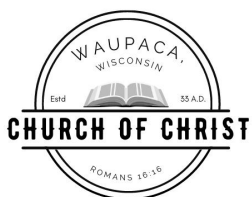


**“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.” - Psalm 127**

# **SPIRITUAL FAMILIES & GODLY HOMES**

**“choose you this day  
whom ye will serve”  
-Joshua 24:15**



**2025 - CHURCH OF  
CHRIST**

**Church of Christ in Waupaca**

[www.cocinwaupaca.org](http://www.cocinwaupaca.org)

215 W Badger St, Waupaca, WI 54981

715 258 2774

[rangellalo@gmail.com](mailto:rangellalo@gmail.com) - Preacher

[saintsinwaupaca@gmail.com](mailto:saintsinwaupaca@gmail.com)

Estd

33 A.D.

Worship and Study Opportunities:

**Sunday:**

- Bible study 9:30 am
- Worship (Lord's Supper) 10:30 am
- Worship (Lord's Supper) 6:00 pm

**Wednesday:**

- Bible Study 6:30 PM

Visit our website for more Bible study opportunities.

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Godly Families and Spiritual  
Homes

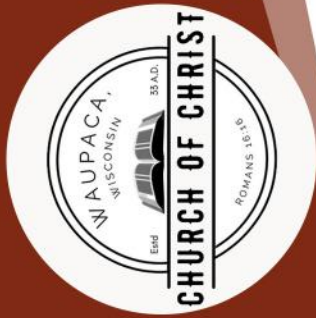
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# Bible Reading Chart

## 365 Days with The Word

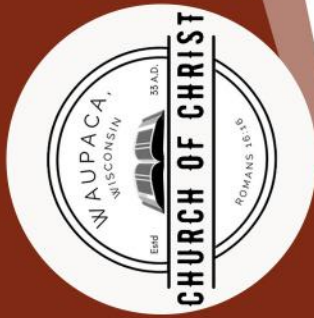


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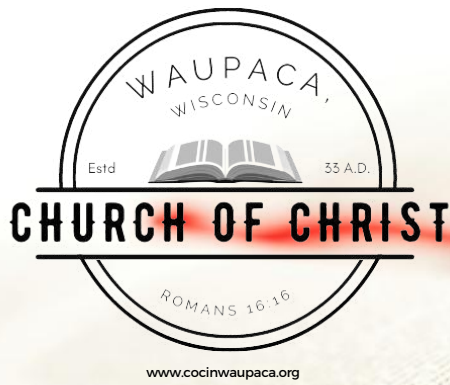


# Bible Reading Chart

## 365 Days with The Word



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<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Psalms 111-114	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Isa. 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Jer. 31-33	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Hosea 4-7	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Luke 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Galatians 4-6
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Psalms 115-118	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Isa. 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Jer. 34-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Hosea 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Luke 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Eph. 1-3
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# MESSAGE

FROM THE

*Elders*

“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.” This truth was recorded in the 127th psalm and is followed by a few more statements teaching that if we do not include the Lord in our efforts, our efforts will be in vain. The elders have chosen our theme and focus in 2025 to be on our earthly family, specifically on having a spiritual family and a godly home. To achieve this, we need to heed the psalmist’s warning and make certain it is the Lord that is directing our efforts so that our efforts will not be in vain.

This year, our focus will be on defining what a spiritual home entails, understanding the role of each household member, and emphasizing the importance of involving the Lord in this journey. Spiritual families play a vital role not just within the confines of our home, but they also need to positively impact the church, workplace, educational institutions, and our communities. When the Lord builds our spiritual family, then each member of it will be properly equipped to venture out and be this positive force and will be equipped to fight against the various trials and temptations that are certain to be encountered.

The effective organization and operation of the church closely resembles that of a spiritual home. Elements such as authority, unity, love, reverence, teaching, and correction are essential in both settings. By understanding their significance within the church, we can better implement these principles in our own homes.

