

The Praying Parent

Dear Facilitator: In Matthew 19:13, it says, “Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.”

In that day, children did not take a very prominent place in the family. In fact, they had no rights. Children, along with women and slaves, were treated like possessions. But, in Matthew, we see that Jesus encouraged interaction with children. Jesus desired to pray for them. Jesus loved them.

This week we are going to focus on prayer, specifically how one can pray for children and other family members.

It might be helpful for you to know what we hope to accomplish through this lesson. Using Scripture, participants will:

1. Develop a prayer for each of their children.
2. Develop a prayer for other family members.
3. Develop a prayer for the community.

This week’s commitment statement is: Prayer changes things.

We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God’s love and become a source of friendship and support for one another.

Blessings



Scripture SUPPORT

Philippians 4:13

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the LORD.

Psalms 133:1

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

1 Corinthians 1:10

I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Welcome 5 minutes

Say: Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you as you have been working diligently on many things that are positively influencing your family.

Last week we spent time learning about salvation. We wrote our personal faith story and learned how to share the gospel with others.

Ask: Did anyone try something this past week that made a positive difference in your family that you would be willing to share?

Introduction 5 minutes

Say: Today we are going to spend time learning about the topic of prayer, specifically how to use the Bible while praying for your children, family, and community.

Do: Before we begin, I am wondering if we could share some of our favorite Bible passages. (Make a list on the board.)

Say: As mentioned before, we are going to talk about prayer, specifically how to use Scripture in praying for our children, family members, and community.

Using Scripture, today's objectives are to:

1. Develop a prayer for each of your children.
2. Develop a prayer for other family members.
3. Develop a prayer for the community.

Our commitment statement is: Prayer changes things.

Family & Table Talk 20 minutes



Share: Talk about the Bible verses with your family.

1. Share a favorite Bible verse.
2. Explain why this is your favorite verse.

After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.

As you begin this portion of the evening, explain that each time you will start with the overview and then the lesson time.



Scripture SUPPORT

Acts 16:31

They replied, “Believe in the LORD Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

These commandments that I give you today are to be on 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.

Joshua 24:15

But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

40 minutes

Parent Training

Faith Formation

THE PRAYING PARENT

Have you ever thought about starting something—a hobby, activity, or study but then thought it was too late?

Facilitator, share a story about something you regret not starting sooner.

DISCUSS

- What are some things you wish you would have started sooner than later?

Prayer might have made your list. Perhaps you wish that your prayer life was deeper and richer.

It is never too late to begin praying for our children, family, and community. One way to enhance our prayers is making use of Scripture.

Facilitator share an example on how prayer has impacted your life.

DISCUSS

- What are the benefits of prayer?
- How has prayer impacted you and why?

Mr. Stanley, a noted pastor and publisher of In Touch Ministries, gave a message on prayer. He stated 14 benefits of prayer (<https://www.intouch.org/read/blog/14-benefits-of-prayer>):

1. Provides timely direction.
2. Prevents wrong decisions.
3. Eliminates worry and anxiety.
4. Produces peacefulness.
5. Invites God into our activity.
6. Produces confidence.
7. Eliminates fretting.
8. Sharpens discernment.
9. Gives us energy.
10. Prevents distractions.
11. Reminds us to act now.
12. Protects us from discouragement.
13. Opens doors of opportunity.
14. Helps us discern between busyness and fruitfulness.

From this list, in which area do you need the greatest support/help?

Stormie Omartian was a worried mom. With all that was happening in the world, she ran herself ragged with worry, wondering how she could keep her eyes on her children every minute of every day.

Eventually, she cried out to God, asking Him for peace. The answer she received was prayer.

Stormie notes that prayer is more than giving a wish list to God: “Prayer is acknowledging and experiencing the presence of God and inviting His presence into our lives and circumstances. It’s seeking the presence of God and releasing the power of God which gives us the means to overcome any problem” (Omartian, 2015, p. 18).

When we combine Scripture with our prayers, we are repeating God’s Word to Him. By doing so we are drawn into better understanding and realizing the promises of the Bible.

We will pause now and provide an example on how Galatians 5:22-23 can be used to pray over a child.

