

Family Home Evening

The home is the most important place for gospel learning. No other organization can take the place of the family. Latter-day prophets have repeatedly called on parents to nurture their children with love and gospel teaching.

In 1915 President Joseph F. Smith and his counselors in the First Presidency began a Churchwide effort to strengthen the family. They called on parents in the Church to gather their children once each week for a "Home Evening." Families were to take time to pray and sing together, read the scriptures, teach the gospel to one another, and participate in other activities that would build family unity.

In 1970 President Joseph Fielding Smith joined with his counselors in the First Presidency to designate Monday night as the time for family home evening. Since that announcement, the Church has kept Monday evenings free from Church activities so families can have this time together.

Latter-day prophets continue to urge Church members to give highest priority to family home evening. They have promised that our dedication to this program will help protect our families against the evils of our time and will bring us abundant joy now and throughout the eternities.

All members of the Church should make Monday evening a sacred time, reserved for family home evening. If you are married, have weekly family home evening with your spouse. As you have children, include them in family home evening. Adapt the program to their needs and interests, and let them participate. After your children grow up and move away, continue to hold family home evening with your spouse.

If you are single, consider asking your bishop or branch president to organize a home evening group for you and other single members of your ward or branch. He may call a home evening leader, who is responsible to organize the program and see that home evenings are held regularly.

Family Prayer

A suggested outline for family home evening follows:

- Opening song
- Opening prayer
- Scripture reading
- Lesson
- Activity
- Closing song
- Closing prayer
- Refreshments

As you prepare lessons for family home evening, remember to base them on the scriptures, the teachings of latter-day prophets, and personal experiences and testimony. This book can help in selecting topics to teach. In addition, you may want to refer to other Church publications, such as the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (item number 31106), *Gospel Principles* (31110), the *Family Guidebook* (31180), and Church magazines.

See also Family

Family Prayer (*See* Prayer)

Fasting and Fast Offerings

To fast is to go without food and drink voluntarily for a certain period of time. Fasting combined with sincere prayer can help you prepare yourself and others to receive God's blessings.

Purposes of Fasting

On one occasion, the Savior cast a devil out from a child and used this experience to teach His disciples about the power of prayer and fasting. His disciples asked Him, "Why