

KIDS CORNER

FAITH PRACTICES FOR FAMILIES:

PRAYER



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Introduction

Prayer, along with Bible reading, service, and worship, teaches us to turn our hearts and minds to God. We begin to think and act as Christ's image-bearers. As we develop our relationship with God, we receive his love, and we respond with service to our neighbors and observe God's care for creation.

For you and your children, our prayer comes from [Ephesians 1:17](#):

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

Prayer

God calls us to be the primary spiritual guides for our children and the Holy Spirit equips us as parents for the calling. Prayer is at the heart of the Christian life. Our children need to see how we rely on God and need prayer in

our lives. Prayer is an important daily spiritual practice that we can't live without. Praying together sets a good example for our children. Following our lead, our children learn to take their own problems to God and find answers from him. It demonstrates where to go for guidance and strength for each new day.

We hope these resources will add to your daily prayer practices and inspire you and your family to draw near to God.

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" ([Ephesians 6:18](#)).

Why Should We Pray Together?



Praying together cultivates healthy relationships. Praying together connects us to God. It unites our hearts as a family, and opens our eyes to all the victories and all the struggles of those closest to us. Praying together strengthens family bonds.

Colossians 4:2 says,

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”

When we come together to give our problems and worries to God as a family, he can work powerfully in transforming our lives.

In this way, **praying together generates empathy.** Prayer helps us pay attention to how each person is feeling. It lets us see each other through God's eyes and walk with each other in the highs and lows of life. As adults, hearing what our children pray for can help us understand what difficulties they may be facing in life.

In the same way, **praying together connects us as a family.** Together we open and unite

our hearts before God. As we share our praises and burdens, parents see through wide windows into the hearts of their children that reveal ways to pray for them. It goes the other way, too, giving children a chance to pray for their parents. Taking a family member's hand and praying for them gives them a powerful blessing.

Praying together connects us with God. Our Father encourages us to bring our praise, thanks, concerns, worries, and fears to him (**Philippians 4:5-7**). When we pray together as a family, we show our children that when they share their triumphs and struggles with our heavenly Father, he hears them, bears their burdens, and gives them what they need (**1 John 5:14-15**).



Use Scripture to Pray

*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us (**1 John 5:14**).*

When can We Pray?



God invited us to pray at any time and in all circumstances—there is never a bad time to pray! Be spontaneous and take some time to pray together. Also establish a daily prayer practice that children will come to expect and value.

God gave us instructions about passing our faith along to the next generation,

“Memorize his laws and tell them to your children over and over again. Talk about them all the time, whether you’re at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

When you’re at home. Giving God thanks for food and provision are probably the most common daily prayers in Christian families. But mealtimes can offer even more opportunity to pray. Go around the table and ask each person to share one good thing about their day and give thanks for it. You can also share the challenges of the day, and

together turn them over to God. Shared chores, like washing dishes or raking the yard, are great times to pray together as well. You can even pray as you sit down together for family movie or game night. You may find that these exercises will help family members share even more about the day.

When you walk along the road. As you drive to school, run errands, or go out for ice cream, move through your community at a slower pace and notice what’s happening around you. Offer prayers together for the people you see and any of their needs that God shows you. Maybe you speak a blessing over the homes and families you pass. Pray for people that provide care to others in your community, such as teachers, doctors, police officers, fire fighters, and many others.

Our days can be jam-packed, so why not use quiet times like the morning drive to school or the afternoon carpool to soccer for prayer? Pray about the trip itself, the people we’re

visiting, the things we plan to do. Listen to a song, a Bible reading, or [devotional podcast](#), because these can help us focus on God together as we move to our next destination.

When you go to bed at night. Do a bedtime check-in to hear the highs and lows of the day. Spend one-on-one time asking your children how they saw God throughout their day. Ask them about upcoming stressors, like tests or soccer games, and encourage them to turn their worries over to God. It's also a good time to lead your child in asking for forgiveness of sins and grace to turn away from the temptations of the next day. Bedtime prayer quiets the mind and settles the body for rest. Thank God for all of the ways that you witnessed him at work in your day and in the wonder of creation. Finally, speak a blessing from scripture over your child:

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace ([Numbers 6:24-26](#)).

