

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankston.rpca.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Joshua by John Calvin and Roger Ellsworth.

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Joshua 24:1-7 Adopted by God for service

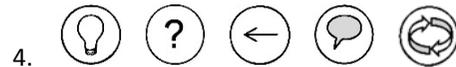
Notes As Joshua's life (and book) comes to a close, he calls the people before God and God reminds them of why they must obey Him. He adopted them as His own people – calling Abraham from a family of idolaters. God's intention was that His people would turn from serving false gods to serving the One, Living, and True God.

Notice that Joshua is not telling the people what he thinks, rather this is a message from the Lord. *His message on service came from God himself. He was the one demanding their faithful service. Joshua was merely his mouthpiece.* (Ellsworth)

God recounts His mercies to the people. He called Abraham, gave him an overview of the promised land, and gave him descendants. Jacob, Abraham's grandson went to Egypt where eventually God rescued his descendants from slavery and led them out with His mighty hand.

What about you? What is the story of God's dealing with you and your family? When did God first call your family from serving idols to serve Him, the Living, and True God?

- Questions**
1. Who is giving this message to Israel?
 2. How had God shows mercy to Abraham and his descendants?
 3. How has God shown mercy to your family?



- Praise** Psalm 52a²
- Pray**
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to recall God's mercies
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Joshua 24:29-33 Dead but not forgotten – yet

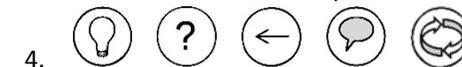
Notes As this book of Joshua began, Moses, God's servant had died. Now Joshua has both that title and that experience. Yet, for a time, Joshua – and more importantly, Joshua's God – are remembered. If we sneak a peek ahead to Judges 1:1 we see that after Joshua's death the people were committed to following the Lord's ways and seeking the Lord's will.

Yet even in these verses, there is a hint of the trouble to come. "Israel served the Lord," we're told, in v31. But we're not told, "Israel served the Lord, 'full-stop.'" No, this continued while Joshua lived, and even continued while all the elders lived who outlived Joshua. But, "but," lies unspoken at the end of the verse.

"But" when all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. (Judges 2:10) It's been said that we know how well we have trained our children when we observe godly behaviour in our grandchildren. Though most of us won't live long enough to see it, it is even more telling what behaviour is observed in our great-grandchildren.

Are we content to live our life before God with some measure of personal commitment, yet be casual about the commitment of our children? May we commit ourselves, and may God grant the grace that the generational line of Christians follows us until Jesus comes.

- Questions**
1. What is Joshua's title and experience as this book ends?
 2. What was the immediate response of Israel when Joshua died?
 3. What was their later response?



- Praise** Psalm 52a
- Pray**
1. Pray that you and your family will follow Jesus, with God's help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading Joshua 24:22-28 Witnesses that we will serve the Lord

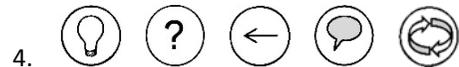
Notes “Ok,” Joshua replies, in a sense, to the people, “you are witnesses yourselves that this is your commitment. No one is forcing this on you – you have determined that you will serve the Lord.”
“Yes,” the people reply. “We are witnesses. We will serve the Lord. We will obey Him.”

When the people continued to insist that they would be faithful to God, Joshua made a covenant with them, recorded it all in ‘the Book of the Law’ and set up a stone of witness that they had promised to serve God. (Ellsworth) Although we are not given the words of this covenant, the essence of covenant language in the Bible is “God will be our God and we will be His people.”

The people along with an inanimate stone were witnesses that they had willingly covenanted to be God’s people. They had agreed to serve God, not idols, but even more so, they had committed their hearts to Him. *The clause, incline your heart unto the Lord, ... may be taken as equivalent to, rest in him, and so give up your heart to the love of him, as to delight and be contented only with him.* (Calvin)

Where is your heart committed? And, who and what bears witness to the commitments of your heart?