There are very few things less pleasant than a home without God, a home that doesn’t function like God desires. But when we let the Lord build our family, we will find great joy, peace and contentment. God’s people should create homes that reflect His presence, where the Scriptures are respected, and where our faith is openly embraced. While it’s not essential to convert every room into a chapel, having a Bible on the table and displaying a few Scripture verses on the walls serve as a testament to our commitment to the Lord and our wish to honor Him. (Deuteronomy 11:18-21)

It is our hope that this year’s efforts will be fruitful for every family whether young or old. That every family will grow closer to God and as a result each family will be more equipped to help edify the body of Christ and to evangelize the communities in which we live.

*The Elders*



# 3000 Years of Research for the Spiritual Family of 2025

DEUTERONOMY 6

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Modern family life can benefit immensely from the timeless wisdom found in ancient texts. The book of Deuteronomy, written over 3,000 years ago, offers profound insights into building a spiritually rich and harmonious family environment. Its teachings emphasize commitment, discipline, communication, and joy—cornerstones for nurturing a strong family unit.

## **Balanced Protection**

Deuteronomy vividly illustrates God's love and protection, comparing it to a father's innate instinct to care for his child. This analogy underscores the importance of a father's role in providing both love and discipline. Just as God disciplined His people, parents are reminded to balance nurturing with guidance, teaching children vital life lessons while ensuring they feel secure and loved.

## **Ongoing Communication**

Communication is vital in imparting God's principles within the family. Deuteronomy encourages parents to actively engage their children in discussions about spiritual matters, integrating these conversations into daily life. By creatively and intentionally incorporating Scripture into family routines, parents can make learning about God's Word an enriching and enjoyable experience.

## **Protective Separation**

A key teaching in Deuteronomy is the principle of protective separation. It warns against adopting harmful societal practices, urging parents to shield their children from negative influences while still engaging with the world meaningfully. Families are encouraged to spend quality time together, participating in enjoyable activities that reinforce spiritual values.

## **Joyful Participation**

Families are called to share in spiritual experiences joyfully. Deuteronomy highlights the significance of rejoicing together in the presence of God, fostering a sense of community and

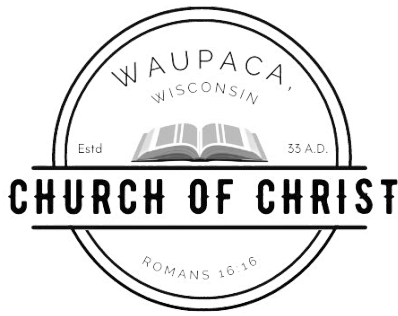
belonging. By conveying enthusiasm for spiritual gatherings and worship, parents can instill a deep appreciation for faith in their children, ensuring it becomes a source of joy and strength.

The teachings of Deuteronomy remain relevant and impactful for families today. By embracing its principles of protection, communication, and joyful participation, families can create a nurturing environment that reflects the love and wisdom of God, guiding them toward a fulfilling and spiritually enriched life.

*Ed*







# Fear and Serve the Lord Wholeheartedly

Joshua 24

How do you inspire people to do what is right? How can you lead them to consistently make the right choices? The first question has a more straightforward answer, while the latter is simpler: "There is no way to ensure people will always do what is right." The saying about leading a horse to water but not being able to make it drink holds true. Solomon expressed it differently, saying, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6). Solomon, of all people! Many parents would give anything for a foolproof, 100% guaranteed plan to prevent their children from making mistakes. Unfortunately, as stated, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

After 40 years of wilderness wandering, the bones of almost 2 million people littered the sand. The question has been repeatedly asked, "Why did the people disobey and rebel after experiencing God's miraculous power first-hand?" The human mind is highly forgetful. The children of Israel felt oppressed under the ruthless hand of the Egyptian taskmaster and cried to God, begging for a deliverer. (Exodus 2:23ff). In the Spirit of the future Messiah, God sent them Moses. The message was simple, clear, and direct: The "I Am" had sent Moses to deliver the people from bondage and oppression and lead them to the Promised Land that God had sworn to their father Abraham (Deuteronomy 6; Psalm 105:9). Their part was to listen, believe, and obey their God who was able to deliver them.

