

MARCH 25, 2024

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FOCUSED ON THE WORD

Leading Family Devotions at Easter



As with Thanksgiving and Christmas, this week I would like to provide you with a slightly different Bible study. What follows is an outline on how to lead a devotional at Easter with your family. I encourage you to lead this important ministry function in your home.

It is critical to train yourself to lead your family spiritually for several reasons. First, such is incumbent upon the

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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

Governors: Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom

Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff: Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom

Senate Members: Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served

House Members: Thursdays 8am, AG Hearing Rm., Longworth 1302, hot breakfast served



VERSE OF THE WEEK



Matthew 28:6

“He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said.”



He is risen indeed!



husband. Being obedient to Scripture in this regard will inure personal blessings from above. Secondly, it helps to assure that The Faith is passed down in your family lineage. Easter is an important time for you to build your family culture: “... *but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD*,” states Joshua in Joshua 24:15. Thirdly, this is a time to confer with your family. You need them to be 100 percent behind your huge familial sacrifices of time and energy in order to serve your district in D.C. Your family needs to be supportive in order for you to remain healthy and effective—and our country especially needs believers to remain effective here.

Your leadership at Easter represents a sacred time to inure, assure, and confer with your family. Don’t miss these special opportunities!

Read on, my friend,

Ralph Drollinger



I. INTRODUCTION

The following is a suggested outline to help prepare you for leading and facilitating a meaningful and spiritually nourishing time of family gathering and devotions at Easter.

II. PREPARING FOR THE FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

A. ANNOUNCING IT

When you invite your family and inform them of the time to arrive and when you will be sitting down to dinner, mention the family devotion in the conversation. By discussing this tradition ahead, people will not be surprised when you transition into this part of the day. Much of the pressure will be taken off you when the time arrives to segue into the devotion; it should come as no surprise.

B. DRESSING FOR IT

Give prior consideration as to how you will dress. Dress one step above your guests—but only one step. Your dress should show warmth, love, dignity, and a sense of seriousness. Remember, how you dress should reflect the fact that in the coming moments you will be God's spokesman to your family—don't take that lightly or discount the sobriety of your duties by sloppy dress.

C. TIMING IT IN THE DAY

A good time to have devotions is after the main meal, during dessert. Make sure the TV and background music are

off and not competing for attention. Kindly inform everyone to “turn off all electronic devices during takeoff and landing.” You don't want your young ones sending text messages or playing games, or your older ones checking in on the final round at Augusta while you are sharing God's Word.

I ask Danielle to serve dessert and beverages while I speak. This helps to take the edge off, especially for those who might not be saved.

D. TRANSITIONING INTO IT

As you circulate amongst your guests and invite them into the room (which you have previously determined is best for this purpose), make appropriate edifying-only small talk as people settle in. You are starting to set the tone. Be extra sensitive to making your guests feel comfortable. Help with moving the chairs, bringing people coffee, and other preparations. Manifest a servant's heart.

III. BEGINNING THE FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

A. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Express your heartfelt gratitude that you could all be together during this wonderful time of the year.

B. PRAISE YOUR WIFE

Nothing is more important in the formation and stability of your children and grandchildren than for them to see how much you love your wife.

Benjamin Rush



“My only hope of salvation is in the infinite transcendent love of God manifested to the world by the death of His Son upon the Cross. Nothing but His blood will wash away my sins [Acts 22:16]. I rely exclusively upon it. Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly! [Revelation 22:20].”

— Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, surgeon general of the Continental Army, ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, “Father of American Medicine,” treasurer of the U.S. Mint, “Father of Public Schools Under the Constitution.”

Benjamin Rush, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush*, George W. Corner, editor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), 165–166.



Elias Boudinot



“May the God of your parents (for many generations past) seal instruction to your soul and lead you to Himself through the blood of His too greatly despised Son, Who notwithstanding, is still reclaiming the world to God through that blood, not imputing to them their sins. To Him be glory forever!”

— Elias Boudinot, president of Congress, signed the Peace Treaty to end the American Revolution, first attorney admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, framer of the Bill of Rights, director of the U.S. Mint.

