

## Ideas For Praying With Your Children

**The following is taken from the *Praying Church Resource Guide*:**

1. *Pray at every meal* - make Thanksgiving a habit. And let the children pray.
2. During the course of your meal, *ask your kids about their day* - What happened in your world? Use their anxieties as cues for prayer.
3. *Pray at bedtime*. Include a bed-time Bible story. That daily habit is a powerful and comforting closure to the day.
4. If you drive your children to school, you have a great opportunity to plug into the "hurry-up" of the morning, a restful prayer. Before they get out of the car, pray for them. *Bless them*. Ask for God to be with them.
5. Take each of your children out, once a week for a private time with Dad or Mom. Make prayer a part of that time. Do it casually, naturally. Lace the presence of God into daily life, as if it were not a Sunday thing! Read a scripture together. *Give a Psalm as a gift to your child* - read it over them. Give them other promises from the bible.
6. Table devotions. Once a week or so, do more than saying grace at the table, do a round of prayer with each family member praying sentence prayers.
7. On Passover, Jewish families experience a Seder meal together. One of the practices of conservative Jews is to leave the door slightly ajar and an empty chair for the prophet Elijah – just in case he shows up to announce the coming of the Messiah. Improvise. *Leave a chair open for Jesus*. Welcome him as the unseen guest who lives in the home. Talk about his physical and visible second coming to your children.
8. *Make a family prayer list*. Pray over the needs on the list – at least weekly. Do some type of weekly family prayer and worship event. It does not have to be long – 15-30 minutes will do, especially with smaller children whose attention spans are short. Do it consistently. Read Scripture. Pray. Bless the children. Review your Family Prayer List. Pray for unsaved family members, neighbors and friends.
9. *Keep a family prayer log*. Howard Hendricks of Dallas Theological Seminary says years ago, his wife created a family prayer journal. On one side was listed – “We Asked!” On the other side – “He Answered!” Hendricks said, “I would not substitute anything for what this notebook did to teach my children the theology of prayer.” This brings reality to prayer. It makes it about real things. It chronicles the family’s spiritual journey.
10. During the holidays, open the Christmas cards at dinner when the family is together. *Pray over the loved ones* who sent the cards before they are hung on the mantle.
11. *Create a “sacred space” in your home* where you meet for prayer – a family altar. Set aside a room for a chapel, if you have the space. If not, designate a place where the family meets God. Put out *visible reminders* of the sacredness of the space – a Bible, pictures on the wall, study helps, a globe or map to remind you of missions, the family prayer list, anointing oil.