

52 Family Time Ideas

A recent national radio host asked Timothy Smith about his new book, **52 Family Time Ideas**

Author: Timothy Smith
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1. **Why did you write the book?**

“Because families are too busy for each other and they don’t seem to have time to connect, let alone develop values and their spiritual life. Many kids are growing up in a vacuum without moral or spiritual nourishment in the home.”

2. **You’ve been working with families for thirty years, what have you observed with this current generation of parents?**

“Most of these parents are children of divorce; many are single parents; more and more are step parents; and one of the fastest growing groups are grandparents who have daily responsibility for raising grandkids; but all of these diverse kinds of families need basic, practical guidance on how to pass on faith to their kids – but it has to be fun and quick or we lose the kids. That’s why I designed *52 Family Time Ideas* to be done in 20 minutes.”

3. **What happens in these family times?**

The book is a *kitchen table tool* for families to discover practical timeless principles. I see parents grabbing it after a meal together and using it to have a fun time learning together. It’s not a lecture. The parents don’t have to be teachers or experts. It’s a shared experience, typically using household objects as illustrations. *52* provides the direction, the inspiration and the creativity that parents need to pull of a time together with their kids. Each session has a main point; a list of materials – so you can gather them; a Warm-up question; scripture reading and discussion questions. To make it fun, I offer an activity that parents and kids do together – like throwing rolled-up socks into a bowl! Of course we include tips for adapting for preschool kids and teens.”

4. Are all 52 Family Times alike?

“No – we offer 40 basic Family Times that you can do in about 20 minutes; but we also included six Movie Nites based on family-friendly themes like *Finding Nemo & Toy Story*. These would be ideal for weekend Family Times when you have a couple of hours. With *52 Family Time Ideas* we can add substance to our entertainment. We also have included a dozen Special Occasion and Holiday Family Times, like back to school; Thanksgiving, Mother’s Day & Father’s Day. Next book will have Groundhog Day; Flag Day and the other discriminated against holidays.”

5. What do you hope will be the outcome?

“I hope parents will gain confidence to have family times. I hope that they can launch a tradition of love, laughter and learning – together.”

6. What makes your book unique?

“It is designed for 20 minutes a week, and in that time you can grow a closer family. Other resources assume that the parent has more confidence, knowledge and time than most parents actually have. Some unique features are – the adaptations for younger and older kids; the suggested prayer and journal space; the use of DVDs; and the concept of including holidays and special occasions. These seem like a natural time to leverage and drive home a spiritual or moral truth.”

7. Any tips for the parent who is a rookie at Family Times?

“Make it fun. Don’t take yourself too seriously. Be flexible and roll with it. It doesn’t have to be serious - its family time!

Just set aside a regular time each week and fight to protect it. Encourage every family member to attend and participate. If you have teens, include them in leading them. Your goal is making a memory, illustrating a moral concept and having fun.

