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# HERALD

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## Where Can You Find Something That Is....

*John Piper presents characteristics about the Word from the Word and encourages Christians to respond biblically.*

©Desiring God.

**1. True and Reliable** – “The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether” (Psalm 19:9).  
“Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth” (John 17:17; cf. Psalm 119:142; Hebrews 6:17-18).

**2. Powerful** – “Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?” (Jeremiah 23:29; Isaiah 55:10-11).

**3. Pure** – “The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver refined in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Psalm 12:6).

**4. Eternal** – “The word of the Lord abides forever” (1 Peter 1:25; Psalm 119:160).

**5. Reviving** – “The law of the Lord is

perfect, reviving the soul” (Psalm 19:7; Psalm 119:50, 37, 93, 107; Matthew 4:4; John 6:63).

**6. Delightful** – “Trouble and anguish have come upon me, but thy commandments are my delight” (Psalm 119:143, 16, 92, 111, 174; 19:8).

**7. Strengthening** – “My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to thy word!” (Psalm 119:28).

**8. Hopeful** – “I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in thy words” (Psalm 119:147, 43, 74, 81).

**9. Comforting** – “This is my comfort in my affliction, that thy word gives me life” (Psalm 119:50).

**10. Guiding** – “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).

**11. Saving** – “Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek thy statutes” (Psalm 119:155).

## Therefore, let us take God's word and...

**1. Tremble** – “This is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word” (Isaiah 66:2).

**2. Trust** – “I trust in thy word” (Psalm 119:42).

**3. Meditate** – “Blessed is the man... [whose] delight is in the law of the Lord, on his law he meditates day and night” (Psalm 1:1-2).

**4. Memorize** – “I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11).

**5. Obey** – “Blessed are those who keep thy testimonies” (Psalm 119:2; Luke 6:46-49).

**6. Sing** – “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage” (Psalm 119:54).

**7. Share** – “We cannot but speak what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

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## The Word on Family Worship

*John Folmar is the Teaching Pastor of UCDD.*

*“Teach us to number our days aright...” (Ps 90:12.)*

There are many reasons why families don't worship together in their homes—sometimes parents don't want to (the heart issue); sometimes the family is too busy (the priority issue); sometimes parents don't know what to do (the education issue); sometimes the children can't or don't want to (the discipline issue).

These challenges aren't unique to us. Families have always contended with

threats to good, regular family worship time. In 1679, the Synod of New England, inquiring into the causes of the conditions that might have “provoked the Lord to bring judgments upon New England,” observed, “there are many families that do not pray to God constantly, morning and evening, and many more where the Scriptures are not daily read so that the Word of Christ might richly dwell in them” (quoted in Jerry Marcellino, *Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship* (Audobon Press, 1996), p. 2.)

Let's consider the importance of family worship, along with some practical

suggestions and resources that may be useful.

## **I. The Importance and Characteristics of Family Worship**

1. Family worship is taught in Scripture, both by precept and example. “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them...” (Deut 6:6-7). “Fathers, do not exasperate your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph 6:4; cf. Gen 18:19, Josh 24:15; Job 1:5; Ps 78:5). The family unit is the God-ordained instrument for the teaching and shepherding of your children.

2. Family worship is an event that should occur regularly in the life of a Christian family. Family worship isn’t so much an aspect of family management or a method to “save” your children, as it is an acknowledgment of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over your home. Every time you gather your family and open God’s Word together, bow down together for prayer, confess sin together, and praise God in song, you are showing your reliance on the King, Jesus. That’s not the only way you show your reliance on him, but it’s one important way.

3. In addition to being an event, family worship should be a lifestyle. “Talk about [these commandments] when you sit at home and when you walk

along the road, when you lie down and when you get up...” (Deut 6:6-7). The modern equivalent of “walking along the road” might be driving. When, for example, families drive places together, they have a great opportunity to sing or talk or pray about the mighty deeds of God. Let family worship mark all of your life together as a family. Family worship is much broader than the ideal image of a family gathered around dad’s chair while he teaches the family. Family worship is as much a lifestyle as it is an event. So, family worship means 1) a regular gathering, and 2) a lifestyle.

