

« **Your house** », in the biblical sense. « As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD » (Joshua 24:15). Your house is everyone who lives under your roof – a large family, a couple, a single parent, or you alone before God. A household of one is a household, and this altar is for it, fully.

FULL PROGRAM · 3 HOURS

Laying the foundations of the altar: personal, then household

“And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.”

1 KINGS 18:30 · FOUNDING TEXT



Opening & Welcome

Worship · connection · pastoral framing

20 min



Diagnosis — The broken altar

Anonymous questionnaire · founding teaching

20 min



Workshop A — Building home worship

Create your sheet · choose a model · commit

35 min



Break

10 min



Workshop B — Laying down the wound

Silent gesture · prayer of surrender · release

40 min



Workshop C — Passing on a gesture

Prayer box · parental blessing

40 min



Sending — Hineni

Ritual of light · blessing · commitment

15 min

Materials

- **Workshop A:** A5 cards, pens, printed worship examples
- **Workshop B:** Small slips of paper, pencils, a container per table
- **Workshop C:** 2 jars or 2 envelopes per household, colored sheets, pens, markers
- **Sending:** Phones (flashlight) — no purchase needed
- Printed anonymous questionnaires

BLOCK 1

Opening & Welcome

□ 20 min · 0:00–0:20

WORSHIP · 5 MIN.

One or two hymns on the theme of returning, of home, of grace received.

Suggestions: “Return to Me” · “As the Deer” · “Take My Life and Let It Be”

Prayer of invocation

“Father, here we are together. As Elijah repaired the altar that had been thrown down, we come with empty hands. We do not need to be perfect to draw near to You. Come and repair what is broken. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

PASTORAL WORD · 5 MIN.

Frame it in 4 sentences

- 1 **The problem:** A home altar with no fire is just a heap of stones — even if every family member is at church each sabbath.
- 2 **The promise:** God does not ask for a perfect home. He asks for an available altar. He does the rest. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28) — you do not need to be ready in order to come.
- 3 **The destination:** This altar we are repairing this afternoon is not only for your home. It is the starting point toward someone God has placed on your path. An altar that burns always ends up shining outward.
- 4 **The invitation:** This afternoon, we take the first steps. Nothing will be perfect. Everything will be real.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations — and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20 · THE DESTINATION OF EVERY ALTAR SET ABLAZE

Practical key — Appendix 7 of the booklet

This week, in your personal time with God: circle a promise in your Bible. Write it in a journal. Pray it aloud. “Your word is a lamp to my feet.” (Psalm 119:105)

ICEBREAKER · 10 MIN.

TEACHING ADJUSTMENT

Opening question — in a small group (the people at your table)

We begin with what exists, even far in the past — not with what is missing.

OPENING QUESTION

“Tell us a memory of prayer or a spiritual moment as a family — even very far in the past, even very short. Everyone has one.”

IF SOMEONE SAYS THEY HAVE NONE

“Then tell us about the time you saw someone else pray — and what you felt.”

In a small group — 2, 3 or more, the people at your table (not necessarily your family). A short moment of silence to let a memory come back, then we share: with 2, ~90 s each; with 3, ~1 min; with 4 or more, a short round; with 5–6 or more, first in pairs, then each pair reports one phrase. **Odd number: a trio — no one alone.** Gather 4–5 phrases on the board — they stay visible all afternoon.

CREATIVE PRAYER · NAMES OF GOD · 3 MIN.

Spontaneous prayer — each says a name

Just before moving to the diagnosis, a minute of praise lived aloud. The facilitator begins:

Words to say:

“Before we go further — which name of God do you need to hear today? Not an explanation. Just the name. Aloud, where you are.”

The names rise across the room — Father, Shepherd, Rock, Healer, Emmanuel, El Shaddai... The facilitator allows 90 seconds, then concludes: *“That name you spoke — He is the One you will meet this afternoon.”*

BLOCK 2

The broken altar — Diagnosis

□ 20 min · 0:20–0:40

Anonymous questionnaire · 8 questions · YES / NO

Hand out a card. Read aloud. Collect. Read the totals without judgment — just the figures.

This questionnaire is adapted from the Anonymous Discipleship Questionnaire in the booklet Return to the Altar (MacLafferty, 2023).

CORRECTED ORDER — FROM THE LEAST THREATENING TO THE DEEPEST · +2 QUESTIONS FROM THE BOOKLET

- 1 Our family has a regular home worship at least **once a week**.
- 2 We pray together for **specific needs** and we see answers to prayer.
- 3 We talk about God and the Bible **spontaneously** in our daily life (meals, commute, evening).
- 4 I had a **personal time with God in His Word** this morning — a meaningful time, *unhurried*.
- 5 I had a **personal prayer time** meaningful and unhurried this week — not only at home worship.
- 6 I have a **thirst for something more** in my personal relationship with God than what I currently experience.
- 7 I ask for and receive each day a **new baptism of the Holy Spirit** for my life and my family.
- 8 *A more personal question — you may choose not to answer:*
There is someone in my family with whom **something is broken** — a relationship, something unsaid, a wound.

