

Growing Spiritually as a Family

Dear Facilitator: For several weeks we have been discussing how successful families communicate, support one another, and organize their lives. This week we are going to focus on growing spiritually as a family.

Growing spiritually starts with developing our own relationship with God through prayer, reading the Bible, and going to church to connect with others who want to do the same. Out of our own growth will flow the ability to have a home of faith where we talk with our families about God, bring Him into everyday situations, and follow His direction.

Finally, it is important to remember that we were not meant to grow spiritually all by ourselves. The Bible is clear that the church or family of God is where we grow together, encourage one another, and worship God together.

It might be helpful for you to know what we hope to accomplish through this lesson.

Participants will:


1. Commit to personal spiritual growth.
2. Commit to family devotions.
3. Commit to being in fellowship with others.

During the past few lessons, we have made commitment statements. This week's takeaway commitment statement is: I commit to personal spiritual growth, family devotions, and being in fellowship with others to help my family grow spiritually.


We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God's love and become a source of friendship and support for one another.

Blessings


Welcome *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you as you have been working diligently on many things that are positively influencing and leading your family.

Last week we spent time talking about organizing our family for success by maintaining routines, scheduling events, and planning projects.

 **Ask:** Did anyone try something this past week that made a positive difference in your family that you would be willing to share?

Introduction *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Let's take a few minutes together to read out loud our Family Commitment Statements. (Read together out loud the previous statements.)


Tonight, we are going to talk about growing spiritually as a family and how our personal spiritual choices and spirituality as a family can strengthen our families. Even if we have never given much thought to our spiritual life before, we can take simple steps that will help us make our families stronger.

Today's teaching objectives are to:

1. Commit to personal spiritual growth
2. Commit to family devotions
3. Commit to being in fellowship with others

This week's commitment statement is: I commit to personal spiritual growth, family devotions, and being in fellowship with others to help my family grow spiritually.

Family & Table Talk 20 minutes

 **Say:** As you enjoy your dinner, talk about the following questions at your table:

1. What are some things that you do as an individual that reflect your spiritual beliefs?
2. What are some things that you do as a family that reflect your spiritual beliefs?
3. If someone came over for dinner at your house, would they be able to tell what you believe spiritually as a family? Why?

Our family commitment statement is: I commit to personal spiritual growth, family devotions, and being in fellowship with others to help my family grow spiritually.

These are the three key ways to grow spiritually. Growing spiritually starts with developing our own relationship with God through prayer, reading the Bible, and going to church to connect with others who want to do the same.

After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.

As you begin this portion of the evening, explain that each time you will start with the overview and then the lesson time.

Notes

40 minutes

Parent Training

Faith Formation

**GROWING SPIRITUALLY
AS A FAMILY**

Today we will look at the process of growing spiritually together as a family. It has been said that a family that prays together stays together. While this may not always be true, what is true is that when we access God's power through prayer, changes take place in us and in our families.

Growing spiritually starts with God restoring our broken relationship with Him through our repentance and acceptance of Him. As we walk with God, spend time in His Word, and depend on His power, our lives and actions begin to be more like Him every day.

Families with a strong sense of spirituality tend to celebrate life as a gift and develop the following characteristics in their families:

- The power to love.
- A spirit of gratitude and hope.
- A sense of purpose and support.
- The power to forgive and be forgiven.

As parents, it's important to develop our own relationship with God so we can share our faith with our children and families. It's out of our own relationship with God that

we can begin to develop a home of faith to help our families grow and learn.

In our homes, God should be elevated to a place of importance. We do this in many practical ways, including activities that honor God and others or choices that put God first in our lives. Sometimes this looks like sitting down and reading the Bible in family devotions, and other times it looks like praying at mealtimes or bedtime. We can share Bible verses and stories or put them on the wall, mirror, or refrigerator. It could also include playing Christian music or talking about God when you're driving the car or sitting in your house.

It's important to take every opportunity to practice modeling our faith to our children. Just as a runner in a relay hands off a baton, you can successfully pass on your faith to your children. They should see you reading

God's Word and praying, hear you sharing what you are learning, and see you spending time with other believers and praying with and for them. You never stop being a parent, and the impression you make continues for generations. It's important to continually repeat the basic truths of God to our children.

We must be intentional to bring God into our conversations and situations in our families. Talking about God by asking questions influences the thoughts and actions of our children. For example, when your children have opportunities to make choices, you might ask them how they think God would want them to respond. You can easily bring God into many every day conversations by talking about Him and how He wants us to respond. In fact, Deuteronomy 6:6-7 tells us, "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." What exactly is this faith talk? It's repeating the Law or the Word of God to our children.

DISCUSS

- Why is it important to develop your own relationship with God?
- What are some ways that you are developing your relationship with God?
- What are some practical ways that you could help your children grow spiritually at different age levels? (Discuss the handout sheet and add ideas.)
- What will be the results of discussing faith and spirituality with your children?

All of this sounds like quite a bit of work, but like we discussed before, God never meant for us to be alone in this process of helping our families grow spiritually. He gave us the church, which is filled with people in different stages of spiritual growth to help us along the way. To grow we must stay connected to other believers and rely on them as well as God as a source of support when we don't know what to do.



