

HABITS OF THE
H**OUSEHOLD**

Purpose

The purpose of this field guide is to help households in all seasons of life develop habits that lead to growing faith and flourishing relationships.

Throughout the field guide, we will look at ten different areas of life that impact our households. These habits will look different in every household. They are only **recommendations**. *You are free to adjust and adapt any recommendation* to fit the reality of your household.

How It Works

This field guide is broken down into three different sections:

Everyday Moments

Meaningful Moments

Intentional Moments

Each week you will work through a different section of this guide. As you approach each section, work through the content in this process:

- **Read:** Begin with reading the entire section by yourself, as a household or with your small group.
- **Discuss:** Use the discussion guide to talk through what you read with your household or small group.
- **Decide:** Decide which habit you want to work on in your household over the next week.
- **Develop:** Review the habit you chose and develop a game plan for yourself and your household.

Note to parents: Each week in the “Forming Kids” section of the guide you will see recommendations that are based on the age of the kids in your household. They are designed to help kids build appropriate habits for their stage of development:

- **Early Years:** You do the habit **for them**. (Ex. Read to them, Pray for them, etc.)
- **Elementary:** You do the habit **with them**. (Ex. Read with them, Pray with them, Etc.)
- **Older Years:** You do the habit **alongside them** (Ex. Invite them to read while you read or read the same material and discuss)



EVERYDAY
MOMENTS



MEANINGFUL
MOMENTS



INTENTIONAL
MOMENTS



EVERYDAY

MOMENTS

Everyday Moments: Introduction

Waking, Meals, & Bedtime

If you were asked to name some of the most impactful moments in your life, you'd likely name major life-altering events. What wouldn't be on your list? Ordinary, everyday moments. Moments in life like waking up, eating, or going to sleep. These are moments we experience every single day but often don't give much thought to. Especially, how these moments impact our day-to-day life. In Deuteronomy God gives a clear command to his people. In chapter 11 it says:

So, commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. - Deut. 11:18-19

God challenges his people to see every moment of their lives as significant. Every moment matters. Not just the major life-altering moments but even the ordinary everyday moments.

So, how do we begin to think about our lives in that way?

That is the focus for this week. To build simple, daily habits surrounding three moments all of us experience every day that have the power to shape our lives and the way that we live them.

- **Waking: How We Start Our Day**
- **Meals: When We Stop During Our Day**
- **Bedtime: How We End Our Day**

The challenge of building habits around these three moments is to slow down enough to be present to God and others. It won't take you long to realize that the more intentional you are about inviting God into one area of your life, the easier it will become to invite him into more areas of your life.

Waking

How We Start Our Day

Let's start with a challenge: **List out everything you did within your first twenty minutes of waking up.**

We are creatures of habit, and those habits begin the moment we wake up. For some, their morning begins by hitting the snooze button as many times as possible. Others might pick up their phones and scroll through their news or social media app of choice. The thing about habits is that once they are ingrained in our lives, we don't think about them. They just happen.

How often do you think about your morning? Depending on your season of life, mornings might feel rushed and chaotic or slow and steady. In the life of Jesus, we see this consistent pattern emerge in the way he approaches mornings. In Mark 1 it says:

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" - Mark 1:35-37

What you see in the life of Jesus over and over is intentionality in approaching his morning. The busier Jesus' life got, the greater priority he put into prioritizing time with God and others. Why?

What you prioritize in the morning sets the trajectory for the rest of your day.

Most of us, from the time we wake up, have a thousand things pulling at our attention. Yesterday's work email. A text from a friend. The to-do list to get yourself and the kids off to school. If we aren't careful all these things will pull us away from connecting with God and others in our household and we will instead be consumed by the push and pull of life. **Waking up is as much a spiritual reality as it is a physical one.** Building small, daily habits into our morning routine can help us connect to God and others before stepping into the chaos of everyday life.

Forming Adults - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Scripture Before Phone - Opening God's word before viewing your phone helps bring focus to your day. A few helpful tips: (Recommended reading: **Psalms 121, 103, 91, 23 or a Proverb**)

- **Move your phone away from your bed.** Remove the temptation to grab your phone when you wake up.
- **Put a printed Bible next to your bed.** This physical reminder will prompt you to read your Bible.
- **Start small.** Don't obsess over how long you read your Bible. Be okay with it being brief.
- **Read aloud.** Reading out loud can help you focus on the passage. Especially when you're tired.

Prayer Before Work - Stopping to pray before you begin your day's work (vocational or personal). This builds in a habit of slowing down and bringing your day before God in all that you do. A few tips:

- **Take a moment to be silent.** Prayer is as much about listening as talking.
- **Pray the Lord's prayer.** Starting here will give you a framework for your prayer.
- **Pray for intentionality.** Bring forward the meetings/tasks/conversations for the day and pray over them.

Forming Kids - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Early Years (Up to Kindergarten)

Morning Prayer: Prayer of Thankfulness/Excitement - Kids in the early years have a natural bent towards excitement. Capitalize on this opportunity and center it on God. Have them name one thing they are thankful for or excited about for that day. Model prayer. Invite them. A few tips:

- **Morning Routine.** Have this conversation and prayer time while getting ready for the day. Getting dressed. Brushing teeth. Don't make it complicated. Don't make it long.
- **It's okay to pray the same prayer over and over again.** Don't worry much about content but focus on repetition. You are working to establish the right habits at this age, not diverse content.

Elementary Years

Morning Prayer: Prayer of Opportunity - Kids in elementary years have lives that are filled with opportunities. Opportunities for kindness. Opportunities for integrity. The hope in the morning prayer is to help kids think through potential opportunities that will be before them that day. A few tips:

- **Drive to school.** A great time to have this conversation is on the way to school. As their minds move toward the school day, they will be more aware of the opportunities in front of them.
- **Use previous conversations to guide.** For kids this age, you are guiding them into the right action. Bring up other conversations or circumstances they've talked about previously to help them connect the dots to potential opportunities that might be present for that day.

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

Morning Prayer: Prayer of Intentionality - As kids move into middle school and high school the hope is they begin to see their lives integrated into the mission of God. This happens through small but intentional moments. Here are a few tips:

- **Pray with them.** As kids get older, the natural opportunities to pray with them happen less frequently. Know that kids covet the prayers of their parents (even if they won't admit it). Take this time in the morning to pray over them.
- **Pray a prayer of blessing.** How often do your kids feel blessed by you as a parent? At this point in their life, you are shifting your focus to preparing your kids to be sent out on their own. Use this moment to bless your children.

