

Practice, Practice, Practice

Therefore every Christian has enough in Baptism to learn and to practice all of his life . . .
Martin Luther

The word practice is a part of almost every family's vocabulary and daily routine. Even the youngest of children are often involved in practice: Baby Einstein Flash Cards, violin, swim lessons, soccer, dance, karate, yoga and the list goes on! Parents and caregivers haul their kids and themselves all over town to practice, practice, and more practice. Children are captivated by the accomplishments of their role models. They want to be like _____!

But wait is something missing? How about faith practice? How do we nurture our children's faith so they will want to live like Jesus? How does practicing our baptism become a daily and normal part of a family's life in the domestic church called home? (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)

Top Ten Training Tips for a New Life in Christ

Following are 10 Faith Practices that one can easily incorporate into daily life. Which ones are already a part of your personal and family's routine? Choose one to add to your warm-up for a new life in Christ.

1. **My Book of Faith.** My child sees me reading and enjoying the Bible on a regular basis.
2. **Family Book of Faith.** My child and I spend time together, each day, reading Holy Stories from an age appropriate Bible.
3. **Family Prayer & Devotions.** We pray at mealtime, bedtime, sick-time, car-time, school time.
4. **Caring Conversation.** We share "highs and lows" as part of our daily, caring conversations.
5. **Rituals & traditions.** My family acts and talks in a way that says to the world, "We are on the Jesus team!"
6. **Acts of Service.** We joyfully serve one another in our home. We take action to care for our community and the earth. Each one's gifts are affirmed and utilized to make a difference.
7. **Worship.** My child and I worship together in a community of faith.
8. **Cross+Generational Relationships.** I create opportunities for my child to have trusting and caring relationships with faith-filled people of all ages.
9. **Blessings.** I often say, "I love you." I practice forgiveness and grace. I affirm my child's uniqueness and gifts.
10. **Shared Mealtimes.** We regularly eat meals together - with the TV and other electronics off.

___ **Bonus Point:** Music is a part of our lives – listening, playing, or singing words and sounds that bring joy, peace and healing to our household.

The Training Table - Make Mealtime, Family Time!

Sharing a meal is an opportunity to practice eight of the *Top Ten Faith Practices*. Research clearly tells us that eating meals together increases the likelihood that a child will perform better in school and will be at less risk to use alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs, engage in too early sex, get into fights or quit school.

*Top Ten Faith Practices is a **HomeGrown Faith** resource, created and developed by Linda Staats
Credit to Dr. David Anderson and The Youth & Family Institute for the Four Keys:
Caring Conversation, Devotions, Rituals & Traditions and Acts of Service.