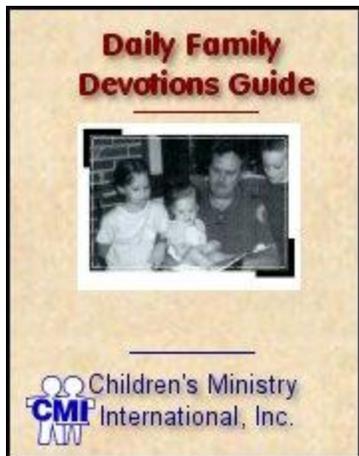




## New Family Daily Devotion Guide

Children's Ministry International (CMI) has just released its first comprehensive "Family Devotion Guide". Now families can have daily devotions that will truly make a difference. We have done the "hard work" to get things organized and laid out in an easy to follow format, now you have to "show up" ready to learn.



In our "Covenant Life Conferences", CMI emphasizes the need for children to see the daily working out of the Christian faith in families. One of the best ways to do this by having daily devotions. This has become a "lost art and practice" in most Christian homes today, with severe consequences. Children rarely see their parents in prayer, opening up the Scriptures as a family, showing how the Bible is relevant for today, praying together as a family for the events of the day, or singing together. Therefore, the children quickly reason that it is not important to be in the Word, or pray together as a family. They can easily see Christianity as a "Sunday thing" run by "professionals". Irrelevancy is just around

the corner, when they leave home they can also leave "Mom and Dad's religion" behind.

Here are the "normal (and not so normal/spiritual) reasons" I hear and observe on why families won't have daily devotions:

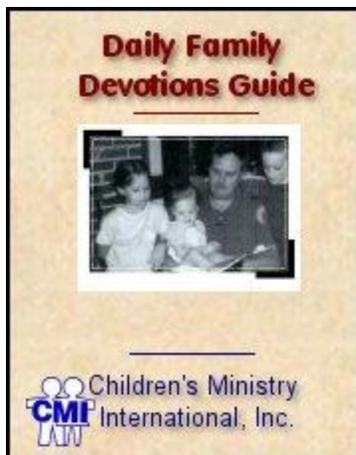
1. **Priorities-** Families are always saying that there is just not enough time in the day to add another event. They might say that devotions are a "high priority" but they never do it. Priorities should be defined as what we actually do. If we can "surf the net" for an hour a day to keep up with the news or other interests, why can't we set aside 20 minutes for a family devotion? If we jog five miles, watch hours of TV/videos or read magazines for 45 minutes daily, can't we do something for our family that will have "eternal rewards"? Remember we can store up treasures in heaven where moth and rust cannot destroy and robbers cannot break in and steal. Most of us never consider that we are building a foundation whose architect and builder is God when we persevere and have family devotions.

2. Habits-This dove tails in to the first reason. All of us have developed habits (good and bad) over the years. Hopefully, family devotions will become a new one and one of the best! Probably you are accustomed not wo getting up in the morning just in time to get you and your children out the door to work, school and other activities. This is an ingrained habit that must change if you desire to do devotions in the morning. Some habit(s) will have to stop in order for family devotions to begin. Consider the "best" over the "better". There are unlimited "good" things we can do with the precious commodity of time that God has given to us to be good stewards of--WHY NOT THE BEST?
3. Satan- You can be certain that Satan does not want your family to do anything remotely "Christ-honoring " together. Satan hates for saints to pray; he detests the reading and studying of the Word; he certainly doesn't want your children to have a solid foundation of biblical truth or to pray and sing God-honoring songs as a family. Therefore, the "evil one" will throw every conceivable "excuse" at you not to have devotions, or if you do have family devotions, Satan will want them to be as "dry, anemic, boring and meaningless" as possible. Remember, Satan's chief desire is to destroy---be it marriages, children, devotion to the Truth, or whatever is from God. The flesh is weak to resist. We must bind Satan by praying for the will to persevere in having our families "strong in the Lord".
4. Knowledge and inability- Many families say it is just "too difficult" to have devotions. Fathers and mothers don't have the time to "plan" for devotions and the family devotions become routine and dull. Maybe they've tried it in the past and its been a failure. This is where CMI can help. Why not learn the "Shorter Catechism taken from the Westminster Confession of Faith" together? Here are the basics of what we believe in question and answer format, done in a systematic way to help in memorizing the Christian distinctives. CMI has done the work, bringing song, Bible, prayer and the questions and answers together in a easy to follow format.

Well, you've looked at the reasons for why most people don't have family devotions; here are some reasons why families today need to do them:

1. The Bible says that we need to feed upon the Word of God and to pray about "everything". This practice of daily devotions demonstrates to our children and spouses that we are serious about our faith. It also begins a family tradition of "holiness" that our children will take with them wherever they go of being daily in the Word and praying to God about "everything".
2. Our homes are (as Jonathan Edwards said) little churches, with the fathers "prophets, priests (ministers) and kings" in their homes toward their families. As prophets, we need to "speak the truth of life and know it". As priests, we intercede for our families, and bring them to the throne of grace in prayer. As kings, we protect them from the arch enemy of God (the devil) and other things/people that might harm them. There are few better ways that do all three than family devotions.

3. The Bible says Life is "spiritual warfare" (Ephesians 6), we must prepare ourselves for battle by putting on the "full armor of God". Going to work or school with a Godly hymn/song on our lips, earnest prayer imploring God for His blessings, reflecting on a biblical truth or passage and remembering to intercede for those closest to us are wonderful goals that can hardly be accomplished without a plan of action. That plan can best be executed in the practice of daily family devotions.
4. Twenty years from now, what will we remember about what we are doing today? Will we recall the big deadline, the latest purchase of frivolous items, the school assignment, the casual friendship? Probably not, but with the Word of God and biblical truths in our hearts, the Holy Spirit will recall the elements of Christian living so necessary to be a fruitful follower of Christ. So many of us, after so many years are still "babes in Christ", still being tossed to and fro by changing, temporal philosophies of the day. We haven't grown up spiritually. We need "solid truth" systematically proclaimed and studied. But this truth doesn't need to remain in the Bible, unexplored; it needs to be in our hearts and in the hearts of our children. It can be "mined" one day at a time, in a manner that allows us to fully cover the essentials of our faith.



Children's Ministry International has produced this family devotion guide in three small volumes so that the booklet can easily fit into the family Bible. The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession is used as the outline for the daily lessons. There are six parts to each lesson: Opening prayer, hymns/song, Bible verses, related questions, Bible Lesson and Closing Prayer.

The work has been done for you, but you do have to show-up and set aside the time to ensure this happens.

A last word for the fathers.....If you want to ensure that this kind of devotion is successful, then you **MUST** be involved.

Fathers are the spiritual heads of their homes (this is an indicative not an imperative statement see Ephesians 6). The sure way to "kill it" is to let your wife consistently do the devotions when you aren't available (which can easily become more and more common). Fathers, you choose the best time of day for your entire family and you lead it. Start out with a 20 minute slot and stick to it. If it means getting the family up before sunrise then commit to it--they can go back to sleep if need be or you might have to get them to bed earlier in the evening.

Order volume one of the Family Devotion Guide for \$6.00 by emailing CMI at [childrensministry1@earthlink.net](mailto:childrensministry1@earthlink.net); ordering from our web page or calling us toll free 1-888-345-4264.