Forming Households - Weekly Habit

Morning Huddle - Mark one morning on your calendar that your whole family can come together. The busyness of our lives often pulls us in all sorts of directions as we start our day. This huddle doesn't have to be long or complex. The goal of this huddle is to connect to each other and God before you start the day. In this huddle focus on accomplishing two things: **Sharing & Praying**. Here are a couple of tips:

- **Expect Imperfection.** If you've never done something like this, don't expect it to be perfect. Older kids might naturally resist and think it's dumb. Younger kids probably will struggle to focus. ***Moments that shape our household are never perfect or ideal but consistent ordinary moments.***
- **Everyone Participates.** Have everyone share one thing they are excited/nervous about for the day. Then have each person pray a one-sentence prayer for the person next to them.

Meals

When We Stop During Our Day

If you were to ask someone, **"How are you?"** Odds are high that you will get one of two answers: "Good" or "Busy." Most of us have packed our schedules full to the brim with "good" things. Being "busy" is just part of everyday life. It is the cultural norm and life only seems to get busier as you get older. More things to juggle. More things to manage. Appointments. Kids' activities. Most days feel like a juggling act just trying to get all the things done and people to the right places before you collapse in bed at night. During each day God has given us ordinary moments that are designed for us to stop, take a breath, and connect with God and others. This ordinary moment is a meal.

Meals, by their nature, force us to slow down. We stop. We make (or order). We sit. We eat. We talk.

Meals are a gift from God that invites us to slow down and stop even for just a few minutes during the busyness of life. They bring people and households together around a single table. Busyness has the power to pull us apart as we go in different directions. Meals hold the exact opposite power. **Meals pull us together.**

As households, meals hold extraordinary power and significance. All the research shows households that eat together regularly (3 times a week) have significantly better relationships and develop kids who are better equipped to step into the world. Harnessing the power of meals in our household doesn't take a fancy meal or two hours around the table. Meals have power when they possess three key elements:

1. **Consistency**
2. **Intentionality**
3. **Involvement**

In our daily and weekly practice of meals, we work to develop these three key elements into the meals we share.

The difference between people who happen to live together and families who befriend each other are rhythms of conversations at mealtimes. - Justin Whitmel Early

Forming Adults - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Prayer Before Every Meal - Praying for every meal begins to develop a posture in the life of a believer to slow down and be present before God regularly. Meals are designed to slow us down. When we slow down, we grow more aware of God's presence in our lives. A few tips:

- **Progress over Perfection.** Building habits isn't about being perfect but making progress. Don't worry if you miss a meal or even a day. It's about progress. Not perfection.
- **Prayers of Gratitude.** Allow these moments of prayer to move beyond thankfulness for your meal.

Eat With Someone - This is extremely simple. **Eat one meal a day with at least one other person.** This habit places priority on eating meals with others. A few tips:

- **Think simple.** Where do you naturally have meals that line up with others? A meal consists of food and a conversation.
- **Put away your phone.** We live in a distracted world. Meals have power when you are fully present with another individual.

Forming Kids - Family Dinner

Early Years (Up to Kindergarten)

Routine Question - Ask a question that allows everyone in the family to answer. What was your favorite part of your day? Hardest part of your day? Funniest? The goal in this stage is to develop the rhythm of what meals are designed to do--connect.

Pass the Object - Kids at this age are extremely visually/physically oriented. A great way to keep kids engaged in conversation is to ask a question, but only allow the person with the pepper shaker (whatever object) to answer. Then they get to choose who answers next.

Elementary Years

The same conversation habits can be applied from both the early years and older years for the elementary years.

Additional Tip - The bigger your household, the more likely you are to have sidebar conversations during mealtimes. At certain times during a meal establish a time when you only have one conversation. Doesn't have to be the entire time, but that ensures everyone in the household connects with every other person.

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

No Phone at Dinner - This will sound like torture to a pre-teen or teenager if this has never happened before but over time it is worth the work. **First, this must be modeled by parents. No phones by anyone at the table.** The goal of the meal is a connection to each other. The more we are distracted, the less we will connect. A few tips:

- **Own the newness.** You may just have to admit that it is new if you've never done this before. Admit you are trying something, and you are doing it too.
- **Invite in.** Give your older kids a voice in how to make mealtime more meaningful. Bring forward their ideas and give them a say in the experience.
- **Provide reward.** If you've never done this before and your child has had a phone for several years, then you've conditioned them to have their phone. Their attitude towards this change will, most likely, be pretty poor. To build new habits you must provide new rewards. What does your child love to do? (Bonus if it is a reward that continues to build family connection)

Forming Households - Weekly Habit (Pick One)

Make A Meal Together - This doesn't need to be elaborate. It could be as simple as pancakes or homemade pizza. This makes an easy opportunity to extend the conversation beyond mealtime. **The goal is to get the whole family involved.** Go shop specifically for this meal. Let the kids pick out parts of the meals, whether that be pizza toppings or brownies.

Invite Others Over for a Meal - Again this doesn't have to be fancy or elaborate. It's more about befriending someone than impressing them. Inviting others over for a meal helps households see how meaningful meals can be in relationships with others.

Overall Goal: Seeing meals as moments of connection to your household and mission to others.

Bedtime

How We End Our Day

The Bible begins with the story of creation. During the six days when God created the cosmos and everything in it, there is a phrase that is repeated multiple times: **"It was evening and then it was morning."** The Biblical authors write this way because our days are connected. **How we approach our evening lays the groundwork for how we will start our next morning.**

How was your day?

Odds are high that it was a mixture of both good and bad. Hopefully, some things went well today. Kids got to school on time. The big meeting was handled well. However, odds are high, something didn't go quite as planned. One of the kids didn't like what was for dinner and you had to argue for the third time this week over what they are eating. You had an unexpected meeting pop up and now you are behind at work for the week. Our days are filled with both great things and challenging things. As we approach bedtime, we are often running low on energy and patience. You are ready to wrap the day up and shut out life for a few minutes before you head off to bed. **The way that you approach your evening will lay the groundwork for how you start the next morning.** So, how do we end the day well?

We end our days well when we do four things with God and others:

- **Slow**
- **Connect**
- **Remind**
- **Rest**

When we are out of energy, we tend to speed up to get through all the activities to get us to bedtime. In these moments, God invites us back to connect with Him and our household which helps us end our day well. *The daily and weekly rhythms in this week are designed to help you and your household find ways to **slow down**.* Find time to **connect** with God and others in your household. **Be reminded** of God's love for you and your love for one another. **Rest** in God's grace as you go to bed.

