

Family Worship
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Persons need personal and sometimes peculiar favors, and therefore personal prayer is proper. Families need family and often peculiar blessings, without which they are miserable, and therefore they should pray. Where is there any flaw in this reasoning?

It is admitted that family prayer, properly engaged in, is a blessing to all concerned. How could it be otherwise? God has rich blessings for all that call upon his name. If Churches and even nations may profitably give a united cry for mercy, surely a lesser company, that of a household, may fitly engage in the same duty. Could reasoning be fairer?

Some demand an express precept enjoining family worship. Perhaps none can be given that will satisfy them. And yet one would think that such words as these ought to solve all doubts: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord;" "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart;" "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name." Josh. 24:15; Psa. 101:2; Jer. 10:25. Surely here is authority enough. Will any wise man leave his house uncovered and his family exposed to the wintry blasts? That would, indeed, be folly and error. But is it not worse to leave our families exposed to the tempest of the divine wrath? O, let men pray always with *all* prayer. Let all people call upon God, in whatever capacity they act.

These rules may well aid in making this part of worship profitable:—

1. Let it be at seasonable and convenient hours, commonly before breakfast and just after tea or supper.
2. Let it not be tediously long. It is sometimes painfully protracted. That is not edifying.
3. Let the reading of God's word, prayer, and if possible, singing, be parts of each exercise.
4. Let great decorum and decent solemnity enter into all acts of family devotion.
5. Let not the presence of company nor business engagements interrupt the regular order for worship.
6. Let family mercies and afflictions be duly notices by him who leads in the exercises.
7. Continually labor to have the heart right and warm.
8. Be joyful and cheerful in the whole service.
9. Never give reproofs to others in the forms of prayer.