READ: Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance [patience], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Now, let’s see how we can use the verse as a prayer. I will be using the name Margot.

EXAMPLE: The Holy Spirit produces fruit in Margot. Fill her with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. When Margot is equipped with these, she will be filled with the Spirit!

Earlier we came up with a list of favorite verses. Perhaps you could use one of those to pray over your child. Choose a verse for your child. Write it out, using your child’s name.

Notes

DISCUSS

- Have participants share what they wrote for their child.

Choose a verse for another family member. Write it out using the person's name.

DISCUSS

- Who are members of the community that we should be praying for by name? (List them on a white board, if available.)

As a group, choose a verse for a member of the community. Write it out using the person's name.

SUMMARY

We covered a lot of material in the lesson.

Our objectives were to:

1. Develop a prayer for each of your children.
2. Develop a prayer for other family members.
3. Develop a prayer for the community.

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight tonight about something you've learned or want to try?
2. What will you change or improve in your role as a parent this week?

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

Student Training

Faith Formation

THE PRAYING PARENT

Objectives

- Help children be aware that their parents pray for them.
- Help children be aware why parents pray for their children.
- Help children be aware that parents in the Bible prayed for their children.
- Help children be aware that, most importantly, parents pray for their salvation.
- Help children be aware that God wants them to pray.

The Bible says that children are a gift from God! That means that you are a gift that God has given to your parents! Psalm 127:3 says, “Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him.” When you are given a gift, you take special care of it! That is what your parents are doing when they pray for you. They are taking special care of you—their very precious gift from God! Though being a parent is a challenging assignment, it is also one of the most rewarding and important responsibilities anyone can have. God said being a parent is an exceptional blessing!

When God created man (Adam) and woman (Eve), He did it because He wanted to be a parent Himself and have a family of His own. God commanded them to have

many children and fill the earth with people. God’s plan was for Adam and Eve to love, honor, and revere Him while teaching their children to do the same. Adam and Eve soon had two sons, Cain and Abel, and later other sons and daughters.

Like all good parents, Adam and Eve loved their children and did all they could to provide for them, protect them, and teach them right from wrong. However, after experiencing a painful tragedy between their two sons, they soon found out that they were going to need God’s help to raise their children (Genesis 4:8). They realized that there was no way that they could guard their children from all the danger, harm, and other problems they would be faced with every day.

There are several examples in the Bible of parents praying for their children. In Genesis 17:18, Abraham prayed for his son Ishmael. In 1 Chronicles 29:19, King David prayed for his son, Solomon, and in 1 Samuel 1:28, Hannah prayed for her son, Samuel. And just like Adam and Eve and these other fathers and mothers in the Bible, Christian parents today need God's help to raise children who love, honor, and revere God. That is why one of the most important things a parent can do for their child is pray for them. Lamentations 2:19 tells parents, "Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the LORD. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children."

Parents are the most significant and influential people in a child's life. Christian parents pray regularly for their child's physical needs, but even more importantly, they pray for their spiritual needs. They pray for their child to accept Christ as their personal Savior because parents know that is the most important decision their child will make in their life. This is the main decision that will determine the outcome of their child's future.

Children today are constantly confronted with evil influences by many factors in their home and school community such as peer pressure, unwholesome music, video games, and other media. When parents pray, they solicit the powerful help of the Holy Spirit into their child's life because the Holy Spirit is the only one that can help their child overcome the pull of Satan and draw their child to Jesus. Ephesians 1:13 says, "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit."

Prayer is the glue that keeps families strong. In addition to praying for their children, parents can model living according to the Word of God in front of them. Proverbs 22:6 tells parents, "Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." So, praying parents help children develop godly habits and behavior at an early age. They involve their children

in activities like reading the Bible, attending church and Sunday school, memorizing verses, and having family devotion and prayer time. Of all these godly habits, prayer is right at the top of the list.

Prayer is how we communicate with God. Parents know that when they engage their children in family prayer, it not only teaches them the importance of prayer, but it helps to build their child's relationship with the LORD.

Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." And 1 Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to continually be prayerful. God loves it when we spend time with Him thanking Him for our many blessings and telling Him how much we love and value Him. He loves it when we ask for His help with our hurts, disappointments, and concerns. He also wants us to ask for His advice for making the right decisions and for his help in seeking guidance for health and healing for our bodies.

Christian parents also ask God to help them create the proper vision for your life. God created you for a very specific reason. There are important contributions you are supposed to make during your life on earth. God put special gifts and abilities inside of you to accomplish His purpose for creating you. As your parents raise you, they become aware of your gifts and abilities. They know your strengths and weaknesses, and they know your hopes and dreams. Your parents pray not just thinking of your own earthly goals and dreams, but for God's will and plans for your life to be accomplished. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Your parents know that if you fulfill the plan God has for you, your life will be filled with peace, love, prosperity, health, and success.

Not only can your parents pray for you, but you can pray for your parents. Being a parent is no easy task. Parents are often faced with trying circumstances and tough decisions. And though parents pray for



Scripture SUPPORT

Psalm 127:3

Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him.

Genesis 4:8

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Genesis 17:18

And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"

1 Chronicles 29:19

And give my son Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your commands, statutes and decrees...

1 Samuel 1:28

So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD.

Lamentations 2:19

Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the LORD. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children.

themselves, it would bless them immensely to know that their children are praying for them too. You can start out by praising God for your parents! Thank Him for helping them provide for you and take care of you. Ask God to protect them and give them good health. Pray for your parents to be contented and have a happy marriage. Pray that your parents have wisdom and are successful in becoming all that God created them to be. And pray for your family to have love, peace, unity, and joy because those things will not only bless your parents but will also bless you and your entire family.

Sincere prayer is effective and helps parents focus on what is most important for their child to live a godly successful life. James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." God trusts your parents and placed you in just the right family to give you all the love and experiences you will need to prepare you for your assignment on earth. He gave you parents who would make sure you love Him and know how to communicate with Him. Thank God that you have praying parents! Remember:

Prayer delights God's ear; it melts His heart; and opens His hand. God cannot deny a praying soul. (Thomas Watson)

DISCUSS

- The Bible says children are given to their parents as a gift.
- How do you treat a gift?
- What is prayer?
- What is the most important decision you will make in your life? Why is it the most important?
- Why do parents need to pray for their children?
- What is the most important thing parents pray for their children?
- What kinds of things can children pray for their parents?



Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is focused on ages 4-11, and the second is for older children ages 12-16.

AGES 4-11

Materials

“My Prayer for My Parents” worksheet
Pencils, crayons, markers

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/msjMEsJNjY> (Discuss briefly.)
(If not possible to view video, do activity without it.)

- After the lesson and video discussion, explain to children that just as the father in the video was praying and asking God for specific things for his son, children can pray and ask God for specific things for their parents as well.
- On “My Prayer for My Parents” worksheet, have children write specific things they want to pray and ask God for their parents. Challenge them to pray these things for their parents daily.
- Have children share some of the things they are praying for their parents.
- Smaller children can color a picture to make their parents happy.



Scripture SUPPORT

Ephesians 1:13

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 22:6

Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Pray continually.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

James 5:16

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Notes

AGES 12-16

Materials

"My Prayer for My Parents" worksheet

Pencils, crayons, markers

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/msjMEsJNJpY> (Discuss briefly.)

(If not possible to view video, do activity without it.)

- After the lesson and video discussion, explain to children that just as the father in the video was praying and asking God for specific things for his son, children can pray and ask God for specific things for their parents as well.
- On "My Prayer for My Parents" worksheet, have children write specific things they want to pray and ask God for their parents. Challenge them to pray these things for their parents daily.
- Have children share some of the things they are praying for their parents.



CHALLENGE QUESTION

DO I PRAY FOR MY PARENTS?

CHALLENGE COMMITMENT

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO
TO WORK ON THE CHALLENGE
QUESTION THIS WEEK?



AFFIRMATION *Have children repeat:*

*My parents are
praying for me!*

Resources & Materials

Books from <https://www.stormieomartian.com/store1-2/>

Omartian, S. (2014). *The Power of a Praying Parent*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-0736957670