

I Will Pray

I Will Pray for My Children (part 2)

April 2, 2023

HDBC

Last week I preached the first part of praying for our children. Today we'll cover part two. I want to begin by showing you an important story found in Mark 9:14-29. Let me summarize it for you, and I'll show you why it is important.

Jesus, Peter, James and John return from mount of transfiguration.

Find other apostles in a crowd arguing with the scribes.

They surround Jesus and he asked what they were discussing.

Man approaches Jesus and explains about his son. **Read 17-19**

They brought the boy to Jesus and the demon throws him to the ground.

Dad asked, If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.

Read 23-24. Jesus' statement about faith. The man's transparency.

Jesus heals the boy by casting out the demon.

Later the disciples asked Jesus, why could we not drive out this demon.

Note the key: **Read 29. Some things can only be solved with prayer!**

You cannot use natural means to solve supernatural problems.

This was a spiritual problem. I realize that not everything is completely a spiritual problem, but I believe every problem has a spiritual dimension to it.

Prayer is your most powerful weapon in defending and protecting our kids.

All children need prayer warriors. So, find some kids who need your prayers.

We are war with a spiritual enemy who wants to devour our kids.

We must stand in the gap and never stop praying for them.

When we do, we can rest in the promises of God. Listen to a few.

For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory. Deut. 20:4

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 1 John 5:4

These things I have spoken to you so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble, but take courage. I have overcome the world. John 16:33

There is an evil Devil who is not neutral when it comes to your kids. He wants to devour our children. He wants to keep them far from God. So, we must be determined to guard and protect them. Our primary weapon is prayer. There are nine specific things we can pray for our kids. I'll start with a quick review of the four I shared last week, then dive into the last five.

1. **Salvation**
2. **Spiritual growth**
3. **Submission**
4. **Protection**

5. **Relationships**

Don't underestimate the influence that other people will have on their lives. When they are young, parents and siblings are the primary influencers, but that group expands significantly as they grow older. Pray for all who will have an impact on their life. Teachers, preachers, ministers, friends, parents of friends, coaches, small group leaders. As you pray, guide them to be with the right kind of people. Pray and protect.

One who walks with wise people will be wise. But a companion of fools will suffer harm. Proverbs 13:20

Do not be deceived; bad company corrupts good morals. 1 Cor 15:33

When they are young, you make the decisions about their friends and companions. You may have to step in and end some relationships. These may not be easy. I've visited with a few young men to let them know my daughter was not available to be with them. I did not ask her permission. But she appreciated this later.

Never too early to begin praying for their future spouse.

6. **Wisdom and Spiritual Discernment**

Not talking now about obedience to other people, but to the Holy Spirit. Pray that they will be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the faith to trust and obey His leading. The Bible does not provide specific instructions for every detailed situation. As parents, you cannot provide that either. What

will they do when facing decisions where there is no specific instruction?

They will need two things: **Wisdom and Spiritual Discernment**

How blessed is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding. (13) They will be life to your soul and adornment to your neck. They you will walk in your way securely and your foot will not stumble. (22-23)

Wisdom: Principles of life gleaned from reading God's word, having a reverent attitude toward Him, and listening to His voice. Wisdom results in good choices, protection from enticement, and avoidance of unnecessary trouble that comes with bad decisions. Ask God to give your kids wisdom. But also, do your part. Get the Word of God into their minds and teach them reverence for God. Most importantly demonstrate those things in your life. Make sure you are in the Word, reverencing God and demonstrating wisdom in your own life decisions.

Spiritual discernment: Ability to sense the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the faith to obey Him. God is not silent when we need direction. Through His Spirit He will prompt His people.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will advise you with My eye upon you. Psalm 32:8 Pray this.

Your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left. Isaiah 30:21

7. Practice forgiveness

Life is filled with frustrations and hurts, often caused by other people. Sometimes they are intentional, but often they are not. Pray that your children will learn that forgiveness is not simply something we receive from Christ but something we offer to others. Pray that they will understand the serious consequences of unforgiveness.

From an early age they need to know that revenge and bitterness are self-destructive. Pray that they will offer forgiveness to those who harm them.

Pray Eph 4:32. *Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

Pray Rom 12:17, 19. *Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.*

8. **Courage**

Pray that your kids will have courage when courage is required.

Pray Deut. 31:6 for them.

Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.

When they face personal adversity. At school, physical issue, relationships.
When they face temptation. Courage to do the right thing, against the crowd.

When they see someone else being bullied or picked on.

When they sense a call of God on their life that may be hard

David was 13-15 years old when he faced off with Goliath.

We do our kids a great disservice if the greatest gift we give to them is their safety. Kids are born with a desire for more than safety.