'Tis the grandest theme thro' the ages rung;  
'Tis the grandest theme for a mortal tongue;  
'Tis the grandest theme that the world e'er sung:  
Our God is able to deliver thee.

He is able to deliver thee,  
He is able to deliver thee;  
Tho' by sin opprest, Go to Him for rest;  
Our God is able to deliver thee.

Upon crossing the Red Sea, they immediately began to voice their complaints. This mindset was not fleeting; it persisted for 40 years, lasting until that first generation died without ever entering the Promised Land.

Following Moses' funeral, Joshua was chosen as the new leader. His responsibility was to guide the second generation into the Promised Land—the children and grandchildren of those who had previously been rebellious, grumbling, and clinging to their worldly ways. Would this new generation demonstrate greater faithfulness than their predecessors? Would they choose to worship the I AM instead of idols and false gods? Unfortunately, this generation did not fare much better than their parents.

They soon fell into a cycle of faithfulness followed by evil, repentance, and then back to evil (as noted in Judges). Ultimately, they demanded a king, rejecting God as their Sovereign. This led to further decline, resulting in a division between the tribes into two groups of ten and two, followed by 400 years of silence—a period during which God did not communicate with His people, either directly, through prophets, or through signs.

Could this have been avoided? Certainly! God had placed things that would serve as perpetual reminders of their time as slaves and exodus deliverance, of their blessings of things for which they never labored, and God's love. God also gave them detailed instructions on how to raise their children so that they would not depart from the righteousness of God. (Leviticus 16). But they refused.

Someone once remarked on the desire for a book that could unravel the complexities of the female brain. While this might come off as misogynistic, many women would also appreciate a guide to understanding the male brain. This could explain why John Gray authored the book "Men Are from Mars, and Women Are from Venus." This idea is not entirely new, as Paul discussed the mystery of unity in Ephesians 5-6. When the apostle referred to the union between man and woman, he likened it to the relationship between Jesus and the church. He stated, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband." (Ephesians 5:31-33)

The family cannot function as God intended if both leaders fail to grasp the essence of unity. On June 16, 1941, Winston Churchill famously stated, "United we stand, and divided we fall." This sentiment echoes the words of Jesus: "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25). God's design for the relationship between husband and wife, as well as mother and father, represents the only path to perfection. No alternative approach proves more effective, and no therapist offers better guidance. The profound mystery that Paul refers to revolves around honoring God's authority, which is where it all begins. In a family, parents should exemplify authority and demonstrate respect for it. They honor God's authority as well as each other's, and this respect is also instilled in their children.

The same principle applies to faith. God provided the children of the Old Testament with the ideal tools to ensure His people remained on the right path and lived in holiness. Parents were expected to lead holy lives, pray multiple times a day, and make sacrifices; however, above all, they were to love God and their neighbors. Each day, parents, particularly fathers, were to read the Scriptures to their children, and every Sabbath, the entire family was to gather for worship at the temple. Respect for God and His Word was instilled, commanded, and anticipated. Interestingly, if parents truly embodied their faith, their children would naturally be drawn to the source of living water. When our children witness our genuine love for the Lord and we guide them in the same way, they will cultivate their own faith and eventually cross the River Jordan into the Promised Land.

The church relies on the spirituality of the family. The upbringing of the family, how they are taught Scriptures, and their training in respecting both parental and divine authority will significantly influence the strength of the local church. The vitality of the local church reflects the health of its "home" families.

Please commit to understanding the mystery of unity and take the words of the prophet Joshua to heart. (Joshua 24:15)

# January’s Family Focus: Godly Families Make Strong Homes

The strength of our families depends on the strength of each individual family member. Likewise, our churches will reflect the strength of our families, and our nation will be as strong as the local churches.

Numerous sociologists, philosophers, and wicked people have attempted to redefine the concept of family and downplay the teachings of our Lord Jesus regarding it.

