The Power of a PRAYING Parent

STORMIE OMARTIAN
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Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord.

Lift your hands toward Him for the life of your young children.

LAMENTATIONS 2:19
My mom has been a great mother to me. She encourages me and tries to help me with everything. I am very thankful for her prayers and love. She prays for me daily, and I think that is one of the reasons I make it through school and life. Her prayers have made a difference to me, and because of them, I am alive on this earth. One time her prayers made a big and wonderful change in my life that I never imagined could possibly happen. At my school, I had a classmate who was very mean and I never wanted to go near her because she scared me. When I told my mom, she decided we should pray together for this girl. I thought that was a good idea and so we prayed nearly every day until school was out and through the summer too. The following school year, a miracle happened and that girl changed completely, and she became one of my best friends. It affected my life and it was one of the greatest things that ever happened to me.

Mom’s praying worked. It doesn’t always work, but even when our prayers aren’t answered right away, just praying or being prayed for makes me feel better. I am thankful for God and my mother. Thank you, Mom.

Amanda Omartian (13 years old)

Amanda, Ten Years Later

Over the last ten years I have felt my mother’s prayers every day. And I am now enjoying answers to the countless prayers she
has prayed for me all my life. Even if I didn’t realize it at the time, I know her prayers were covering me—no matter where I was and what foolish thing I may have been doing. I wish one day to be half the woman she is. She has held this family together with her prayers. She has grabbed hold of God so tightly in prayer every day that the enemy couldn’t have any of us, no matter how hard he tried to gain a foothold in each of our lives. I have been in situations where I knew I was close to danger or disaster, where all I could do was desperately cry to God at that very moment. I can see now what might have happened if my parents had not been praying for me all along, and especially at that time of crisis in my life. Their prayers protected, strengthened, and guided me, even when I didn’t know I needed protection, strength, or guidance. Without them I’m certain that I would not be as whole, happy, or hopeful a person. Prayer has become such an important part of my life that I know it is something I cannot live without.

_Amanda_ (23 years old)

_Amanda, Nine Years Later_

I am truly blessed to have parents who care for me and follow the leading of the Lord to pray for all areas of my life, even ones I may not pray for myself. When I was about to enter my thirties, I started thinking that maybe marriage wasn’t something I would have, unlike many of my friends who had already married and had children by that time. I had even stopped praying for that, not because I thought prayer was unimportant, but because I didn’t want to feel the disappointment of marriage never happening for me. But not only did it happen unexpectedly at age 31, I married someone who exceeded my expectations for a lifelong companion in so many ways.

I know my mother prayed my husband into my life. How great to have a mom who never ceases to care about the things I sometimes don’t even have the strength to address! Another thing she
prayed for is that I would have a career I love that fits my personality and abilities and brings me joy. I was such a late bloomer in just about every area of my life that I felt as though that day would never come for me, either. But just like finding my life partner in my thirties, my career also took off at that time and doors opened for me. I am blessed to enjoy what I do, and that is an answer to many prayers. I give thanks to God—and to my mom for being so diligent to fight on my behalf, to pray without ceasing and trust that God would get me to where I needed to go.

Amanda (32 years old)

Well, I must say that I have truly been blessed with a couple of parents who are very loving and caring, very understanding, and, yes, even occasionally funny. But of the many wonderful qualities my parents possess, the one that I respect most is their persistence in prayer for me and my sister and our everyday lives. If I were to tell you how much their prayers have meant to me and made a difference in my life, I would probably end up writing more than my mother. But since you probably did not pick up this book to read my writings, I will pinpoint the most memorable time in my life where having praying parents really paid off.