TEACHING · 8 MIN.

Why do altars fall?

1 Kings 18:30 — the altar was not destroyed. It was *thrown down*. It was there. It only needed to be repaired.

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.”

JOHN 7:37 — THIRST IS THE CONDITION FOR THE SPIRIT TO FLOW

“And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.”

1 KINGS 18:30

The 3 reasons for an altar thrown down

CORRECTED ORDER – FROM THE LEAST THREATENING TO THE DEEPEST

- 1 **Haste:** “With hurried steps they pass through the circle of Christ’s loving presence... but without waiting for the least counsel.” – E. G. White, *Education*, ch. 30. *Everyone recognizes themselves here. It is the entry point.*
- 2 **The world’s competition:** “A fever such as has never been seen is sweeping over the world. Entertainment, the race for money...” – E. G. White. *Name the screens, social media, the noise.*
- 3 **The unhealed wound:** Bitterness between spouses or parents and children walls off access to the altar. Malachi 4:5-6. *Name it gently – without pointing at anyone.*

SILENT REFLECTION – KEEP TO YOURSELF

“Which reason most resembles your situation? You do not have to answer aloud.”

Transition sentence into Workshop A:

“We have just named what hinders. Now we will build what is missing.”

WORKSHOP A

Building your home worship

□ 35 min · 0:40-1:15

PRACTICAL WORKSHOP · BUILDING

Each household leaves with its ritual written down

35 min · Materials: A5 card, pens, markers, displayed examples

- 1 **Anchor (4 min.)** – Read Deuteronomy 6:4-7 slowly. Ask: “How many moments of the day does this text cover?” Every moment is an occasion for the altar.
- 2 **Presenting the 3 models (4 min.) – Facilitator** – Display them on the board or screen.
- 3 **Individual or family building (15 min.)** – Each household fills in its sheet. The facilitator moves about in silence. Soft music in the background.
- 4 **Sharing (7 min.)** – 3 to 4 volunteer families present their card in 1 min. max. Not a presentation: a decision.
- 5 **Prayer of consecration (5 min.)** – Each household holds its sheet. The facilitator prays aloud. The families pray silently at the same time.

THE 3 MODELS

A · THE ONE-MINUTE WORSHIP – 3 TO 5 MIN.

For families with young children or busy schedules. **Structure:** one verse read aloud · a moment of praise for each person · a short prayer.

B · INTERACTIVE WORSHIP – 10 TO 15 MIN.

For families with teenagers or adults. **Structure:** Hymn · Bible passage + 1 question · round-the-table prayer · challenge of the day.

C · THE EVENING GATHERING – 20 TO 30 MIN. · 1×/WEEK

To complement a short worship on the other days. **Structure:** Worship · Bible story · creative activity · bodily prayer · prayer box.

My card – 3 decisions to take away

Not a form. Three concrete decisions. The rest comes later.

③ MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT – P2 & P3 OF THE BOOKLET

MacLafferty: “Honor Jesus by asking God each night to wake you the next morning to spend time alone with Him in the Word and in prayer.” – P2, Return to the Altar.

Deut. 6:6: “These commandments shall first be in your heart.” The home altar cannot burn if the personal altar is cold.

WALKING PRAYER OF CONSECRATION · 5 MIN.

Deuteronomy 6:7 says: “when you walk by the way”. The first prayer of the personal altar, overflowing onto the house, is done standing, in motion.

- 1 Each household stands, sheet in hand. They stand side by side.
- 2 The facilitator says: “Walk slowly around the room for 3 minutes. Pray quietly, as a family, for what you have just written. No set formula – your own words.”
- 3 At the end, the facilitator prays a closing sentence aloud while the households come to a stop.

For those alone or in a wheelchair: hold the card in raised hands during a seated prayer.

TRANSITION

Break

□ 10 min · 1:15–1:25

TEACHING TRANSITION – DO NOT SKIP

During the break – 3 steps

- 1 Prepare the room: small slips of paper on the chairs, a container in the center of each table.
- 2 When resuming, before sitting down: ask each person to **close their eyes for 30 seconds** in silence. No explanation. This change of physical rhythm prepares the inner space for Workshop B.
- 3 Then the facilitator says a transition sentence – see below – before entering Workshop B.

TRANSITION SENTENCE TO SAY

“You have just built a plan for your altar. Before passing it on to your children, there is something your hands must be emptied of. You cannot bless with hands that hold a grudge.”