Elias Boudinot, *The Age of Revelation* (Philadelphia: Asbury Dickins, 1801), xii–xiv, from the prefatory remarks to his daughter, Susan, on October 30, 1782; see also *Letters of the Delegates to Congress: 1774–1789*, Paul H. Smith, editor (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1992), Vol. XIX, 325, from a letter of Elias Boudinot to his daughter, Susan Boudinot, on October 30, 1782; see also, *Elias Boudinot, The Life Public Services, Addresses, and Letters of Elias Boudinot* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1896), Vol. I, 260–262.

Follow the ACTS outline as you speak about your God-given partner in life:

Scripture together as a part of your family tradition.

ACTS

ADORATION

Several things you most like

CONFESSION

Things she puts up with you

THANKSGIVING

Show gratefulness to her

SUPPLICATION

Express that you pray for her

C. PRAISE YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS

Speak personally and edifyingly into the lives of your family members in front of others. This will require forethought to most effectively build them up. Herein, you are setting a long-term tone and culture for what you expect in terms of the interpersonal relationships amongst your clan.

IV. OPEN THE SCRIPTURES TOGETHER

Prepare adequate copies of the attached passage of Scripture for everyone.

A. READ THE PASSAGE

Ask your best reader to read the passage. This isn't so much a time to exegete the passage as it is to open the

B. EXPLAIN THE PASSAGE

Once the reading is completed, be ready to share some of your insights into the passage that are self-evident from the reading.

V. SING A HYMN TOGETHER

The hymn “He is Lord” is very appropriate for singing after reading 1 Corinthians 15:3–6. Provide the lyrics on a separate page and make enough copies for everyone. If not you, defer to someone else gifted in music to lead.

Reflect on the profundity that no other religious leader ever rose from the dead. Such serves to prove the veracity of all that Jesus taught—and the singularity of belief in Christ for salvation.

VI. SHARE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Prepare beforehand your personal conversion story. Speak no longer than three minutes—no long recitations of every detail of your life, please. (I can help you to sort through, outline, and codify this if you like.) An effective testimony includes the following three irreducible minimums:

- Your life before receiving Christ
- Specifically how you received Christ
- Life changes since you received Christ



The main thing you want to achieve is to model for your family how they, too, can receive Christ if they haven't already. So edit your comments with this objective in mind. You are providing them with a powerful living example and tool as to how to receive Christ at a later date.

VII. SHARE THE GOSPEL

There is nothing more important to accomplish as a husband and father than to lead your kids to Christ—now is a good time! Here is how to transition into that.

A. APPLY THE PASSAGE

It is fitting at this point, having read Scripture, sung a hymn, and listened to your testimony, for you to return to the Scripture and apply it to their lives.

Ask your family members (if they haven't already) to invite the Lord Jesus into their hearts—just like you did. Take advantage of the special warmth people feel at Easter, the power of having read the Word of God together, and your personal testimony, as pillars to support your personalized quest for their conversion. Don't preach; rather emphasize warmth and gentleness (even though you are most likely struggling to be courageous in your inner person).

B. GOSPEL VERSES TO USE

Look up the following passages prior to the devotion and mark them in your Bible. (Don't read them from this study.) These will aid you in sharing

the Gospel in a succinct and thoughtful way.

Notice how these verses progress through the plan of salvation—make appropriate transitions to achieve this same sense of progression.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name (John 1:12).

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

C. INVITE OTHERS TO ASK JESUS INTO THEIR HEARTS

Publicly pray the following prayer, inviting anyone who would like to ask Jesus into his heart to pray along with you silently as you pray out loud:

Alexander Hamilton



“The Grace that brings salvation, is rich, rich, and on that grace, a sinner has the highest encouragement to repose his confidence, because it is tendered to him upon the surest foundation; the Scripture testifying that we have redemption through the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins according to the richness of His grace.”

— Alexander Hamilton, U.S. Revolutionary War general, signer of the U.S. Constitution, author of *The Federalist Papers*, secretary of the U.S. Treasury.

John M. Mason, *A Collection of the Facts and Documents Relative to the Death of Major General Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Hopkins and Seymour, 1804), 53.