4. Family worship should include “song, scripture and supplication” (Jerry Marcellino, *Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship*, p. 11). The gathering may look different at different stages of your family’s life, of course. The details are less important than your commitment to regularly worship together. “How long should it last? It should be regularly brief, as little as ten minutes when the children are very young. Do not kill it by trying to go too long. Pace yourself. Regularity and repetition is the key. When should we do family worship? When it works...” (J. Ligon Duncan and Terry L. Johnson, “A Call to Family Worship” in *Give Praise to God*, ed. Philip Graham Ryken, et. al. (Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003), p. 324-5). Don’t let idealism be an enemy of your family worship. Be creative, flexible and consistent—for the glory of God.

5. Remember, every day your children are watching and hearing you. “Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt 12:34). Family worship must be accompanied by authentic, compelling Christian living, or else it will be exposed as a farce. Your children will easily see behind the religious garb and find what is most precious to you. “Parents either practice what they preach or become the surest means yet devised by humans or the devil of sending their children to hell” (Duncan & Johnson, “A Call to Family Worship,” p. 335). Children, of course, are ultimately responsible for their own decisions. And no one is saved apart from the sheer grace of God. Our children’s salvation is not finally dependent on us, but on Christ alone. Nevertheless, bringing an image bearer of God into the world is a sobering responsibility. God often uses Christian parents as his redeeming instruments. Therefore, let’s pray for a spirit of authentic joy and constant worship in our homes, through good times and bad.

## II. Thirteen Ideas for Family Worship

1. *Read and discuss the Bible at dinner.* A chapter, or even just a paragraph with young children. Let it guide your conversation for a while at the table. This is easy!

2. *Scripture memory.* Pick a time every day when you work on verses; it need

not take more than a minute or two per day! Use a chalkboard and make a game out of it. Review verses in the car as you’re driving places together.

3. *Quizzes/games.* Develop multiple-choice Bible chronology tests. Ask the children to recite the 10 commandments while you write them on a chalkboard. Create a crossword puzzle. Be creative.

4. *Read good Bible and theology books during family devotions.* Consider these:

- Ella Lindvall, *Read Aloud Bible Stories* (ages 2-4);
- Pat Alexander, *God’s Word For Me* (pre-school and up);
- Sinclair Ferguson, *The Big Book of Questions & Answers* (includes activities, prayers, etc.) (ages 3-5);
- M. Schoolland, *Leading Little Ones to God* (ages 4-10);
- Catherine Vos, *The Child’s Story Bible* (ages 5-11);
- Susan Harding, *Beginning with John’s Gospel* (ages 6-12);
- Wayne Grudem, *Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basic Beliefs Every Christian Should Know* (ages 13+)

5. *On Fridays, discuss the children’s classes, as well as the service (if they were in it.)* Take a “big idea” of the class or sermon and talk about it.

6. *Visit the zoo; buy a telescope; talk about Isaiah 40 when you are on the beach or under the night sky.*

7. *Memorize good catechisms. My First Book of Questions and Answers* by Carine Mackenzie or *Westminster Children's* catechism.
8. *Read devotional stories and church history.* e.g., *Chronicles of Narnia*; any of the Christian Focus series ([www.christianfocus.com](http://www.christianfocus.com)); Frances Havergal, *Little Pillows and Morning Bells* (great for bedtime), etc. Kids love to be read to! Take advantage of this time!
9. *Start a family fun night once a week.* Ask one another for ideas!
10. *Emphasize and pray for global missions.*
- Get a set of the unreached people group cards and pray for one each night at dinner (see me if interested in them).
  - Refer to maps and talk about the world (often at dinner).
  - Invite missionaries, foreign students and travelers to your home; ask them questions about their travels; let the children interact with them.
  - Read missionary biographies.
  - Use Window on the World (Paternoster), by Daphne Spragget with Jill Johnstone.
  - Read the Christian Focus "Trailblazer Series" (children's missionary stories; [www.christianfocus.com](http://www.christianfocus.com)).
  - Read National Geographic.
  - Read Global Prayer Digest and pray for featured people groups ([www.global-prayer-digest.org](http://www.global-prayer-digest.org))
  - Read Noel Piper's pamphlet, "Home-Grown World
- Christians" ([www.desiringgod.org](http://www.desiringgod.org))
- Check out [www.unreached.org](http://www.unreached.org)
11. *Worship through singing and music.*
- Have and sing a "song of the week." Ask your family which song they particularly liked singing in the service and e-mail Glen Jones ([glen@uccdubai.com](mailto:glen@uccdubai.com)) for the lyrics.
  - The Psalms to music ([www.psalmistry.com](http://www.psalmistry.com))
  - Internet hymnal ([www.cyberhymnal.org](http://www.cyberhymnal.org))
  - Sovereign Grace music ([www.sovereigngracemusic.org](http://www.sovereigngracemusic.org))
12. *Read and listen to good family worship materials.*
- Jerry Marcellino, *Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship*
  - Terry Johnson, *The Family Worship Book*
  - Ligon Duncan and Terry Johnson, "A Call to Family Worship" in *Give Praise to God*.
  - C. J. Mahaney, "Gospel-Centered Parenting" (free at [www.sovereigngracestore.com](http://www.sovereigngracestore.com))
  - *The Godly Family: Essays on the Duties of Parents and Children*. (Soli Deo Gloria)
13. *Talk with godly, experienced Christian parents about family worship and resources.*

