookstore, what would our vibe be?
15. Is there a daily habit or rhythm you'd like to see us start or get better at?
16. What does loving you well this week look like?
17. What do you think our spiritual gifts are as a couple?
18. What's a specific way I can be praying for you this week?
19. How do you think we can improve our spiritual intimacy?
20. How do you think we can improve our physical intimacy?
21. What's our dream vacation? How can we make it a reality?
22. What's one of your favorite memories of us?
23. How can I be better at supporting you and encouraging you?
24. What's at least one thing you appreciate about me?
25. In what areas are you proud of the way we've grown together?
26. Is there something we used to do that you wish we still did?
27. How can I better pursue you?
28. When others look at our marriage, what do you think they see? Are they wrong or right?
29. If we renewed our vows, what would you want to tell me?
30. What's one way we can bless someone else with what we've learned as a couple?