Throughout all of my eighteen years, both of my parents have constantly been in prayer for my safety. While growing up in the “peaceful” city of Los Angeles, those prayers kept me shielded from danger. I clearly remember one particular time during my freshman year in high school when God protected me in a serious auto accident. Two other boys and I were driving to school one morning and were not wearing seat belts when we collided nearly head-on with another car turning left in the intersection. One of my friends was severely injured when he went through the windshield, and the other boy hit the steering wheel with his face. I was in the backseat and ended up with only a minor injury to my lower back.
In a situation where everyone could have died, God put His protection over the car and spared all three of us. It was at that point in my life when I realized just how important prayer is, and I gained a clearer perspective of God’s awesome power in the midst of disastrous situations.

I am eternally grateful to my parents for their persistence in praying over my life. It has truly made a difference in not only sparing me from danger, but also keeping me on the right path as an honest, moral person.

I guess now that I am eighteen years old, the prayers of my parents will probably change somewhat. I suspect they may be praying that I will hurry up and get married so they can have the house to themselves.

Christopher Omartian (18 years old)

**Christopher, Ten Years Later**

When I look back over the past ten years, I cannot deny the awesome power of prayer and where I am today as a result of it. I am still blessed by the same loving and caring parents and, yes, they still struggle to be funny. But I know more than ever that having parents who cared enough to take the time to pray continually for my well-being has proven to be extremely valuable to me. Without the prayers of my family, who defined what it means to pray without ceasing, I don’t know where I would be.

A few years ago, I found myself in a difficult place. The time I was spending in the Word and prayer had become more of a daily routine than the powerful, life-changing experience it should be. And as a result, there were major deficiencies in my life. I was stuck in a financial crisis. I also had been stabbed in the back by someone I had trusted for years. But most importantly, I had lost my joy and peace. I remember calling my mother one night explaining my situation and asking her to pray for me. She responded by telling me that God had brought me to this place for a reason and that He was trying to
get my attention. The following day when I opened the Word, I was stunned by the scripture “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33). I had read it so many times before but never realized the profound simplicity of the passage. I had become so sidetracked by my own personal challenges that I was constantly asking God to make something happen in my life rather than truly seeking the Spirit of God to empower my life. It was at that point I fell on my face before the Lord with no other agenda than to seek Him.

All this to say that God will often allow us to dig ourselves into our own stress-filled situations while waiting patiently for us to embrace His will first and foremost. And those miserable times become the very vehicle God uses to bring us into a deeper relationship with Him. God has poured out on me far beyond what I deserve. And I can truly say that the fervent prayers of my parents for me to have a deeper walk with the Lord are what brought it all to fruition. Of course, I am referring mainly to my mother since half of my father’s prayers are allocated toward the success of the Chicago Bears.

Christopher (28 years old)

Christopher, Nine Years Later

I am quite fortunate to have grown up with a mother and father who believe in the power of prayer. Throughout my life, my parents prayed that I would discover and embrace the purpose God had for me. Their persistence in seeking the Lord and His will for my life steered me clear of much heartache over three decades and changed my life in truly miraculous ways. From the time I was young, both of my parents prayed that I would find a wife of noble character. They saw the importance of praying that God would protect and prepare her just as He was preparing me. And I must say I couldn’t be happier with the way things turned out. Today, I am married to my amazing wife, Paige. She is the most beautiful, godly woman
any man could ever hope for...a partner who builds me up in faith, always seeking to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord. She is a direct answer to prayer.

At times in the past, when I’ve struggled with my prayer life, I’ve never once been able to deny the example set by my two very dedicated parents. Over the course of my life, I’ve learned that being faithful to pray without ceasing is what leads to mighty things happening. It’s like clockwork! I know that one day I will pray for my own children as my mother and father prayed for me. I’m sure it will feel overwhelming at times and my faith will be stretched in new ways. Nonetheless, I am confident that the same God who responded to my parents’ prayers on my behalf will be faithful to my wife and me as we seek His will for our family. I hope this will be an encouragement to parents to sow seeds of prayer into the lives of their children and watch God work all things together for good.