Forming Adults - Daily Habit

Prayer of Examen - This is an ancient spiritual practice that is extremely simple but powerful. All you are doing is bringing your day before God and asking for wisdom to evaluate it. Here is a common guide:

- **Quiet Yourself.** Spend a minute to quiet yourself physically from a likely busy/hectic day.
- **Reflect On Your Day.** What went well? What went poorly? What excited you? Frustrated you?
- **Examine Your Walk with God.** Did you press into basic spiritual rhythms? (Bible, Prayer, Etc.) Where did you invite God into your day? Did you miss any ministry opportunities?
- **Thankfulness & Surrender.** End your prayer time by thanking God and giving over the good and bad of the day before you go to sleep.

Tip: If you struggle to focus or lack answers use a journal or notebook to write out answers. Also, feel free to add or subtract other questions.

Forming Kids

Early Years (Up to Kindergarten) // Elementary

Bedtime Blessing - Bedtime with young kids can be one of the most frustrating times of the day. Between wrestling on pajamas and asking 5,000 times to get them to brush their teeth it can be infuriating and leave everyone out of energy. This makes it so important to not let that moment of frustration be the final moment with your child. **Enter: A bedtime blessing.** This moment is simple. You are trying to remind them (and sometimes yourself) that you love them, and God loves them. Here are some tips:

- **Tickle Blessing:** Pray a short, simple prayer while you tickle them. Thank God for them and pray for their joy while they squirm and laugh. Prayer doesn't always need to be serious and somber.
- **End Bad Days Well:** There will be days as parents when the last thing you feel like doing is blessing your child. You are ready to get them to bed and end the day. Don't let the day end in frustration. End bedtime with a quick prayer reminding both you and your child of God's love.
- **Bible Story:** At an early age kids love to be told stories and it's important to begin to weave God's story into their lives. A natural place to do this is at bedtime.

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

Say Goodnight (Parent Initiated) - As kids age, the natural rhythm of connection goes down. Kids in their older years are working to strike a balance between independence and guidance with their parents. In this, conversations that used to happen naturally now take a bit more intentionality. As a parent, the simple act of saying goodnight can be a doorway to deeper conversations. For this to work it must be done in **proximity (same room) with sincerity.** Don't force anything but be genuine and available.

Bedtime Routine (Student Initiated) - We all have routines whether we realize it or not. The things we do repeatedly shape us. Think through your bedtime routine. **How are you ending your day?** Do you have any moments where you are connecting to the people in your home? Connecting to God? To do those things, we often must disconnect from other things, like our phones. **Start Small:** *Think of one thing you can do to change your bedtime routine. Read a Proverb. Pray for two minutes. Just change one thing.*

Forming Households - Weekly Habit

Break Up The "Normal" Bedtime Routine - The goal of the weekly habit is to begin building rhythms as a family that make ordinary moments intentional moments of connection. This weekly habit is going to look different for each household. **Keep it simple. Do something different as you approach bedtime.** *Changing up the normal routine creates memorable moments.* A few ideas:

- **Think Older:** Often younger kids enjoy what older kids do so don't be afraid to invite and help younger kids step into things that your older kids enjoy.
- **Think in Teams:** Make something a friendly competition that pairs up people in your family. Teamwork drives connection.
- **Use Google:** The internet provides endless opportunities and ideas to connect. You can even search for the specific season of life in your household.

Small Group and Household Discussion Guide

After reading about Everyday Moments, what is your current routine for each of these moments?

Waking

Mealtimes

Bedtime

Which habit is your strongest? Why?

Which habit is your weakest? Why?

Decide which habit you will work to implement this week. What challenges will you face in developing this habit?

How will you measure your success next week when we meet again?

Develop a Weekly Game Plan

Daily Rhythm for Adult #1

Daily Rhythm for Adult #2

Daily Rhythm for Children

Weekly Rhythm for the Household

A week from now, what would need to have occurred for you to deem this week a success?

What is the biggest challenge you'll face this week that will prevent success from happening?



MEANINGFUL MOMENTS

Meaningful Moments: Introduction

Play, Work, Discipline & Marriage

Last week the focus was on building habits around moments that happen every single day in the life of your household (wake, eat and sleep). Starting with these everyday moments is designed to help us see that everyday moments are significant. This week we are shifting gears to look at moments that happen with regularity but working to change how we approach them to make them more impactful to our household. **These four areas set the everyday culture that is experienced in your household.** These areas shape the rhythms and habits of your household that determine:

- **Where your household will prioritize time and resources.**
- **How your household will build relationships.**
- **What moments will be memorable.**

Remember, the goal of this field guide is to provide opportunities for you to start building habits in your household—it's about progress, not perfection. Focus on only one area each week and give all your attention to that area. This week the habits naturally pair up together. **Play & Work. Discipline & Marriage.** Every household has habits that surround these four areas of life (whether they realize it or not).

With play and work, we are looking at finding the right balance in our households between the rhythms of "work" and "play". For households to thrive, they need to prioritize both work and play. A household without "work" will drift towards a household that is lazy and without purpose. A household without "play" will drift towards a household that is sterile and joyless.

With discipline and marriage, we are looking at how the key relationships in your household interact in pivotal moments. Parent to child. Spouse to spouse. Not every household has those dynamics. Skip over the areas that don't apply to your household.

This week pray over, talk through, and try out some new things regarding these meaningful moments in your household. God meets us in our efforts and works through our less-than-perfect, faithful attempts.

- **Play: An Invitation to Imagine & Enjoy**
- **Work: An Invitation to Cultivate & Contribute**
- **Discipline: An Invitation to Correct & Care**
- **Marriage: The Foundation of Your Household**

Play

An Invitation to Imagine & Enjoy

Think through your schedule for this week. What's on your calendar? I bet you've got time marked out for work or meetings. You've got extracurricular commitments either for yourself or your household. **Something I doubt you have a designated time for is play.** Play as an adult seems odd or foreign to us. For kids, play is the center of their schedules. Play is the place where kids build friendships, use their imagination, and put away the real world for a while.

As adults, the grind of everyday life will wear us down. We carry responsibilities at work, home, and other places. We carry worries about finances, the future, and all life throws at us. We feel short on hours to get things done. Without avenues to put down the everyday grind of life and make time to play, our lives will grow stale.

We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing. -George Bernard Shaw

As we get older how we play changes (or it should). We put away the toy cars, dolls, and imaginary friends, but the need for play stays with us. God invites us into a rhythm of stopping, enjoying, and imagining. **As adults, God is inviting us into a moment where we set aside the worries of life and pick up something that brings us joy. When we pursue something that brings us joy, the opportunity to worship God follows.** The joy that comes naturally with play, guides, and directs our hearts and worship beyond our everyday lives back to our God who gives every good and perfect gift (**James 1:17**).