Also try [Ephesians 1:16-18](#) and [Ephesians 3:14-19](#)

When you get up in the morning. Our days can be busy with school, work, sports practices, theater, and so much else filling in the hours. Before the morning rush begins, gather the family in prayer. Pray for God to care for everyone in your family, lifting up the concerns and challenges each person faces that day. Ask God to help you to show love to others through all of the day's activities.



Use Scripture to Pray

By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me—a prayer to the God of my life ([Psalm 42:8](#)).



How Can We Pray?



In prayer, we talk to God and share the concerns of our hearts, and we listen to God and his word to find his leading. Children can learn prayers and ways to pray. We have compiled a list of prayer practices to use with your children, from using scriptures and songs to creating your own prayers together.

Remember that a prayer practice can last for a season or for a lifetime. But prayer practices may also need to change and grow with your child, especially as they transition into middle school. You can try different practices over time and find the age-appropriate prayer practices that work best for your family.

1. USE SCRIPTURE TO PRAY

Sometimes we don't know what to say in our prayers. The Bible can guide you and your family in how to pray. Scripture helps us focus on what really matters to God.

The Bible is filled with thanks and praise to God. When we pray the scriptures, we are

reminded of all the great things that God has done for us.

Sometimes we know what we should pray for because the Bible guides us. God hears his people and promises to lead ([Psalm 31:3](#)).

The book of Psalms is full of prayers and gives us many examples of how, through prayer, we may praise God, thank him, confess our sins, and pray for the needs of others ([Psalm 136](#), [Psalm 51](#), [Psalm 13](#), [Psalm 20](#)).

But other times we may not know for sure what God wants. In fact, the Bible says in our weakness we don't know what we should pray for ([Romans 8:26](#)). That's where trusting God comes in. We should talk to him, using the Bible as a prayer book, and then we



Use Scripture to Pray

I call on you, my God, for you will answer me;
turn your ear to me and hear my prayer ([Psalm 17:6](#)).

should wait to see how he works to accomplish his will in our lives. We know that God listens to us and loves to hear us pray ([1 John 5:15](#)). When we are at a loss for words, the Holy Spirit steps in making sense of our

tears ([Romans 8:26-27](#)).

To start, here are some short verses you could pray with your children. Pray them aloud together or write them on a sticky note as a reminder:



Celebrating the good things:

Always be glad because of the Lord! I will say it again: Be glad ([Philippians 4:4](#)).

Also: [Psalm 118:24](#), [Romans 11:36](#)

When your child is worried or afraid:

But even when I am afraid, I keep on trusting you ([Psalm 56:3](#)).

Also: [Philippians 4:13](#), [Psalm 46:10](#)

When your child wants to thank God:

Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father who created all the lights in the heavens. He is always the same and never makes dark shadows by changing ([James 1:17](#)).

Also: [Psalm 147:1](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)

Helping your child be a good friend:

Instead, be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ ([Ephesians 4:32](#)).

Also: [Proverbs 17:17](#), [Colossians 3:12-13](#)



Use Scripture to Pray

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God ([Philippians 4:6](#)).



Use Scripture to Pray

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer ([Romans 12:12](#)).

2. MEMORIZE THE LORD'S PRAYER

When his disciples asked him to teach them to pray, Jesus taught them this prayer:

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:9-13).

Let's follow the example that Jesus taught because it is for us too. Many Christians learn the Lord's Prayer as children around the supper table or in Sunday school. Many adults can still repeat it from memory. If the Lord's Prayer is new to you or to your family, you can understand the Lord's Prayer better by praying this paraphrased version over your home:

Our Father in heaven, holy be your name within our home. Make your kingdom present in our family. Let your will be done in our lives, on earth as it is in heaven. Provide for our daily needs, and equip us to forgive, as we also have forgiven. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver our family from evil. In Jesus name, Amen.

You might also consider praying through each part of the Lord's Prayer, expanding upon each section. For example, when you pray, "Give us our daily bread," bring to God your specific needs for that day, whether for a project at work, a difficult test in school, or a friend who is sick.



Use Scripture to Pray

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2).