January’s Sermon Titles		
The Mystery of the Unity	Intro to Series: God Give Us Christian <u>Homes</u>	Joshua 24:14; Deut.. 6:10-15
The Mystery of the Unity	The Home: Where the <b>Father</b> is True and Strong	Ephesians 6:1-4
The Mystery of the Unity	The Home: Where the <u>Mother</u> Cares and Loves the Lord and Her Children	Proverbs 31; Titus 2:4; 2 Timothy 1:5
The Mystery of the Unity	The Home: Where the <b>Children</b> are led to know Christ	Deuteronomy 6:1-26

## God’s Design for Marriage and Family



And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

– Matthew 19:4–6 (NASB95)



Jesus clearly communicated to His audience God's vision for a healthy marriage, emphasizing that this design has been in place since the beginning. A design created by a perfect God signifies that the design itself is flawless and requires no alterations.

### Leave:

One of the initial steps towards a joyful and thriving marriage is for both partners to detach from their parents. The ties that bind, whether emotional or financial, must be severed to create the Christian home that God envisioned.



The bond between spouses takes precedence over the parent-child connection. If you have dedicated all your love and attention to your children at the expense of your partner, you may discover that when the nest empties, your marriage feels empty as well.

### **Be Joined:**

The New American Standard Version and other translations use the phrase "be joined," whereas the King James Version employs the term "cleave." This concept suggests a bond that is welded or glued together, signifying a permanent relationship. Marriage is intended to be lasting and unbreakable. Breaking up your home for any reason does not align with pleasing God.

### **Become one Flesh:**

All of God's principles are very simple to understand. Take a close note of the "offspring message in Malachi:



"But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.

— **Malachi 2:15**



God has made husbands and wives one flesh, physically. How did God intend for the world to be populated with godly children if godly people did not have children? In Malachi's message the people of God were taking pagan women just to satisfy their sexual appetites and having children out of wedlock and ignoring their wives and families. Malachi's message rebuked the people and reminded the men that when adultery was committed it was an offense against their wives and a sin against God.

Husbands and wives are **one flesh, psychologically**. Your spouse is to be your friend - someone with whom you share the most intimate thoughts of your heart.

Husbands and wives are **one flesh** and **spiritually** united. This bond is nurtured through shared prayer and the connection of your hearts. Men, it's essential for your wife to hear you pray.

This is God's design for the family: **Leave, Cleave**, and become **One Flesh**. It is unchangeable, irreplaceable, and disobedience will not go unnoticed.

### **Numerous adversaries aim to undermine the family, with Satan at the helm.**



They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?" **8** He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. **9** "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

— **Matthew 19:7-9**



Marriage is intended to be a lasting, lifelong commitment between one man and one woman.

God allows divorce in cases of fornication; however, it is important to note that He does not *command* it. Consider the case of Gomer and the prophet Hosea for insight. (Refer to Hosea 1:2-3, 3:1-2.)

## What Does It Mean to Be in Love?



Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

— **Ephesians 5:25 (NASB95)**



It is not love that keeps your marriage alive; rather, it is your marriage that nurtures your love. Love is an action you can choose to embrace.



so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, **5** to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

— **Titus 2:4-5 (NASB95)**



Every command from God is backed by His all-powerful ability to fulfill that command. When God instructs you to love your spouse, He isn't referring to a mere emotion—He is emphasizing a deliberate choice.

It's important to recognize the distinction between God's love and the love portrayed in Hollywood.

### Selfish Love

Frequently, when individuals express, “I love you,” they might actually be conveying, “I want you.” We often seek happiness and fulfillment in another person rather than in a higher power. This reflects a conditional love, which is ultimately self-serving.

Eventually, this type of love can instill fear in your partner's heart. They may think, “*He loves me because...*” and worry that the reason is diminishing. This sense of inadequacy can lead to feelings of failure, which may transform into anger and resentment, leaving them feeling manipulated.

### Godly Love

The love that God expects from husbands and wives is unconditional (refer to Romans 5:8, Ephesians 5:25).

When this unconditional love is present, it fosters security within the family instead of fear—providing assurance that you are loved regardless of circumstances. This love brings peace in place of guilt and joy instead of anger.

**It's important to note that this type of love is not merely an emotion.** It is a conscious choice driven by the will.

## Decide to Build a Strong Christian Family

This month is dedicated to strengthening families in order to foster a more resilient local church. Each member plays a significant role in God's plan, starting with the foundation of a husband and wife who are committed to one another and to their Christian faith.

