Praying in the Home

Helping your kids learn to pray naturally and daily

Highlands

Most parents want to pray with their kids. Most feel like they're getting it wrong.

This booklet is for you – not the parent who has a polished family devotional routine, but the one in the car at 8 am trying to find words, or sitting on the edge of a bed at night, wondering if a two-sentence prayer is enough. (It is.)

Prayer is one of the most important things you can build into your family's life – and one of the most ordinary. This resource is a practical guide to doing it naturally, in the moments you already have, in a way your kids will carry with them for life.

What's inside

01 Why Prayer Matters *Prayer isn't performance. It's the ordinary, daily work of knowing God – and it starts younger than you think.*	02 What Prayer Looks Like *Frustrated prayers count. Confused prayers count. There's no wrong way to talk to God, and your kids need to know that.*
03 What the Bible Shows Us *From David's raw honesty to Jesus' quiet trust – Scripture models every kind of prayer your child will ever need.*	04 Daily Prayer Rhythms *Morning school runs. Mealtimes. Bedtime. Four moments you already have – with simple words to fill them.*
05 Praying in the Moment *The best prayers aren't planned. Here's how to pray through worry, conflict, joy, and the moments that catch you off guard.*	06 Practical Tools *Prayer starters, conversation prompts, and one simple principle: invite, don't force.*

Start small. · Stay consistent. · Keep it real.

A Highlands Church resource on family prayer

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Why Prayer Matters

Prayer is not about getting the words right. It is about building a real relationship with God. For kids, that starts with understanding that God is always listening, always caring, and always near.

As a parent, you are the biggest influence on how your child sees prayer. If they see it as natural, honest, and part of everyday life, they are far more likely to carry it with them into adulthood.

Think of prayer less like a ritual to perform and more like a conversation to model.

Prayer as Discipleship

Prayer is not just a habit to teach – it is a key part of discipleship. When we teach kids to pray, we are not just helping them learn what to say. We are helping them learn how to know God.

It can be easy to unintentionally focus on behaviour: getting kids to sit still, close their eyes, or say the right words. While those things can be helpful, they are not the goal.

The Goal Is Encounter

We want our kids to recognise God's presence, feel confident talking to Him, and experience His peace, comfort, and guidance. We want them to know that their relationship with God is real and personal.

Prayer becomes powerful when kids realise: "I am not just saying words. I am talking to God, and He hears me."

As parents, we are not just forming routines. We are leading our kids into moments where they can experience God for themselves.

What Prayer Looks Like for Kids

Kids do not naturally separate spiritual life from normal life – and that is actually a strength. Prayer does not need to look a certain way. It can be:

- Talking out loud or quietly in their head
- Short and simple, or a bit longer
- Happy, thankful, confused, or even frustrated
- Done alone or together

The goal is to help kids see that nothing is too small or too big to talk to God about.

What the Bible Shows Us About Prayer

The Bible gives us real examples of people talking to God in all kinds of ways. These stories help kids understand that prayer is honest, personal, and always welcome.

Praying in Frustration or Honesty

Kids can learn: *It is okay to be honest with God about how you feel.*

Psalm 13:1 - *"How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?"*

Job 7:11 - *"I will speak out in the anguish of my spirit."*

Praying with Thanks

Kids can learn: *We can thank God for both big and small things.*

Psalm 107:1 - *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good."*

Matthew 14:19 - "*Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them."*

Praying with Trust

Kids can learn: *We can trust God, even when things are hard or confusing.*

Psalm 56:3 - *"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."*

Luke 22:42 - *"Not my will, but yours be done."*

Listening to God

Kids can learn: *Prayer is not just talking. It is also being quiet and listening.*

1 Samuel 3:10 - *"Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."*

Psalm 46:10 - *"Be still, and know that I am God."*

Building Daily Prayer Rhythms

Consistency creates confidence. These simple moments throughout the day help prayer become natural – something woven into life, not added onto it.

