

## DEVOTIONS/FAITH TALK

**GOAL:** *How to communicate and pass on our devotion to god in the everyday moments of life.*

### Preparation:

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- Paper and pens
- Whiteboard
- Devotion activity (see *Extra Resources* on website)
- Take home resources (see *Extra Resources* on website)

### Morning tea: (10 min)

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Start with morning tea so parents have time to connect with each other. Introduce any new parents. Alternatively you could allow some time for this at the end of your session.

### Explain it: Why do we run these sessions for parents? (5 min)

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Take a few minutes to reinforce to your parents the importance of their role in passing on faith to their children. Sell the vision by saying something like, 'You are the biggest influence in your children's lives and the church wants to partner with you to help make the most of these early formational years. Today is about helping and resourcing you so you can go home and easily incorporate faith talk into your everyday life.'

Explain that today's session is not about giving parents a hard task to do or making them feel guilty about what they are not doing. It is about encouraging them to talk to their kids about God in the everyday moments of life. This is what faith talk is all about.

### Explain it: What is a devotion and how do we do it at home? (10 min)

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**Activity:** Draw a picture as a family of how you spend your time when you are at home.

Ask each child to show their picture and share one thing they do. Children can take their pictures back to their table and continue to decorate.

### Discussion with parents:

**Say something like:** 'Today's workshop is on spiritual devotions. What is a traditional view of a family devotion? How many of you grew up with that? What is your gut reaction to that?'

*(Pause after each question for answers.)*

What does the word devotion or 'to be devoted' actually mean?' *(Brainstorm ideas on a whiteboard.)*

'So when we talk about Christian devotions in the home, the aim is to foster children who are devoted to God... who are *(read suggestions from the whiteboard)* to God.' *(People said things like 'in love with', 'committed to', 'want to be with' etc.)*

'I have read that one way to see what we are devoted to, is to look at how we spend our time. If that were true, have a look at your poster and see what you spend the most time on? Work? Sleep? Eating? Facebook? TV? Are you devoted to that? I don't like that definition!!

At this point I want to share with you a couple of verses:

**Colossians 3:23:**

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters...

**1 Corinthians 10:31**

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

These tell us that everything in our lives can be devoted to God. The point of today is not to make you feel guilty about what you spend your time on or to give you another burden to add to your already busy lives. Today is about encouraging you to think about how can we communicate and pass on our devotion to God in the everyday moments, in some of the activities we do in our week, in the things that are on your poster.

Here is a great definition of devotions from Mark Holmen.

“Family devotions are simply the way you bring Christ and Christ-like living into your daily lives as individuals and as a family. Devotions are about seeking God at all times, in all you do. Devotions are about living a wholly devoted life to God that is continually seeking, wrestling with and applying the truths of God’s Word to your daily walk. The question is not, ‘are you ready to do family devotions?’ The question is, ‘are you ready, as a family, to be devotional at all times and in all places?’ With this as your target, you are ready to further explore how to make family devotions a way of life rather than something you have to do once a week?”

Mark Holmen, *Faith Begins @ Home Devotions*, page 35.

Devotions can be formal, structured times together and they can be faith talk in the everyday moments, like those mentioned in Deuteronomy 6. (*Read this verse.*)

So how can meal time be devotional? How can you include faith talk at bedtime, car time, bath time?’

## Inspire them: Share some stories (5 min)

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Ask someone to come and share what this looked like for them and their family. You could ask someone who has older children or is a grandparent.

## Practice and make it: Create and take home some resources (20 min)

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**Devotion activity:**

Give families time to make a resource that they can use at home to encourage faith talk.

Say something like: ‘For the purposes of today we are going to focus on meal time. Meal time is a great opportunity to regularly sit down as a family and connect with one another and God.’

At this point give families everything they needed to make a family conversation jar: the jar, labels and stickers to decorate the outside and conversation starter cards to cut out and put in the jar. (*See Extra Resources on website: conversation starters for kids, jar labels, meal time magic labels and cards.*)

## Resources:

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In addition to the resources they have made, families could also be given the book *Faith Begins at Home Devotions* by Mark Holmen or some articles. (See *Extra Resources on website: talking faith dads and sons; make time to talk about faith; faith talk handout.*)

Another idea is make a fridge magnet with a key verse on it (such as Deuteronomy 6:6-7) or a key quote (such as Mark Holmen's definition of devotions—see *Extra Resources on website: family devotions*).