Say this: “With God’s grace, we can and we will find a solution.” Although it may take time, remember that with God, there is always hope.

How will you protect your home?

### **Make Christ the center of your home:**

The devil is tirelessly working to undermine your family. However, when Christ is at the core, a godly family will endure, standing firm like a house built upon a rock. (Refer to Matthew 7:24.)

### **Nurture your love:**

Love isn't a dazzling diamond to possess; rather, it resembles a flower that requires cultivation and nourishment.

### **Avoid flirting with others:**

Even in a lighthearted manner—refrain from doing so.

### **Keep the romance alive with your spouse.**

Ensure your partner knows they are cherished.

### **Be a shining example.**

A thriving family where the husband and wife are united, and the children are loved, will create a powerful testimony to those around you—often more impactful than any lesson you could impart.



#### **Scriptures to study for this month:**

Matthew 7:24; 19:4-9; Malachi 2:15; Hosea 1:2-3; 3:1-3; Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:4-5; Romans 5:8; 8:1; John 1:7; Isaiah 1:18; 1 Corinthians 7:2-3



# February's Family Focus: Godly Families Make Strong Churches

February's Sermon Titles		
The Church of Christ	The Head of the Church	2 Thessalonians 2:14; Romans 1:14-16
The Church of Christ	The Plan and the Purpose of the Church	Matt. 16:13-19
The Church of Christ	Church Discipline part 1	1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15
The Church of Christ	Church Discipline part 2	1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

A prevalent belief is that churches should provide numerous programs and activities for children. Many denominations host a "children's church" during worship services, where kids are separated from adults and worship in distinct areas. While one group engages in games and skits in a more daycare-like environment, the other participates in a more adult-oriented worship experience. Consequently, churches often feel the pressure to offer various opportunities and activities to teach and involve children in spiritual matters, thereby easing the responsibility of parents for their children's spiritual upbringing. However, as we discovered in January, God assigns the head of each household the duty of overseeing the spiritual education of the family. This is why strong families contribute to the strength of churches.

## How Can Families Build Up the Church?:

Every family member has the potential to be the best and most devoted Christian they can be. Since the church is made up of individuals, its strength will grow with each dedicated and faithful member contributing to the collective.

**The husbands:** Paul said that husbands are to be the head of the wife (including the home) **just** as Christ is the Head over the church, and to love their wives **just** as Christ loved the church. The more the husbands love their wives the more right things they will do and the more wrong things they will avoid.



**Ephesians 5:23-25 (NASB95)** – For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body...**25** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

– Ephesians 5:23, 25



The adverb “**just**” signifies **exactly** in the same way that Jesus is the head, reflecting how He loved the church so profoundly that He sacrificed His life for her. This emphasizes that headship should be honored and selfless love should be prioritized.

Husbands should strive to be emotionally loyal, financially responsible, dedicated with their time, and faithful in both romantic and sexual aspects. Aim to embody the qualities that God desires for you as a husband, reflecting the love and commitment that Christ has for the church.

**The fathers:** The Ephesians also received instructions on how fathers should treat and raise their children.

Fathers should not act as bullies; instead, they should be positive role models, educators, leaders, and nurturing parents.

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

– Ephesians 6:4

”

Additionally, fathers are to provide for the physical and material needs of the family. If he fails to do so out of neglect then he is in sin and considered to be worse than an unbeliever.

“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

– 1 Timothy 5:8

”

With all these considerations in mind, fathers are entrusted with the sacred duty of providing spiritual leadership within the home, taking on the role of headship, and nurturing their children. Being a father should not be taken lightly; it is a significant responsibility

**The wives and mothers:** A key priority in any home should be love. When a wife shows love for her husband and children, she is significantly contributing to the success of both the marriage and the household. Wives are to love their own husbands, love and nurture their children, and care for the home.

“to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored... Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;

– Titus 2:5| 1 Timothy 5:14

”

**The children:** The family is to exist in peace and harmony. The children are to obey the parents in what is right, but always respect them.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise),

– Ephesians 6:1-2

”



Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

– Colossians 3:20



These principles contribute to creating a godly family, which ultimately leads to a strong church. Here are some recommendations for all family members to consider.

