



CULTIVATING PERSONAL PRAYER

RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 6+

One of the greatest gifts a parent can offer a child is guidance in developing a personal relationship with God. This begins with a personal prayer life. However, prayer is not always natural and must be taught and modeled. Many families struggle for a variety of reasons, including awkwardness, time, discipline, confidence, and inconsistency. The desire to grow in this area reflects a commitment to be intentional. Prayer is how people communicate and connect with God. As primary caregivers, parents are entrusted to nurture a child's faith by praying together and encouraging independent prayer as an investment in their future faith.

BE AN EXAMPLE

First, prayer must become a value in a parent's relationship with Jesus. As a result, prayer is not simply something that must be done; it is a natural outflow of a relationship with God. There is a desire to talk with Him. Children benefit from observing consistent prayer in everyday life. Prayer is a discipline that should be continually cultivated. Parents can take time to pause and give thanks when life is challenging, when God blesses, or when He answers prayer. Opportunities can be found to pray while reflecting on His goodness, not only personal needs. Regular reminders of His faithfulness and beauty help shape a heart of prayer. Demonstrating prayer during difficult moments or when seeking guidance for important decisions teaches its value. Praying for family and others allows a child to witness the impact of prayer in daily life.

GETTING STARTED WITH PRAYERS

Use these methods to help initiate prayer time with a child:

- **Sentence Prayers:** Encourage each family member to pray short, one sentence prayers such as “Please heal Uncle _____” or “Thank you for _____.” These simple prayers help a child feel comfortable expressing thoughts to God.
- **Fill in the Blank Prayers:** Guide a child with prompts such as: “God, I love you because...” “Thank you, God, for...” “God, please help...” “God, I’m sorry for...”
- **Prayer Investment:** One meaningful practice for many families is an evening prayer time. Each night, the family gathers, shares a brief recap of the day, and expresses any concerns or burdens. After listening to one another, each family member chooses someone to pray for and takes turns praying for that person. This simple practice helps children connect deeply to God’s care and to one another. Over time, it often leads to continued conversations about those prayer requests, showing growing care and investment in others.

Creativity is helpful, but consistency is what demonstrates value.

PRAYER TOOLS AND IDEAS

- **Prayer Board:** Create a place in the home where children can add prayer requests for others to see. This could be a dry erase board, refrigerator surface, or chalkboard displayed in a shared space.
- **Prayer Journal:** Help a child begin a prayer journal. If they are too young to write, they can draw pictures of their requests. Parents can revisit the journal to reflect on how God has answered prayers and shown His care. Prayer includes both requests and celebration.
- **Mirror Prayers:** Prayer can also remind a child of God’s truth. Using a dry erase marker, parents can write biblical truths on a bathroom mirror so a child can pray them back to God with gratitude, even during daily routines. This practice helps build a strong foundation for identity as a child grows.

INCORPORATING PRAYER INTO YOUR FAMILY ROUTINE

Making prayer a regular part of daily life helps it become a natural habit. Consider integrating the following practices:

- **Mealtime Prayers:** Offer a brief prayer of thanks before meals and, after eating, model a longer prayer that reflects what God is teaching and what is valued.
- **Bedtime Prayers:** Take time to pray individually with each child. This often creates space for more personal sharing and strengthens the parent child relationship while continuing the practice of speaking blessing over each child.
- **Drive Time Prayers:** Before beginning a drive, pause for a short prayer, asking for God’s guidance. Invite each person to share a brief prayer for the day. This is especially meaningful when driving to school and can lead to follow up conversations later.
- **Prayer Walks:** Walking together creates an opportunity to pray for others, including neighbors. A heart often grows for the things it consistently lifts up in prayer. Taking time at the end of a walk to pray over what was discussed helps reinforce this habit.

• • • • • **FAITH PATH PLAN** • • • • •

Child’s Name: _____

How will you be intentional about your child’s spiritual growth in the coming year?

- ☐ Pray daily *with* and *for* my child.
- ☐ Spend consistent time in God’s Word.
- ☐ Offer a daily blessing to my child.
- ☐ Plan regular family time. Write a Prayer Plan for your family.
- ☐ Other _____

The next step on the Faith Path is Bible study, recommended for third graders. They will be prepared for that step after they develop the discipline of prayer in their lives. Their prayer life will blossom once they can articulate Scripture into them. They must have the bedrock foundation of prayer for the seeds to root.

ADDITIONAL READING RECOMMENDATIONS

Pray Big for Your Child by Will Davis Jr.

Creative Family Prayer Times by Mike and Amy Nappa

What Happens When I Talk to God by Stormie Omartian

Power of a Praying Kid by Stormie Omartian

What Every Child Should Know About Prayer by Nancy Guthrie

Pray With Me: Help Your Children Engage in Authentic and Powerful Prayer by Erica Renaud

My First Book of Bible Prayers by Philip Ross



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