*Can I find these recommended resources in the bookstore? Some! But if not, contact the church and we can make copies or lend material out.*

## Greetings! From Kathleen Nielson

Warm greetings, women of UCCD!

What a joy it was to be with you in February! It was a blessing to worship in your church and then to enjoy a chance to be with you at the retreat. I've carried away vivid memories of such a beautiful variety of faces, colorful dress from different corners of the globe, accents, conversations. . . all wrapped around with a vibrant sense of the Lord God powerfully at work. What a treasure you have in your church community, with such strong and godly leadership; I am thankful to know fellowship with such an alive church body there on the other side of the world!



As we talked and thought together about the Word of God, it was clear that so many of you are loving that Word – studying it faithfully, meditating on it, following it like a light, and sharing it as God enables you. I encourage you to keep on “receiving with meekness the implanted word” (James 1:21), which does indeed light up the way, until we get to see the living Word face to face! For those of you more new to the process of Bible study, may you not be distracted from learning to listen well to God’s gracious gift of his inspired Word, which his Spirit applies so powerfully to our hearts.

As I write this, I’m just about to finish preparing for my church Bible study that meets tomorrow; it’s work, but I’m always amazed at how much there is to learn and savor once I get into it – and once we begin to digest it in a group. What a blessing we share, as we are able to participate in the gatherings of biblically-centered churches – not only the worship services but also the classes and Bible studies and small groups. God gives his Word to his people, and it is such a joy and help to receive it among a church family.

I loved visiting your church family! Thank you for your warm welcome and hospitality. I pray the Lord will continue to bless you richly and use you powerfully for his kingdom. May the

the Word be sweet as honey to each of you, and may that Word flow from you among your friends and families and acquaintances – for the glory of Christ the living Word.

Blessings to you, in the name of Jesus Christ – Kathleen Nielson

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDY  
ON THE WORD:

1. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (available in the bookstore).
2. [www.monergism.com](http://www.monergism.com). Christian website containing articles and MP3s on just about all Christian subjects!

## WHO'S THE MAN... ACCORDING TO THE WORD?

If you are a man you are invited to the

### **MEN'S RETREAT**

March 27-28th, 2009

to learn about

### ***Biblical Manhood***

Interested in going? Contact the church office at  
[info@uccdubai.com](mailto:info@uccdubai.com)

## March Calendar

### **March 6, 2009**

8:00/10:00 UCCD corporate gathering. Thabiti Anyabwile preaching.

8:30-9:30 Christianity Explained (Friday Foundations) begins! Taught by Paul White/Lenny Muthiah. Located in the Children's Church room downstairs.

### **March 12, 2009**

7:00 pm Thursday Night Bible Study - **CANCELED.**

7:00 pm Oasis (Youth Ministry)

### **March 13, 2009**

8:00/10:00 UCCD corporate gathering. Mack Stiles preaching.

8:30-9:30. Christianity Explained. Taught by Paul White/Lenny Muthiah.

### **March 13, 2009**

6:30 pm Children's Game Night

7:00 pm Thursday Night Bible Study

7:00 pm Oasis

### **March 20, 2009**

8:00/10:00 UCCD corporate gathering. John Folmar preaching. Beginning a series in Exodus.

8:30-9:30. Christianity Explained. Taught by Paul White/Lenny Muthiah.

### **March 26, 2009**

7:00 pm Thursday Night Bible Study

7:00 pm Oasis

### **March 27, 2009**

8:00/10:00 UCCD corporate gathering. John Folmar preaching. Beginning a series in Exodus.

8:30-9:30. Christianity Explained. Taught by Paul White/Lenny Muthiah.

Men's Retreat (27th and 28th).

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