

A Month of
PRAYERS
for Your Children



“Prayer does not equip us for the greater works—prayer *is* the greater work.”

So said Oswald Chambers, and his words ring especially true when it comes to parenting. While tempted to rely on our own wisdom and insight, or to turn to the counsel of experts and the latest fads, deep down we realize how desperately dependent we are on God. Without him we have no hope. What our children need most—more than education, health, better behavior, good friends, promising prospects, or *anything else*—is Jesus. So we turn to Jesus, and plead with him for the lives and souls of our children.

This short prayer book is meant to be a guide on this rugged path. Who among us knows how to pray as we should? Who doesn't feel confused and discouraged about what to pray for our kids? As we seek to learn prayer, we can gain much from reading model prayers such as these. Steeped in Scripture, these prayers can serve as a springboard to deepen your own prayers. To help that process, I've included a “Notes” page after every day to allow you to record other verses, specific requests, or personal insights about your children.

After all, these prayers are meant to be a *supplement*—not a *substitute*—for your personal study of Scripture and resulting intercession. You know your children better than anyone: their personality, their passions, their gifts, their sinful tendencies. As you grow in your understanding of God's Word and how to pray in line with his will revealed in it, allow that to guide your personal, hyper-focused, God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered prayers for your children!

That is my prayer for you.

For his glory,

Brandon Cooper

Glorious One,

We know that your chief purpose in history is to glorify your name. When you created the heavens and the earth, you did so that they might declare your glory and proclaim your works (Psalm 19:1); when you formed a people to be your own, you did so for your glory (Isaiah 43:7) and so that they might proclaim your praise (Isaiah 43:21). When your people sin and you show restraint, you do so for the sake of your praise, that your glory will not pass to another (Isaiah 48:9-11); when the wicked sin and you give full vent to your wrath, you do so that you will gain glory for yourself (Exodus 14:4), that you might make known the riches of your glory to the objects of your mercy (Romans 9:23). When you predestine your children for adoption through Christ, you do so to the praise of your glorious grace (Ephesians 1:5-6); when you call a people out of darkness and into your light, you do so for your name's sake, to make your mighty power known (Psalm 106:8); when you plant us as oaks of righteousness in your garden, you do so for the display of your splendor (Isaiah 61:3). Our prayer for our children is simple, Lord. Whatever they do, may they do it all for your glory (1 Corinthians 10:31); with an undivided heart and single-minded devotion, may they live to glorify your name.

Amen.

Almighty God,

You are our refuge and our fortress, our God in whom we trust. We know that those who take refuge in the shelter of your wings will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1-2). We know our help comes from you, the Maker of heaven and earth (Psalm 121:2), and so we turn our eyes to you now. Keep our children from all harm; watch over their lives. Watch over their coming and going both now and forevermore (Psalm 121:7-8). Give your angels charge concerning them, to guard them in all their ways, lest they should strike a foot against a stone (Psalm 91:11-12). Hem them in—behind and before—and lay your hand upon them (Psalm 139:5), as you did the Israelites when they fled from their Egyptian pursuers. Let no harm befall them (Psalm 91:10). But should disaster threaten, keep us and our children in perfect peace as we stay our minds on you, because we trust in you (Isaiah 26:3), knowing that some glory we cannot yet see must lie behind the harm. What light and momentary troubles come their way, let our children embrace them for the eternal glory they are winning that far outweighs them all. Help them to look beyond what is seen and temporary to what is unseen and eternal (2 Corinthians 4:17-18). Glorify yourself in our troubles and in our comfort, as we worship the Lord who both gives and takes away (Job 1:21). Blessed be your name!

Amen.