P4 of the booklet – The Holy Spirit as the actor of Workshop B

Workshop B is not a human exercise of willpower. MacLafferty reminds us that the Holy Spirit « turns our hearts of stone into hearts able to love and forgive » (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Before entering Workshop B, silently invite the Holy Spirit to take the space. He is the one who does the work – not the technique.

WORKSHOP B

Laying down the wound

□ 40 min · 1:25–2:05

PRACTICAL WORKSHOP · RELEASE & INTERCESSION

Empty the hands — and pray for the absent

40 min · Small slips of paper, pencils, a container per table — and your phone

To read aloud before beginning

“What follows is not a therapy exercise. No one will be asked to share a wound in public. Everything stays between you and God. You are free to take part at your own pace.”

Why this workshop comes here: you cannot bless with hands still clenching a wound. This workshop empties the hands — and then reaches them toward those who are absent this afternoon.

- 1 **Anchor (4 min.) — Facilitator**
Read Ephesians 4:31–32 and Malachi 4:5–6. Ask in silence — not aloud: “*Is there someone in your family with whom something has been broken for too long?*”
- 2 **Write (8 min.) — Individual, silent**
Each participant takes a slip of paper. They write or draw the name or the situation that weighs on them. Soft instrumental music. No one else reads this paper.
- 3 **Walking prayer with the paper (5 min.)**
Participants stand, the folded paper in closed hands, and walk slowly around the room while the music continues. No further instruction. Then the facilitator says gently: “*Return to your seat.*”
Deut. 6:7: “when you walk by the way.” The body prepares the gesture.
- 4 **Prayer with photos of the absent (8 min.)**
See the full protocol below — this is the heart of this workshop.
- 5 **The act of laying down (3 min.)**
Each person places their paper in the container in the center. Phones, screen down, stay on the table. This gesture says: “*I entrust this to God. It is no longer in my hands.*”
- 6 **Hymn of grace (5 min.)**
One hymn. No words from the facilitator. The music speaks.
- 7 **Testimonies (5 min.) — Volunteers only**
“*How has God already repaired something in your family that you thought was beyond repair?*”

PRAYER WITH PHOTOS OF THE ABSENT · 8 MIN.

The phone as a tool for prayer

This moment turns an object of distraction into an instrument of intercession. The phone is not the enemy – it is what we make of it.

PROTOCOL – WORDS TO SAY STEP BY STEP

- 1 The facilitator says: *“Take your phone. Open your photo gallery. Look for the face of a family member who is not here this afternoon – a child who lives far away, a spouse, an elderly parent, an estranged brother or sister. Someone your heart beats for. Just one photo.”* Allow 60 seconds to search.
- 2 When everyone has their photo: *“Hold this phone in front of you. Look at this face. God knows them better than you do. He knows their name, their nights, their fears.”*
- 3 Soft music. The facilitator continues quietly and slowly: *“Name them quietly before God. Just their first name.”* Silence, 20 seconds.
- 4 *“Tell God one thing you want for this person. Not to change them – to love them.”* Silence, 30 seconds.
- 5 Silence for 60 seconds. Music only. People pray at their own pace, eyes on the photo.
- 6 The facilitator concludes: *“Turn your phone over, screen down. You have just prayed for that face. God has heard.”*

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NO PHOTO

Close your eyes and see the face in your memory. Or write the first name on a paper and hold it. No one is left without a face to hold before God.

Short prayer of surrender – after the walk · To read or adapt

“Father, we return to our seats with something in our hands. Something heavy.

[Silence, 20 seconds]

We cannot forgive on our own. But You are our forgiveness for the people we cannot forgive. We choose to hand this over to You – this name, this wound, this debt.

[Silence, 30 seconds]

And we entrust to You the faces we have just held in our hands. Take them. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

“Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it?”

ISAIAH 43:19

WORKSHOP C

Passing on a gesture

□ 40 min · 2:05-2:45

PRACTICAL WORKSHOP · TRANSMISSION

A parent gives a spiritual gesture to their child

40 min · 2 jars or 2 envelopes per household, colored sheets, pens, markers

What's at stake

Faith is not passed on through teaching — it is passed on through the gesture lived together. A child who has *placed* a card in a box, who has *felt* their parent's hand on their shoulder, who has *heard* their first name spoken with love — remembers it at 40.

- 1 **Anchor (5 min.)** — Read Deuteronomy 6:6-7. Say: “*Faith is not given in a lecture. It is given in the ordinary gesture, repeated.*”
- 2 **Build the prayer box (17 min.)** — **As a family**
See the protocol below.
- 3 **Corporate intercession by name (5 min.)**
See the protocol below — a new creative prayer time.
- 4 **The gesture of blessing (10 min.)**
See the protocol below. **Important adjustment:** each parent first writes in silence before speaking.
- 5 **Sharing (3 min.)** — **2 volunteer households**
“What did your child say or do during the box?”

