

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 Acts by Simon Kistemaker, Kent Hughes, Matthew Henry, and John Stott

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

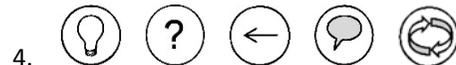
Reading Acts 20:1-6 Encouraging words

Notes Paul is on his 3rd missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:17). His three year ministry in Ephesus (chap. 19) ended with the idol-makers rioting because they understood the threat Christianity was to their business. After the riot, Paul lovingly says goodbye to the disciples. *He would not see them again for many years. They would have to stand alone in times of persecution and hardship (Rev. 2:3), and they needed Paul's encouragement.* (Kistemaker)

Then he departs for Macedonia and visits the churches there. Luke emphasises the purpose Paul had in visiting these churches God had founded through his 2nd missionary journey. He visited in order to encourage them, likely in *an exhortation similar to the one he would later give to their pastors in Miletus (20:17ff). He will have urged them to remain loyal to Christ in spite of continuing persecution and to 'live a life worthy of their calling' as God's new and holy people. (Eph. 4:1ff)* (Stott)

Then we learn that he then ministered in Greece for three months, likely staying in Corinth, then returned to Macedonia. Luke mentions his travelling and mission companions – partners with him in the gospel.

- Questions**
1. What is clear about Paul's care for the Ephesian Christians?
 2. What does Paul do as he visits the Macedonian churches?
 3. What is significant about Paul not ministering alone?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 59a²
1. Commit you and your family to speaking encouraging words
 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

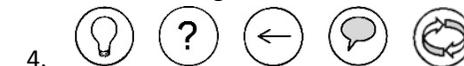
Reading Acts 20:32-38 I commend you to God

Notes Paul was never going to see these elders and the church members in Ephesus again. Who would take care of them? How will they survive and go forward in service to Jesus? Paul knew. He commends them, not to another missionary pastor, not even to the elders themselves, but to God and the word of His grace. God alone can care for and protect his church. He may well use the diligent watchfulness of elders and members, but He is the one who is our fortress and tower of protection.

The expression the word of his grace is a synonym for "gospel". The gospel of Christ has innate power to strengthen and establish the Ephesian elders in their faith. By implication, we understand that the gospel receives its authority from the Lord Jesus. He demonstrates his power by confirming the believers through the spoken and written word (compare Rom. 16:25). (Kistemaker)

Having commended them by his life and ministry, and by his words of warning, Paul sorrowfully bids these elders goodbye. *In a nutshell, their ministry was to be one of giving. Paul gave himself to God and his people. He gave himself to the ministry of the Word. He gave himself with such intensity that he forgot himself. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."...Paul sailed off to keep giving his life to Christ, thus providing us with an example of how we should approach life and ministry.* (Hughes)

- Questions**
1. Who would care for the Ephesian church Paul had left? How?
 2. What is the word of God's grace?
 3. How can we give ourselves like Jesus did and like Paul did?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 59a
1. Pray that you and your family will give yourselves to ministry, 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 Acts 20:29-31 Savage wolves in the flock

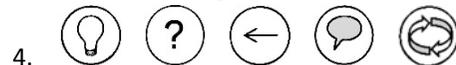
Notes Having urged the Ephesian elders to watch themselves and their flock, Paul tells them why it is so important. Danger lurks. And, the danger is both outside the church and inside the church.

Keeping with the biblical theme of God’s people as sheep and His leaders as shepherds, Paul warns of wolves – savage wolves who will come from outside into the church. *Wolves are predators that attack the flock and slaughter many of the sheep (compare Matt. 7:15; 10:16; John 10:12).* (Kistemaker)

In addition, and in some ways, both more subtle and more dangerous, harm would come to the flock from inside the church. From this congregation, perhaps from these very elders (“from among yourselves...” v30) will come teaching that will sound good, but will mislead the church. *Satan loves to subvert from within. Vigilance is ever the price of liberty. We must not develop a fortress mentality, assuming all to be well, for enemies are to be found both outside and inside the flock of God.* (Hughes)

No wonder Paul warned the church, with tears, night and day for his three year ministry among them of the danger to come. They must be watchful. The whole church – but the elders especially were to watch out for the ways Satan would seek to destroy the church.