3. PRAY THE ACTS FORMAT

We can follow how Jesus taught us to pray using **ACTS**, an acronym that stands for adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.

- **Adoration**: Another word for adoration is love! Adoration is praising God for who he is and what he has done.
- **Confession**: Saying sorry for the hurt we've caused God and others.
- **Thanksgiving**: Thanking God for all he has done for us.
- **Supplication**: Asking God for help, direction, intervention and other needs to be met.

Here's an example of how a child could say an ACTS prayer:

[adoration] Holy Father, it's so amazing that you created the sky, the sea, and me. **[confession]** I'm sorry for the times I say mean things about people, because I know it not only hurts them, but it hurts you. Please forgive me. **[thanksgiving]** Thank you for forgiving me, loving me, and giving me what I need. **[supplication]** Please help me when I need it at school or when I'm with my family. In Jesus' name, amen.





ACTS Idea: Handprint Prayer Journal

Make some prayer hands to help you and your family focus your prayer time.

- Trace your hand 5 times on paper and cut them all out.
- The first hand will be the cover, which you and your children can decorate. What are some prayer images you can include? How can you make the prayer journal colorful?
- On the second hand, print the letter **A** and write "Adore God." Begin your prayer with praising him for being great!
- Print **C** on the next hand and write the word "Confession." Confess your sins and ask God to forgive you.
- **T** goes on the next hand as well as the word "Thanksgiving." Remember to thank him for all you have.
- The last card has **S** on it. You can write "Supplication." For your kids, the **S** can stand for the words "Supply Needs." Ask God about the things that are on your heart. He wants to hear what you have to say!

Staple or put a ring through the hands to make a little ACTS book to guide your prayer time as you pray every day this week.



Use Scripture to Pray

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working (**James 5:16**).*



ACTS Idea: Prayer Rounds

Pray through the ACTS format in a round. You can sit in a family circle to pray in a round, your children can either repeat after you, or come up with their own short phrase to say for each section. Lead with **Adoration** and then squeeze a hand for the next person to go. Continue until the whole circle is done with **letter A**. Then move on to **confession-letter C**, then **letter T** and finally **letter S**. Here's an example:

Adult: Dear God, you are great.

Child: Dear God, you are great.

Adult: I'm sorry for hurting you and others, like when I yelled at my son today. Please forgive me.

Child: I'm sorry for hurting you and others, like when I didn't listen to my parents. Please forgive me.

Adult: Thank you for forgiving me, and for our home.

Child: Thank you for forgiving me, and for my friends.

Adult: Please bless our family, and help us to grow closer to you and each other.

Child: Please bless our family, and help us to grow closer to you and each other.

As your family gets more comfortable with the order and what each section means, you can let your children lead the round.



Use Scripture to Pray

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God ([Psalm 42:5](#)).

4. CREATE AN ABC PRAYER

Jesus taught in *The Lord's Prayer* that praise and adoration for God comes first. Seeing God's perfection leads us to confess our own sins. Seeing God's greatness helps us to turn to him for our needs. We then can thank him for every good gift that comes from him. Simple as A, B, C...

An easy way to begin prayer with adoration is to create a list of God's attributes using each letter of the alphabet. For example,

"God, you are Awesome. Lord, you are a Beautiful Creator. Father, you are Caring. God, you are Divine."

You get the idea. Try to finish the list yourself. What attribute can you come up with that starts with the letter Q? How about X? The Alphabet Prayer seems simple, yet it really makes you think as you find words to adore our God. By listing his attributes, our praise not only affirms God's majesty and power, but also calms our anxious hearts, motivating us to keep praying, knowing that God hears each request we pray.



Use Scripture to Pray

Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you
(Jeremiah 29:12).



5. PRAYING THE NAMES OF GOD

We identify our friends by using their names. We use our own names to introduce ourselves. Throughout the Bible, God's people identify God using different names to reveal his personality and character. God introduces himself using different names. We learn who God is by reflecting on the meaning of his names.

Adoration means giving ourselves the chance to be in awe of God, who he is, and what he has done for us. Dive into scripture and find the names of God to use them in your prayers. If you'd like to learn more about the many names of God, you can read through a devotional series from our sister ministry, Today, called "[The Names of God](#)."