William Samuel Johnson



In an address to graduates:

“Remember, too, that you are the redeemed of the Lord, that you are bought with a price, even the inestimable price of the precious blood of the Son of God. Adore Jehovah, therefore, as your God and your Judge. Love, fear, and serve Him as your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Acquaint yourselves with Him in His word and holy ordinances.”

— William Samuel Johnson, signer of the U.S. Constitution, member of the Continental Congress, judge, framer of the Bill of Rights, president of Columbia College, U.S. senator.

E. Edwards Beardsley, *Life and Times of William Samuel Johnson* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1886), 141–145.

The Sinner's Prayer

Lord Jesus, I need you.
I realize that I have sinned
and fall short of Your
standard of perfection
and am in need of not
only a Savior, but a Lord
who will always lead me in
the right direction. I open
the door of my life today
and ask you to come in
and begin to change my
life for good and your
glory. Amen!

Personally, and individually, follow up afterwards with your family members; ask them if they prayed that prayer with you. In the days that follow, minister to each accordingly as the family shepherd. Begin to cultivate an image of yourself as the shepherd of the family.

VIII. CLOSING THE FAMILY DEVOTION

From the bottom of your heart, express to your family how important this time has been to you—and how you hope it has been meaningful to them as well.

A. CLOSE WITH THE SAME HYMN

Encourage everyone to sing the hymn once again from the heart.

B. CLOSE WITH PRAYER

You might choose to have someone else in the family whom you know has a strong walk with Christ to close in prayer.

C. EXPRESS APPRECIATION

You are the head of the household; once again take this opportunity to set a tone of love, mercy, graciousness, compassion, longsuffering, and care. Abundantly shower others with His love and tell them how much you appreciate each of them. How can you spend more time with each of your family members? For someone as busy as you are, prioritizing time with your immediate and extended family members is probably your best way to prove your love for them and extend influence for Christ.

IX. SUMMARY

May God richly bless you as you assume your spiritual leadership responsibilities in your home. This is what God has called you to—and you need serve your family in this way in service to Him. Family devotions is one of the most important functions you will perform in life—with the greatest return on investment, I might add!

Lastly, it is common to feel woefully inadequate in this role (I still struggle with those feelings too). Ask God for the strength. He will empower you—just wait and see what I mean! I'll be praying for you, my friend.



1 CORINTHIANS 15:3–6

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep.

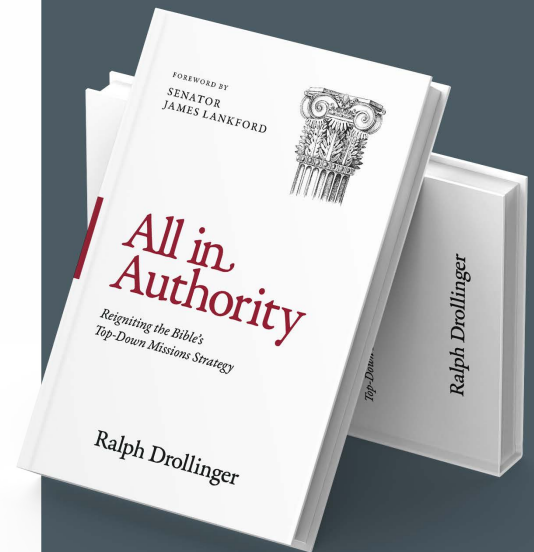


HE IS LORD

He is Lord, He is Lord!
He has risen from the dead, and He is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, Every tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.

He is Lord, He is Lord!
He has risen from the dead, and He is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, Every tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.

He is Lord, He is Lord!
He has risen from the dead, and He is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, Every tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.



NOW AVAILABLE

The book of Acts records how a small band of men—the apostles—in very short order *turned the world upside down* (Acts 17:6, KJV) during the first century in which they lived. This small team of uneducated, common men were not elite leaders, so how were they able to saturate the world with the gospel—changing lives, changing culture, and eventually changing the Roman Empire?

Scripture provides the answer: not only did they fulfill the Great Commission one soul at a time through a ministry of geometric evangelism and discipleship, but they succeeded *by concentrating on and impacting a particular element of society, specifically kings and all who are in authority* (1 Timothy 2:1–4).

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