- Questions**
1. Why is it so important that elders watch themselves and the church?
 2. How does danger come from outside the church?
 3. How does danger come from inside the church?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 59a
1. Pray with your family that God will protect your church from danger on the outside and danger within
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

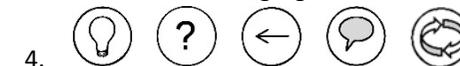
Reading Acts 20:7-12 Sleeping through the sermon

Notes In Troas, Paul met with the Christians for worship. *This gathering is the earliest unambiguous evidence for the Christian practice of gathering together for worship on [the first day of the week]... It probably began about sunset, the congregation assembling for worship at the conclusion of their day’s work.* (Stott) *(The Greeks and the Romans did not have days of rest. In fact, the Roman author Seneca scoffed at the Jews and derided them for wasting time by resting one day out of every seven.* Kistemaker)

The service began with preaching, and Paul, having much to say on his only visit to Troas, went on until midnight. No matter how riveting Paul’s preaching was, the room was crowded, the torches were adding heat and removing oxygen. A young man named Eutychus might not have been the first, and certainly wasn’t the last, but he may be the most famous to fall asleep during a sermon. To add injury to insult, he was sitting in a third story window opening and fell to the ground below.

The congregation gave a horrified gasp and immediately rushed down the outside stairs to the broken form. Some of them began to shriek a Middle-Eastern death wail. But they did not mourn for long. Paul prostrated himself across the boy’s lifeless form ...—and the young man was revived! It was a miracle! No one was sleepy now. Back up to church they went. (Hughes)

- Questions**
1. Why did the church begin meeting on the first day of the week?
 2. What happened to Eutychus?
 3. What did the congregation do after Eutychus was raised?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 59a
1. Commit yourself and your family to listening attentively to preaching, 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

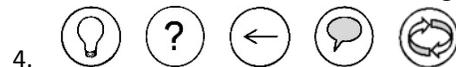
Reading Acts 20:13-21 You know how I lived

Notes *Paul is hastening towards Jerusalem, but strives to do all the good he can by the way, οὐς εν παροδοι, "as it were by the by." He had called at Troas, and done good there; and now he makes a sort of coasting voyage, the merchants would call it a trading voyage, going from place to place, and no doubt endeavouring to make every place he came to the better for him, as every good man should do. (Henry)*

As they come to Miletus Paul calls for the elders (also called overseers) of the Ephesian church to come to meet him. *We trust that the elders came to Miletus without delay. They presumed that Paul's message would differ from the words of encouragement he spoke to the disciples when he left for Macedonia (v. 1). They came as governing and teaching elders to whom Paul would entrust a spiritual inheritance. (Kistemaker)* Paul longed to speak to these dear men – partners with him in ministry – and give them farewell instructions to their lives and ministry. He begins with a short review of his ministry with them.

He had lived openly with them so they could observe him freely. His ministry was marked by humility, hardship, and preaching Christ. He desired, and accomplished by God's help, what every Christian elder desires, a ministry helping people repent of sin and come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Questions**
1. Why did Paul call for the Ephesian elders?
 2. What had been the marks of Paul's ministry in Ephesus?
 3. What was the essence of his message he had preached there?



- Praise** Psalm 59a
Pray
1. Pray with your family for your elders to faithfully proclaim Christ.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

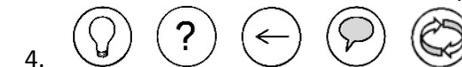
Reading Acts 20:22-28 Shepherd the church of God

Notes Paul continues to encourage these church leaders, whom he will never see again, with his own example. He is determined to go to Jerusalem, compelled by the Holy Spirit, yet the Spirit has revealed to him that he will suffer. That doesn't matter to him. Like his Saviour had done, "he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." (Lu 9:51) Jesus' goal was the accomplishment of salvation for His people. Paul's was to testify to that gospel.

That had been both his goal and, by grace, what he had accomplished – in Ephesus and in all of his ministry. He had proclaimed all of God's word to all he could. In Ezekiel, God tells us he will hold guilty those who don't warn the wicked (33:6). Paul had no such guilt.

Because Paul had proclaimed the whole word of God to the Ephesians, he could call them to be on guard – to judge by God's word. And the judgment to which Paul called them was first to themselves, then to the church. And, it was not to Paul they were accountable. Paul may have taught them about God, but it was God Himself who had called them to shepherd and oversee (feed and watch) His church. *God bought his universal church with the blood of his Son. He paid an incalculable price to save a people for himself through Christ's death on the cross. (Kistemaker)*

- Questions**
1. Where was Paul determined to go? Why?
 2. In what way was Paul innocent of men's blood?
 3. What were to the elders to do? Why?



- Praise** Psalm 59a
Pray
1. Pray with your family for your elders to faithfully shepherd Christ's church
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member