In households, play is an invitation to stop the daily pursuit of work as a vocation or at home. There will always be dishes to be done, homework to be finished and other places to spend our time. When we pursue play, it brings meaningful moments to our lives that bring joy, laughter, and enjoyment of each other and God.

Forming Adults – Multiple Times Per Week

Mark Your Calendar - The goal of this week is to find something you enjoy doing and give yourself at least 15 minutes to do it. **Put it on your calendar. Treat it just as you would any other meeting or obligation.** The goal of this time is to pursue something with the sole intention of enjoying it. Here are some ideas to help you find ways to play:

- **If you had time, what do you enjoy doing?** This is a simple but sometimes challenging question. These can be simple things. Going for a walk. Reading a book. Puzzle. Sitting by a fire.
- **Can you do this with someone else?** Building this habit often works best if you are inviting someone else to join you. The goal of play as a habit is that it provides opportunities to connect with someone else.
- **What limitations do you have in life?** Different seasons bring about different time/commitment limitations. A two-hour hike, while you leave your spouse at home, might not go over well.
- **Avoid technology.** Most of us spend large amounts of our time in front of screens. This habit hopes to press you into enjoying parts of your life that you must participate in, not merely watch others for entertainment.

Forming Kids - Consistent Habit

Early Years (Up to Kindergarten)

Work each day to have intentional time to either play or read with your child. Kids at this age are hard-wired to play and read. It is how they discover the world and so **this discipline is more for you as a parent than it is for your child.** A few tips:

- **Don't be distracted:** Mark out this moment as intentional. Don't try to accomplish other things or be on your phone. Give your child all your attention.
- **Try to find brief 1-1 moments:** If you have multiple children, it can be hard to find moments of 1-1 time in an ordinary day. Try to make a moment where each child gets your 1-1 attention.

Elementary

Work each day to create spaces where your kids have the freedom to play or read. Again, this type of play is designed for fun and enjoyment. A few tips:

- **Ask Your Child to Play.** There is an ideal opportunity for you as a parent to create an opportunity to connect with your child over something fun or imaginative.
- **Play as Connection.** As kids get older the appeal of video games/screens becomes higher and more designed for kids that age. If video games are a regular habit in your household, try to steer video games towards connecting rather than isolating yourself.

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

Work to create moments of "fun" that connect older kids to parents or siblings. As kids get older, the opportunities for play or connection become less frequent, but parents and kids will have an opportunity to partner together. A few tips:

- **Ask for help.** Every person wants to live in a house that is "fun" and older kids have ideas to create a fun household. Let them drive moments of play for your household.
 - **Use spontaneous moments.** Don't be afraid to use spontaneous moments for fun. Don't feel pressure to always "plan" your fun. Use moments as they arise.
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Forming Households - Weekly Habit

Make A Memory - This weekly household habit is simply finding some time together where you can make a memory as a family. **Spend extended time (1 hour +) where the goal is to have fun and have every member of the family connect.** There is immense freedom in this. A few tips:

- **Parents Model Intentionality.** Resist the urge to sit out or be an observer. Parents get to be the model of what it looks like to participate in fun and engaging activities.
- **Family Meeting.** Kids love to plan fun things! Let them be part of picking what you'll do. If you have multiple ideas, store those for future use. Let them drive your next family event.
- **Be Aware of Schedules.** We are prone to overrun and overfill our schedules. If you are struggling to find time when everyone can connect, then you've allowed individual schedules to get too crowded. This will be a great time to begin evaluating and praying through your schedule and priorities.

Work

An Invitation to Cultivate & Contribute

What are we made for? You may or may not have thought about that question before and the answer can sometimes seem to be oversimplified or overcomplicated. In the opening pages of scripture, God creates the world and everything in it and he looks at his creation and sees that it is good. Amid his perfect world, he puts his prize creation—humanity—in the garden of Eden. God told them to **Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. (Gen. 1:28)** God's creation was perfect but it wasn't cultivated. God designed humanity to be a partner in His work to cultivate all of creation to mirror the perfection of the garden of Eden.

What are we made for? Work. We were made to work with God in the cultivation of His good and perfect world. Sin fractured that perfect reality. Our original design to work is still ingrained in us, but our work now contains challenges and frustrations due to the reality of sin in our lives. ***Within our households, we must work to develop both—a healthy view of work and an appropriate work ethic.*** To have one without the other will create an imbalance in how we approach work in our lives. When we see work as an opportunity to cultivate and contribute to the betterment of our society and our household it elevates the purpose and importance of work. Work is a necessary part of being human and it isn't always beautiful, exciting, or enjoyable, but we must develop a work ethic to do what is needed for the good of our household. **So, how do we begin to cultivate work in our households?** By building three habits:

1. Habits of talking about work.
 2. Habits of inviting other members of our household into work within the household
 3. Habits of inviting other members of our household to see work outside the household.
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Forming Adults - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Work as Worship. It is easy as an adult to get stuck in the routine of work--wake up. Get ready. Go to work. Eat dinner. Help with the kids. Get ready for bed. Sleep. Repeat. It can be easy to lose sight of the purpose of work and the significance of work for us as adults. Our work holds significance (this includes work around the home). Paul tells us, **Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. - Colossians 3:23-25**

Our daily work is worship to the Lord. **What daily habits** do we need to build to worship by the way we work?

- **Pray Over Your Work.** When we weave prayer into our work it shifts our perspective on our work.
- **Your Character at Work.** How hard you work and your moral integrity in your work are an act of worship.
- **Your Witness at Work.** Do people see/know why you live the way that you do? You can use your work to be a witness of your faith in Jesus.
- **Your Ability to Leave Work.** When work is worship it allows us to leave unfinished work for the next day. We aren't ruled by our job, the paycheck, or the demands but can focus on our home.

