

---

## CHILDREN & PRAYER

From birth, children try very hard to communicate. We find their efforts endearing and, if we think honestly, the trust and confidence they express soon humbles us. We know and love our children deeply and imperfectly. God, who gave them life, knows and loves them perfectly. Love and awareness of our human limits impel us to help children learn about prayer, about communicating with God.

By praying, ourselves, we fulfill the desire we have as human beings to know the God in whose image we are made. Something in us wants to know God. "Our hearts are restless," Saint Augustine says, "until they rest in you." By praying, we rest in God. As our children learn to communicate with God, they too find this special place of rest.



---

Below are some prayers for children. However, you might like to mix these with encouraging children to pray themselves - since they may feel less self-conscious than adults when praying aloud. This also enables them to pray for what they want to pray, rather than reciting a list of prayers. Some books of children's prayers use complex language, and some even rhyme! The prayers below are deliberately uncomplicated. This gives children a better pattern for their own prayers.

---

**Dear God,  
We are sorry for doing wrong things.  
Please forgive us. Help us to forgive those  
who are unkind to us. Amen.**

**Father God,  
As I turn off the light, please be with me.  
Help me to get to sleep, and please give me  
good dreams. Amen.**

**Lord Jesus, Thank you for my friends, and  
for the games and fun that we share.  
Please help me to be a good friend to them.  
Amen.**

Father God,  
Thank you for my family : and not only for  
those I live with, but grandparents, uncles,  
aunties and cousins. Please be with them  
today. Amen.

**Lord, Help me to notice people who need  
my help. Children who are alone without  
friends, My parents or teachers, when they  
need a hand. Amen.**

Lord Jesus,  
I know that I am your special child, and that  
you love me. Other children don't know you.  
Please may they come to know your love. I  
particularly pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Amen.

**God, you are great. You made the world  
and it's good. Thank you for making it so  
beautiful, and we are sorry that we have  
spoiled it. Amen.**

Dear Jesus,  
Please help me at school. Sometimes I find it  
hard, and it's at those times I specially need  
your help. I know you are with us always.  
Amen.

---

---

## ENCOURAGING CHILDREN



Encouraging children to pray is an important challenge to parents and to church leaders. This can be quite different from helping adults to pray since children may well not have the same concerns about praying aloud as adults. It can be a privilege and a joy to pray with children. Here are some ideas:

- A brief mealtime prayer before eating together reminds the whole family that God is the provider of all. This is a simple prayer, and even children as young as 4 can take their turn in saying it.
  - Conversational praying can be a very natural way of including God in our conversations. You will need to explain that conversational praying is very short prayers without the Amens, which focus on a common subject for a while before moving on. Eg Mum : "Thank you Lord that Granny is feeling better", Sarah "Yes, and we pray that she'd continue to feel stronger each day.", Jim "Help us to remember to call her each day", Dad : "and we ask that you would be with her."
- News Prayer: Pray together as a family after watching a news summary. This is an easy way to start praying for broader world issues, and can encourage children and young people to develop a practical concern for God's world.
- Patterns and Styles: It's a good idea to get into a habit of praying together in a certain place at a certain time - the routine can be helpful. Yet, if there is no flexibility, the routine can become a chore. The style of prayer can be very simple, using simple words and simple ideas - the key is to encourage your child to talk to God, to bring their concerns to Him, and to enjoy spending time with Him.
- You can use simple written prayers to help your children pray. However, do encourage them to use their own words as well - God doesn't demand well constructed sentences and fine poetry!



## Prayers for Children

### Prayers for Children – Instruction

Many parents feel uncomfortable when constructing prayers for children or instructing their children about prayer. As parents we want to impart our depth of faith as we help our children discover their spiritual selves. We all have that picture-perfect image of a praying child -- closed eyes, folded hands, peaceful expression. But usually times of prayer find our children fidgeting while we shush them, telling them to bow their heads. Is there a formula that defines prayer in a natural, simple manner to our children?

Even the youngest child understands that prayer means "talking to God." As a child shares their concerns, parents can write down simple phrases to help them recall. By creating specific prayers,

parents can address the child's individual needs and concerns. Prayer is "stimulated" by many things -- walking in the park/woods (giving thanks), seeing the handicapped/elderly (asking for healing), planning a vacation (requesting protection). Music creates an awareness of God's nearness, helping children to focus on their feelings ([Colossians 3:16](#)). In time, children learn that prayer is a special time of thanksgiving with a Friend.

Praying out loud is important -- God spoke His Word out loud. There is power in prayer, especially when incorporating God's spoken Word. It is very helpful for children to memorize Bible verses. This gives parents the opportunity to see how the Holy Spirit helps their children to recall God's truths ([John 14:26](#)). A few examples of scriptural-based prayers for children might include:

- Thank you God, for taking away my sins and helping me to live right ([1 Peter 2:24](#)).
- Help me to know Jesus' love and to feel Your power in me ([Ephesians 3:19](#)).
- I trust God to always protect me ([Psalm 91:11, 14](#)).
- Teach me God to be honest about my sins so I can confess them and be forgiven ([1 John 1:9](#)).
- I want to sing and tell everyone how wonderful You are ([Psalm 150](#)).

