

## **40 WAYS TO PRAY FOR YOUR CHILD**

One of the great privileges of parenthood is that we can ask God to work in the lives of our children. These 40 prayers can be offered as a 40-day cycle of prayer {patterned after Jesus' own 40-day spiritual retreat in Matthew 4} or simply used during the course of each day.

### **For the knowledge of God**

Dear God, the Psalmist declares, "Be still, and know that I am God" {Psalm 46:10}. In their busyness, may my children have quiet moments in which they think and reflect about God in their lives.

### **For salvation**

Loving God, the Apostle Paul reminds us that the Gospel "is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" {Romans 1:16}. Help my children learn to trust in you early in their lives and remain faithfully committed to your ways throughout their lives.

### **For myself as a parent**

Gracious God, fill me with sensitivity and insight that I may understand the best ways to guide my children so they may grow in your wisdom and love.

### **For parenting patience**

Loving God, although family life is often hectic and busy, help me to listen with patience to the worries, troubles, and problems my children may have.

### **For kindness of speech**

Gracious God, so many children have been deeply wounded because they have been the brunt of criticism, teasing, and taunting. May my children exhibit kindness in their speech. Let the words of Psalm 19:14 be true for my children: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight."

### **To recognize their mistakes**

Dear God, may my children recognize when they are wrong and take responsibility where they are at fault. Give them a deep and sincere desire to put things right as quickly as possible.

### **For love**

Gracious God, let my children follow the command of Jesus to "love one another" {John 13:34}. Let them reach out with love to all within their sphere of influence.

### **For spiritual stability**

Oh God, in times of moral uncertainty and temptation, empower my children to exhibit spiritual stability. May the words of Joshua have a firm grip in their hearts: "You are to hold fast to the Lord your God" {Joshua 23:8}.

### **To help bear burdens**

Loving God, let it be that my children are the ones who quickly reach out, helping to lift the burdens of others. Through my example, may my children understand the importance of fulfilling the call of Scripture to "carry each other's burdens" {Gal. 6:2}.

### **To be instruments of peace**

Gracious God, may my children guide their thoughts, words, and actions by the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi: "Make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy."

### **To celebrate humanity**

Dear God, this world is filled with beautiful people, all of whom are your children. May my own children be free of discriminatory and judgmental attitudes toward others. Let them appreciate and celebrate the fact that people are red and yellow, black and white, tall and short, fat and thin, rich and poor, young and old.

### **For spiritual & emotional growth**

Loving God, let my children be like Jesus who "grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" {Luke 2:52}.

### **To be salt & light**

Gracious God, may my children learn how to cooperate rather than compete, to respect rather than revile, and to console rather than condemn. Even in their limited circles of influence, may they be "the salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" {Matt. 5:13-14}.

### **For protection**

Eternal God, as my children go out this day may your loving protection go ahead of them, be behind them, hover over them, and stand beside them. This day protect them from every danger, disease, and trauma.

### **For faith in times of difficulty**

Dear God, whenever my children face trial, trouble, or fear, let them naturally turn to you for guidance and strength. May my children know this powerful promise of scripture: "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" {Deut. 33:27}.

### **To remember the marginalized**

Dear God, create in my children hearts of love and compassion for those whom society overlooks. Let them understand the importance of this biblical command: "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering" {Heb. 13:3}.

### **For growth in grace**

Loving God, day by day and in every way, let my children "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" {2 Peter 3:18}.

### **For contentment**

Loving God, let my children cultivate the same spiritual contentment as did the Apostle Paul, who said: "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want" {Phil. 4:11-12}.

### **To be unselfish**

Gracious God, give my children more love, more self-denial, more willingness to sacrifice for others. Let them understand deeply that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

### **For wisdom**

Loving God, may your spirit be so present in the lives of my children that their thoughts are your thoughts and their ideas are your ideas.

