

## **How Can We Pray Together as a Family?**

### *A Framework for Seeking God Together as a Family*

#### **What is prayer?**

It's a conversation between God and mankind—the Creator and His creation. It is an amazing thought that we can communicate with the God of the universe. The key is communication. Effective communication involves both talking and listening.

#### **Make prayer a priority in your family.**

We will find time to do whatever is most important to us. Families must make prayer a priority. When we do this, it communicates to every single family member this is an essential aspect of our lives. Parents, if you don't make prayer a priority, then don't be surprised when your kids have "rushed, going out the door" prayer lives. The key to making prayer a focus is first to make it a habit. To begin, start by praying five minutes a day. Then, when that becomes a habit, pray 10 minutes a day. Then, when that becomes a habit, pray 15 minutes a day, and so forth. If we don't make prayer a priority, something else will inevitably take its place.

#### **Find a specific place for your family to pray.**

Finding a specific place to pray is essential because it creates an atmosphere of worship. When families have a particular area to pray, such as a living room, family members will know that it is for praying together when they gather there at a specific time. It is also important to find a place in which distractions can be removed. Don't take your phones, tablets, video games, etc., as these things can quickly become a hindrance to completely focusing.

#### **Understand the purpose behind prayer.**

People tend to make prayer either a "Christmas wish list" or "an emergency hotline." God intends prayer to be so much more than this. Is it okay to seek God in something? Sure. Is it alright to ask God to be with someone with a physical, emotional, or spiritual need? Sure. But what is the ultimate purpose behind praying? It is to connect with the Heavenly Father in worship, confession, and adoration.

### **Practical Advice for Praying as a Family Unit**

#### **Pray before a meal.**

Traditionally, if Christian-influenced homes don't do much praying at all, they tend to bless their meals, even if it's occasionally. Next time you sit down as a family for a meal, go to the table 10 minutes early before you start eating your meal. Spend those 10 minutes praying as a family unit. Pray for each other.

#### **Pray for your circle of influence.**

Have each family member write down two people in their circle of influence (friends, teachers, pastors, coaches, etc.) that they can lift up in prayer. Allow each family member to voice these prayers aloud.

**Parents—pray over your children.**

Mom and dads don't miss this. When your kids go to sleep, spend time with your spouse praying for your kids. Pray that they would fall in love with Jesus and love Him more than anything else. Pray that the decisions they make in life will honor and glorify God. Pray for their future spouse.

**A Suggested Weekly Prayer Guide for Families****Sunday: A Pastor/Church Staff Member**

Ministry is rewarding yet challenging at the same time. Pray with your kids before you leave for church on Sunday morning and spend dedicated time in prayer for a pastor or another church staff member. Pray for their family and for God to be the center of their home and lives.

**Monday: A Family Member**

Help kids see the importance of praying for members of their own family/extended family. If this person is lost (and the child is saved), pray the Holy Spirit will grip this person's heart. If this person is a believer, pray they would continue to grow in their faith.

**Tuesday: Their School**

Encouraging kids to pray for their school will teach kids their school is much more than a place to learn and see their friends—it is a mission field. Maybe they pray for their school's principal, teacher, lunch lady, bus driver, or someone they know is in need.

**Wednesday: A Friend**

Kids often see their friends as people they enjoy being around and playing with at school, on a team, or in another organization. Yet, we must instill in our kids their friends are people who God deeply cares about. If their friend is lost (and the child is saved), pray the Holy Spirit will grip this friend's heart. You can also spend this time praying for their friend's family and any needs your family might know.

**Thursday: A Missions Partner**

Gather any materials or information you may know about your church's mission partners. These might be church planters, foreign missionaries, or local organization partners like a food pantry ministry or crisis pregnancy center. This could also be a time to pray for other ministries, such as Operation Christmas Child.

**Friday: A Coach, Team, or Other Organizational Leaders**

Several kids participate in sports teams, drama clubs, and community organizations. Take Fridays and have kids pray for their football coach, gymnastics coach, play director, and/or friends on these teams and clubs.

**Saturday: Your Church**

For many families, Saturday is the night before church. And we know, as adults, Churches are filled with people searching for answers. Before you go to bed on Saturday evening, spend a few moments praying for the people coming to church the following day. Pray especially for the people who don't know Jesus as Lord and Savior. In addition, pray God would move, and He would stir and move in hearts.