### **Prayers for Children – Investment**

Prayers for children can be an investment in your children's lives. Technology provides parents with a continuous electronic connection with their children (monitors, cell phones). Only prayer reinforces a life-long spiritual connection between the Heavenly Father, parents, and children. Parents often pray for their children's healing or physical protection, yet spiritual security must take a higher priority. Pray that your children have the courage to follow Jesus ([salvation](#)), a teachable spirit (obedience), and wisdom to use the talents God gives them for His glory (commitment).

From birth, parents are investing in their children's spiritual security. Even newborns are involved in prayer as you hold them, praying and introducing them to God's love ([Matthew 19:14–15](#)). No one will pray as fervently for your children as you. No one will invest as much time in shaping their children's values. The father's relationship often models a child's basis for a relationship with their Heavenly Father ([Luke 11:11–13](#)). Mothers who seek God for patience find wisdom when disciplining ([Hebrews 12:6](#)). By praying with your child after discipline, both parents and children experience God's forgiveness and abundant mercy. The time invested in seeking God through prayer with our children will net a great return ([Psalm 103:17–18](#)).

### **Prayers for Children – Involved**

Do your children ever see you praying as you go throughout your day? As Christ was our example, parents are called to be Spirit-led models for their children ([2 Timothy 3:15–17](#)). When our son and daughter were young, we said prayers for them, while they listened. Soon they were praying for us, while we listened. As our children learned more about God's character, He was shaping their character as well. Their conversations with God became the "voice of their heart" -- sometimes detailed, sometimes unpretentious, always earnest.

Prayer is not about a formula. It is the anticipation of God's response as we speak to Him. It represents a genuine expression of child-like devotion and faith. Prayers *for* children and *with* children give parents an opportunity to pass the legacy of their commitment and faith on to the next generation ([Deuteronomy 6:5–7](#)).

---

**Click [HERE](#) to print a coloring page!**



### **A Child's Grace**

God is great and God is Good,  
And we thank God for our food;  
By God's hand we must be fed,  
Give us Lord, our daily bread. Amen.

--- Traditional

### **A Child's Prayer for Morning**

Now, before I run to play,  
Let me not forget to pray  
To God who kept me through the night  
And waked me with the morning light.  
Help me, Lord, to love thee more  
Than I ever loved before,  
In my work and in my play  
Be thou with me through the day.

Amen.

--- Author Unknown

### **Guardian Angel Prayer**

Angel of God, my guardian dear,  
to whom God's love commits me here;  
Watch over me throughout the night,  
keep me safe within your sight.

--- Traditional

### **God Hear My Prayer**

God in heaven hear my prayer,  
keep me in thy loving care.  
Be my guide in all I do,  
Bless all those who love me too.

Amen.

--- Traditional



### **Prayer for Students**

God of Light and Truth,  
thank you for giving me  
a mind that can know  
and a heart that can love.  
Help me to keep learning every day of my life,  
for all knowledge leads to you.  
Let me be aware of your presence  
in all things and at all times.  
Encourage me when work is difficult  
and when I am tempted to give up;  
encourage me when my brain seems slow  
and the way forward is difficult.  
Grant me the grace to put my mind to use  
exploring the world you have created,  
confident that in you there a wisdom  
that is real.

Amen.

--- Charles Henderson

### **Angel Blessing at Bedtime**

Angels bless and angels keep  
Angels guard me while I sleep  
Bless my heart and bless my home  
Bless my spirit as I roam  
Guide and guard me through the night  
and wake me with the morning's light.

Amen

--- Traditional



### **A Child's Evening Hymn**

I hear no voice, I feel no touch,  
I see no glory bright;  
But yet I know that God is near,  
In darkness as in light.  
God watches ever by my side,  
And hears my whispered prayer:  
A God of love for a little child  
Both night and day does care.  
--- Anonymous

### **Child's Prayer**

Dear God most high, hear and bless  
Thy beasts and singing birds:  
And guard with tenderness  
Small things that have no words.  
--- Traditional

### **Table Blessing**

God is great! God is good!  
Let us thank God for our food.  
Amen.  
--- Traditional

### **For Happy Hearts**

We thank Thee Lord, for happy hearts,  
For rain and sunny weather.  
We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,  
And that we are together.  
--- Traditional



### **Children's Bedtime Prayer**

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep:  
May God guard me through the night  
And wake me with the morning light.  
Amen.  
--- Traditional

### **23rd Psalm for Students**

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not flunk  
He keepeth me from lying down when I should be studying  
He leadeth me beside the water cooler for a study break  
He restores my faith in study guides  
He leads me to better study habits  
For my grades' sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of borderline grades  
I will not have a nervous breakdown  
For thou art with me  
My prayers and my friends, they comfort me  
Thou givest me the answer in moments of blankness  
Thou anointest my head with understanding  
My test paper runneth over with questions I recognise.  
Surely passing grades and flying colours shall follow me  
All the days of my examinations  
And I shall not have to dwell in this exam hall forever.  
--- Author Unknown

### **Child's Prayer for Protection**

Angel of God, my Guardian dear,  
To whom God's love commits me here;  
Ever this day, be at my side  
To light and guard  
To rule and guide.  
--- Traditional