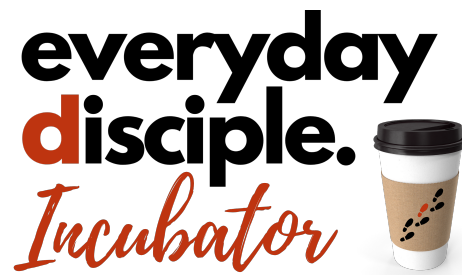


Module 7

Family Dinner Night





Module 7 | Family Dinner Night

Meals together can become a way of loving each other well, “gospelizing” your hearts, and being a refuge in the storm for fellow travelers. Your family table is your best opportunity for discipleship!

👁 It is important to shift our thinking about meals and dinnertime from just having occasional meals together for nourishment or when it fits our schedule... to enjoying intentional times of discipleship and deeper connection with one another and the Gospel in everyday life.

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COMMON MISTAKE

*Thinking that meals are primarily for eating food
and it's no big deal how we do it.*

- Mealtime is the most amount of concentrated time and the #1 way we have to connect with our family members
- Family dinners are the perfect time to create and pass on traditions and instill values
- Don't think you have more important things to be doing like homework, TV, or chores...

Meals are a big deal in the Bible...and can be for us.

Food and feasting have always played a prominent role throughout the Bible, serving as examples and metaphors for what God is like, showing his great care and provision for those he loves.

Luke's gospel records at least nine different meals Jesus ate with people, and there are more throughout the New Testament. But Luke and the other authors are not just showing Jesus' humanity and talking about his human need to eat. They are communicating something much more profound regarding his mission.

The religious teachers in Jesus' day couldn't figure out what he was up to with all of his partying. Jesus, calling them on their assumptions, pointed out, "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners'" (Luke 7:34) In other words, Jesus' critics were accusing him of being a big fat drunk who hung out with sinners.

"This is why eating and drinking were so important in the mission of Jesus: they were a sign of his friendship with tax collectors and sinners. His 'excess' of food and 'excess' of grace are linked. In the ministry of Jesus, meals were enacted grace, community, and mission." -Tim Chester

 **This can be the same thing within your own household: Family Dinner night as an act of grace... and togetherness... and mission.**

Your thoughts... _____

Tips for making Family Dinner Night great...

- Take turns picking the meal
- Make the pre-game a warm up for dinner
- Everyone has a role to play
- Start with prayer... and end with prayer

Tina's Tips
For Awesome
Family Dinner Night

See last page of this Module 7 Worksheet 

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So What Did We Learn?

A quick review...

- Meals are a big deal to God and can be for us too
- You may be missing a big opportunity
- Intentionality & Rhythms
- Go after the heart!
- Create an atmosphere of fun, celebration, and discovery

Key Takeaways From This Lesson

You May Be Missing Your Best Opportunity For Discipleship As a Family!

1. How often are you having a regular Family Dinner Night where you all sit down as a family (or have close friends over for this type of meal) ? _____

2. How intentional are you with what you do and how everyone is involved in your meals?

3. What is God saying to you in all of this?

Action Steps

1. Set a date now to discuss and plan what night(s) or times you are going to regularly have Family Dinner Night. When will you do this? _____

(Get a rhythm going right away...)

2. After your first Family Dinner together, review what went well, what you learned about yourselves and what you could do to add to and improve the experience *and* intentionality of your times together. When will you do this? _____

3. What did you learn? And what could you tweak or improve upon?

4. In the next week(s), consider inviting one other person or couple to join you for Family Dinner Night once a week/month.

5. Who would you consider inviting to join you?

List possible people or couples here. Ask the Spirit to show you who.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Tina's Tips

For Awesome

Family Dinner Night

Repeat family favorite meals...

Listen and watch what meals your family really enjoys. Share the story of where that meal came from (old family recipe, vacation, a friend or experience).

Have those favorite meals on a regular basis – maybe even weekly – including the kids and your other spouse or close friends in the process of choosing which meals you like and when you eat them.

My husband's family did 'Saturday night burgers' almost until his parents passed away. Our kids loved that too, and it became part of our family tradition for a long time until the kids decided they preferred other things.

Talk, Talk, Talk...

Family dinners are more than just a time to get nourishment into our bodies – it is also a time to nourish our souls. Make sure the conversations are deeper than “this food is good!”

Here are three different conversation starters you can use to really pump up your Family Dinner Night intentionality:

- 1) **High/Low** – Each person at the table tells the 'best' part of their day and their least favorite part. Give everyone a chance to ask questions and get clarifications. (Why... what did you like about that,...was that hard to take...?) This will give you a good picture of where your children or spouse are feeling stressed or succeeding.
- 2) **Blessings** – Our day is full of discouragements that often go unchallenged. Take the time around the table to tell each other the things that you like or appreciate about each other. These can be attributes (you are always so kind to people) or actions (that was so cool how you helped our neighbor today!). Find something that helps remind them that others are watching and appreciate them.
- 3) **Dreams** – This one is fun and helps our children (and even us adults) to keep our eyes open to all the possibilities in life. It starts with a question: "If you could do any job in the world, what would it be?" "If you could travel anywhere, where would you like to go?" "If you could live anywhere, where would you like to live?" You get the idea...

Dreaming and thinking beyond the day to day keeps our spirits refreshed and our eyes open to possibilities that we may encounter along the way in life., and that God may be showing us.

~ Tina

