

3 Prayers for Parents Who Want to Raise Their Children in the Lord

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There is a certain kinship parents feel with each other. It comes with a specific kind of vernacular, shared experiences, and common difficulties and pain. As a result, when you meet another parent, especially one that happens to have children around the same age as yours, there can be, many times, a very quick connection.

And I would imagine that most of these parents also share something else – a dirty little secret. One that we don't like to talk about, and yet one that is never too far from mind. True enough, it can fade into the background somewhat, but with every changing season in the lives of growing children it once again pops up. Here's the secret:

None of us know what we're doing.

That's despite all the books, all the seminars, all the podcasts – we still don't know what we're doing. We don't know what we're doing with babies, with toddlers, with pre-teens, or with teenagers. Most days, we are muddling our way through it all because there is no real instruction manual for raising your children in the Lord. There is, however, prayer. And surely most parents have that in common as well – to feel the desperate sense of need as we try and help shape these little humans. So, what do we pray when we want to raise our children to know and love Jesus? Here are three suggestions:

1. Lord, help my children love Your Word.

We know, as Christians, that reading the Bible is vitally important. God's Word is the lamp to our feet and the light to our path; it is the measuring stick of all truth and reality; it is the means by which we know who God is and what He desires from us. But we also know that it's important for our kids to read the Bible for themselves. In fact, according to Lifeway Research, the single biggest factor in predicting the spiritual health of young adults is whether they read the Bible regularly as kids.

Isn't that what we want as parents? It's not just for our kids to like Sunday school classes, but to see them as vibrant, growing, and contributing Christians decades from now. If that's the case, then we should pray they love God's Word.

2. Lord, help my children have a backbone.

“If you do not stand firm in your faith, then you will not stand at all” (Isaiah 7:9).

This was the word of the Lord through His prophet to a trembling king when faced with adversaries. It was an admonishment to not look to the size of the enemies at hand, but instead trust in the power of God on his behalf. Stand up. Let your backbone be fortified with the truth of the promises and power of God.

While we all want our children to be safe, comfortable, free, and happy, perhaps we should also be praying, in light of the times in which we live, for something different. Their mettle will be tested. Their faith will be challenged. They will be pressured to succumb on any number of fronts. By God’s grace, we will raise them not to shrink back into the shadows, nor to be intentionally argumentative and betray Christian kindness and compassion. That they will stand, and stand firmly.

3. Lord, help my children to be quick to repent.

One final prayer for parents is that our children would be quick to repent. We all know that sin has a “creeping” factor to it – the longer you allow sin to maintain its grip in your heart, the longer it remains hidden and unconfessed, the more it grows. And eventually, inevitably, it grows to something you could not have imagined.

For that reason, let us pray together that our children would not just get caught doing whatever it is they’re doing, but that they would be quick to repent. For as they repent, they will experience the love and grace of a heavenly parent that is far better than we are. They will run to his arms early, often, and quickly, so that sin might never gain a significant hold in their hearts.

Pray, parents. Pray for your children. Because in the end, even with the best of intentions, only God can change these little hearts.