Merciful Savior,

We praise you because you have blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. In love you chose us to be adopted to sonship through Jesus Christ, to the praise of your glorious grace. In you we have redemption through Christ's blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of your grace (Ephesians 1:3-7). We acknowledge that we are by nature objects of your wrath, and rightfully so, as we have all sinned and fall short of your glory (Romans 9:22; 3:23). And yet you have saved us that we might declare the praises of him who called us out of darkness and into his wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9). Redeeming Lord, we ask that our children might likewise know the joy of your salvation. Though so precious in our eyes, we confess that they are by nature sinners—sinful from the time of conception (Psalm 51:5). They are in need of redemption; may you be their salvation. You are under no obligation to save them, so we plead naught but your grace. Be merciful to them for the sake of your name, to the praise of your grace (Psalm 79:9). Jesus, we know that none can come to you unless the Father draws them, and so we pray that you would draw _____ to yourself (John 6:44). Make their souls thirsty—as in a parched and weary land—to drink of the living waters you offer; make their souls restless until they find rest in you. We know that you will never drive away the one who comes to you (John 6:37); may they find you when they seek you, if they seek you with all their heart (Jeremiah 29:13). Reconcile them to yourself, Savior: new creations in Christ, righteous in your eyes, their spirit crying out "Abba! Father!" (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:15). May they experience such sweet solace knowing that, in Christ Jesus our Lord, nothing can separate us from your love, oh God (Romans 8:38-39).

Amen.

Generous King,

Not only were we wonderfully made, but we were fashioned with a purpose. You have made us not only to bear your image, but to carry the glorious message of your gospel in these jars of clay (2 Corinthians 4:7). As our children grow in their knowledge of self, help them to see how you created them uniquely to bring you glory in special ways. May they understand their gifts and passions, and may they have the courage and diligence to serve you wherever the two align. May they never think of these gifts as having been given to serve their own needs, but to serve you and the needs of your kingdom. By using these gifts, may they edify the Body of Christ until we all reach unity in the faith and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13). By serving you with faithful passion, may they help extend the boundaries of your kingdom into the remotest parts of the world and the deepest corners of the human heart. In all _____ do with their gifts, may your work be evident in their lives and in their service to you.

Amen.

Abba Father,

How great is the love you have lavished upon us, that we should be called your children (1 John 3:1)! Truly you are our heavenly Father—faithful to discipline, matchless in love, perfect in wisdom. The cry rings from our hearts, "Abba! Father!" for you have made us your very own. What unspeakable joy to be the child of the Almighty Father! You love and discipline us (Hebrews 12:7), you conform us to the likeness of your Son (Romans 8:29), you grow us in your knowledge and grace (2 Peter 3:18). May we be such parents. Our children will know no greater influence in life beyond ours as parents. May we wield that influence for the sake of your name and the furtherance of your kingdom. Teach us, that we may have wisdom to impart; mold us, that we may reflect your righteousness; break us, that we may depend wholly on you in this precious work you have given us. Make us holy, make us faithful, make us true. Give us perseverance and diligence to carry out our commission, that we might shape these tiny hearts which you have entrusted to us. Establish our priorities, that we might never leave this wondrous privilege to another—one far less able than we to speak truth into the lives of our children. Impress your Word upon our hearts, that we might teach your truth to them when we sit at home or walk along the road, when we lie down and rise up (Deuteronomy 6:7). Make us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, that we might in turn teach our children to do the same (Deuteronomy 6:5).

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN TO FOLLOW GOD'S WILL

Notes

Benevolent Master,

You work out all things in conformity with the purpose of your will, including our lives (Ephesians 1:11). We yield ourselves to you as the clay yields itself to the potter's hands (Isaiah 64:8). Shape our lives as you deem best; use us for what purpose suits you. As our children grow to understand your supreme authority, your hidden purposes, your guidance in their lives, may they likewise submit their lives to your purposes. May they relinquish control of their lives to you, trusting that you are the Way, and that you will guide them in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:24). May they commit their plans to you, and may you give them success in what they do in your name and for your sake (Proverbs 16:3). Though they plan their courses in their hearts, still determine their steps, and give them confidence in knowing that you are guiding them in all that they do (Proverbs 16:9). When facing decisions, may _____ prayerfully seek your will and then have the courage to follow it with joyful abandon.

Amen.