Christopher (37 years old)
Introduction

When I first wrote *The Power of a Praying Parent*, I never dreamed it would touch millions of lives. All I thought about was how the Lord had taught me a way to pray for my children that was powerful and effective—and that I wanted to share this with other parents. What had begun as a group of families who got together regularly in our home to pray for our collective children became a way of life for all of us. We felt the power of our prayers and saw their wonderful effects and amazing results. The answers to the prayers we prayed over the years fueled our faith and inspired us to be persistent and diligent to continue to pray even as, one by one, our children grew up and left home to build their own lives.

In the last edition of this book, I included an additional chapter called “Praying for Your Adult Children.” It consists of simple prayers to help you pray specifically for them. That’s because as a parent you will never stop praying for your children, no matter what age they are or where they live. That chapter turned into a book called *The Power of Praying for Your Adult Children*. Even if your children are already grown and you have not prayed for them before, you can still use this book to pray for them today. Then add the book specifically for adult children when you are ready for something more in-depth. My children are in their thirties now, and I continue to use that book and this one as a guide for prayer.

In this latest edition of *The Power of a Praying Parent*, I have included a new chapter called “Getting Through the Teenage Years Successfully.” In these serious times, it is clear that we cannot afford...
to wait until our children are teens to cover that crucial section of their lives in prayer. I hope this chapter will remind you of things you might not remember to pray about until they become urgent issues.

As you embark on this adventure of praying for your children, you will find it to be an unending habit of your heart. Being able to positively affect your children in prayer will keep you in close contact with them and actively involved in their lives, even after they leave home. And it will continually contribute to your joy as a parent.

Stormie Omartian

For a special message from Stormie, please visit http://bit.ly/PrayingParentIntro
It's the best of jobs. It's the most difficult of jobs. It can bring you the greatest joy. It can cause the greatest pain. There is nothing as fulfilling and exhilarating. There's nothing so depleting and exhausting. No area of your life can make you feel more like a success when everything is going well. No area of your life can make you feel more like a failure when things go wrong.

PARENTING!

The word itself can bring contradictory emotions to the surface. We try to do the best we can raising our children. Then, just when we think we've got the parenting terrain all figured out, we suddenly find ourselves in new territory again as each new age and stage presents another set of challenges. Sometimes we sail through smoothly. Sometimes we encounter tempests and tidal waves. Sometimes we get so tired that we just want to give up—let the storm take us where it will.

But I have good news. We don't have to be tossed and turned by these winds of change. Our children's lives don't ever have to be left to chance.

We don't have to pace the floor anxiously, biting our nails, gnawing our knuckles, dreading the terrible twos or torturous teens. We don't have to live in fear of what each new phase of development may bring, what dangers might be lurking behind every corner. Nor do we have to be perfect parents. We can start right now—this very minute, in fact—making a positive difference in our child's future.
It’s never too early and never too late. It doesn’t matter if the child is three days old and perfect, or thirty years old and going through a third divorce because of an alcohol problem. At every stage of their lives our children need and will greatly benefit from our prayers. The key is not trying to do it all by ourselves all at once, but rather turning to the expert parent of all time—our Father God—for help. Then, taking one step at a time, we must cover every detail of our child’s life in prayer. There is great power in doing that, far beyond what most people imagine. In fact, don’t ever underestimate the power of a praying parent.

I didn’t have the best role model for parenting because I was raised by a mother who was mentally ill and very abusive. I wrote about that abuse and my miraculous recovery from its effects in my book *Stormie* (Harvest House Publishers). I also related how having my first child, our son Christopher, caused me to realize that I had the potential in me to be an abusive parent. I discovered that if we are parenting without God, we are destined to repeat the mistakes of our past and to mimic what we’ve observed. A scene from childhood can flash across the screen of your mind and play itself out on the stage of your life in a moment of weakness—before you even realize what has happened. It may occur so quickly that you feel powerless to control it, and it can make you do and say destructive things to your children. This becomes compounded by the guilt that inevitably takes root and grows to often paralyzing proportions. Thankfully I had good counseling and support and was able to overcome this problem before any damage happened to my child, but many people have not been so fortunate.