Scripture SUPPORT

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Proverbs 22:6

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Isaiah 40:31

But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

That's why going to church is so important. We get our strength and support from others in the family of God.

We also learn that no one is perfect, and it takes time to become spiritually strong. Just look in the Bible and you will see all kinds of examples of people who failed and yet still grew into people who God used to do His work. What's important is that we start growing and keep growing our whole lives. To help us all begin to think about how we can bring God into our everyday life, we are going to practice some "Faith Conversation Starters."

ACTIVITY

Handout

1. Ask parents to get into groups of two or three.
2. Have each person take a turn starting a conversation with the other parents.
3. Discuss in small groups how they might do this in their everyday life.
4. Ask for groups to share their thoughts and ideas. Be ready as the leader to share how you bring God into everyday conversation.

SUMMARY

We covered a lot of material today during our time together. Our objectives were to:

1. Commit to personal spiritual growth.
2. Commit to family devotions.
3. Commit to being in fellowship with others.

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight about something you've learned or want to try?
2. What will you change or improve in your role as you parent this week?

40 minutes

Student Training

Faith Formation

**GROWING SPIRITUALLY
AS A FAMILY**

Objectives

- Help children to be aware of why they were created.
- Help children to be aware of why families were created.
- Help children to be aware of how a family continues to grow spiritually.
- Help children to be aware that their parents are responsible for teaching them about God and what the Bible says.
- Help children to be aware that they are responsible for learning all that their parents teach them about God and what the Bible says.
- Help children to be aware that God wants them and their families to be lights that shine bright for Him.

In earlier lessons we talked about the reason that you were created. When God created you, He placed a very special gift inside of you. The gift that He has given to you is very important and will make the world a better place. We talked about the reason God created families. We learned that God created a special family just for you. He made sure you would have people in your life that would protect you, care for you, and provide for you. But the most important reason God created families was so that parents would have children, share

their faith in God with them, and raise them up to love Him.

God has given parents the responsibility to lead their children to God and teach them how to have a personal relationship with Him (Proverbs 22:6). Yes, He wants to have a relationship with you! God placed you in a Christian family where you would hear about Him, learn about Jesus, and see your parents living their lives according to what the Bible says. God wants you to learn to behave and live as the lessons in the Bible teach you as well.

For most of us, the place where we first learn about God is at home. For parents to teach you about God, they must have a relationship with Him first. They must pray, read the Bible, live their lives according to what the Bible tells them to do, go to church to worship God, and spend time with other believers. As parents grow in their relationship with God and gain more knowledge and wisdom about Him, it helps them to create a strong home of faith. Faith in God and in His Son, Jesus strengthens families. Faith in God brings families closer together and gives meaning to our lives. When parents are growing spiritually, they can then instruct their children about what the Bible says. They invite God to be the center of the family, and they bring God into everyday family celebrations and challenges. This gives them confidence to meet any circumstance the family may have (Isaiah 40:31).

When a family is growing spiritually, God is elevated to a place of importance. Some of the ways we can do this is by reading the Bible together, saying a blessing when we eat, or praying at bedtime. We can read Bible stories or listen to Christian music in our homes or when riding in our car. We can talk about God and share Bible verses or put them on the wall or refrigerator.

In the Bible, God tells parents, “These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Here God is telling your parents how important it is to teach you about His Word. It is your responsibility to listen to your parents and do your best to learn all that they are teaching you.

We must remember that no family is perfect and growing in our faith in God takes time. But when a family prays and asks God to work in their lives, He will get involved, and your family will grow stronger and stronger in their faith. When that happens, you will see evidence that God is a part of your

family, and your family will enjoy more love, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, patience, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). That is what God wants for all families. As your family grows spiritually, it becomes a bright light shining in the world for God.

DISCUSS

- Lead children in a discussion about the most important reason God created family.
- Lead children in a discussion about why God placed them in a Christian family.
- Lead children in a discussion about ways parents teach their children about God.
- Lead children in a discussion about ways families can place God in the highest point of importance.
- Lead children in a discussion about some of the evidence of God's involvement in the spiritual growth of families.



Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is focused on ages 4-11, and the second is for older children ages 12-16.

AGES 4-11

Materials

Paper

Pencils

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/HOHL9CPeGCM>

(If not possible, do activity without video.)

- Have children write three things they want God to do for their family. Now have children take those three things and use them to create a prayer for their family. Have students share if they want to.

Notes

Notes

AGES 12-16

Materials

Paper

Pencils

Have children view YouTube:

https://youtu.be/QVHUx_EJnUs

(If not possible, do activity without video.)

- Have children write three things they want God to do for their family.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- Now have children take those three things and use them to create a prayer for their family. Have students share if they want to.




CHALLENGE QUESTION

AM I WILLING TO PRAY TO GOD
EACH DAY OF THIS WEEK?

CHALLENGE COMMITMENT

WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO
TO WORK ON THE CHALLENGE
QUESTION THIS WEEK?

	AFFIRMATION <i>Have children repeat:</i>
	<i>My family is a light shining in the world for God!</i>