

Tips for Growing as a Family in the Practices of the Christian Life

Lean into the wisdom of the church in focussing on key habits or practices that open us up to God's presence and work in our lives: Worship, prayer, reading the Bible, service and generosity.

1. Celebrate what you are already doing, knowing it is planting good things in your child's life. Then look at one new thing to try for 2-3 months. Try to build one consistent habit at a time. Small things done consistently have a more lasting impact than things tried once.
2. We are aiming to apprentice our children in the 'muscles' and habits of the spiritual life so that they are equipped to nurture and pursue it after leaving the home. See especially *Parenting: The Complex and Beautiful Vocation of Raising Children* by Holly Coolman for excellent teaching on this.
3. Read Canadian author Christie Thomas' *Little Habits, Big Faith: How simple practices help your family grow in Jesus* for a very practical workbook in starting small and building for the long term in simple practices in the home that are specific to your family.
4. Establish a rhythm of attending church together and tag it to practices of Sabbath rest. Model making space in your week – and deliberately breaking the patterns of the week – to be nourished by God in community together. Consider ways to make this day set apart and special (practicing hospitality, weekly games or movie night, go on family walks).
5. As you build habits of listening to God's word together, work with an age appropriate Bible: (non readers and early readers: *The Jesus Storybook Bible*; independent readers: *The NIV Adventure Bible*, *The Kids' Visual Study Bible*; *The Action Bible*; teens: *ESV Teen Study Bible: Loving God with your head, heart and hands*, *The Simple Truth Bible: 365 Daily Devotions for Students*, the Bible Project app, You Version Bible app, Dwell Bible app)
6. As you build habits of praying together, lean into the resource of set prayers (they hold lots of wisdom!). Resources for set prayers for families to use: *To Light Their Way: a collection of prayers and liturgies for parents*. Kayla Craig, 2021. Over 100 prayers including prayers for: leaving on vacation, welcoming a new pet, a stressful morning, graduation, racism, big feelings, being overwhelmed, anger, breaking trust, bullying, moving house, death of a child, feeling weary, going to sleep at night, etc. See also *Prayers for the Pilgrimage: a book of collects for all of life*. W. David O. Taylor, 2024. A book of 2-3 sentence prayers in categories like: the birth of a child, being mad at God, for sadness, going to school, before a meal, bad dreams, exhausted parents, loving our neighbor, for pets, bedtime, anxious children.

Other resources for how to build faith habits in the home:

- *The Sticky Faith Guide for your Family: over 100 practical and tested ideas to build lasting faith in kids*. By Kara E. Powell
- *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms*. By Justin Whitmel Earley
- *Raising Disciples: how to make faith matter for our kids*. Natalie Frisk

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