Sovereign Creator,

You formed _____; you created their inmost beings. How fearfully and wonderfully are they made! When they were made in the secret place, when they were woven together in the depths, your eyes saw their unformed bodies. All the days ordained for our precious children were written in your book before one of them came to be. Before a word is on their tongues, you know it completely. You know when they sit and when they rise; you perceive their thoughts from afar. How precious to us are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them (Psalm 139)! Who is like you in understanding? Who surpasses you in wisdom or power? You alone are God; there is no other. What can we then do except yield _____ completely to you? Your thoughts are above our thoughts; your ways, above our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). We would be foolish to think we know better what they need or what path would be best for them. We trust you completely with our children's lives. A bruised reed you will not break; a smoldering wick you will not snuff out (Isaiah 42:3). With tender care and unfathomable love will you protect, guide, and nurture them, so we entrust them to you, knowing that you have proved faithful and true. As humans, we would seek to control their destiny, to manipulate the course of their life as we think best. But we know that you are God and we are not. We must yield _____ to you as we would any other gift received from the Giver of all good gifts (James 1:17). Take them, mold them, make them completely yours. Without fear or doubt we release our dearest loves to you, for you are good. You did not keep your child from us; we will not keep ours from you.

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S HEART FOR MISSIONS

*Notes**Desire of Nations,*

You have commissioned us to go, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in your name, teaching them to obey everything you commanded us (Matthew 28:19-20). How awesome the privilege and responsibility of carrying this precious treasure, the gospel message, in these cracked earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7)! In Christ are given us the nations as an inheritance, the ends of the earth as our possession (Psalm 2:8). Place in our children's hearts a passion for proclaiming your glory, for seeing your name exalted in the remotest corners of the world. If you call them to remain among their own people and land, still give them a concern for your work the world over—to support the missionary effort with prayer and resources; if you call them to minister your truth in a distant land, help us to rejoice at their high calling and not to hinder their going for selfish reasons. Give them the courage to follow your call wherever it may lead. May _____ never grow limited in perspective and compassion for one geographical region, but may they long to see your kingdom grow to cover the whole earth. Glorify yourself, King of kings, among men and women of every tribe, nation, people, and tongue (Revelation 7:9)!

Amen.

Holy One,

How can we who are accustomed to doing evil do good? A leopard could as easily change his spots (Jeremiah 13:23). Unless you should change us, we shall never be free of our desperate wickedness. We confess the sinful nature of our children and ask that you would change them. Conform them to the likeness of your son; having called them, justify and glorify them (Romans 8:30). May you, the God of peace, sanctify them through and through; may their whole spirit, soul and bodies be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that you are faithful and you will do this (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24). May it be so in _____ 's lives. Transform them into Christ's likeness with ever-increasing glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5); make every word pleasant in your sight. May the world look upon their deeds—done in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit—and praise their Father in heaven (1 Peter 2:12). May their life reflect your holiness, offered as a perpetual sacrifice for the honor of your glorious name.

Amen.

Mighty Savior,

All have sinned and fall short of your glory (Romans 3:23). There is no one righteous, no one who understands, no one who seeks you (3:10-11). We all, like sheep, have gone astray, turning to our own way, worshiping gods of our own making (Isaiah 53:6). And yet you have loved us, even while we were still sinners, sending Christ to die for us (Romans 5:8). On him—and not on us—have you laid the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). The world is in desperate need of this news. Everyone who calls on your name will be saved (Joel 2:32), but they cannot call on a name they have not heard. How will they hear unless we preach the gospel to them (Romans 10:14)? Make us and our children willing stewards of this precious truth. In the fear of the Lord, compelled by the love of Jesus, conscious of our responsibility as ambassadors of Christ and ministers of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:11-21), may our children proclaim your word boldly, lovingly, and unceasingly. May many come to know you by their words and deeds, as they see the cross stamped on their lives and proclamation. The gospel is your power for the salvation of everyone who believes; let not our children ever be ashamed of it (Romans 1:16).

Amen.

Living God,

As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pant our souls for you (Psalm 42:1); our flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water (Psalm 63:1). In you—and in you alone—is found the living water after which we will never thirst again (John 4:10-14). In your house we drink our fill, and from your river of delights do you slake our thirst (Psalm 36:8). May our children know you thus: as the deepest satisfaction, the highest joy, the ultimate pleasure in life. May they taste and see that you are good (Psalm 34:8); may they delight in you and find that in you are the desires of their hearts (Isaiah 61:10); may they experience fullness of joy in your presence and pleasures forevermore at your right hand (Psalm 16:11). So overwhelm them with the sweet grandeur of your majesty that the things of this world would dim in comparison with the light of the knowledge of your glory in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). Make their hearts to sing with wild, undignified abandon for love of their Sovereign Joy. What pleasure they know in this world, may they know as but a gift from the One in whom all pleasure is found. May _____ glorify you by enjoying you wholly forevermore.