Here are three commonly found names:

El Shaddai (Lord God Almighty): [Genesis 17:1](#); [Genesis 28:3](#) and [Genesis 43:14](#).

Adonai (Lord, Master): [Job 28:28](#); [Psalm 38:15](#); and [Daniel 9:4](#).

Yahweh (Lord, Jehovah): [Genesis 2:4](#); [Psalm 3:5](#); and [Isaiah 38:14](#)

There are a couple of different ways that you can pray the names of God:

List them:

"Heavenly Father, you are the Alpha, the Omega, the Great I AM. You are the God Who Sees, and you are God With Us. We praise you and thank you for how you are."

Pick one and pray about that name:

"Heavenly Father, you are the God Who Sees. You see me. Let me know you as the God Who Sees, make that name real in my life and allow me to glorify you for it."

6. WRITE A PRAYER JOURNAL

Writing your prayers in a journal is a great way to keep track of prayer concerns. It also helps you stay focused in prayer if your mind tends to wander. Write down the need and the date. Build community in your home by checking back with family members about their prayer concerns and update them in your journal. Keeping a prayer journal is a beautiful way to look back and see how God answered your prayers.

7. CREATE A MISSION POSSIBLE LIST

Nothing is impossible with God! What is your “Mission Possible”? As a family, make a list of some changes that you need to make or some things you need to do—they can be big or small! Together, pray and ask for God’s help. These things might seem hard or even impossible, but with prayer and God’s help in your actions, anything is possible with God.

8. MAKE A PRAYER JAR

Find an empty jar. Decorate it with paints, stickers, crayons, ribbon, or anything else you might have on hand. Place the jar in your favorite place to pray or beside your child’s bed each night. When someone asks you to pray for them, or you know of someone who needs prayer, put the request on a piece of paper and add it to the prayer jar. Then when you pray as a family, have everyone take a slip of paper out of the jar to pray for that request. Be sure to ask if anyone has any new slips to add. As prayers are answered, you can paste them in a special notebook for a reminder of God’s faithfulness in answering prayer.

9. SING PRAYERS

Songs can guide our heart into postures of prayer. Many worship songs and hymns are renditions of psalms or other bits of scripture and can be sung as prayers. Choose music to play to remind you of God's faithfulness and guide your family to lay their burdens at God's feet. When you pray, you can also play music and set the tone for prayer time around the table or at bedtime.

Prayer of St. Francis

1 Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Refrain: O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.

2 Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, let me bring your light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy. [Refrain]

3 Make me a channel of your peace.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
in giving to all people, we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.
[Refrain]

This song is Public Domain



Use Scripture to Pray

*Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, Bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits (**Psalm 103:1-2**).*



Conclusion

We are praying that the ideas in this book have inspired you and your family to keep drawing near to God and discovering his boundless love for you!

Prayer can sometimes feel awkward as we try unfamiliar practices and engage in praying in ways that might be outside of our usual comfort zone. What felt comfortable at one age may not work as kids get older. Don't be discouraged. Keep trying new ways and work with what you have. Get creative and keep trying. The seeds that you plant are not in vain and they will yield their harvest in God's timing.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it ([Isaiah 55:10-11](#)).

Prayer is at the heart of the Christian life and we hope that these resources help build habits of prayer into your family. If you would like our team to be praying for your family you can share a prayer request with us at <https://prayer.reframeministries.org/#requestPrayer>.

Thanks for engaging with our materials and persevering to nurture prayer practices in your family.

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need ([Hebrews 4:16](#)).



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Use Scripture to Pray

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! While I live I will praise the Lord; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being (Psalm 146:1-2).

KIDS CORNER

Geared for children ages 6 - 12, *Kids Corner* is a ministry that helps kids discover their part in God's Big Story through fun entertainment, activities, and devotions that promote biblical literacy, understanding of the gospel, and calls for a response of faith and obedience. Families explore the Bible and meet God in prayer together through our weekly devotions and parent blogs. Dive into our "Kids in Action" videos, "Liz and Friends" podcast, audio Bible Stories, video Bible study, and crafts. It's all free!

KidsCorner.net

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