Forming Kids – Consistent Habit

Early Years & Elementary Years

Age-Appropriate Work. In the early years it is essential to help kids begin to build the rhythm and expectation of work in their lives. As a parent, you will have to avoid the temptation to just do the work yourself. It would be faster, less messy, and less of a headache if you just did it. In these moments, you are teaching your kids the value and importance of completing work. A few tips:

- **Start simple & straightforward.** Invite kids into simple tasks. Picking up their toys. Putting dishes in the dishwasher. Taking their clothes into the laundry room. Etc.
- **Do it with them.** Work is best done together. It makes jobs much more enjoyable when you have someone with you. Plus, kids in their early years will need help staying on task.
- **Praise them.** We all want to be celebrated for a job well done. **What gets celebrated gets replicated.**

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

Work Together. As kids get older, there should be a natural rhythm of work established as part of the household. As kids grow older, use those seasons to invite kids to work alongside you. If you can teach them a new skill or project, invite them in. (They might not appreciate it at the time) These moments of work create opportunities for conversation and then a reward if merited. A few tips:

- **Give yourself more time.** The goal of this work isn't efficiency but relationship building. So don't pick something that has a deadline crunch. Allocate more time to accomplish it.
 - **Ordinary consistency.** Have kids help you with something routinely. Unloading dishes. Folding laundry. Give them options even. Make work an expectation and an opportunity to connect regularly.
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Forming Households - Weekly Habit

Complete a Project: Complete a project that the entire household works together on. This could be something you build, create, organize, or clean. The main goal is to work together as a household to complete something. There is a large amount of freedom in what type of work project you decide to do. Ideally, make it last at least an hour (unless your kids are young). Once completed, celebrate together with a meal or treat. A reward for a job well done. A few questions to think through if you need help:

- **What could we create?** One of the great joys of working is the ability to create or construct something. This project could be something you create to give away to someone.
- **How do we work together?** The goal of the work project is to work together in one form or another. Doesn't mean you all have to occupy the same space but work toward the same goal.
- **What has been on the to-do list forever?** Sometimes we have projects that get buried on the to-do list and this is a great opportunity to check a few of those off the list.

Discipline (Parent Habit Only)

An Invitation to Correct & Care

Discipline. The word just sounds dull and unloving. Often, people think parenting would be amazing if it weren't for discipline. The fighting, the correcting, and the repeating yourself. Discipline is one of the most important things we do as parents. Discipline isn't just something that we do for our kids, but one of the things that God does for us.

My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child. - Hebrews 12:5-6

The Lord disciplines those he loves. Sit on that for a moment. Discipline isn't something that occurs because God *has* to but it happens because God *wants* to. God wants to discipline His children. For God, His discipline is an overflow of his love. God uses discipline to correct us and direct us to the right way of living.

What picture comes to your mind when you hear the word discipline? That word can conjure up all sorts of images in our minds. From anger to fighting, frustration, or even physical pain. It's doubtful the word *love* is what comes to mind. Love is the very first word that comes to God's mind. **What is the disconnect?** Why is our response so different from God's? What's the problem?

We are the problem.

This isn't meant as a statement of condemnation, but one of invitation. We have these little humans who we love dearly but can drive us crazy. Sometimes as parents, we respond more like the child than the adult. We get selfish and frustrated by our children and rather than viewing discipline as an opportunity for correction and care it becomes a means to relieve the annoyance that our children have brought into our lives. The great joy and great challenge of discipline is the fact that **God parents us as we parent our children.**

God didn't just send you to do the work in the life of your children; he will use the lives of your children to advance his work in you.
- Paul David Tripp

As parents, disciplining our children is a means to provide correction and care to them. A way to guide them and lead their lives in a way that shows love and honor to God and others. In the heat of the moment, it can be hard for that to be our motive. We are sometimes more motivated by frustration, disappointment, or disbelief in what they've done. As parents, we must work to build habits that transform our perspective of discipline into a place that is more like the way God disciplines us. He disciplines us because he loves us. His mode of discipline involves **love, correction, and consequences**. The same needs to be true of our discipline toward our children. This week we are going to look at building habits as parents that incorporate those core things into our discipline.

** The goal of this week is NOT to discuss discipline tactics but to evaluate the motive underneath the way that we discipline.*

Forming Adults – Daily Habit

Discipline isn't something that you plan in your day as a parent. 5:00 dinner. 5:15 discipline. 5:30 dessert. It just happens as life unfolds. If we, as parents, are going to express our loving authority to discipline our children **we need a plan of action** when that moment arrives. **This week there is only one habit to focus on-- creating a plan of action.** Without a plan, we will respond with whatever feels right at the moment. Frustration, anger, or annoyance are the most common feelings during moments that warrant discipline. How do we instead demonstrate an attitude of love in moments of discipline? Four things must be done well:

Step #1 Pause: Our initial reactions are often not the best. As the need for discipline unfolds, we need to be quick to pause and slow to react. Our kids need us to be the parent--not respond to their chaos with our own. **Take a moment to pause, breathe, pray and talk to yourself for a quick moment.** This will allow you to assume a posture of love rather than reaction.

Step #2 Create: After we've prepared ourselves, now we must create a space where true discipline can happen. First, de-escalate the moment. If a fight or yelling is occurring, pull the necessary people out of that space. You can't resolve with appropriate discipline while in a state of chaos. **First, calm yourself. Then, calm your child(ren).** **Find a calm setting (bedroom or go for a walk or drive).** All of this creates a space for the right conversation to be had.

Step #3 Converse: If the goal of discipline is to provide correction and care for your children, then a conversation is the most effective way this can happen. In this conversation, you are working to accomplish three things:

- **Understanding:** Why did this happen? Discipline is how God works to reorient our hearts and the same is true for us with our kids.
- **Confession:** Kids need to say out loud either what they did or what they are sorry for. (So do adults!) It brings freedom and reality to the moment for kids.
- **Consequences:** Consequences need to be a part of this conversation. Ideally, consequences should be related to the moment or the action.

Step #4 Restore: Discipline works to restore a right relationship with God and others. Often, this includes an apology and admitting where the wrongdoing occurred. This means discipline should finish with working to restore the relationship that has been broken--not avoiding the damage done. The discipline process isn't completed until a process of restoration has begun.

Questions to Consider:

- Which of these steps comes most naturally to me? Which is the hardest?
- What is my natural reaction when moments of discipline arrive?
- How do I (we) see these steps playing out in our household when it comes to discipline?
- What is one thing we can do differently this week when it comes to discipline?

Marriage (For Married Couples)

The Foundation of Your Household

If someone were to ask you, “What do you remember about your wedding day?” You might have a host of different answers. The dress. The meal. The weather. The things that went wrong. Your crazy aunt.

Most people probably wouldn’t have their “vows” on that list. Our vows are the very thing that marriage is designed to be built upon years after the wedding day has passed. Vows are the covenant agreement two people enter into together. For richer or poorer. Sickness and health. Good and bad. No matter what, I’m committing to this relationship until death do us part. Marriage is designed to bring about stability to build a life and a family.

The covenant of marriage is designed to serve as a secure foundation for a household.

Fast forward from the wedding day. A couple’s life has filled up. Kids. Parenting. Being a chauffeur. Running a house. Groceries. Cleaning. Projects. A career or two with high demands. **As life gets full it is easy for the marriage relationship to be moved from the foundation of the household to the backburner.** From marital bliss, to being roommates who split the duties of housework, taxi driving, and bills to make a household function.