Because I was painfully aware that I didn’t have a positive parenting experience to imitate, I was nervous and anxious when my first child was born. I feared I would do to him what had been done to me. I read every book available on the subject of parenting and attended each Christian child-rearing seminar I could find. I tried to do my best with all this good and helpful information,
but it was never enough. I had countless agonizing concerns for my son’s social, spiritual, emotional, and mental growth, but most compelling of all, I feared that something bad might happen to him. Kidnapping, drowning, disfiguring accidents, irreparable injuries, diseases, sexual molestation, abuse, rape, or death all played across my mind as possibilities for his future. As much as I tried not to be an overreacting parent, every newspaper, magazine article, or TV newscast on crime made me more concerned for his welfare. Plus we lived in Los Angeles, a city where crime was rampant. It was more than I could handle.

One day in prayer I cried out to God, saying, “Lord, this is too much for me. I can’t keep a twenty-four-hours-a-day, moment-by-moment watch on my son. How can I ever have peace?”

Over the next few weeks the Lord spoke to my heart about entrusting Christopher to Him. My husband and I had dedicated our son to God in a church service, but God wanted more than that. He wanted us to continue giving Christopher to Him on a daily basis. This didn’t mean that we would now abdicate all responsibility as parents. Rather, we would declare ourselves to be in full partnership with God. He would shoulder the heaviness of the burden and provide wisdom, power, protection, and ability far beyond ourselves. We would do our job to discipline, teach, nurture, and “train up a child in the way he should go” knowing that “when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). We were to depend on God to enable us to raise our child properly, and He would see to it that our child’s life was blessed.

An important part of our job was to keep the details of our child’s life covered in prayer. In doing this, I learned to identify every concern, fear, worry, or possible scenario that came into my mind as a prompting by the Holy Spirit to pray for that particular thing. As I covered Christopher in prayer and released him into God’s hands, God released my mind from that particular concern. This doesn’t mean that once I prayed for something I never prayed about it again,
but at least for a time I was relieved of the burden. When it surfaced again, I prayed about it again. God didn’t promise that nothing bad would ever happen to my child, but praying released the power of God to work in his life, and I could enjoy more peace in the process.

I also learned that I should not try to force my own will on my child in prayer. This only leads to frustration and disappointment for all concerned. You know the kind of prayer I mean, because we’re all prone to it: “God, I pray that my son will grow up and marry my best friend’s daughter.” (Her parents would be great in-laws.) Or, “Lord, let my daughter get accepted at this school.” (Then I can feel better about myself.) Of course we may never consciously acknowledge the words in parentheses, but they are there in the back of our mind, subtly inspiring us to impose our will in God’s ear. I have found it’s better to pray more along the lines of “Lord, show me how to pray for this child. Help me to raise him Your way, and may Your will be done in his life.”

By the time our daughter, Amanda, was born four and a half years after Christopher, God had taught me what it means to pray in great depth and to really intercede for my child’s life. Over the next twelve years God answered my prayers in many wonderful ways, and today I see the results.

My husband and I recognize the hand of God on our children’s lives, and they readily acknowledge it as well. For it’s the power of God that penetrates a child’s life when a parent prays.

What Is Prayer and How Does it Work?

Prayer is much more than just giving a list of desires to God, as if He were the great Sugar Daddy/Santa Claus in the sky. Prayer is acknowledging and experiencing the presence of God and inviting His presence into our lives and circumstances. It’s seeking the presence of God and releasing the power of God which gives us the means to overcome any problem.

