

# Start *little*

## If your goal is this:

Reading a devotional book to your kids every day.

A long, meaningful prayer time with your child.

Reading a full chapter of the Bible and talking about it.

Family worship time

A family prayer time where everyone prays out loud.

## Try the LITTLE version:

Speak a Bible verse blessing over your child (same one every day).

Say the Lord's Prayer together.

Read one Bible verse and ask "What does this show us about God?"

Turn on Christian music in the background.

Focus on one kind of prayer each day. (*praise, thanks, confess, ask*)

## At this time of day:

- Right after tucking them into bed.
- Just before opening the car door at school.
- Just after changing diaper.

- In the car on the way to school/sports.
- Just after tucking them into bed.

- Directly after a meal, before anyone stands up.
- First thing in the morning.

- When you step into the kitchen.
- After clicking in your seatbelt in the car.

- Before or after a meal.
- Right before kissing them goodnight.

# Why start *little*?

If anyone ever made you think that you have to "go big or go home" with regard to family faith, they were wrong. The BEST, most long-lasting habits all have something in common: they started LITTLE.

And when I say LITTLE, I mean something that takes 30 seconds or less. Tiny.

These tiny habits are much more likely to stick in your life because they're so easy to do, even when you're all tired, sick, grumpy, or just plain unmotivated. You can always dig deeper after you have set the habit, but the tiny habit becomes a **baseline** that helps you feel confident that you're nurturing deep faith roots by taking advantage of the tiny moments in life.

**ASK YOURSELF: What habit do I want to do regularly? How can I make this easier and quicker?**

## Why do I need a time of day?

If you're trying to consistently pray or read the Bible or do anything else just by remembering, you're missing out on a crucial component: brain science. Our brains weren't made to just *remember* things. We need a prompt.

You *could* put a daily reminder on your phone, but you'll soon start to ignore it.

Instead, use your **daily life** as a prompt. Even the most inconsistent people have things that get done everyday - eating, using the bathroom, going to work, changing diapers...anything goes!

**ASK YOURSELF: What do I do every day (or every weekday)? How can I weave my tiny habit into this routine I already have?**

# QUICK TIPS FOR MAKING A HABIT STICK QUICKER:

## 1) CELEBRATE it

Have you ever tried to use a sticker or reward chart to provide incentive for a new habit, only to find that it doesn't actually help you remember?

You're not alone. What you need to harness is the power of your brain chemistry.

God created your brain to seek out behaviors that make you feel GOOD. That means one of the secrets to creating new habits is to CELEBRATE EVERY TIME you remember to do your new TINY habit!

Celebration makes you feel good, and your brain will naturally seek out that behavior again.

**ASK YOURSELF: What do I do when I've accomplished something big? (That's the feeling you want to harness with your celebration.)**

EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO CELEBRATE:

- Give your kids a high five.
- say "Victory!" or "We did it!"
- Do a happy dance or fist pump.

**To Read:**



*The Easiest Parenting Habit With The Biggest Eternal Impact*

## 2) REMOVE obstacles

If you're like me, you start out every new habit with the best of intentions, but then get derailed by the simplest things.

Like, you were going to pray the Lord's Prayer, but you couldn't remember the exact wording. Or you were going to turn on a devotional podcast for the kids in the morning, but you couldn't find your phone.

The last thing you need to do before starting your new tiny habit is to think through any potential obstacles. **What might make this habit hard to keep?** Once you figure that out, you can fix the problems before they derail your new habit.

Solve any one-time problems that you expect to come up BEFORE they become a problem. Pay attention for any hurdles that come up so you can tweak things along the way!

### **ASK YOURSELF: What makes this habit difficult?**

#### EXAMPLES OF SOLUTIONS:

- Charge your phone in the kitchen so you can find it easily.
- Put the devotional app on the front screen.
- Take a picture of your Bible verse and set it as your phone's lock screen.
- Print off a copy of the Lord's Prayer or a verse and hang it on your wall.
- Ask your kids to help you remember.
- Give your Bible/devotional book a permanent spot in the middle of the table.

### **References:**

*Tiny Habits: The Small Changes That Change Everything*, by BJ Fogg

*The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do In Life And Business*, by Charles Duhigg