### **To offer confession & seek forgiveness**

Gracious God, may there be in my children no propensity for denial of truth and reality. When they err and do wrong, may they offer you confession and seek your forgiveness. Let them take comfort in your word, which says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" {1 John 1:9}.

### **To be "clothed" in virtues**

Dear God, may my children constantly and consistently be clothed "with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" {Col. 3:12}.

### **For humility in victory & dignity in defeat**

Dear God, life is made up of valleys and peaks, wins and losses. There will be times when my children will make important gains and other times when they will feel the sting of losing. May they have humility in their victory and dignity in defeat.

### **For appreciation of God's creation**

Loving God, show my children how to love all animals, birds, creatures, and all green and growing things. Help them to cherish and protect your creation.

### **For gratitude**

Dear God, let gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving continuously flow from the lips of my children. May they "give thanks in all circumstances" {1 Thess. 5:18}.

### **For the courage of convictions**

Gracious God, convictions mean nothing unless there is the courage to stand up for them. May my children "be strong and courageous" {Joshua 1:6}, standing up for those treated unkindly and unjustly.

### **For emotional & spiritual strength**

Eternal God, whenever my children feel the pain of rejection by friends or feel they are the objects of ridicule, infuse them with emotional and spiritual strength. May they always remember that you are the strength of the weak, the refreshment of the weary, and the

comforter of the heartbroken.

### **To be joyful Christians**

Loving God, bless my children with the spirit of joy. May they smile naturally, laugh easily, rejoice in your gifts large and small. Let the words of the Psalmist resound in their lives: "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" {Psalm 118:24}.

### **To be free from materialism**

Gracious God, even in their youth let my children be free from materialism. May they enjoy their benefits, privileges, and material possessions without the constant clamor for more and more and more. And, should they be blessed with wealth in their adult years, may they know the importance of sharing and using their abundance to bless others.

### **For peace & justice**

Eternal God, nurture in my children a love for the many people who live in poverty and misery. Arouse in their hearts a deep and abiding hunger for justice and peace.

### **To be filled with hope**

Loving God, no matter what may befall my children, may they be so filled with hope that it prevents any despair from taking hold. With the Apostle I pray that you, "the God of hope" {Romans 15:13}, will fill them with all joy and peace.

### **For perseverance**

Dear God, keep my children from becoming impatient and quitting prematurely. Develop within them endurance and perseverance so that when faced with major challenges and crises they do not easily give up. Let my children be "joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" {Romans 12:12}.

### **For a passionate love of God**

Gracious God, cultivate in my children a passion to love and serve you. May my children have the same kind of passionate love for you as did this Psalm writer: "I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you" {Psalms 9:1-2}.

### **For generosity of spirit**

Loving God, instill in my children a desire to give of themselves. May they always be honorable in action, sincere in words, and gentle in their treatment of others.

### **To be forgiving**

Eternal God, fill my children with the spirit of forgiveness. Whenever they are hurt, may they naturally forgive and thereby free themselves from the burden of resentment. May they take seriously this word from the Apostle: "Forgive as the Lord forgave you" {Col. 3:13}.

### **To have a teachable spirit**

Gracious God, infuse in each of my children the awareness that the world is filled with

teachers. May they see others as being sent by you into their lives to teach them to learn better patience, greater love, more compassion.

**For the wise use of their talents**

Loving God, thank you for filling my children with numerous gifts, talents, and abilities. As they mature, let them exercise wisdom in using their gifts to help others.

**To be honest**

Gracious God, let my children always exhibit honesty of conduct and honesty of speech. May there be nothing deceitful in what they say and do. Instill in them the awareness that life flows more smoothly when it is built around honesty.

**To practice hospitality**

Eternal God, may my children be open and affirming of all others. May they be the ones who reach out, embracing those who are left out or left behind.

**To be faithful in prayer**

Gracious and loving God, help my children to live lives punctuated by prayer. With the Apostle may they "pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests" {Eph. 6:18}. May they be persistent and powerful in their praying. Victor M. Parachin is a minister and writer living in Oklahoma.

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