

Table Talk Fact Sheet

Table Talk helps children and adults explore the Bible together. In this sheet you'll find suggestions for how to use Table Talk, along with hints and tips for adapting it to your own situation. If you've never done anything like this before, we hope you'll find some helpful ideas here. If you're still feeling stuck, or would like to give us some feedback, contact Alison at the address on the back.



Who can use Table Talk?

- Families
- One adult with one child
- A teenager with a younger brother or sister
- Children's leaders with their groups
- Any other mix that works for you!

Our aim is to help children and adults to explore the Bible together. Please use and adapt Table Talk any way you want to help you to do that.

TABLE TALK

A short family Bible time for daily use. *Table Talk* takes about five minutes, maybe at breakfast, or after an evening meal.

Choose whatever time and place suits you best as a family.



Table Talk includes a simple discussion starter or activity that leads into a short Bible reading. This is followed by a few questions and a suggestion for prayer.

Table Talk can be used on its own, or alongside the *XTB* children's notes.

BUILDING UP

The "Building Up" section at the end of *Table Talk* is designed to link up with *XTB* children's notes. After your child has worked through *XTB* on their own, the questions in "Building Up" can be used to build on what they have learnt. Questions may reinforce the main teaching point, stretch your child's understanding or develop how the passage applies to us today.



"Building Up" can also be used as an extra question section to add to those in *Table Talk*. This may be particularly valuable if you have older children.

XTB

XTB Bible-reading notes for children are based on the same passages as *Table Talk*. *XTB* notes can be used on their own, or with *Table Talk*.

Table Talk Time

A few ideas about which time to choose.
Pick whatever suits you best.



Do your children wake up at the crack of dawn? Suggest that they do **XTB** on their own when they wake—then use the *Building Up* questions to talk about it together at breakfast.



The family could do **Table Talk** together at breakfast. Older children do **XTB** on their own later, then share what they've learnt with a parent using *Building Up*.



Involved with a lunch time Bible Club at your local school? Use **Table Talk** to explore the Bible with a small group once a week—and encourage them to try **XTB** at home.



Are you a leader of a Sunday group for 7 to 10s? Could you meet up with them after school once a week to explore the Bible together?



Use **Table Talk** to read the Bible together after an evening meal. If older children also use **XTB**, you can link the two together with help from the *Building Up* questions.



Some children find bed time is the best time to read the Bible—on their own using **XTB** or with you using **Table Talk**. You could also use the *Building Up* notes to build on what they've done earlier in the day.

A Daily Dose?

It's great to read the Bible every day if you can. We get to know God better as we read His Word, so the more time we spend reading the Bible the closer our friendship with Him becomes. Just like with any friendship we want to meet with God regularly to get to know Him better.

But **don't panic** if daily doesn't seem to work in your family! Some families find that regular Bible reading fits in well on school days, but not at weekends. Others encourage their children to read the Bible for themselves during the week, then explore the Bible together as a family at weekends, when there's more time to do the activities together.

The important thing is to help your children get into a habit of reading the Bible for themselves—and that they see that regular Bible reading is important for **you** as well.

Your Flexible Friend

You know your children best. Will the warm-up activity hype them up instead? Leave it out! Do they want to write a prayer rather than saying it out loud? Great—let them do it!

Table Talk is here to help you, but it's not set in stone. Please change and adapt it for your own children—and experiment with what works best.

Praying Together

There are loads of ways to help each other to pray. Here are a few...

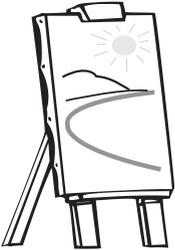
Keep a note of what you've prayed in a prayer diary. Look back at it each week to see how God has answered your prayers.

If there are three or more of you, pass a book to each person in turn. If they want to pray, they can do so when holding the book. If not, they just pass it on quietly to the next person.

Get into the habit of asking God to help you to understand His book before you read it.

Prayers don't have to be said out loud. Prayers can be written, drawn, sung... Written or picture prayers can be stuck to the wall as a reminder.

"Amen" means "I agree" It's a joining-in word. We say it when we agree with what has been prayed.



Picture this...

Pictures often make it easier to understand and remember what we learn, so building up a collection of pictures or diagrams based on what you read in the Bible together can be really helpful. Display them where the whole family will see them regularly. How about near the breakfast table or on the kitchen door?

A few ideas:

- Children draw a picture based on the Bible story
- Write out a memory verse (and test each other during the day)
- Make a list of things to thank God for. Add pictures to the list.
- Put up some key words from the Bible theme e.g. "God's Rescue Plan"



Stick with it!

The Christmas and Easter issues of **XTB** use Rescue! stickers to reinforce the main theme. Develop this idea by buying some tiny coloured stickers. Stick them into your Bible next to every verse that reminds us of God's Rescue Plan.

Or make your own Table Talk chart. Your child can stick a sticker on the chart every time you read the Bible together.

Bible Basics

Finding your way around the Bible can feel a bit like navigating an inter-galactic star chart! If your child isn't used to using a Bible there is a page near the beginning of XTB that will help them. It's called "How to find your way around the Bible". Your family may enjoy timing each other to see who can find the Bible passage first. Or (for those with mega-memories!) how about learning the books of the New Testament in order? Adults and children can compete to see who remembers it best.



Doest Thou verily understand ancient English? If not, avoid the King James Version! Choose a modern version with easier language. *The New International Version (NIV)*, or its revision *The New International Readers Version (NIRV)*, or *The Good News Bible* would all be good choices. Alternatively, use a translation written specifically for children such as *The International Children's Bible*. These should all be available from any good Christian book shop.

Do Something Different!

A friend once told me that reading the Bible is like cleaning your teeth. It's something we all do every day because we believe it's good for us, and it doesn't take too long. Just like brushing your teeth, reading the Bible every day is a great habit to get into—and with far greater life-changing benefits than stopping your teeth from rotting!

But sometimes it's great to do something **different** as well. Try and think of some new and different ways to read the Bible and pray with your children. Here are a few to start you off...

- Go on a prayer walk. Ask the children to notice things to thank and praise God for. Read Psalm 19 when you get back.
- Invite another family for a meal, and to read the Bible together. Try Psalm 139 v 1-18 or Mark 10 v 13-16. The children could make a poster based on the passage.
- Link a family outing with a Bible passage. Perhaps a picnic (*while you're there, read about the Feeding of the 5000 in John 6*), a boat trip (*Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4 v 35-41*) or star gazing (*God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 15 v 1-6*).