

SCRIPTURE PRAYER

“God Himself is here waiting our response to His Presence.

This eternal world will come alive to us the moment we begin to reckon upon its reality.”

— A.W. Tozer

Think about how you came to love the person that you love the most.

Did your love for them grow as you learned more facts about them? Did you become more attached to them because you did research about them at the library? It’s hard to imagine how that might be possible. And yet, we often attempt to fill children’s heads with facts about God in hopes that somehow that cognitive accumulation will result in a love relationship with God.

Being with the ones we love, enjoying conversation (listening and responding), expressing real emotion and opinion, sharing common loves — those are things that cause a love relationship to grow. If we approach prayer from that perspective

as we mentor our children, then our children can acquire habits that will bring them to **authentic encounters with the God who loves them.**

When we (and our children) pay close attention to God talking to us through his Word, we can enjoy personal conversations with God. We can experience his involvement in our personal world. And then, who God is begins to soak into who we are, so we will start to become like Jesus. This is true for our children, too.

Think of that! Think how a child’s life can be changed when they believe that they can talk to the Creator of the universe anytime they want! Jeremiah 33:3 has no age limit. God’s promise is to young ones when he says: **Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.** God will hear the children. He will respond. Your children can hear from God when they open his Word and have conversations with him.

The more time we spend with God, the more we will enjoy and understand his love for us. The more we are aware of his nearness to us, the more we will accumulate proof of his love. As we begin to truly understand how much God loves us, then we will be able to face hard things much more easily. Hearing from God in prayer!

Start the conversation with your child!

“Come and sit with me a minute. I found something that I think you will love to know about. God speaks to us from his Word, and I want to make sure that you know what he is saying to you. First, we are going to ask God to speak to us from his Word. Then, let’s see what will happen when we listen for God’s voice from His Word ...”



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INVITATIONS TO ENGAGE

EARLY CHILDHOOD (4-6 years old)

“There is a special word from God for you in the Bible.”

(As you read the verse, put the child’s name into the verse to personalize it for them. Try this with Jeremiah 33:3.)

Make a pretend phone from a piece of paper.

“What do you hear God saying to you from the Bible verse?”

Write the message from God on the back of the pretend phone. Pretend that the phone is ringing and when the child answers, it is God speaking with a message for them. Then put the “phone” in a special, safe place where the child can reach it.

“Any time you want to talk to God today, come and get your phone and we’ll read God’s message to you again.”

ELEMENTARY AGE (7-9 years old)

“There is a special word from God for you in the Bible.”

(As they read the verse, encourage them to put their own name into the verse to personalize it for them. Jeremiah 33:3)

“Why don’t you read it one more time and listen carefully. What do you hear God saying to you from that verse?”

Have the child write what they hear God saying on a 3x5 card or piece of paper. Put the message in a special place — maybe under their pillow or on a message board.

“Every time you think about it today, you can go back to your special message from God and talk to him about it.”

(Mealtimes are easy times to remind the child to hear the message from God again.)

PRETEEN (10-12 years old)

Introduce your child to this process of praying Scripture:

Pray — ask God to speak to your heart.

Read a verse — slowly.

Read the verse again — slowly — pay attention to words that seem most important.

Read the verse one more time — slowly. This time pay attention to ways that God might be asking you to live by what this verse says.

Pray — ask God to remind you of what you have heard from him throughout the day.

Write what you prayed about in your journal and then at the end of the day go back and see if it had an impact on the rest of your day.