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

Notes

King of Kings,

In these dark times, we find it difficult to submit ourselves to earthly powers. So often we convince ourselves that we know better and can choose a better way for ourselves. Ultimately, we rebel against the Supreme Authority, trusting in our flesh instead of your perfect will. Humble us, Lord, that we may bow before you with a glad surrender. As a stiff-necked and rebellious people, we know that we have modeled insolence and disrespect in many ways; may our children learn better than we. Demonstrating complete trust in your sovereign will, may they submit to every authority instituted among men for your sake (1 Peter 2:13). There is no authority—from the highest government to the lowest servant—except that which you have established in your perfect wisdom (Romans 13:1). Teach _____ never to rebel against you, and consequently, never to rebel against those authorities instituted by you. In all their dealings with their parents, church leaders, teachers, and civil servants, may they exhibit absolute confidence in you.

Amen.

You Who Hear Us (Psalm 65:2),

How precious the truth that we may approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may find mercy to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16)! You hear our cries, listen to our pleas, answer when we call. May our children practice the sweet presence of Jesus by leaning wholly on you in prayer. What they cannot accomplish, accomplish in them and through them when they come to you in humble submission to your will. Teach them to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests; may they be alert, and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people (Ephesians 6:18). May they come to you at every moment simply because they love you and want to be with you. May they persevere in faithful prayer, even when an answer comes not speedily, knowing that even an unrighteous judge succumbs to constant supplication—so how much more our loving Father (Luke 18:2-7)! And may they trust that when they call, you hear (Psalm 17:6); that when they ask, they will receive (Matthew 21:22); that whatever they request according to your will and for your name's sake will be done for them (1 John 5:14-15). May _____ find themselves ever on their knees before you, knowing that you are the source of all life and growth.

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S FREEDOM FROM SIN

Redeeming Savior,

At great cost to yourself have you purchased our freedom from slavery to sin (John 8:34). We were enslaved—the whole world, prisoners of sin—but by the blood of Christ are we made free to worship and obey you in the strength of your Spirit (Romans 6:18). Still, we struggle so with following you, hindered by many obstacles, weighed down by the sin that so easily entangles (Hebrews 12:1). Rescue _____ from every last vestige of sin in their life; free them from those generational sins that we have passed on in our frail, fallen state. Demolish every pretension that sets itself against knowledge of you, taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). Give them the courage and discipline to put to death sin in their life by the Spirit (Romans 8:13). Set them completely free to walk by the Spirit, and thus no longer to gratify the desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). When flesh and Spirit conflict, may your Spirit overcome the flesh and deliver them to new life in you. For the sake of your name, remove every stronghold of sin in our children's lives that they may reverently follow Christ in complete obedience.

Amen.

God Who Reveals Himself,

In the past, you spoke to us through your prophets at many times and in various ways (Hebrews 1:1); in these last days, you have spoken to us decisively through your Son—the Word made flesh who perfectly reveals our Father in heaven (John 1:14). What an awesome privilege it is to know the living God, even if we see you as through a glass darkly in these imperfect times (1 Corinthians 13:12). Instill in _____ a deep hunger to know you more, to meet you in your Word, to behold your face on every page. May their delight be in your revealed truth, and on it may they meditate day and night (Psalm 1:2). Lead them to understand your precepts (Psalm 119:27); help them to take joy in your commands; give them understanding that they may better know and follow you. May your decrees be their counselors at every moment (Psalm 119:24), and may you lead them in the paths of righteousness for your name's sake (Psalm 23:2). Infuse _____ with passion to ponder the great truths of your gospel, to hide your Word in their hearts (Psalm 119:11), to seek your wisdom as being more precious than gold or silver (Psalm 119:72). Guide them by the truth; your Word is truth (John 17:17).

Amen.

