

## WHY A FAMILY ALTAR

By: Dr. Hal Webb, Evangelist

*"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."*  
Proverbs 22:6

One of the greatest failures of our Christian families is that of failing to worship God in our homes. We are all aware that children must be fed, clothed, and cared for and the importance of parents in this process. We adults may have our strong points, but the spiritual strength of our home must be built on spiritual, Biblical principles. To fail in this puts us in the column of abuse in the eyes of God. We need to teach that our whole family life is important as we grow up following Him. I have counseled families for 65 years, and from experience based on the Word of God want you to consider why a family altar is of vital importance? **(1). Incentive To Glorify God:** *"And whatsoever ye do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him"* Col. 3:17. Our family actions should all be controlled by what pleases the Lord Jesus. To have a spiritual home you must allow God to be glorified by what you do. Family decisions are to be based on pleasing God. You must teach your children this by example and daily propagation of the Word. Such a teaching process results in a family that bases its decisions on the Word of God, growing up together as a God praising unit. **(2). Strength To Meet The Days Problems:** *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* Phil. 4:13. This is a thrilling truth because our homes today face many problems. Teach your kids that God will help them in school and protect them in this world of confusion. I often say to teens, "remember you and God are a majority". The facts of life and everything about it need daily

application, that only a Family Altar can bring. Family problems will keep coming, but God changes never. Teach your children that whatever comes, God is able to lead them in the right. **(3). To Claim The Holy Spirits Guidance:** *"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"* Phil. 4:6. This brings daily peace of mind. Dad you need to commit your work and trust to the one who gives you strength to labor. And mom, the kitchen can be a place of surrendered victory or a chain around your neck. Attack every family problem with the promises of God, knowing the Holy Spirit is with you every day. **(4). It Cements Family Relationships:** *"Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise.) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth"* Eph. 6:1-3. Rebellious teens were not raised on these principles. Honor and obedience must be taught from an early age, and maintained by daily reminders of devotions as a family. You fathers and mothers have plenty of verses to follow to obey God, in rearing a Godly family. Dear parents, your profound love for each other must be visible and lead your children into a life of the same. Your family can be a confused wrangling bunch, or a disciplined unit in the family of God. **(5) Builds Family Love And Understanding:** *"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another"* Rom. 12:10. Read further than the verse just given, and you will see a list of actions at home and outside that will foster love and understanding. A rebellious teen is a gigantic heart break to a parent, and you must seek by personal Bible instruction to detect and end it. Family squabbles are sad evidence of the lack of spiritual guidance at home. No unsaved expert can take the place of loving parents who really

care for one another, and the rest of the family.

**(6). Sets An Example To Be Followed:** *"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* II Tim. 3:15-17. Family memories can be built, and ways of correction shown, and around the table your family can enter into worship they will never forget. Make it a special time and they will grow up to do the same with their children. God desires His Christian homes to be examples of good works.

**(7). Effects Guests And Neighborhood:** *"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, or die, we are the Lord's"* Rom. 14:7 & 8. Family devotions are a testimony to all who enter your house to visit, or dwell nearby. We do not live to ourselves, but our family actions have a way of getting out. Neighbors and friends will know you worship God as a family, and observe your home as different. Friends at your table bow their heads and accept the fact you are thankful to God who meets your needs. Often questions about spiritual things can result from the example your family demonstrates.

**(8). It Helps Strengthen Your Church:** *"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another' as Christ has received us to the glory of God"* Rom. 15: 6&7. Your family must not make going to church the only time spent pleasing God. The poor false religion of today does exactly that. Family devotions can be a discussion time, driving home the points given in the church sermon. Our family is to be one in mind and actions, to

the glory of God. Your pastor will be thrilled that the precepts being preached are referred to and obeyed in the family. Make your family devotions important, even if you number just two, granddad and grandma, you'll still profit from family discussion. Snuggle together in the Word and elder problems will be much easier to bear.

**(9)' Good Example To Christian Brethren:** *"And they, continuing in one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart"* Acts 2:46. The church in Acts were known for praising God and having favor with all the people" Acts. 2:47. Families were great example to other families, and put the things they learned in church at home. Family with family can rejoice together, as they present a unified front for the glory of God. Prayer requests, family challenges and victories can be shared, bringing encouragement to all the families of the church. Family devotions should wrap the homes of the church together, as a neighborhood testimony, Since unsaved homes are in such chaos, Christian homes praying together have great value for God.

**(10). Obedience To The Word Of God:** *"I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. And be not confirmed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God"* Rom. 12: 1&2. Certainly in presenting you bodies you can go further, and give your whole family a way of life which helps them obey the previous verse. Remember marriage between a man and a woman is a lifetime agreement. Your children, a vital part of the family are included, and will always be known as yours. Making time to pray together at home is a great way to strengthen your family, and your church, and hold the line in these last days of rebellion against God.