- Questions**
1. To what had the people of Israel committed themselves?
 2. What sealed their commitment?
 3. How do we incline our heart to God?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 52a
1. Commit, with your family, to be God’s people in action and in heart.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

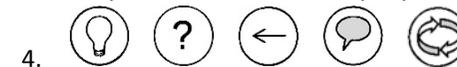
Reading Joshua 24:8-13 Mercy in battle victories

Notes Again and again God recalls for Israel His mercy to them as they came to the promised land. “I destroyed the Amorites from before you. I delivered you out of Balaam and Balak’s hand. I delivered the inhabitants of Canaan into your hand.” And, with the sense of verifying it was God who did it, not the strength of Israel, “I (God) gave you a land you didn’t work for, cities you didn’t build, and crops you didn’t plant.” (v13)

The people needed these reminders. We need constant reminders that our victories come from God rather than from our own effort. *Those who, contrary to expectation, gain a victory without any difficulty, although they confess that the prosperous issue of the war is the gift of God, immediately allow themselves to become blinded by pride, and transfer the praise to their own wisdom, activity, and valour.* (Calvin)

Later God would remind His people through the prophet Zechariah that victory comes “not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit.” (Zech. 4:6)

- Questions**
1. How had God given His people victory east of the Jordan and in Canaan?
 2. What did God remind His people about their land, houses, and crops?
 3. Why does God remind the people so thoroughly about this?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 52a
1. Thank God with your family for the victories by His Spirit in your lives
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Joshua 24:14-16 Chose whom you will serve

Notes Because the Lord has done so much for you, the correct, even commanded response is “fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away your false gods. Serve the Lord!” (v14) As Joshua completes proclaiming the Lord’s word to His people, he then applies it to their hearts and lives, much like a preacher does today.

The application to serve the Lord is reinforced in two ways. First, if they refuse and choose instead to serve false gods they can take their pick. Any one of them – from the false gods out of which God had called Abraham or from the false gods whom Israel had fallen into worshipping while in Egypt – were as worthless as any other. As God reminds us through the Psalmist – the gods of the nations are “nothings.” (Ps. 96:5)

Secondly, Joshua’s own example to them is “We will serve the Lord. I will serve the Lord. My family will serve the Lord. We will put away false gods which we are tempted to serve and will serve the Living and True God.” Fathers, mothers, is this your commitment and example? Are you leading your family to serve the Lord by your example and instruction? Although we recognise that both the effort and the outcome are of grace, are we diligently making the effort and diligently seeking the outcome?

- Questions**
1. What is the application Joshua calls the people to?
 2. What is his first reinforcement of this application?
 3. What is his second reinforcement of this application?
 4.     

- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 52a
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to serve the Lord, with God’s help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Joshua 24:16-21 We will, you won’t, we will serve the Lord

Notes The immediate response of the people is, “We will serve the Lord!” They recount His mercies to them, identify Him as their God, reject false gods, and commit themselves to serve Him.” We would think Joshua would commend their decision and encourage them in it. Instead, he says, “no you won’t!”

Joshua understands how easy it is to say, but how difficult to actually do. *This happens because [people] neither distrust their own weakness so much as they ought, nor consider how difficult it is to bind themselves wholly to the Lord. There is need, therefore, of serious examination, lest we be carried aloft by some giddy movement, and so fail of success in our very first attempts.* (Calvin) *Joshua knew God. God is not to be toyed or trifled with. He is a holy God and a jealous God. If they were not utterly sincere in their commitment to serve, God would detect it and would judge them.* (Ellsworth)

After all this the people renew their commitment. “We will serve the Lord,” they say emphatically. How about you? Will you or won’t you? Are you or aren’t you? Are you making light of your claim to serve the Lord or are you serious about the Lord being your God and you serving Him with your whole heart?

- Questions**
1. What is the response of the people?
 2. How does Joshua reply to their response? Why?
 3. What does a serious commitment to serve the Lord look like?
 4.     

- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 52a
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that God is helping you serve Him
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member