Alpha and Omega,

In dazzling brilliance and purity are you arrayed: head and hair as white as snow, eyes blazing like fire, voice like the sound of rushing waters, you stand enthroned in the majesty of your holiness while the saints and angels declare your glory (Revelation 1:14). And we are to be holy like you! Purify us, precious Jesus. Cleanse us that we may be clean; wash us, that we may be whiter than snow (Psalm 51:7). Protect _____ from being soiled by a world steeped in sin and debauchery. Give them a spirit to stand firm in the face of so much temptation (Matthew 6:13); legs to flee when facing sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:18); eyes committed not to look lustfully on any divine image-bearer (Job 31:1); and a mind renewed by your transforming power (Romans 12:2). Teach them your perfect plan for marriage, the union of two souls and bodies in heavenly bliss, and keep them from ever diminishing that pleasure by illicit means. Make them only to rejoice in the wife or husband of their youth, captivated always by their love, satisfied by his or her body alone (Proverbs 5:18-19). A person's ways are in full view of the Lord (Proverbs 5:21); may _____ live with this truth in mind at all times.

Amen.

Our Way, Truth, and Life,

You are Truth, and in you all truth is found. We have seen your glory, the glory of the One and Only, come from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14); though we have not seen the Father, you know him intimately, and you have revealed him to us (John 1:18). And you promised that the Spirit of truth would guide us into all truth when he comes, glorifying you as he makes the Trinity known to us (John 16:13-14). Lord, guide our children into all truth too. May they love you with all their mind (Deuteronomy 6:5); may they think deeply about your ways, never neglecting your Word (Psalm 119:15-16). Let them be convinced in their own mind (Romans 14:5), studying and thinking with humility and conviction. Help them watch their lives and doctrine closely, that they might be a blessing to many others (1 Timothy 4:16), encouraging others by sound doctrine because they hold firmly to the trustworthy message (Titus 1:9). If _____ err in their thinking, gently instruct them and grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 2:25). May we take the gospel as seriously as it requires (Galatians 1:9), and may we teach our children to do likewise.

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S MARRIAGE OR SINGLENESS

*Notes**Love,*

You have lavished your perfect love upon us (1 John 3:1). Even now you are preparing us as your spotless bride to be united to you in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2). Though our flaws are many, though we are so often unfaithful, you love us unconditionally and promise to love us with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). You will neither leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). What security and confidence should we then know! And yet, too often we seek fleeting, superficial relationships to meet our longing instead of the perfect love from the perfect Suitor. May we, in our marriage relationship, demonstrate to our children what biblical commitment and devotion are. May they understand how wide and how high, how long and how deep is your love for them, and may this provide them with complete satisfaction in you (Ephesians 3:18). Should you give the gift of singleness, may they find themselves lost wholly in you, without bitterness, resentment, or loneliness; should you have marriage in store for _____, prepare them to love truly and devotedly. Let them fall only for one who has fallen first for you. Even now we pray for their future spouses, that each may grow to be a tremendous man or woman of God. When married, bind them with a steadfast commitment, and may they together reflect the love of Christ for the Church and the Church's devotion to you (Ephesians 5:22-32). Above all else, may their marriage—or singleness—bring you the glory due your incomparable name.

Amen.

Masterful Creator,

In a world run mad with superficial beauty and shallow identity, we so dearly need to know our Creator—how he made us and how he loves us. We are sorely tempted to depend on the opinions of others to establish our sense of self, rather than on the only opinion that matters, that of Christ. Teach _____ to answer the crucial question, "Who am I?" by asking the still more important one: "Who does Christ say that I am?" May they know that you made them in your image (Genesis 1:27), and that they are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). You crafted them yourself, and you do not err. When Moses complained that he was not eloquent enough to be your prophet, you reminded him that you make man deaf or mute, make him blind or give him sight (Exodus 4:11). Help our darling _____ to know that the flaws we believe we see in ourselves are but the work of your hand to accomplish your purpose, that you might receive the glory in all that we do (Isaiah 64:8). Teach them that, more than merely making us, you have saved us too. May it speak to their hearts that, if we are in Christ, we are loved by God as sons and daughters, welcomed as his friends. (What wonder is this!) May _____ always find comfort—no matter the circumstances, no matter what lies the world spreads—in knowing that frail, fallen, feeble creatures that we are, we are dearly loved by the One whose image we bear.

