THE FAMILY TABLE PROJECT

52 weeks of questions, Scripture, and simple practices
for families with children

Every table can become a place to notice God, hear one another, and make room for love.

A companion resource to Every Table an Altar

How to use this guide

Choose one meal each week. Read the short Scripture passage in a Bible, ask the question, and try the practice. You do not have to finish everything in one sitting. The goal is a rhythm your family can actually keep.

Make room for every age. Young children can answer with a picture, a word, or a story. Older children may want more time. Adults should answer too. Anyone may pass, especially when a question feels personal.

Keep the conversation open. Listen without correcting every answer. Let honest questions remain on the table. For families with different beliefs or experiences, invite curiosity rather than pressure.

One simple pattern: Read the passage aloud. Ask the question. Listen. Try the practice sometime that week. Close with a brief prayer, if appropriate for your household.

A prayer to begin

Jesus, thank you for this food and for the people around this table. Help us listen well, speak truthfully, and notice the ways you are present in our ordinary lives. Make room in our hearts for one another and for those who need a place to belong. Amen.

A note for parents and caregivers

These passages are references rather than reproduced Bible text, so you can read from the translation your family uses. The questions are starting points. Follow your child’s curiosity, adapt the practices to your household, and skip anything that does not fit your situation.

Weeks 1–4

WEEK 01 / BELONGING

Read: Romans 12:5

Ask: When do you feel most at home with our family?

Try: Let everyone choose one way to make the table welcoming.

WEEK 02 / WONDER

Read: Psalm 19:1

Ask: What in creation has amazed you lately?

Try: Look at the sky together after dinner.

WEEK 03 / LISTENING

Read: James 1:19

Ask: What helps you feel heard when you are talking?

Try: Give each person an uninterrupted turn.

WEEK 04 / GRATITUDE

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Ask: What ordinary thing are you thankful for today?

Try: Name one gift before clearing the dishes.

Weeks 5–8

WEEK 05 / COURAGE

Read: Joshua 1:9

Ask: When did you do something even though you felt afraid?

Try: Encourage someone facing a hard task.

WEEK 06 / KINDNESS

Read: Ephesians 4:32

Ask: Who showed you kindness this week?

Try: Write a short thank-you note together.

WEEK 07 / REST

Read: Mark 6:31

Ask: What helps your mind and body rest?

Try: Set aside ten minutes with no screens.

WEEK 08 / FORGIVENESS

Read: Colossians 3:13

Ask: Why can saying sorry feel difficult?

Try: Practice a sincere apology without excuses.

Weeks 9–12

WEEK 09 / FRIENDSHIP

Read: Proverbs 17:17

Ask: What makes someone a good friend?

Try: Invite a friend to share a meal soon.

WEEK 10 / GENEROSITY

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:7

Ask: What is something we could share with another family?

Try: Choose an item or meal to give away.

WEEK 11 / ATTENTION

Read: Luke 10:38–42

Ask: What makes it hard to pay attention to people?

Try: Keep phones away for the entire meal.

WEEK 12 / JOY

Read: Philippians 4:4

Ask: What made you laugh this week?

Try: Let everyone tell a funny true story.

Weeks 13–16

WEEK 13 / PEACEMAKING

Read: Matthew 5:9

Ask: What could help when two people disagree?

Try: Practice listening before responding.

WEEK 14 / HOSPITALITY

Read: Romans 12:13

Ask: Who might enjoy an invitation to our table?

Try: Choose someone to invite this month.

WEEK 15 / CREATION

Read: Genesis 1:31

Ask: What is one part of the world you want to protect?

Try: Take a walk and pick up litter.

WEEK 16 / PRAYER

Read: Matthew 6:9–13

Ask: What would you like to talk to God about?

Try: Pray one sentence each, with passing allowed.

Weeks 17–20

WEEK 17 / TRUST

Read: Proverbs 3:5–6

Ask: What is hard to understand right now?

Try: Share one worry and pray about it.

WEEK 18 / SERVING

Read: Mark 10:45

Ask: What is one way you like helping others?

Try: Switch the usual dinner chores.

WEEK 19 / HONESTY

Read: Ephesians 4:25

Ask: When is telling the truth especially hard?

Try: Thank someone for being truthful.

WEEK 20 / HOPE

Read: Romans 15:13

Ask: What are you looking forward to?

Try: Make a small hope list for the month.

Weeks 21–24

WEEK 21 / COMPASSION

Read: Luke 10:33–37

Ask: Who might need extra care this week?

Try: Do one practical act of care together.

WEEK 22 / PATIENCE

Read: Galatians 5:22–23

Ask: What tends to test your patience?

Try: Let the slowest eater set the pace.

WEEK 23 / MEMORY

Read: Deuteronomy 6:6–7

Ask: What family story do you love hearing?

Try: Ask an older relative about childhood.

WEEK 24 / CELEBRATION

Read: Psalm 118:24

Ask: What small victory deserves celebrating?

