

The Bible has a lot to say about prayer. You may find these verses helpful as you think about praying with your child:

- **Matthew 6:5-13**
- **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**
- **Philippians 4:6**
- **James 5:13-16**

There are also Psalms and the prayers that Paul writes to the churches in his letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians to give you ideas on what to pray for.

Remember that everyone finds prayer difficult at some point. Don't get discouraged. Pray that you will grow in your ability to pray with your children!

We would love to talk to you if you have questions about praying with your children or would like some support.

Please feel free to contact us at:

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Teaching Children to Pray



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About prayer...

Prayer is important to all Christians. God is a personal God. He knows us and loves us. He is also in control of everything that happens to us and in the Universe, He is all-powerful and He asks us to pray to Him because of our relationship with Him in Christ. We are told in the Bible to:

- **Thank God for who He is**
- **Thank Him for what He has done and given us**
- **Say 'sorry' for our sins**
- **Ask for what we need**
- **Ask Him to help us understand and live out what He says in the Bible**
- **Talk to Him about things that are on our mind**
- **Pray that His Kingdom will grow on Earth**

In the Bible, prayer is both a private thing and something that we share together when we are with other Christians. It is something that we should do regularly, in all circumstances, because God wants us to be persistent prayers.

This is why it is good to show your children that prayer is important to you by showing them that you pray regularly. There are lots of different ways that you can pray that will encourage children to *understand* prayer, see that *prayer is powerful*, and start to *pray for themselves*.



Ideas...

- **Start praying with your children when they are young.** Pray at meals, bedtimes and when you have read the Bible to them. Make the prayers short.
- **Have some prayers that you repeat** over and over (a verse from the Bible or song) so that they learn *what* they can pray for and have words to express it
- **Use pictures** to help you. This might include photos of family, or missionaries that you want to pray for (some people have a prayer photo album), or symbols for 'thank you', 'sorry' and 'please'
- **Let your children know that you are keen to pray.** Encourage them, but don't force them to take their turn at prayer
- **Give children prayer beginnings** like "Thank you God for...", "I am sorry ..." and "Please help me to..."
- **Discuss what things they could pray about before you pray.** What are the most helpful things to pray for your family, missionaries or another issue that has come up.
- **Respect the prayer time.** It is not OK for the children to walk away, grumble, mumble their prayers or interrupt someone who is praying
- **Popcorn (or arrow) prayers** are good to build confidence. Children pray short, one sentence prayers at random until there is the 'awkward silence' when an adult will finish up
- **Pray for children individually.** This will help them to be humble and see that they rely on God to provide for their needs, that God is with them when things are hard and that God cares about, and is in control of, the details of their life
- **Talk to your children about your prayer life.** This will help them to see that prayer is real, answered, important, and that struggles are normal.
- **Stop and pray about things when they happen.** Help your children to see that it is right and good to talk with God about the events of your life whether they are little or big, happy or sad