Amen.

Friend of Sinners,

We have all been marked in diverse ways by the friendships we have known in our lives, sometimes for good and sometimes for ill. How we pray that our children will not suffer harm because of foolish friendships, but instead will grow in your knowledge and grace as they seek the company of the wise (Proverbs 13:20)! In their friendships, may they exhibit loyalty, loving at all times—even in the midst of adversity (Proverbs 17:17). Even the godliest friendships face challenges; in those moments, may our children suffer long, keeping no record of wrongs, always protecting, trusting, hoping, and persevering (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). May loving correction characterize their friendships, for wounds from a friend can be trusted (Proverbs 27:6), and as iron sharpens iron, so friends can sharpen one another (Proverbs 27:17). At every moment, in every way, may our children's friendships reflect the glory of the cross. Let them never choose the way of pride, embracing hypocritical judgment, bitterness and unforgiveness, gossip and factionalism; rather, let them choose the way of love, displaying humility, forgiveness, gentle rebuke, and true biblical community. Glorify yourself in their friendships.

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S CHARACTER

Sanctifying Spirit,

Desperately wicked and hopelessly lost apart from you, we are overcome by our sin (Jeremiah 17:9). You have called us to be righteous, but every inclination of our heart is evil all the time (Genesis 6:5). As ones who bear your image and are called by your name, sanctify our sinful children by your truth (John 17:17). Grow in _____ the fruit of righteousness to the praise of your glorious grace (Philippians 1:11). When hate rises from the blackest regions of the heart, overcome it with softest self-sacrificial love; when plagued by despondency in the face of this present darkness, produce in them the inexpressible joy of eternity; when discord and envy challenge even the strongest relationships, bring an all-surpassing peace to their soul and let it pervade all their interactions with others; when fatigued and faltering, give them a long-suffering patience that endures to the very crown of glory; when tempted with selfish disdain and thinking of themselves better than they ought, develop in them the jewel of kindness that always considers others first and treats them with the dignity and respect due every precious child of God; when evil desires cause them to crave the forbidden fruit of disobedience and self-indulgence, sweeten the fruit of goodness that they may find pleasures forevermore in you; when doubt causes them to waver, tossed about as a wave by every passing breeze, secure their feet to stand with unswerving faithfulness and devotion to you; when folly and stubbornness call out harsh tempers and unkind words, create in them the gentleness of the Savior who played with the children and stopped for the lepers; when any trial endangers their willingness to choose what is best and right and good, teach them the self-control that stands firm regardless of the situation (Galatians 5:22-23). Form in _____ the very character of Christ.

Amen.

Word of Life,

Who can tame the tongue? It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison, corrupting the whole person, setting the whole forest on fire with a small spark (James 3:5-8). The tongue has the power of life and death—the power to hurt or heal, to build up or tear down—and those who love it will surely eat its fruit (Proverbs 18:21). Though no one of us can tame the tongue, with you all is possible. By the power of your Spirit in their lives, train _____ to speak words of life to those around them. May they bless their family, friends, and acquaintances. Set a guard over their mouths; keep watch over their lips (Psalm 141:3). When they speak, may they speak only what is necessary, true, and edifying. Let no unwholesome talk come out of their lips, but only what is useful for building others up according to their needs, that it may bring grace to those who hear it (Ephesians 4:29). In their speech, may they echo the voice of the heavens, pouring forth knowledge, proclaiming the work of your hands, declaring your unequalled glory (Psalm 19:1-4). May the words of _____'s mouths and the meditation of their hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer (Psalm 19:14).

Amen.

Loving Father,

Apart from your love we would be utterly lost. Indeed, we know what love is because you loved us and laid down your life for us (1 John 3:16). You are love itself, and if we do not know love, we do not know you (John 5:42). We pray, therefore, that you would produce in _____ the fruit of love. May they demonstrate your unfailing love in all their interactions with others. May the world know that they are your disciples by their love for all (John 13:35). All their spiritual gifts and worldly talents will be for naught unless they use them in the service of love. Make them humble and patient, selfless and kind; let them not rejoice in evil, but in good; teach them to be slow to anger and eager to forgive. In them, may others find one who always protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres. May their love never fail (1 Corinthians 13:1-8). Of the triad of Christian virtues—faith, hope, and love—we know this is the greatest because only here can we reflect your character as the perfect God of love (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Amen.

