

## I Will Pray

*I Will Pray for My Children*

3 John 1:4

March 26, 2023

HDBC

Prayer is talking with God, who knows everything and can do anything.

**We can come to God in prayer because of the finished work of Jesus.**

We are invited to pray and to pray often.

**God hears us when we pray and responds to our prayers.**

When we pray God does really good things for us and for others.

**When we pray for others, God works in their lives in positive ways.**

Children are some of the most vulnerable people on the planet.

**Many children don't know how to pray for themselves or are too young.**

Every child needs someone to stand in the gap and pray for them.

**Mom and dad are the primary prayer warriors for children.**

**So, today** I want to talk about praying for children. I'm challenging moms and dads to pray for your children. You are on the front lines and absolutely **must** develop the habit & discipline of praying for your children, and if applicable, your grandchildren. But there are some children who do not have a Christian moms or dads to pray for them. So, some of us need to stand in the gap for them.

**If you do not** have children of your own, I especially want to challenge you to add some kids to your prayer list that you think have no one praying for them. You become the one standing in the gap for them. The principles I'll share today can apply to your own kids or others.

Some foundational truths that undergird what I want to share.

*Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him.* Ps. 127:3

*Jesus said, Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.* Matt. 19:14

*I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.* 3 John 1:4.

**One other truth** that we must remember. There is a vile, wicked, evil Devil who is not neutral when it comes to our kids. He wants to deceive, destroy, and devour our children. He wants to keep them far from God. He begins his work on them when they are very young. So, we must be determined to guard and protect them. One of the greatest weapons we have is the weapon of prayer. I want to suggest 10 things to pray our children.

## 1. Salvation

The greatest need that a person has is to be born again. That is the only thing that can give them purpose and meaning in this life and Heaven in the next. Regardless of how old or young, pray for them to come to faith in Christ. Legitimate conversion involving the repentance of their sins and a willingness to turn to Christ. Use John 16:8 as a guide for how to pray for their salvation.

*And He when He comes will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.* Jesus said the Holy Spirit would bring conviction of three things. All three are important for a person to be saved. Where there is no conviction there is no conversion.

- 1) They need to acknowledge that they are a sinner, and there should be a sense of sorrow over their sins. The Holy Spirit is the one who can bring this awareness to your children. You can strengthen their conscience, but it takes the Holy Spirit to bring conviction. So, ask Him to do so.
- 2) They need to know they are not righteous. Not talking about challenging their worth or dignity as an image-bearer of God, but rather that their goodness comes short of God's standard. By their very nature, they sin.
- 3) They need to understand that there is a judgment of God. The wages of sin is death. There will be a judgment of God. They are accountable not just to you but to a holy God.

As you are praying for them, pray also that you will have discernment to know if the conviction is real, especially when they are young. Here is my advice. Don't push them faster than they seem to want to go, but don't hold them back when it seems they are ready. Trust the Lord at the moment and trust Him to reveal to them later if they are not truly converted.

## 2. Spiritual growth

Remember when you brought them home from the hospital. Compare what they were like when you brought them home with what they are today. What happened? They grew, mentally, physically, psychologically, and socially. When they are saved, they are spiritual infants that need to grow. Their spiritual maturity is just as important as all other areas.

I'm reminded of the Luke 2:52, Jesus *kept increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.*

Pray that your children will do the same. That they follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Ask the Lord to use the circumstances and situations of life to grow their faith and make them mature in Christ. This will surely involve some pain and suffering, but it will be worth it to see them grow up in Christ.

2 Peter 3:18. *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

I like what I heard Steve Gaines say, **don't settle for good children, desire Godly children.** There are a lot of good children who are going to do good things in this life then die without Christ. You say, *but my kids are saved.* Being saved is not enough. They need to be Godly. If they are just saved but not really following Christ, their children, your grandchildren, are likely to never get saved.

## 3. Submission

God has ordained authority and submission to order life. Authority is not about being more important than others and submission is not about being less important than others. It's about roles that govern living. Keep in mind that Jesus was submissive to His Father, even though they are equally divine and equally part of the triune Godhead.

**These are** primarily seen in the home and the church, but also extend beyond. In the home, children need to be taught to be submissive to parents. One of your most important jobs as a parent is to teach this important principle to your kids. They will need it in every area of life.

**Teachers. Employers.** Law enforcement officers. If they don't learn to be submissive to parents, they will struggle in all the other areas of life.

**Your children do not need to run your home.** They are not in charge. Don't let them talk disrespectfully to you. Don't let them drive a wedge between you two. Stay unified. You are their parent, not their friend. When they get to adulthood you will have years to be their friend. As you teach them to respect you, teach them to respect their pastor and other ministers at church, all adults, senior adults, coaches, teachers, etc.

Hebrews 5:8 says of Jesus, *Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.* Wow, even though He was fully divine, fully God, he **learned obedience**. That would be a great thing to pray for your kids. *Lord, as you learned to be obedient and submissive, please help ??? also learn to be obedient and submissive.*

#### 4. Protection

As you pray for their protection, be as specific as you can be. Satan will attack them in a variety of ways, looking for a weakness that he might exploit. He has a vast arsenal of weapons that have been used to take down the strong and mighty as well as the small and weak.

From the attacks of the enemy

From pornography, sexual immorality, distortions about gender

From drugs and alcohol

From bad relationships that would lead them in wrong directions

From depression and psychological problems

The level of protection that you can provide for them is highest when they are young but diminishes with each passing year. You will not always be able to protect them from harm. There are levels of protection I could provide for my girls when they were babies that I could not provide when they were toddlers. Then when they went to school and church and other activities. Then when they began driving and dating, etc.

Psalm 91:10-11

*No evil will happen to you, nor will any plague come near your tent. For He will give His angels orders concerning you, to protect you in all your ways.*

Isaiah 54:17

*No weapon that is formed against you will succeed;  
And you will condemn every tongue that <sup>[a]</sup>accuses you in judgment.  
This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord,  
And their vindication is from Me,” declares the Lord.*

## 5. Relationships

Pray for 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.

*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 15:13

Never too early to begin praying for their future spouse.

## 6. Obedience

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. Every person has a calling from God. Pray that God will make His plan for them clear and pray that they will answer the call of God in their lives and follow His lead.

*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

Turn this into a prayer for them.

*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 Luke 6:37. *Forgive and you will be forgiven.*

Help them understand the connection between God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of others. God is pleased and ready to forgive when he sees us forgive others.

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 1 Chronicles 28:20. *David also said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is finished.*

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 abused or picked on.

Pray for wisdom for yourself to know when to step in and when to let them stand and grow stronger. Often difficult to know. Ask the Lord to direct you.

## 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, guilting 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.

**4) Prepare to celebrate their return**

Decide how you will react when they return to the 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 to influence, especially when they are young. That power diminishes the older they get. But you also have the power of prayer. And that power not only does not diminish as they get older but can actually increase as you grow in your faith. So, influence as much as you can. And pray with an understanding that there is a war for the soul of your children. Your most powerful weapon in their defense is prayer.