- Attend all church services regularly as a family unit.
- Actively engage in your Bible class.
- Get involved in the specific programs of work at your home congregation.
- Connect with fellow members of your age group as well as others.
- Participate in special events such as gospel meetings, Vacation Bible Schools, seminars, workshops, lectureships, ladies' days, and more.
- Hold family devotionals at home.
- Subscribe to reputable Christian publications, read them, and discuss them together.
- Prioritize QUALITY time together; sometimes the quality matters more than the quantity. Consider having a family night each week where each member takes turns planning activities.
- Occasionally, just enjoy each other's company while doing nothing.
- Concerning communications within the home.
  - Communicate . . . communicate . . . communicate.
  - Talk to . . .and with . . . one another.
  - Use pleasant tone . . . not harsh ones.
- Acknowledge and address problems instead of ignoring them; seek resolution through biblical guidance.
- Love one another and foster a deeper love for God among each other.
- Show kindness to each other daily.
- Offer assistance whenever possible.
- Provide support for one another.
- Set a positive example; uplift each other and offer encouragement to boost spirits.
- Pray for each other regularly; make time to pray together, as well as individually.
- Address minor issues before they escalate into major ones.
- Create and uphold family rules; be open to negotiation and always strive for fairness.
- Above all, prioritize God in every aspect of your lives!



# March's Family Focus: Godly Families Make Strong Faith

This month, we emphasize Godly Families and Strong Faith. Our prayer is that parents will set a positive example to their children, thereby contributing to the strength of the local church.

## Sermon Titles for February

...Through My Bible Reading and Study (habits for)

...Through My Prayer (James 5:7-20)

...Through Family Bible Study

...Through Sharing My Faith



## Daily Bible Reading Family Bible Reading

In this packet you will find a Daily Bible Reading plan. The Bible is a living text. Unlike any other book, it was written by a divine author whose words bring life.

The Bible offers us wisdom. Composed over many centuries, these inspired scriptures present guidance for every challenge we may encounter.

The Bible reveals a Savior who loves us deeply. No other belief system honors a God who cares for its followers enough to sacrifice His own life for them.

The Bible nourishes our spirits. Jesus embodies God's Word, serving as the bread of life for our souls.

## 7 Advantages of Reading the Bible Cover to Cover In a Year as a Family

- **Engaging with the Bible each year can cultivate discipline, prioritizing time with the Lord.** This practice helps us form a habit that integrates into our daily lives. It doesn't imply that we should ignore other studies or devotional resources we typically use. However, having a visual reminder of our selections can make it less likely for us to overlook picking up our scriptures each day.



**But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**





— Matthew 6:33



- **We can gain new insight.** When we approach our study period with an open heart, we can read the same passages over and over and receive a different revelation. Inscribing notes next to verses or writing our thoughts in a journal can remind us of what the Holy Spirit revealed to us when the passage was previously read.

“ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. ”



— 2 Timothy 2:15

- **We understand how each section of the Bible connects with the others.** Reflecting on all the sacred texts together can reveal Christ's significance through various sacrifices and festivals. We benefit from the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which the saints lacked until Christ's resurrection. Those who conversed with Jesus at that time did not realize how He fulfilled every prophecy; however, through God's Word, we can gain insight.

“ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. ”



— Luke 24:27

- **We serve as a positive role model for children and others.** By dedicating this time each day and sticking to it, we showcase the significance of the Word in our lives. While any daily Bible study can achieve this, having a chart to guide us increases our likelihood of staying committed.

“ Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. ”

— Deuteronomy 4:9

- **We explore sections of the Bible that we might usually overlook through various selected studies.** Since the Bible is God's inspired Word, we can gain valuable insights from every part of these sacred texts. Although the genealogies and Levitical laws might seem tedious at times, and we may find ourselves drifting off, Jehovah had a purpose for including them. For instance, the well-known prayer of Jabez was derived from the genealogies in Chronicles.

“

The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.