Author and Finisher of Our Faith,

You endured such opposition from sinful men, endured the cross, scorning its shame, for the joy set before you. Jesus, you have modeled for us the perseverant life, having finished the race well and sat down at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 12:1-2). God, you began a good work in the life of our children, and we ask now that you would carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6). Those whom you foreknew, you predestined to be conformed to the likeness of your Son; them you called, justified, and will certainly glorify (Romans 8:29-30). We know that you are faithful, and that you will do it (1 Thessalonians 5:24); that of all those you have given to Christ, he will not lose even one, but will raise them all up at the last day (John 6:39). Instill in our children the perseverance to finish this journey, to follow you until the very end. Let them throw aside everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles that they might run the race marked out for them. No matter the circumstances, no matter the emotions, no matter the call, inspire our children to live everyday in complete obedience to you. Give them the tenacity and resolve they need to say at the end of their lives, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

Amen.

Faithful Lord,

In our lives you have proven consistently faithful, and you have promised to remain faithful to us to the very end (Matthew 28:20). And yet, so often we are faithless—wavering and stumbling, straying like sheep from your paths of righteousness (Ezekiel 34:6). Overcome in _____ all unbelief, teaching them to believe without doubting, not tossed about by every passing fad and circumstance (James 1:6). Create in them the sure and certain knowledge of what we hope for but do not yet see (Hebrews 11:1). Give them the faith of Noah, who labored for 120 years to build the ark, without ever having seen rain (Hebrews 11:7); give them the faith of Abraham, who believed in your promises though he faced infertility and landlessness for decades after they were given (Hebrews 11:8); give them the faith of Moses, who stood up to Pharaoh for the sake of his people, leading them through the Red Sea on dry land and toward the land you had promised them (Hebrews 11:24-29). With so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding _____, let them fix their eyes on Jesus—the Pioneer and Perfecter of their faith—and run with faithful endurance the race marked out for them (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S COMPASSION

*Notes**Eternal Rock,*

You have been a father to the fatherless (Psalm 68:5), a hope for the hopeless, a refuge for the poor (Isaiah 25:4); you have set the captives free and the lonely in families (Isaiah 42:7, Psalm 68:6); in you the lame walk, the blind see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and good news is preached to those who most need it (Matthew 11:5). How can we who are called by your name not show the same love to the marginalized around us? How can the love of God be in those who see the need but do not show pity (1 John 3:17)? Surely it cannot. Raise up in _____ a deep compassion for those who most need it: the poor, the sick, the lonely, the broken and hurting, widows, orphans, and aliens. In our children's arms may those in need find kindness and love, tender concern, and what resources they have to give. What blessings are given them, may they make them available for the work of your kingdom, knowing that those who are kind to the needy honor God (Proverbs 14:31). The righteous care about justice for the poor, so teach _____ to share this concern (Proverbs 29:7). What they do for the least of these, let them do as for their Savior and King (Matthew 25:40). Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream in our children's lives (Amos 5:24).

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S
WISDOM

Only Wise God,

You give wisdom, and from your mouth come knowledge and understanding (Proverbs 2:6). Wisdom calls from the highest point in the city, entreating the simple to feast in her house and walk in the ways of understanding (Proverbs 1:20; 9:6). How we pray that _____ will answer that call and learn wisdom! May they accept words of wisdom, storing up your commands within them, turning their ears to wisdom and applying their heart to understanding, calling out for insight and crying aloud for knowledge (Proverbs 2:1-3). You have promised that anyone who lacks wisdom may ask you for it, and you will give it generously (James 1:5). Give our children counsel and sound judgment, prudence and discernment; teach them to love wisdom and to listen to it, that they may find life and receive your favor (Proverbs 8:14; 4:22). Make them yearn to know wisdom that they might understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God (Proverbs 1:7). And walking in wisdom, may _____ learn to fear you—to show you a reverential awe—and thus to shun evil and folly (Job 28:28).

Amen.