The problem is **a household is only as strong as its foundation.** If the marriage is weak, so is the entire household. This entire guide is designed to help you see that all relationships are built by consistent and intentional action. The same is true for marriage. A strong and healthy marriage can be built with time by consistent and intentional action. **So, how do you build a strong marriage?** This week is designed to help you take steps to strengthen your marriage.

Forming Adults - Daily Habit

Invest in Small, Daily Moments. Often, we want to focus on the “big moments.” Life is not made up of big moments, but a bunch of ordinary, everyday moments. The same is true when it comes to marriages. Most of your marriage will be filled with ordinary moments. **How do we use these ordinary moments and turn them into meaningful moments?** Here are a few questions to work through with your spouse to arrive at what small, daily moment you can invest in:

- What is one thing I could (do, say, or avoid) that would make you feel (loved, respected, or valued)?
- What is something I used to do that you appreciated that I no longer do?
- What is something I do regularly that frustrates or annoys you?
- What is one area of (struggle/needed growth) I can be praying for you this week?

Forming Marriages - Weekly Habit

Weekly Check-In: Life is busy. No one has to tell you that. No matter the season of life, everyone is “busy.” The challenge is that in our busyness of life our marriages can get placed on the back burner. Instead of being the foundation, our marriage moves to an afterthought. In life, you must fight to make your marriage a priority. One practical way to do this is with a weekly check-in with your spouse. This looks unique to every couple in different seasons. **The goal is intentional time to connect and work to understand where your spouse currently is in different areas of life.** For some, this could look like a date night or morning coffee. For others, this could be thirty minutes after the chaos of bedtime. Again, the goal is establishing the habit of developing your relationship with your spouse. Don’t feel as if you must cover every area mentioned below. Here are a few questions to get your conversation started:

- Personal
 - What is bringing you joy? What is weighing on you?
 - What is a weekly rhythm you’d like to see started? Stopped?
 - What are you reading, listening to, or watching that is interesting?
 - Personal: What is something you’d like to make time for?
- Parenting
 - What is going well? What is hard?
 - Which child do you feel most connected with? Who are you struggling to connect with?
 - How is each child doing? Academically? Physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?
- Household
 - Are we too busy as a family? How well are we connecting as a family?
 - How are we pointing our children towards Jesus?
 - Is anyone’s schedule running the family calendar? How so? How do we fix it?

A Note to Single, Divorced, or Spiritually Uninvolved Spouses

If you read through this section, you might conclude that there is little to no hope for your household. That couldn’t be further from the truth. The Lord has never needed ideal circumstances to accomplish His purposes. All God asks of you is to be faithful in the season of life you find yourself in. Don’t try to go this alone. You need other believers to encourage you and support you in finding the right steps to build habits in your home. Know the Lord sees you. The Lord loves you. The Lord is for you.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- Philippians 4:6-7

Small Group and Family Discussion Guide

How successful were you in implementing the habit you chose to focus on last week?

What did you learn about yourself? Your household?

How are you continuing to work this week to implement that habit?

After reading about Meaningful Moments, what is your current routine for each of these moments?

Play

Work

Discipline

Marriage

Which habit is your strongest? Why?

Which habit is your weakest? Why?

Decide which habit you will work to implement this week. What challenges will you face in developing this habit?

How will you measure your success next week when we meet again?

Develop a Weekly Game Plan

Daily Rhythm for Adult #1

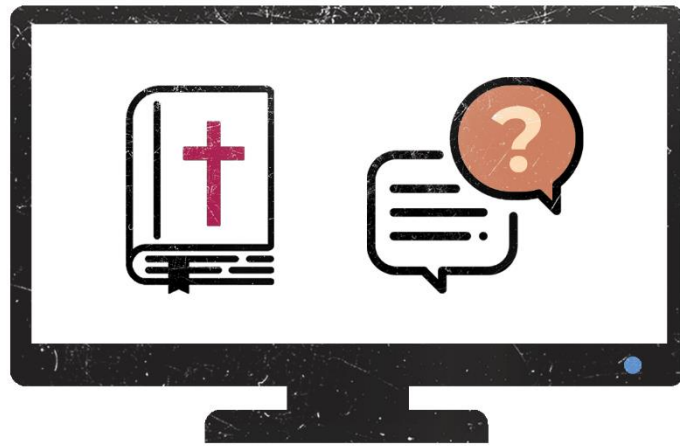
Daily Rhythm for Adult #2

Daily Rhythm for Children

Weekly Rhythm for the Household

A week from now, what would need to have occurred for you to deem this week a success?

What is the biggest challenge you'll face this week that will prevent success from happening?



INTENTIONAL MOMENTS

Intentional Moments: Introduction

Family Devotions, Conversation & Screen Time

Most people find themselves invested in the lives of those who live in their household. You care about what they are invested in. You attend events they are a part of. Watch shows they enjoy watching. It is good and right for us to become invested in the lives of others who share our household. However, there is another corner to turn in our relationships in our household. Our goal should not only be investing in our relationships but working to take steps for those relationships to become more intentional. **The challenge with intentional moments is they don't just happen they must be pursued.**

Pursuit separates intentional moments from everyday and meaningful moments.

When it comes to intentional moments sometimes, we find ourselves looking for the perfect moment—waiting for all the stars to align. At that moment, we will finally be able to have the perfect conversation. Perfect devotional. Or a perfect amount of screen time. Yet, life doesn't work that way. There is never a perfect moment. Only the present moment.

God isn't calling you to be perfect. He is calling you to be intentional.

This week we look at three of the more challenging habits--**Family devotions, conversations, and screen time.** The great news about these habits in our households is that we have years to practice and develop them. We don't have to be perfect from day one or on our first attempt. The only way you don't get better? **By not ever doing them.**

Developing good rhythms around these three habits can be intimidating and, at times, overwhelming. The goal of this week is to help households evaluate their current rhythm, or lack of rhythm, and determine how they want to build that rhythm into their household.

This week don't try to make massive overhauls to your household rhythms. Begin with something small and meaningful. The Lord doesn't despise small beginnings and over time the Lord will use your small, meaningful habits to change you and your household.

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand. - Zechariah 4:10

Family Devotions

An Invitation to Messy Holiness

For most families, the thought of family devotions brings about mixed emotions of fear and dread. What if a child asks a question, I don't know the answer to? How will we ever get our children to sit still for even five minutes? What do we read? The fear of the unknown often paralyzes families into doing nothing. Parents have this vision of what family devotions are "supposed" to look like, but their lives and ability don't match that.

The good news is that most of our assumptions about what family devotions are "supposed" to look like are completely wrong. Family devotions are messy. Family devotions are imperfect. They get sidetracked. Kids (and even parents) don't always love to pay attention. God works in and through our messy imperfections. This is how he has always worked. This is the entire story of the gospel. Jesus, God the Son, would take on human flesh and be born as a baby. God himself descended into our story. Into our messiness. This is how God works.