”



– Psalm 119:130



- **Reading in chronological order, if you decide to do so, provides us with valuable insight into the historical record.** By observing the sequence of events, we can better understand the overarching purpose of the Creator, while also deepening our knowledge of the development of Israel.

“

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

”



– Romans 15:4



- **We familiarize ourselves with the order of the books in the Bible.** While knowing the sequence isn't essential for spiritual enlightenment, it can significantly assist us in locating a specific book. There's nothing wrong with consulting the index; it exists for that reason. However, having the order memorized can be quite beneficial when we need to find a reference quickly.

“

But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.

”



– Deuteronomy 4:29



### ...Through My Prayer and Bible Study

James 5:7-20

Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus frequently withdrew to pray alone. Some of His prayers have been recorded by the Holy Spirit for our guidance. One of the most profound prayers He offered is known as the High Priestly Prayer in John 17, where He earnestly shared His heart with His Father on behalf of His friends. Another significant prayer is the one He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of His arrest (Matthew 26:36-56), which was filled with deep emotion and sincerity.

From these examples, we learn that Jesus exemplified a committed prayer life. He instructed His disciples on how to pray (Matthew 6:5-15), including who to pray to, through whom to pray, when and where to pray, and why prayer is essential. God desires to hear from us frequently.

In today's society, couples often engage in various activities to commemorate special moments together, such as getting matching tattoos. However, imagine if couples embraced

something far more profound and transformative—praying together.

Here is a note from a sister about their prayer life as a couple (names have been changed):

“

When my husband and I pray together in our marriage, he often surprises me by expressing his love for me to God. I can feel his genuine concern for my well-being—a sentiment that may not always be conveyed in other ways. On some mornings, as Don prays, I am deeply touched by the magnitude of his love for me. In those moments, I silently ask God to help me be deserving of such affection.

Together, we have discovered one of the most underrated secrets to a strong marriage: entering God's presence together to pray and explore His Word.

Looking back, I realize that it was actually God, not Don, who disrupted my quiet mornings all those years ago. Our all-knowing Father understood that these shared moments would not only bring us closer to Him but would also deepen our love for one another.

— anonymous

”

Transformative Benefits of Praying Together in Marriage:

- Prayer for Your Marriage Fosters Unity
- Prayer for Your Marriage Enhances Emotional Intimacy
- Prayer for Your Marriage Welcomes God Into Your Relationship
- Prayer for Your Marriage Transforms Relationships

Engaging in family prayer can be as challenging as gathering for a daily meal. Can we truly argue that we are busier now than our parents and grandparents were, and that this is why we struggle to find time for nightly family meals, Bible reading, and prayer? If we think so, we should reflect on whether this is just an excuse to rationalize our self-imposed, time-consuming, and materialistic attitudes.

Prayer is the life-breath and heartbeat of a truly Christian home. It's also one of the best ways to help your family thrive. When you pray together, each member of the family learns what it means to be intimate with God. When you see answers to prayer, you experience His love and His presence in your daily lives.

Prayer plays a crucial role as it practically illustrates the significance of faith. Indeed, praying together is one of the most essential actions you can take to pass down your faith to the next generation. Children need to witness authentic faith demonstrated in their parents' lives, as actions often speak louder than words.

Allow your children to hear you present your needs and requests to the Lord with a sense of humble expectation. This will help them understand that our Heavenly Father can be trusted to guide us through life's challenges. Such moments can spark meaningful discussions about spirituality. The benefits of prayer extend even further.

In addition to strengthening each individual's connection with God, prayer also enhances interpersonal relationships. It fosters greater sensitivity among family members to each other's feelings. Prayer is fundamentally about intimacy – both with the Lord and with one another. The age-old adage holds true: families who pray together stay together. Shared prayer experiences become valuable opportunities to express love, forgiveness, and grace. It's challenging to hold onto grudges and resentments when kneeling together before the Lord.

As a shared act of intimacy, prayer builds family unity and fortifies the bonds between husband and wife, siblings, and parents and children. Your family prayers will thrive to the degree that they address your children's immediate needs and interests. This task doesn't need to be daunting; simply tailor your approach to their level of maturity. Use language they can grasp, remembering that simplicity is essential at every stage of development.