Humble King,

In a moment of breathtaking humility and loving service, the King of kings and Lord of lords knelt before his people and washed their feet. What only the lowliest slave would do for his master, you, our Master, did for us—to set an example for us, that we might do as you did (John 13:14-15). Teach us to wash one another's feet, Lord. As parents, help us to humble ourselves and model Christian service for our children. May they learn from us what it means to stoop in love for the sake of another. In humility, may they consider others as more important than themselves, always looking to the interests of others before their own (Philippians 2:3-4). By the cross of Christ, crucify selfishness and vain conceit in our children. Because you have freed them from the sinful nature, may _____ use their freedom to serve others in love, thus fulfilling the whole law: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Galatians 5:13-14). May their attitude be that of Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, nevertheless humbled himself, made himself nothing, served humanity, and became obedient to death—even death on a cross (Philippians 2:6-8). Teach our children to walk the dusty road to Calvary daily as they serve others with self-crucifying love.

Amen.

Perfect Father,

The tendency towards pride is overwhelming in our lives. Steeped in self-sufficiency and self-centeredness, we abandon both dependence on you and concern for others. But pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18). Rescue our children from this destruction. Help them to clothe themselves with humility toward others, knowing that you oppose the proud but give grace to the humble (James 5:5). Let them not fall into the disgrace that comes with pride (Proverbs 11:2), but instead to win the honor that a lowly spirit brings (Proverbs 29:23). When we fix our eyes upon the cross, we see at once that we have no cause for pride, as all our works merit us nothing but damnation. But by grace you sent your Son, clothed in humble frailty, to rescue us still. May our children never boast, then, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 6:14). Let them not boast in wealth or wisdom or strength, but only in the marvelous truth that they know you, that you are the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23-24). Before you, may they eschew self-sufficient pride, as we do not even know what the next day may bring forth (James 4:13-15); before others, may they leave bragging aside, letting another praise them and not their own mouths (Proverbs 27:1-2). You hate pride and arrogance (Proverbs 8:13). May our children do likewise.

Amen.

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S FREEDOM FROM WORRY

Lord Our Provider,

The cares of this world and the wiles of the enemy so often strip us of the joy and peace we should know as your children. You have loved us perfectly, and perfect love should drive out all fear in us (1 John 4:18). In the light of your supreme goodness and relentless grace, we should be able to rejoice always, knowing you are near. Let not our children grow anxious about anything, but rather come to you in prayer and thanksgiving (tremendous weapons in the battle against worry!); and when they do, may your peace, which surpasses all understanding, guard their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:4-6). Teach _____ to esteem the needs of this world rightly, for life is more important than food, and the body more important than clothes (Matthew 6:25). Would that they have the faith of the birds and lilies, who know their Creator will provide all that is needed. For they are ephemeral, but we are eternal: how much more will you care for us (Matthew 6:26-30)? Fix our children's thoughts on you instead, seeking first your kingdom and righteousness, and trusting that all these things will be added in good time (Matthew 6:33). For you will meet all our needs according to your glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). You, who did not spare your own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will you not also, along with him, graciously give us all things (Romans 8:32)? May our quiet confidence reflect this truth.

Amen.

Giver of All Good Gifts,

As the Israelites fled Egypt after the Exodus, they soon fell into murmuring and complaining (Numbers 11:1). Forsaking both gratitude for your past actions and faith in your future salvation, they turned petulant and ungrateful. We recognize that we all have the same tendency within us. Help our children to give thanks in all circumstances, knowing that this is your will for them in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Though it is so often difficult to be thankful when we face trials of many kinds, open our children's eyes to see that in the light of the cross - in light of the salvation we have from you - we never have reason to be less than perfectly grateful. Let them do everything without complaining, shining like stars in the universe as they hold out the word of life to this crooked and depraved generation (Philippians 2:14-16). As the peace of Christ rules in their heart, let them be thankful; as the word of Christ dwells in them richly, let them sing spiritual songs of joyful thanksgiving; whatever they do, in word or deed, may they do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to you through him (Colossians 3:15-17). Let them glory in your name, rejoicing as they seek you, declaring your wonderful acts as they sing to you, remembering all that you have done—and all this while giving thanks to you (Psalm 105:1-5).

Amen.