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. - Philippians 2:6-7

This should give us great freedom to pursue family devotions without feeling the need for them to be perfect. The quality of your family's devotion is probably not what your kids will even remember. The thing they will remember is that you made it a priority. **For kids, what you prioritize is what they internalize.** The mere act of making family devotions a priority is what will stick with your kids as they grow up. The great power of family devotions isn't in the content, but in the consistency of it. If you have never tried family devotions this is your invitation to build that habit. It could change the entire trajectory of your household. It will be messy and imperfect, but it will be worth it.

Forming Adults - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Scripture Before Phone OR Scripture Before Sleep - We can't expect family devotions to grow as a priority in our household if it isn't first happening in the lives of the adults of the household. Most adults struggle to engage with scripture regularly. **The problem isn't ability but priority.** This daily habit of scripture either before your phone or before you go to sleep is designed to help you realign your priorities with God. A few tips for both:

- **Consistency over quantity.** The goal of this habit is to build a consistent rhythm. Even if you read for only a minute to start or end your day it will begin to shift your priority.
- **Do it when you remember.** If this is new to you, odds are you will forget or, out of habit, will go to your phone. It's okay. Do it when you remember. Put down the phone. Open your Bible.
- **Reset your environment.** If your phone is normally right next to your bed--move it. Put your Bible in its place. You need to reset your environment to trigger new habits.

Forming Kids - Consistent Habit

Early Years (Up to Kindergarten)

Kids Worship - Kids love to learn through song. This is such an easy avenue to incorporate scripture.

- Recommendations: Slugs & Bugs, Yancy & Ellie Holcomb

Kids Bible Story - Kids love to read. Finding a way to read stories that point to scripture is an easy way to build this habit for young kids.

- Recommendation: Let your child help pick out the Bible (or at least be a part of the process).

Elementary Years

Build On Above Habits - Continue to expand on the habits listed above. Worship (singing God's truth) and Scripture Reading (reading God's truth) go hand in hand.

Have Them Join You – When your kids see you read scripture, they will want to model after you. This can be a powerful tool. Invite them into those moments. Show them what you are reading. Read a verse or two together. Ask them basic questions.

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

Invite & Challenge Them - At this stage, you are working to help kids establish their own rhythm of engaging with scripture. There are many ways to do this that will build your relationship with them. If this is new, attach a reward to it (ideally an experience over an item). Let them develop a plan of when, where, what they read and how frequently it occurs. If it ties into what is happening within the ministries of the church, even better! Keep the option open of having them join you when you read.

Forming Households - Weekly Habit

Family Devotions - The goal of this habit is to create a space where, as a family, you **open scripture and pray together**. This doesn't need to be perfect or time-consuming. Here is an example you can use:

- **Read Psalm 23.**
- **Read it again.** Have everyone listen for a word that "sticks out" to them. Have them answer why they chose that word.
- **Close.** Everyone says a one-sentence prayer (something they need, are thankful for, or happy about)
- **Eat Ice Cream.**

A few tips:

- Don't make it sterile. Add food or dessert. Snacks. Make it comfortable and fun, not awkward.
- Involve your household in establishing this rhythm. Let them have a say in it. Your kids might have some great ideas.
- Longevity. Find a good resource. Something your kids enjoy coming back to.

Recommendations:

- *Indescribable* by Louie Giglio (100 Devos about God & Science)
- *Teach Us To Pray* by Lora Copley
- Search Amazon: There Are Great Resources

Conversation

An Invitation to Friendship

Who is your favorite person in the world to talk to?

Odds are high that you would consider this person one of your closest friends (even if you are related). Because conversation is the fuel that builds the fire of friendship. Justin Whitmel Early says it this way:

Conversation -- inside and outside the household -- is the learned art of friendship. But you cannot learn the art without practice, and that takes the habit of finding rhythms of one-on-one conversations.

One day your kids will leave your home and begin lives outside of your household. Depending on the season of life you are in that could feel like an eternity away or a rushing reality that is all too close. You will always be their parent and they will always be your child, but the day they leave the relationship changes. The primary thing that sustains is your friendship with them.

The great news of parenting is the fact that God has entrusted us to guide and lead the lives of our children. We don't do that as mere authority figures, but as parents who love and cherish friendship with our children. Friendships are developed only through the practice of conversation. In our households, the need to pursue life-giving conversations is an essential part of developing meaningful relationships. Conversations are the avenue by which we become known to one another, and by which we process all that life has brought us. Justin Whitmel Early says this about the power of conversations:

Trauma and secrets can burn us up from the inside out, but conversation is what turns those destructive fires of our own fallenness into the refining fire of God's grace.

Conversations hold untapped potential to help us grow in our faith and friendship with one another. As with every habit, the goal is to build or develop a rhythm of household conversations. This habit encompasses one-on-one conversations and determines how the entire household relates to each other.

Forming Adults - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Everyday Intentionality. As an adult, you get to model what it looks like to pursue meaningful conversations. **Each day, make it a habit to have an intentional conversation with someone in your household.** Here are a few tips:

- **Think About When.** Depending on schedules and personalities there will be right and wrong times to try to have a meaningful conversation.
- **Think About Where.** Is there a place where conversations naturally happen? Think about car rides, before bed, or when doing dishes together.
- **Think About Your Approach.** Have a few questions that can help get the conversation started. Also, conversations are two-way streets, and feel free to come ready with something you want to talk about.

Forming Households - Weekly Habit

Conversation Game Plan

This game plan is designed to ensure everyone in the household has a fun, meaningful conversation with at least one other member of the household.

A few ground rules:

- This should be fun.
- Get it on the calendar.

Exercise #1: Write the answer to the following questions for each member of the household.

Rule: The other members of the household get to answer the questions for each person. Ex. If you are working through dad's answers, everyone but dad works to come up with an honest answer.

- When is the best time of day for this person to have a conversation? Worst?
- What is this person's favorite thing to talk about?
- What is this person's favorite thing to go and do?
- Where do you find yourself having the longest conversations with this person?

Exercise #2: Develop your game plan.

