



## PRAYER STRATEGY

### 5 Tips for Helping Kids Learn to Pray

#### ***1. It's Never Too Early to Begin***

There is nothing more precious than a 14-month-old folding his hands and bowing his head to listen to an adult pray. Or, when a toddler repeating after her mama prays, "Thank you for the food." Some would say that they are too young to understand, but I feel it is never too early to begin laying a foundation of communication with God, making it a natural part of their daily lives.

#### ***2. Model Honest Prayers***

While we often ask our children to pray before meals, please note the importance of our children hearing *us* pray. Just as Jesus modeled prayer for his disciples in Luke 11, we too must take time to model prayer for our children. We can further encourage them by having them pray after us, thereby giving them something to copy.

#### ***3. Pray Continually***

1 Thessalonians 5:17 tells us, "Pray without ceasing." It can be as brief and simple as a "Thank you, Lord!" shouted in praise or a quick request for God to help with a temptation, or a fervent plea, "Jesus, I need you!" in the struggle for wisdom or patience. Or it can be more eloquent and free-flowing. Again, by modeling these, we are teaching our children to pray continually.

#### **4. Make Prayer the Go-To Reaction**

Philippians 4:6. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* Notice how Paul is instructing us to not even step into the circle of anxiety. Immediately, we are to go to God in prayer. It is important to help our children learn to do the same. Of course as parents we want to comfort them but we also want to teach them to go to the true source of comfort.

#### **5. Prioritize Prayer**

If we desire our children to spend quality time conversing with God, we have to make it a priority in our own lives. In the busy-ness of parenthood and life, we can easily excuse ourselves out of daily Bible time and focused prayer. "There's not enough energy or time," we can reason. Instead, try to apply Deuteronomy 6 to prayer.

*Impress (prayer) on your children. (Pray with your children) when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*