

- Make a set of “Count Your Blessings” placemats for your table. Think of things you are thankful for and find something that reminds you of them. Arrange pictures, pressed leaves and flowers, and other flattened nature objects on a piece of waxed paper, leaving a two inch margin around the edge. You can add letters and words cut out of brightly colored or designed paper. Then cover your work with another piece of waxed paper the same size. Carefully press the two sheets of waxed paper together with a warm iron, moving the iron gently over the entire placemat to seal everything in place.
- Ask each family member to bring to family worship something that comforts them when they are tired, sick, or worried. Perhaps it’s a favorite blanket, a hot drink, a soft toy, a warm bath with bubbles, aromatic lotion, etc. Read Isaiah 40:1-2. Talk together about the comfort that comes from knowing that God has reconciled the whole world to Himself in Jesus Christ, and that you are part of that world brought back into the family of God. Celebrate your decision to accept this gift from God by standing in a circle and holding out your tightly closed fists, then deliberately unclasp them to receive the salvation that is yours in Jesus.
- Identify at least two spiritual gifts you think God has given to each of your children. Find something to symbolize these gifts and wrap each individually with beautiful gift wrap and ribbon. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and give each child their gifts, affirming evidence you have seen that God has bestowed these gifts upon them. Give each one a chance to think about how they will enjoy these gifts and use them to share the Good News about Jesus and in service to others.
- Read the story of the prodigal son in a modern Bible version (Luke 15:11-31). Focus in on the hug in vs. 20. What made that hug feel so good? Create your own family hug by standing together in a circle with hips tight together—no space between. On the count of three, everyone take one giant step toward the middle. Think about God being in your circle, part of your family hug.

- Write your child a love note on a colorful piece of paper and decorate it with stickers, etc. Cut the paper into 8-10 odd-shaped puzzle pieces and put them in a sandwich bag. Tuck it in their lunch box as a surprise. Remind them often that you love them and that God loves them even more!
- Read Luke 7:36-47. What other stories of forgiveness can you think of in the Bible? Why do you think Jesus said that much forgiveness produces much love and little forgiveness produces little love? Help the younger children understand God’s forgiveness by blowing some soap bubbles and watching them pop and disappear. God’s forgiveness is just like that. Take time for a prayer of love and thanks to God for forgiveness!
- Play a game of hide and seek in the house after dark with the lights out. Pair up little children with an adult. What does it feel like to be lost? To be found? To be the “finder”? Read Luke 15:1-10. Celebrate with God that you were lost, but God found you. You may want to plan a party! Pray for people who don’t know yet that God has found them and wants them to join the party.



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Fun & Easy Family Worship Memories



- Make up a tune for a favorite Bible passage and sing it around the dinner table every day for a week. Think about choosing 52 passages from a modern version to commit to memory this year, adding a new song to your family repertoire each week.
- Read Matthew 8:1-3 and try to imagine the scene. What is the leper wearing? What does his voice sound like as he calls out to Jesus? Pretend your family is in the crowd around Jesus. Call out what you think you hear them saying? Let your non-verbal communication mimic theirs. Then stop. What do you think Jesus is thinking? How would you describe the look in His eyes? His tone of voice? His touch? Imagine yourself the leper. Experience the moment of the miracle as you think he experienced it. What is it like to be healed by Jesus? What would you like to say to Jesus now?
- Collect 25-30 paint chip samples of a variety of colors from a home improvement store. Find as many color matches as you can in the natural world. Make a windowsill display or a centerpiece for your dinner table from what you have found.
- Take turns choosing a button from Mom's button collection that reminds you of someone who knows your name and who has helped you know God as Heavenly Father. Tell the others in your family a story about this person's influence in your life.
- Read Isaiah 40:28-31. What makes you feel just great, like you could conquer Mt. Everest? Share with your family a time when God renewed your strength. Tell your family practical ways they could be the "wind beneath your wings" this week.
- Read Genesis 1. Talk about the world fresh from the Creator's hand. What do you see? Feel? Smell? Taste? Hear? What do you think God was asking human beings to do when He gave them dominion over the earth? You may want to look on the Internet for the amazing story about the ivory-billed woodpecker's comeback from extinction.

What can your family do to protect and revitalize God's creation?

- Read Psalm 136 with parents on one side of the room reading the first half of each verse and the children on the other side responding with the refrain, "His love endures forever." Write at least six more verses, presenting your own testimony from your family experience that His love really does endure forever.
- Create a promise book of God's promises to you in the Scripture. Illustrate it with experiences in the life of your family that show how God has kept His promises.
- Go on a God hunt. Ask each family member in the morning to be on the look out for evidence that God is alive and at work in the world as they go about their daily activities. Share where you have found God today for family worship.
- Make a family coat-of-arms that illustrates who you are as a family circle. Include symbols that convey your shared family heritage, interests, values, faith, spiritual gifts, goals, mission, etc. Hang it over your front door.
- Read Matthew 28:19-20. How do you see yourselves fitting into this picture? Write a mission statement for your family.
- Make an A-B-C illustrated book of Bible stories. Think of how you can make it a book your family and friends will want to look at again and again. Think colorful, three dimensional, interactive, and personalized.
- At the close of the Sabbath, take turns as parents blessing your children one by one, asking God to bestow on them the good things you perceive they especially need for the coming week.
- Look for all the names for Christ you can find in the Scripture. See if you can find at least one for every letter in the alphabet. Put your list up where you can see it. Pick a favorite name at the end of each day this week. You may want to share the name you chose and why it is especially meaningful to you today around the dinner table.
- Invite each family member to nominate one person for

a Heavenly Hall of Fame. Tell why you would induct them.

- Keep a book of prayer requests. Open it on the floor in the middle of your family circle as you pray. Pray conversationally for each one, with different family members taking turns contributing to one family-sized prayer. Keep a record of ways you know God's listening.
- Read Isaiah 43 together, replacing "Israel" with your family name and changing the pronouns to personalize the passage just for your family. Talk about the verses that have special meaning for you.
- Make an Encouragement Jar for your kitchen table. Find as many Bible passages as you can where God offers words of hope and encouragement. Write them on strips of colored paper and fold them and put them in a jar for the taking whenever family members and friends feel worried, frightened, or discouraged.
- Get together with other families and plan a Walk through the Bible Trail, where different family groups act out Bible stories along the way. Invite neighbors and friends to walk along your trail, enjoying the dramas along the way.
- Plan a worship experience for a neighbor who is shut-in or someone in a retirement home. Share your smiles, the Good News, your music, and your life lessons.
- Read Philippians 2:4. Make coupons for each family member to redeem as needed, offering loving services you are willing to provide in the coming week.

