

Horton Road Church of Christ
Home Devotional Booklet
February 6-12, 2011

It is important to worship the Lord together on Sundays, as the church of Christ gathers to pray, sing, share in remembrance and proclamation around the Lord's Table, and hear a portion of God's Word taught. But it is also important that the hearing of God's Word extends to our homes throughout the week. We have a responsibility—perhaps even an obligation—to read God's Word at home and obey it.

One outstanding way to do this is as a family. The Bible teaches us that fathers are to “bring them [their children] up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Combined with 1 Timothy 3:5 and Titus 1:6-7, which describe an elder as an effective manager of faith in his household, we learn that we have a responsibility to make sure that our faith is taught in our households.

This booklet is provided as an aid to reading and teaching the Bible in your homes. I recommend that you read each daily section and discuss both the reading and the questions. Conclude your time together with a prayer and perhaps also a song. There is no better way to spend an evening with your family than in Bible reading, discussion and prayer. This way, your fellowship with each other will also be seasoned with grace.

If you are already using another system in your family discipleship, please feel no need to switch to this booklet. I only provide this as a help to you, to help you regain the importance of Bible reading and prayer in your household. No matter what system you use to do this, the end result is God's glory as you learn more his ways and obedience to them.

Sunday – Ecclesiastes 8:1-8

1. How is wisdom (8:1) the key to understanding this section (8:1-8)?
What are some of the insights of wisdom revealed in these verses?
2. In light of not knowing how long our lives will be (8:8), how should we live?
3. In what ways do you need to pursue wisdom?

Prayer focus: Pray for godly wisdom and the ability to live it out.

Monday – Ecclesiastes 8:9-17 (9-13)

1. What is the “vanity” (or “meaninglessness”) mentioned by the Teacher (8:10)? Why is it vanity?
2. What are the reasons given why some people engage in evil?
3. What will you do to remain devoted to God and his wisdom?

Prayer focus: Pray for dedication and commitment to God and his ways.

Tuesday – Ecclesiastes 8:9-17 (14-17)

1. What is the meaningless (or “vain”) thing the Teacher identifies in this section (14)?
2. What is his solution to avoid dwelling on meaningless things?
3. What things do you need to stop worrying about in order to live with joy instead?

Prayer focus: Pray for more joy in your life and to live joyfully before others.

Wednesday – Philippians 3:1-11

1. What are the descriptions Paul uses for his enemies? Why do you think he chose those words?
2. What are the characteristics of true worship (3:3)?
3. What practices do we hold to today that are empty? How can we infuse them with truth to truly worship God?

Prayer focus: To keep our attention and focus on the main thing—knowledge of Christ and revealing him to others.

Thursday – Philippians 3:1-11

1. How did Paul previously consider himself to be mature? Why was he wrong?
2. What are the marks of maturity that Paul details in this passage? What things does Paul want to gain (3:8-11)?
3. In what ways are you tempted to focus on your own accomplishments? How will you sacrifice these things for the sake of gaining the things in Christ that Paul wanted to gain?

Prayer focus: To stop looking at yourself and what you can do and instead focus on what God has done for you.

Friday – Philippians 3:1-11

1. Paul discusses knowing Christ (not knowing *about* Christ). What's the difference?
2. How can we share in the sufferings of Christ?
3. What do you still need to learn about your own spiritual growth?

Prayer focus: To recognize your shortcomings and failures and gain a greater dependence on God through Christ.

Saturday – Read Ecclesiastes 9 and Philippians 3:12-4:1

1. What are the main themes of these sections of scripture?
2. How do these sections of scripture develop and extend the teaching from the earlier sections you studied this week?
3. How do they help you prepare for Sunday worship?

Prayer focus: To be prepared to hear the word of the Lord on Sunday.