THE HOME PRAYER BOX

- 1 **Prepare two jars or envelopes** — one “Requests,” the other “Answered prayers.” The children decorate their own.
- 2 **Write together** — each family member writes 1 to 3 requests on colored cards. The youngest draw. Parents write for them.
- 3 **Find a verse** — for each request, a Bible verse on the back. It is the promise the family claims.
- 4 **Pray together** — each one reads their card aloud and prays a short sentence. The children too — even two words.
- 5 **Put it in “Requests.”** The box stays visible at home.
- 6 **A ritual of moving** — when a prayer is answered, it is the child who moves the card. They see God answer.

The cards in the center — praying together for the absent

- 1 The facilitator asks each household to take **one of their request cards** — the one concerning an absent or unbelieving person.
- 2 Each household **places its card in the center of the room** — on a table or on the floor — face up. The names, first names, drawings pile up.
- 3 The facilitator says: *“These cards represent the people absent this afternoon. They are not here — but God sees them.”*
- 4 The facilitator prays aloud, hands stretched toward the cards: *“Father, these names are before You. Every first name You see there, You have known since before their birth. We entrust them to You. What we cannot do for them — do it Yourself.”*
Silence, 30 seconds. Music.
- 5 Each household takes back its sheet and places it in the « Requests » box.

TEACHING ADJUSTMENT — WRITING PRECEDES SPEAKING

THE PARENTAL BLESSING

In two stages

- 1 **Write in silence (3 min.)** — Each parent writes on a paper: their child’s first name · a quality they see in them · a sentence of blessing. *Writing prepares the spoken word.*
- 2 **Speak it (7 min.)** — The parent places a hand on the child’s head or shoulder and reads what they wrote.

Template: “[Name], I bless you in the name of Jesus. You are a gift from God to our family. I see in you [the quality]. May God keep your life and bring you to Himself. I love you.”

For adults who are alone or without children: a peer or an elder lays on a hand. No one is left without a blessing.

What you take home

- The home worship card — with day, time, model, first text
- A paper laid down — a wound handed over to God
- The home prayer box — begun here, to continue at home
- A blessing received — written before being spoken

CLOSING

Sending — Hineni

□ 15 min · 2:45–3:00

Anchoring duo · 2 min

Before you are sent out: turn to **the person next to you** — whoever is there, not necessarily your family — and tell them **the one thing you take away and will do this week**. Listen to theirs. Two sentences each.

Odd number: form a trio. No one is left alone — that is the rule.

“Hineni.” — Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Isaiah. A single Hebrew word. Total availability. This afternoon, your family can speak this word.

RITUAL OF LIGHT · 5 MIN. · NO FLAME

The phone used as a prayer tool in Workshop B now becomes a tool of light. No purchase. Zero risk. And the gesture stays strong.

- 1 The facilitator turns off the room lights — or lowers them as much as possible.
- 2 The facilitator turns on the flashlight of their own phone and raises it: “*This light represents the altar we are repairing this afternoon.*”
- 3 They pass the light to the family on their right: “*Light your flashlight from mine.*” The light spreads from family to family, in a silent cascade, until the whole room is lit by raised phones.
- 4 As the lights come on, the facilitator slowly reads Deuteronomy 6:4-7 aloud.
- 5 When the whole room is lit — 30 seconds of silence. Phones raised. Just the light and the silence.

Pastoral note: the image is biblically sound — Matthew 5:16: “Let your light so shine before men.” Each household raises its light. It is not a wax flame — it is the light of the home opening up.

COLLECTIVE PROCLAMATION · 5 MIN.

Each household proclaims — standing, phone raised

It is not a blessing received. It is a declaration made. The sending of S1 ends with a collective voice.

- 1 The facilitator says: « *Each household will say aloud one name of God — the name you most need for your home this week. Not all at once. One after another. Just the name.* »
- 2 The families proclaim their names — Shepherd, Father, Healer, Rock, Faithful One, Emmanuel... The voices rise in the room, one after another.
- 3 The facilitator concludes: “*These names — that is Him. He enters your homes this afternoon. Go.*”

Final blessing

“May the LORD bless you and your household.

May His face shine upon your children and your children’s children.

May His name be adored in each of your homes across the land of the Indian Ocean, until He comes.”

Hineni. Here we are. Lord, send us.

Next time, we will come back to live out what you have written – and this time your children will lead.

TOWARD SESSION 2

- The following sabbath: invite 2–3 families to share what has changed.
- Announce the date of Session 2 – the continuation of this journey, not a mere review meeting.
- Ask each household to bring its sheet back to Session 2.

“You who love God, take Jesus with you wherever you go; and, like the patriarchs of old, erect an altar to the LORD wherever you pitch your tent.”

E.G. WHITE · TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH, VOL. 5, P. 320