On the Way to School

A simple way to set the tone for the day. Use this moment to focus on:

- God's presence with them throughout the day
- Confidence and courage
- Kindness toward others

Example prayers

→ ***God, go with us today. Help us be kind and brave***

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→ ***Help me do my best and be a good friend.***

→ ***Be with my teachers and help me learn well.***

Make it interactive

→ ***What is one thing you want help with today?***

→ ***Who can we pray for at school?***

Grace before Meals

Mealtime builds gratitude and awareness of God's provision. Rather than a fixed formula, let it grow. You can expand by:

- Thanking God for specific parts of the meal
- Thanking Him for the people who grew or prepared it

Example prayers

→ ***Thank You for this food and for caring for our family.***

→ ***Thank You for providing what we need today.***

→ ***Help us be thankful for what we have.***

Make it interactive

→ ***What is your favourite thing on your plate today?***

→ ***Who can we thank for making this meal?***

Let kids create their own version of grace. It does not have to sound the same every time.

Turning Meals into Communion Moments

From time to time, meals can become moments to remember Jesus in a simple and meaningful way. This does not need to feel formal – it is about being intentional.

Focus on:

- Remembering Jesus
- Gratitude for His love and sacrifice
- Knowing that Jesus is close to us

Example prayers

→ Jesus, thank You for loving us so much. Thank You for giving Your life for us so we can be close to You. Help us remember You today. Amen.

Make it interactive

→ Pause before eating · Hold a piece of bread or food · Take a moment to remember Jesus together

→ This reminds us of Jesus' body, given for us because He loves us.

→ This reminds us that Jesus made a way for us to be close to God forever.

Keep it simple and age-appropriate. There is no pressure for full understanding. Let kids ask questions as they come. This helps kids see that faith is not just something we talk about at church – it is something we live and remember in everyday life.

Bedtime

Bedtime is often the most meaningful moment of connection and reflection. A simple four-part structure helps kids cover what matters:

Thank You · Sorry · Please · I Trust You

Example prayers

→ Thank You for today and the fun I had. I am sorry for when I got angry. Please help me tomorrow. I trust You to take care of me while I sleep.

Make it interactive

→ Praying for family and friends

→ Naming any fears or worries

→ Speaking peace over their night

Praying in the Moment

Prayer does not have to happen at the same time each day. Some of the most powerful prayer happens in everyday moments. Be ready to help your kids give their struggles – and joys – to God at any time.

When They Are Worried

Instead of only reassuring them, invite God into the moment.

What to say: "Do you want to talk to God about that together? God cares about what you are feeling."

Prayer: *God, we feel worried about this. Please bring peace and help us trust You.*

When Something Good Happens

Celebrate with gratitude. Make joy a reason to pray, not just hardship.

What to say: "That is amazing. Let's thank God!"

Prayer: *God, thank You for this good thing. We are so grateful.*

When There Is Conflict

Prayer can help reset the moment and soften hearts.

What to say: "Let's pause and ask God to help us."

Prayer: *God, help us be kind, patient, and understand each other.*

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When Someone Is Sick or Hurt

Teach kids to bring care and compassion to God. Remind them that our God is a God who heals.

What to say: "Can you think of someone who needs God's help today? Let's pray for them."

Prayer: *God, please bring healing and comfort. Be close to them right now.*

When Emotions Are Big

Help kids see that God can handle their real feelings. No emotion is too much for Him.

What to say: "You can tell God exactly how you feel."

Prayer: *God, I feel really angry right now. Please help me calm down and make good choices.*

Practical Tools for Parents

Simple Principles

- Model it consistently – kids learn by watching
- Keep it simple and natural
- Invite, do not force
- Celebrate effort, not perfection
- Use repetition to build confidence

Easy Prayer Starters for Kids

These open-ended starters help kids find their own words:

- Thank You God for...
- Please help me with...
- I feel...
- God, You are...
- I am worried about...
- I am excited about...

Creating a Prayer Culture in Your Home

- Pray in different places: the car, kitchen, bedroom
- Keep prayers short and frequent rather than long and rare
- Allow space for quiet listening moments
- Share stories of answered prayer
- Remind your kids that God hears every prayer, even the quiet ones

A Final Word of Encouragement

You do not need to be a perfect example to lead your kids in prayer. You just need to be a present one.

Over time, these small and consistent moments will shape how your child sees God – as close, caring, and always available.

That is a foundation that lasts a lifetime.

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