

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS WEEK 8

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

QUESTION 8: *How doth God execute His decrees?*

ANSWER: God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.



MONDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 8B

Scripture: Read Psalm 148:1-14

Key Thought: *The execution of God's decrees in the works of creation should inspire praise from His creatures.*

Questions:

- ☞ According to Psalm 148, who is to praise the Lord?
- ☞ How do animals and trees and mountains praise God?
- ☞ Why is God to be praised (see vv. 5-6)?
- ☞ How do the rain, snow and clouds fulfill God's word?
- ☞ Are any people excluded from the command to praise God?
- ☞ Are any people especially included (see v. 14)? Why?

Prayer

Notes: The question and answer from the *Catechism* before us this week introduces the next few questions, which focus on God's works of creation and providence. Question 8 simply affirms that God executes His decrees through the works of creation and providence. We will look at some passages of Scripture that highlight how we should respond to God's execution of His decrees. Today's emphasis is on the fact that God's work of creation inspires the praise of His creatures. Psalm 148 calls upon all of the works of God's hands to pour out their praise to His name. Explain to your children that the creation itself praises God by showing forth His power and wisdom. Show them that all men and angels are commanded to praise their Creator, whether rich or poor, powerful or weak, old or young. Point out that the chosen people of God are especially called to praise Him for drawing them near to Himself and delivering them from their sins. Spend time in prayer praising God for His wondrous works of creation.



TUESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 8B

Scripture: Read Jeremiah 5:20-22; Mark 4:36-41

Key Thought: *The execution of God's decrees in the works of creation should inspire fear of His power.*

Questions:

- ☪ Have you ever been to the beach? What stopped the powerful waves from overflowing out of the ocean?
- ☪ Who controls the power of the sea?
- ☪ How did God say the people should respond to this?
- ☪ What did Jesus do to stop the wind and waves?
- ☪ How did the disciples respond to His power?

Prayer

Notes: God executes His decrees through the works of creation and providence. The most powerful forces of creation are at His disposal and under His control. They carry out His purposes and they are bound by the power of His word. When we consider the awesome power of the wind and the waves, we see how mighty our Creator is. The prophet Jeremiah spoke of God's power over the vast and powerful oceans and called on His people to fear Him. Likewise, when Jesus manifested His power over the wind and the waves, His disciples "feared greatly." Talk with your children about the awesome power of God over His creation, explaining that His providence controls all of the forces of nature according to His purpose. Discuss why the power of God as seen in creation should move us to fear Him. Pray together, asking the Lord to help you to grow in fear and awe of His incredible power.



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 8B

Scripture: Read Romans 8:28-39

Key Thought: *The execution of God's decrees in the works of providence should inspire faith and confidence.*

Questions:

- ☪ What is the promise of Romans 8:28?
- ☪ What does this promise have to do with God's providence?
- ☪ When it says "all things" does that include unpleasant things?
- ☪ What is the basis of this promise (see vv. 29-30)?
- ☪ What confidence did this promise inspire in Paul?

Prayer

Notes: We will come to a more detailed discussion of God's works of providence in the next couple of weeks. For today our emphasis will be upon the general theme that God's providence affords great confidence for those who trust in Him by faith. The promise of God is that He causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. This promise is rooted in God's eternal purpose, by which His elect are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Because of this, the apostle Paul had great confidence that regardless of circumstances he could trust that God was working all things for his (Paul's) good and for His (God's) own glory. Show your children that those who belong to God through Christ have no need to be afraid or discouraged because they know that His works of providence are designed to do them good. This applies even to unpleasant circumstances, as the example of Joseph in the Old Testament shows. Though he was sold into slavery by his brothers, God blessed him and accomplished a great deliverance through him. Joseph was able to say to his brothers, "You intended it for evil, but God meant it for good." This is the confidence that God's people have as a result of His providence. Pray together, thanking God for His promise and asking Him for increasing faith to remain confident in the face of every circumstance.



THURSDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 8B

Scripture: Read Matthew 5:43-48

Key Thought: *The execution of God's decrees in the works of providence should inspire perfect love.*

Questions:

- ☪ What four things did Jesus command His disciples to do?
- ☪ Why did He tell them to do these things?
- ☪ Does God extend kindness to His enemies? How?
- ☪ Is it hard to love people who hate you?
- ☪ Why does God command you to do this?

Prayer

Notes: In this passage from Matthew, Jesus commands His disciples to show love to their enemies in four specific ways. The basis for this command is the fact that God, in His providence, brings blessings to both the just and the unjust. Because God shows kindness to His enemies, we are commanded to do the same. Talk with your children about the specific ways in which this command of Jesus should be carried out. Explain to them that obedience to this command is a way to demonstrate the patience and love of God to those who

do not know Him, so that they might turn from their sin and be saved. By showing kindness to an enemy, we might gain an opportunity to share the message of salvation with them, and we imitate God in this, who showed us the ultimate act of kindness by sending His Son to die for us while we were yet sinners. Pray for grace to enable you to imitate God's perfect love by showing kindness to your enemies.



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 8B

Scripture: Read Colossians 1:9-20

Key Thought: *The execution of God's decrees in the works of creation and providence should point us to Christ.*

Questions:

- ☪ By whom were all things created?
- ☪ For whom were all things created?
- ☪ Who holds all things together?
- ☪ What does it mean for Christ to have the preeminence in all things?

Prayer

Notes: We have seen something of the blessings that come to us through God's execution of His decrees in His works of creation and providence. Today's focus is on the fact that all of God's works are carried out for the sake of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. All of the blessings that flow to us are a by-product of God's love toward His Son. God does not bless us for our own sake, but for Jesus' sake. He holds first place in all things. Apart from God's love for His Son, we would not know His love for us. Explain the centrality of Christ to your children and pray together, thanking God for loving us and extending grace to us through Jesus Christ.



Note: Only five lessons per week are included. You are encouraged to lead your family in worship seven days a week. On weekends, you may want to review or build upon the lessons from the previous week, discuss the sermon from Sunday morning, or work on questions from the Catechism or memory verses. These lesson suggestions are intended to provide a simple framework for parents to build upon. You are not limited to this content. The habit of morning and evening family worship is the biblical ideal. We hope you can use these lessons as a starting point for the development of a blessed practice of family worship in your home.