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Praying With My Child

As Christian parents, one of the most vital things we can instill in our children is the value of prayer. It can be difficult to take such an intimate piece of our relationships with the Lord and pass it on to our families. How can we teach our children to talk, praise, and cry out to God?

Create a Routine

Children are comfortable with routines; it creates a sense of safety for them. That's true of teaching them to pray as well! Create a routine of prayer in your home: before meals, at bedtime, during family devotions. Show your children that you value making prayer part of everyday life!

Then, as soon as you create a routine, break it! Don't neglect to pray at those key times, but pray in ways that are spontaneous to your little ones. Talk to God on your way to the grocery store. Pause to pray when something scares your child. Be careful not to let a routine become legalistic!

Be Real

God knows us and cares about every detail of our lives (1 Peter 5:7, Psalm 139:1-4)! As we grow, we begin to understand that prayer is about God changing *our* hearts. For our children, prayer is about bringing before God everything that is on their little hearts! Begin to teach them to bring Him their worries, their fears, their joys, and their questions! We don't have to pretend when we're praying ... Prayer isn't a performance for others or for the Lord. Be real! Model that in front of your children. Don't be afraid to pray honestly in front of them - walking with the Lord through both trials and joy!

Focus on Relationship

As you pray at meals or before bed, focus on

relationship! Begin to talk with your children about who God is ... who they're talking to when they pray! Start your prayers by praising God for a different part of who He is (Love, Provider, Truth). Try incorporating different prayers at bedtime or before you eat to show your kids there isn't just one way (or a "right" or "wrong" way) to pray.

Together and Alone

As your kids get a bit older, start having them pray too! As toddlers, they love to repeat prayers after you. As preschoolers, they often begin to pray on their own! When they enter elementary school, try creating a time when your kids spend 2 or 3 minutes praying alone. Let your kids take turns praying at key times of the day. Praying together and alone is a great way to teach your kids that prayer is personal and corporate (Acts 2:42, Matthew 18:19-20).

Be Creative

Be creative in how you pray with your kids. Go on a nature walk and praise God for what He's made. Use acronyms ... Thank God for 5 things He's given you, that start with each letter of the word "thank." Have your kids write a letter to God. Put a chair in the room, and have them imagine that Jesus is sitting there! Help prayer become exciting and a piece of everyday life.

When They Grow Up

Prayer is a foundational part of knowing God. The more you introduce prayer into your family now, the deeper the roots will be when your kids become tweens and teenagers. Praying together won't be foreign and awkward if it's part of the DNA that makes up your family!



Remember that there isn't one way for parents to pray either! Don't stress if you aren't spending an hour in family prayer everyday. Just start praying *with* your child whenever you can, and model being real in prayer in your relationship with the Lord. Be in continual prayer *for* your children, too! The more you pray as a family, the more natural it will become and the more integral it will be to what your family values.

Scripture

Matthew 6:5-6 - "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

Philippians 4:6-7 - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Additional Resources

Faith Begins @ Home Prayer Mark Holmen

ISBN: 978-0830752119

Available at christianbook.com

Mark Holmen
Faith Begins
@Home
PRAYER



The Power of a Praying Kid Stormie Omartian

ISBN: 978-0736901222

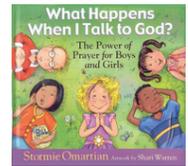
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What Happens When I Talk to God?: The Power of Prayer for Boys & Girls Stormie Omartian

ISBN: 978-0736916769

Available at christianbook.com



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Resources for Home

Our greatest desire is to **partner** with you as you lead your kids to follow Jesus. One way we hope to do this is by providing **resources** for you to use at home as you engage in conversations with your children about the Bible.

Deuteronomy 6:5-9

"Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

Be sure to visit communitychurch.com/kidconnection for the monthly Parent Cue, GodTime Cards, and more!