Utilize moments like bedtime, mealtime, discipline discussions, car rides, and conversations about childhood fears as opportunities to help your kids trust the Lord and feel at ease in His presence. As they mature, pray with them about their personal challenges (Philippians 4:6). When prayers are answered, highlight these moments by expressing gratitude to God for His actions. Consider keeping a list of answered prayers on the refrigerator door.



### **..Through Sharing My Faith**

Tell Your Children About Your Journey

Vulnerability is nothing we like to share with others especially our spouse and children. But as Christians we need to confess our weaknesses to one another (James 5:16). How much more powerful would this passage be if we did this with those who know us best?

We often say, “No one is perfect and neither am I.” Well, maybe we should explain that to our children during a family devotion. Or, maybe we can discuss how Jonah sitting under the hot sun angry about the salvation of foreigners can apply to us? Or, do you remember when Rahab hung a red thread from her window? So did Joshua and the spies. That is a great time to talk about keeping promises and having faith. What is a promise? What is faith. How far reaching was the red thread promise?

Sharing faith as a family is a moment when we gather together, open our hearts and our Bibles (or smartphones), and reflect on the day. We explore godly applications and seek answers, especially when our children are older, like teenagers. If the family is young this is the perfect opportunity to teach how to sit still and engage in Bible story time. Here is a suggestion from a mom of 6 toddlers - she was blessed with sextuplets!

Our family devotions is called Circle Time. Circle Time consists of:

- Everyone comes together 10-15 minutes before bedtime, getting cozy and snuggly. The kids always argue over their seating arrangements (as expected!).



- We read from a children's Bible, a book of the Bible, or a short devotional.
- We work on our Sunday and Wednesday School lessons.
- Together, we recite a new or familiar memory verse.
- We sing a song as a family, which might be a children's church song or a lullaby like "Jesus Loves Me, I'm in the Lord's Army."
- My husband and I lead our kids in prayer, including both specific requests and blessings.
- Each little one gets their moment to shine in prayer, though we sometimes have to nudge them back on track (like when someone earnestly prays for cozy caterpillars in their cocoons!).
- This Circle Time invites our children into a sacred moment, where we gather in stillness to absorb God's Word, offer prayers, and sing joyous melodies. It is a time free from snacks, restroom excursions, playful antics, or the tugging of hair—an endeavor indeed, with six siblings nestled closely together. This "exercise" cultivates reverence, preparing them for our worship hour at church, where they actively engage, color their notes with crayons, and lift their voices in song and prayer. They have come to cherish their own Bibles, understanding their significance, and they know to honor the songbooks by returning them to their rightful places after use.

REMEMBER! →

Remember, **parents** raise their children, not the church. **Parents** are responsible for the spiritual upbringing of their children, not the church.  
-Ed

#### 1. **Model Faith in Action:**

Children absorb knowledge most effectively through observation. Show your love for God, embody humility, and depend on Him in your everyday actions. Pray openly, study Scripture, and make choices that align with biblical principles.

#### 2. **Teach Biblical Values:**

Consistently share biblical stories and teachings with your children. Highlight values such as kindness, honesty, patience, and faithfulness. Utilize everyday experiences to convey God's perspective.

#### 3. **Prioritize Family Study:**

Set aside time for family devotions, prayer, and talks. This regular practice demonstrates that God is at the heart of your home.

#### 4. **Share Your Testimony:**

Share with your children the ways in which God has influenced your life. Personal testimonies bring faith to life, making it relatable and inspiring trust in God's power and love.

#### 5. **Encourage Christian Fellowship:**

Create a nurturing Christian community around your family. Foster connections with mentors and peers who strengthen and support your family's faith.

#### 6. **Involve Children in Service:**

Encourage your children to serve others by engaging in outreach activities as a family. Visiting the shut-ins, random visits to nursing homes (even if you don't have relatives there), , etc. Also, teaching our children to serve at church is a great way to involve them in service. Acts of service nurture compassion and demonstrate the joy of living for God's glory.