Gary Haugen, president and CEO of International Justice Mission, a Christian organization dedicated to fighting sex trafficking, writes,

After we have poured into our children all the good food and shelter and clothing, after we have provided them with great education, discipline, structure and love, after we have worked so hard to provide every good thing, they turn to us and ask, "Why have you given all of this to me."

And the honest answer from me is, "So you'll be safe."

And my kid looks up at me and says, "Really? That's it? You want me to be safe? Your grand ambition for my life is that nothing bad happens?"

I think something inside them dies. They either go away to perish in safety, or they go away looking for adventure in the wrong places. Jesus, on the other hand, affirms their sense of adventure & their yearning for larger glory.

Kids want to be courageous, but it needs to be for something that matters.

Pastor Mike Breaux tells the following story of when his daughter Jodie answered God's call to go into missions work:

When she graduated from high school, she said, I don't think God wants me to go to college right now. I want to take a year to go to Haiti, and I want to serve people in a medical mission down there.

I said, Are you sure you want to do this? Jodie, it's 3,000 miles away from home. It's AIDS-infested and the poorest country in the western hemisphere. And do you know it's controlled by the voodoo religion?

I know all that, she said. But I feel like God wants me to go and help those people.

One of the hardest days of my life was putting my little girl on an airplane and watching it lift off. One night I got an e-mail from Jodie. She wrote:

Dad, tonight has been the most remarkable night of my life. I got called out to this hut to deliver a baby. Dad, I've only delivered one, and that was with somebody. I'd never done this by myself, but I was the only one around. They called me, and I get to this hut, and there's this naked, screaming lady on the dirt floor. I got a flashlight, and I'm thinking, Here I am, 18-years-old, and I'm in a hut in a third-world country with a naked, screaming, pregnant lady. I have a flashlight, and I don't know what I'm doing—but I'm here.

To make matters worse, this lady from the voodoo religion walked into the hut, dressed in her voodoo garb, and began to chant some voodoo incantation in Creole. She put some kind of oil on the lady's head, and when she started to walk away from me and the woman, she stopped at the woman's belly, put some other kind of salve there, and walked the opposite direction—all while chanting this Creole spell.

I didn't know what to do. She stood at the head of this woman and stared a hole through me. When I was getting ready to deliver this baby, I just looked back at her, and I started singing. I knew she didn't understand English, but I just started singing:

'Our God is an awesome God, he reigns from heaven above, with wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God.'

that the voodoo lady became completely unglued. She grabbed all of her stuff and ran out of the hut. Jodie wrote, "That night I knew that that baby was going to be born with the blessing of God and not the curse of Satan.

As I read Jodie's e-mail, my fatherly side thought, You get on a plane tomorrow! What are you doing in a hut with a voodoo woman in the first place? But then my heart beat so fast for her as her brother in Christ. I thought,

*Way to go, Jodie! Way to make a difference with your life! Way to stop floating around accidental-like! Way to put your life in the hands of the destiny-maker! Way to make a splash! Who knows who that little baby she delivered that night is going to grow up to touch and who *that* person is going to touch—all because of one courageous girl who said, "Okay, God, I want to put my life in your hands; I want to make a difference."*

Pray that your kids will learn courage, experience courage, and live courageous lives that will make a difference.

9. Finish well

Pray that they will never leave the faith as they go through different phases of their life. Pray 2 Tim 4:7. *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.*

There are so many things that will come along at various stages of life to distract them and pull them away from Christ. Pray against those things.

Speak to those parents who have children who have drifted from the faith or even completely left the faith. What do you do? Your inspiration needs to be the story of the **prodigal son**. In the story, the loving Father is a picture of God. But it is also inspiration for you. Here are just a few thoughts.

1) Give them space and time

Give them space but make sure they know you love them. Smothering them, pressuring them, guiltting them will not work.

2) Keep the door open

Make sure there is a place for their return in your heart.

3) Stay hopeful and watchful

Keep a watchful eye for their return. Don't lost hope. Never give up.

Most people pray one day for a two day problem. Josh Howerton
quoting someone else.

4) Prepare to celebrate their return

Decide how you will react when they return to the faith. This is acting on your faith.

5) Entrust them to God

He loves them more than you do.

You have no power to dictate how your kids will turn out, or what they will do. But you do have great **power of authority** when they are young. That power diminishes the older they get. You still have the **power of influence**, but that is limited. The greatest power in any season is the **power of prayer**.

Go back to the story in Mark 9. What did we learn?

Spiritual problems can only be solved with spiritual means.

Prayer is the greatest weapon in our spiritual arsenal. So . . .

We must pray for our kids

We must pray for our kids with **desperation**.

We must pray for our kids with **faith**.

We must pray for our kids with **persistence**.

There is a war for the soul of your children. Pray calls upon the power of God, the love of God, the wisdom of God and the grace of God to work in the lives of your children.