

7 Ways to Teach Your Children to Pray

kimcubitt.alphalifestyleacademy.com

One of the most important jobs you have as a parent is to teach your children to pray. You want them to have a joyful and easy relationship with Jesus. You want them to be able to talk to Jesus about anything.

For example, during his nightly prayers, Jason, age 5, pleaded with Jesus to help him be able to put his face in the water the next day during swimming lessons. Up to that point he had been terrified of doing so.

Since swimming classes were part of the after-school program, his parents wouldn't be there during the lesson. When his mom picked him up, he jumped in the car and excitedly said, "Let's hurry and get home so I can tell Jesus how I put my face in the water."

His mom grinned and responded, "Let's tell him right now."

Helping Your Child Learn to Pray

You teach your child this important skill through your own example!

Let's look at these important steps:

1. Show them how you pray. They won't know how important prayer is if you don't show them. Show them how to integrate prayer throughout their day.

- Express gratitude before each meal. Give thanks for the meal and for anyone who had anything to do with bringing the meal to the table. Mention the cook and those who prepared the table.

- You can also go around the table and share something that happened that day for which each person is thankful.

2. **Be with them to end each day with prayer.** During this special time, guide them in ways to pray.

- Teach them to give thanks for what they're learning, the time they have to play, and the people in their lives. Share what you're thankful for.
- What do they need help with? This can be school work, a teacher or peer they're having difficulty with, or putting their face in the water even when afraid. Model for them your own prayers for assistance.
- Who do they want to pray for? Once children get the hang of this, you'll hear them ask for blessings and help for parents, grandparents, friends, cats, dogs, and almost anyone.

3. **Pray with them for healing.** Bumps, bruises, and hurt feelings occur throughout the day. Teach them to ask God to heal them of these hurts.

- A powerful prayer is to gather the family together and, one at a time, **pray that God give them now all the love they needed that day but didn't receive.** Rarely does anyone receive all the love they need.

4. **Pray for forgiveness.** During night prayers, when there was tension or harsh words, teach them how to ask God for forgiveness.

- **This isn't a time to shame or embarrass them.** Tell them they simply need

to say, "Jesus, please forgive me for being mean to my sister."

- As difficult as it may be for you, use those occasions which occur to show them how to do this by praying, "Jesus, please forgive me for losing my temper with my children."

5. Teach them short prayers. Put "short prayers to teach children" in your internet search engine and you'll have a number of options.

- Of course, when they're old enough, teach them *The Lord's Prayer* or special verses from scripture.

6. Read them children's books about prayer. There are numerous books about prayer for children. Again, your search engine is your friend.

7. Bless them before they leave for their day. When you take a minute to send your child off to school with a blessing, and then end the day with night prayers, you demonstrate how God is with them all day, every day.

Praying is a skill that will benefit your children for the rest of their lives. Teaching them to pray will come easy to you if you have an active prayer life yourself. Use these ideas to get you going. Your children will pick up praying as a regular part of their daily routines.