Try: Toast a small victory with water or juice.

Weeks 25–28

WEEK 25 / HUMILITY

Read: Philippians 2:3–4

Ask: Who taught you something unexpected?

Try: Ask someone younger to teach you a skill.

WEEK 26 / ENOUGH

Read: Matthew 6:25–34

Ask: When do you find yourself wanting more stuff?

Try: Name something you already have that you enjoy.

WEEK 27 / MERCY

Read: Micah 6:8

Ask: What does it look like to give someone another chance?

Try: Offer a fresh start after a mistake.

WEEK 28 / WORK

Read: Colossians 3:23

Ask: What kind of work feels meaningful to you?

Try: Thank someone whose work helps your family.

Weeks 29–32

WEEK 29 / SABBATH

Read: Exodus 20:8–10

Ask: What would make a day of rest feel life-giving?

Try: Plan one shared rest activity.

WEEK 30 / WELCOME

Read: Luke 14:12–14

Ask: Who is sometimes left out?

Try: Make room for someone at school or work.

WEEK 31 / FAITHFULNESS

Read: Luke 16:10

Ask: What small promise did you keep this week?

Try: Choose one small commitment to honor.

WEEK 32 / BEAUTY

Read: Psalm 27:4

Ask: Where have you noticed beauty this week?

Try: Put a flower or found leaf on the table.

Weeks 33–36

WEEK 33 / WISDOM

Read: James 1:5

Ask: Who do you turn to when you need advice?

Try: Ask someone wise a thoughtful question.

WEEK 34 / ENCOURAGEMENT

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Ask: What words have helped you on a hard day?

Try: Say one specific encouragement to each person.

WEEK 35 / SHARING STORIES

Read: Psalm 78:4

Ask: What do you wish people knew about you?

Try: Share a childhood story.

WEEK 36 / JUSTICE

Read: Isaiah 1:17

Ask: What feels unfair to people around us?

Try: Find one fair, practical way to help.

Weeks 37–40

WEEK 37 / CONTENTMENT

Read: Philippians 4:11–13

Ask: When do you feel like you have enough?

Try: Enjoy a simple meal without adding extras.

WEEK 38 / RECONCILIATION

Read: Matthew 5:23–24

Ask: What helps repair a friendship after hurt?

Try: Make space for an overdue conversation.

WEEK 39 / AWE

Read: Job 38:4–7

Ask: What is something you still wonder about?

Try: Ask a question no one has to answer.

WEEK 40 / PRESENCE

Read: John 1:14

Ask: What helps you know someone wants to be with you?

Try: Sit together five minutes after eating.

Weeks 41–44

WEEK 41 / NEIGHBORS

Read: Luke 10:27

Ask: What do we know about the people who live near us?

Try: Learn a neighbor’s name.

WEEK 42 / PROVISION

Read: Matthew 6:11

Ask: Who helped bring this food to our table?

Try: Thank a grower, cook, or grocery worker.

WEEK 43 / LEARNING

Read: Proverbs 1:5

Ask: What mistake taught you something useful?

Try: Let each person share a lesson learned.

WEEK 44 / SORROW

Read: Romans 12:15

Ask: What do you need when you feel sad?

Try: Make room for a feeling without fixing it.

Weeks 45–48

WEEK 45 / FAITH

Read: Hebrews 11:1

Ask: What does trusting God look like this week?

Try: Pray for a situation with an unknown outcome.

WEEK 46 / INVITATION

Read: Revelation 3:20

Ask: What makes an invitation feel sincere?

Try: Invite someone without expecting a yes.

WEEK 47 / SIMPLICITY

Read: Luke 12:15

Ask: What could we do with less of?

Try: Choose one thing to give away.

WEEK 48 / PEACE

Read: John 14:27

Ask: Where do you most need peace?

Try: Share a quiet moment and pray.

Weeks 49–52

WEEK 49 / THANKSGIVING

Read: Psalm 107:1

Ask: Who has helped our family this year?

Try: Send a message of gratitude.

WEEK 50 / ADVENT HOPE

Read: Isaiah 9:2

Ask: Where do you long to see light break in?

Try: Light a candle and pray for hope.

WEEK 51 / LOVE

Read: 1 Corinthians 13:4–7

Ask: How do you know someone loves you?

Try: Do one loving act in someone’s preferred way.

WEEK 52 / THE TABLE OF JESUS

Read: Luke 24:30–31

Ask: What do meals in Jesus’ life teach us about God?

Try: Read the Emmaus story together.

Our family table rhythm

The day we will gather each week: _____

A simple way we will begin our meals: _____

Someone we hope to welcome to our table: _____

One screen boundary we want to practice: _____

One thing we want to remember about this year: _____

A blessing for the road

May our table have room for laughter and honest questions. May we learn to receive each day as a gift and each person as someone made in the image of God. And may the love of Jesus shape the way we welcome one another, here and beyond our home. Amen.