

Connecting With Children Through Prayer

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Praying draws us into an intimate closeness with God. In prayer, we focus our attention on God's presence and power instead of our own troubles.

Times of prayer can be compared to enjoying some delicious drinks in a cozy, friendly coffee shop. You enter the coffee shop (and time of prayer) with the hope of slowing down and relaxing. Here are some of the parallels to consider:



1. **At the coffee shop** – We look forward to “withdrawing” from our cares.
 - **In prayer** – We “withdraw” to be alone with God – (Psalm 27; Luke 5:16; 6:12; James 4:8)
2. **At the coffee shop** – We usually enjoy some relaxing conversation with others.
 - **In prayer** – We enjoy some relaxing conversation with God – (Exodus 33: 9-11)
3. **At the coffee shop** – We enjoy talking about life with others.
 - **In prayer** – We enjoy talking about life with God.
4. **At the coffee shop** – We relax while we listen for answers from others.
 - **In prayer** – We listen for answers from God.
5. **At the coffee shop** – We may ask for help or wisdom from others.
 - **In prayer** – We ask God for help or wisdom. – (Numbers 11: 1-17; Matthew 7: 7; Philippians 4: 6, 7, 13, 19)
6. **At the coffee shop** – We thank others for helping us or doing something nice for us.
 - **In prayer** – We thank God for helping us and always caring for us.
7. **At the coffee shop** – We meet with others to get to know them better.
 - **In prayer** – We get to know God better – (John 10: 25-27)
8. **At the coffee shop** – We enjoy just “hanging out” with others or by ourselves
 - **In prayer** – We enjoy just “hanging out” with God – (Isaiah 43: 22-26; Luke 19: 1-6)

The Two Characteristics Most Disliked By God

1. Self-centeredness

"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." (Philippians 2:3-4)

2. Spiritual self-sufficiency

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-7)

"... So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked... Behold, I stand at the door and knock..." (Revelation 3:16-20)

The practice of praying is humbling. We mentally and physically submit to God's power, will and being. To pray with children is to model that humility and to help them come to enjoy it.

Teaching Children How To Pray

1. The “Lord’s Prayer” as a model.
 - a. Reverence for God’s holiness and position.
 - b. Submission to, and alignment with His will.
 - c. Dependence on God’s provision for needs, rather than self-sufficiency.
 - d. Humble confession and request for forgiveness.
 - e. Reminder to forgive others.
 - f. Desire for God’s help in temptation and involvement in evil.
 - g. Restatement of submission to God’s will and dominion in Heaven and earth.
2. An attitude of humble submission – Remember Who He is, and humbly submitting to His power.
3. Using regular words and conversation throughout the day – Whenever His help is needed, or His presence or power is recognized.
4. Use adult mentors as models – Pray audibly, impulsively, talk about personal prayer experiences.



Involve Children In Prayer

1. Pray in large groups (with adult or child “leader”).
2. Pray in small groups (with adult facilitator, and fellow children).
3. Pray in personal encounters (with fellow children, adults, or parents).
4. Pray in private, “quiet time” moments (alone with guided topics, or purely self-directed).
5. Pray at home with family.



Teach Children To Pray For

1. Family needs.
2. Personal needs.
3. Church needs.
4. Peer needs.
5. Community needs.
6. Local area needs.
7. National needs.
8. World needs.
9. Missionary needs.



Inspire Children To Pray Independently (at home or school)

1. Highlight children they know as examples.
2. Highlight adults they know as examples.
3. Communicate prayer requests (carefully edited) via email, website, etc.
4. Add children to adult church “prayer chains.”
5. Create a children’s “prayer chain” with carefully edited prayer requests.
6. Provide time to share answers to prayer during children’s ministry programs.