Use your answers from exercise one to help you determine when and where you can work to create opportunities to have meaningful conversations. The goal is for everyone in the household to have at least one intentional moment with one other person in the household. A few tips:

- **Get out your calendar.** This needs to be something you put on the calendar. Don't just hope it happens--plan for it to happen.
- **Do something together.** Go to a coffee shop, work on a hobby or project. Conversations happen best whenever people are doing a shared activity.
- **Prepare.** Have everyone in your family have at least one question they want to ask another member of their household. (Doesn't have to be spiritual)

Screen Time

An Invitation to Self-Control

On June 29th, 2007, our entire world changed. That date most likely means nothing to you. On that date, Steve Jobs and Apple released the first-ever iPhone. The release of the smartphone changed the world. For the first time in human history, people had unlimited access to information, social platforms, and videos all tucked away in their pocket. Over the past twenty years, we have been living through what is called the “technology revolution” which is the greatest worldwide revolution since the Industrial Revolution.

Screens are everywhere. Between phones, computers, tablets, and TVs our lives are filled with screens. Screens aren’t evil, but they are powerful. From a toddler to an adult, when you put a glowing rectangle in front of their face they will be captivated.

When was the last time you evaluated the amount of time you spent in front of screens? How about the amount of time your household spends in front of screens? We need to ask these questions regularly because screens will be our natural drift. They are easy, accessible, and available. Screens can be a great resource if they are kept in check, or they can become your greatest hindrance if left unchecked.

God doesn’t mind you having screens, he just doesn’t want your screens to have your mind.

This guide isn’t designed to tell you how much screen time to have in your household, but to begin to help you evaluate your household rhythms around screen time. Emerging research shows that our emotional, relational, spiritual, and physical health all decrease when our screen time goes unchecked. Screens are designed to be all-consuming. Always another show to watch, social media post to see, or article to read. Without limits, we will find ourselves stuck in a cycle of being checked out of our lives and households and consumed by our screens.

Forming Adults - Daily Habit (Pick One)

Phone Off for an Hour (Before or After Work). When we are tired, our screens become a natural distraction. The ease to pick up your phone rather than engage with your kids or spouse is a major temptation. The daily habit of turning your phone off for an hour has simple but powerful effects. First, it makes you disconnect from work and the outside world. Second, it removes the temptation to pick up and scroll mindlessly.

Limit TV Before Bed. Just as stated before, when we get tired, screens become a natural distraction. We can binge-watch TV because we are tired and it’s just easier to stay on the couch than do something else. With this daily habit, you are working on setting a limit of “how much” TV. In this, you are practicing the art of self-control.

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. - Ephesians 5:15-17

Forming Kids - Daily/Consistent Habit

Audit Your Kid's Screen Time. It is important for you as a parent to become aware of how much and how often screens are affecting your children. This week, keep track of when, where, how much, and why your kids are using screens. As you grow in awareness of screen time it will show you places where screens have reached a less-than-ideal level in your household.

Enter Your Kid's Screen Time. Find a way to enter your kid's screen time. Whether that be watching something or playing a video game together. This helps you find ways to build a positive association with screens.

Older Years (Middle School/High School)

Phones Away for Dinner. This is an easy but effective way to limit screen time and create relationships in the household as the priority. Parents, this habit applies to you as well. Establishing this habit that drives connection (or opportunity at least) will fight against the pull that screens create that cause us to isolate ourselves from others in our household.

Forming Households - Weekly Habit

A Screen-Free Activity. This is a very simple but challenging habit. This activity can be as long or as short as you'd like it to be. Here are a few tips:

- **Let everyone get a say.** Try to make it an activity that everyone gets a say in. The more that members of your household get involved in planning the activity, the more investment they will have.
- **Break up your normal routine.** To establish new habits around screens, it is easier when you break up your normal routine. We are creatures of habit. Familiar routines will pull people to familiar screen time habits.
- **Do something active.** The easiest way to break up the draw to screens is by keeping minds and bodies engaged in activity.

BONUS Habit: A Screen-Based Activity. The goal of this week is not to create the mentality that screens are bad, but that they need to be kept under control. The bonus household activity is to use screens to drive connectivity as a household. Here are a few tips:

- **Make a memory.** Use your screens to watch a family-favorite movie or play a video game with the entire household. Bring out all the favorites--Snacks. Music. Etc.
- **Be mindful.** If you are watching a movie or playing video games, still limit your screen time on other screens. The goal of the activity is to drive household connection.

Small Group and Family Discussion Guide

How successful were you in implementing the habit you chose to focus on last week?

What did you learn about yourself? Your household?

How are you continuing to work this week to implement that habit?

After reading about Intentional Moments, what is your current routine for each of these moments?

Family Devotions

Conversation

Screen Time

Which habit is your strongest? Why?

Which habit is your weakest? Why?

Decide which habit you will work to implement this week. What challenges will you face in developing this habit?

How will you measure your success next week when we meet again?

Develop a Weekly Game Plan

Daily Rhythm for Adult #1

Daily Rhythm for Adult #2

Daily Rhythm for Children

Weekly Rhythm for the Household

A week from now, what would need to have occurred for you to deem this week a success?

What is the biggest challenge you'll face this week that will prevent success from happening?

Closing Thoughts

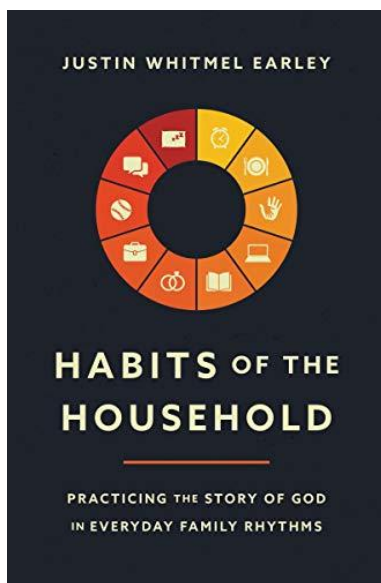
The hope of this field guide is not that you get through the three weeks as either a group or a household and feel like you've reached a finish line. This field guide is designed to be a starting point for you and your household. Every household is different, and habits change as seasons of life change. The hope is that as seasons change, your habits adapt but don't stop.

When do habits stop being a habit? **When you stop doing them.**

This field guide hopes to be a resource you can return to regularly to continue to strengthen the faith of your household. When you find your household drifting into poor habits, use this field guide to fight against that drift. If you find your household in a spiritual rut, this field guide can be used to help you navigate out of it.

No household is perfect. Every household is a work in progress and God honors the work people put into leading their household in a way that honors the Lord.

To close, if you'd like to look at these ten habits more deeply, please check out the book: **Habits of the Household** by Justin Whitmel Earley. The idea for this field guide originated from his book.



**Forming households takes work. It isn't easy, but it's worth it.
Keep trying. Keep growing. Keep working.**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. - Galatians 6:9

Closing Small Group and Family Discussion

When do habits stop being a habit?

How will you sustain the habits you established over the last three weeks?

What other habits could you implement to make your household more intentional?

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