The Bible says, “Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in
heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 18:18). God gives us authority on earth. When we take that authority, God releases power to us from heaven. Because it’s God’s power and not ours, we become the vessel through which His power flows. When we pray, we bring that power to bear upon everything we are praying about, and we allow the power of God to work through our powerlessness. When we pray, we are humbling ourselves before God and saying, “I need Your presence and Your power, Lord. I can’t do this without You.” When we don’t pray, it’s like saying we have no need of anything outside of ourselves.

Praying in the name of Jesus is a major key to God’s power. Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you” (John 16:23). Praying in the name of Jesus gives us authority over the enemy and proves we have faith in God to do what His Word promises. God knows our thoughts and our needs, but He responds to our prayers. That’s because He always gives us a choice about everything, including whether we will trust Him and obey by praying in Jesus’ name.

Praying not only affects us, it also reaches out and touches those for whom we pray. When we pray for our children, we are asking God to make His presence a part of their lives and work powerfully in their behalf. That doesn’t mean there will always be an immediate response. Sometimes it can take days, weeks, months, or even years. But our prayers are never lost or meaningless. If we are praying, something is happening, whether we can see it or not. The Bible says, “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16). All that needs to happen in our lives and the lives of our children cannot happen without the presence and power of God. Prayer invites and ignites both.

Begin with a Personalized List

I actually started praying for each of my children from the time they were conceived because the Bible says, “He has blessed your
children within you” (Psalm 147:13). I believed in the power of prayer. What I didn’t realize at that time was how important each detail of our lives is to Him. It’s not enough to pray only for the concerns of the moment; we need to pray for the future, and we need to pray against the effects of past events. When King David was depressed over what had happened in his life and fearful about future consequences (Psalm 143), he didn’t just say, “Oh, well, whatever will be will be.” He cried out to God about the past, present, and future of his life. He prayed about everything. And that is exactly what we must do as well.

To do this effectively, I found I had to make an extensive personalized list for each child. This wasn’t some legalistic obsession that said, “If I don’t pray for each specific detail, God won’t cover it.” I was simply more at peace when I knew God had heard each of my many concerns. So once a year, when we went to the beach for our family vacation, I used those cherished early morning hours before anyone else was up to spend time with God making a master prayer list. I would sit and gaze out over the ocean, pencil and paper in hand, and ask God to show me how to pray for each child over the next twelve months. After all, He was the only one who truly knew what each child needed and what challenges they would face in the future. The Bible says, “The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him” (Psalm 25:14). He reveals things to us when we ask. God always met me there with good instructions, and I came home with prayer lists for each of my children. Then, throughout the year, I added to them whenever I needed to do so.

I kept many of those lists, and as I look back at them now and see all the answers to my prayers, I’m overcome with the faithfulness of God to work in the lives of our children when we pray.

**God’s Word as Your Weapon**

The battle for our children’s lives is waged on our knees. When we don’t pray, it’s like sitting on the sidelines watching our children
in a war zone getting shot at from every angle. When we *do* pray, we’re in the battle alongside them, appropriating God’s power on their behalf. If we also declare the Word of God in our prayers, then we wield a powerful weapon against which no enemy can prevail.

God’s Word is “living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12) and it pierces everything it touches. God says His Word, “shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11). In other words, His Word is never ineffectual or without fruit. That’s why I’ve included a number of Bible verses following each of the prayer examples. When you are praying for your child, include an appropriate Scripture verse in your prayer. If you can’t think of a verse at the moment you’re praying, don’t let that stop you, but quote a verse or two whenever you can and you’ll see mighty things happen.

As you read the Word during your own devotional time and as you pray for your children with the Holy Spirit’s leading, you’ll find many more Scriptures to include. And you don’t have to have a different verse for each prayer. You may have one or two verses that you use repeatedly during a specific season of intercession for your child. For example, when my daughter went through a period of struggle in school, every time we prayed about it together I encouraged her to quote, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). When I prayed about the matter by myself, I incorporated the verse, “The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles” (Psalm 34:17).

When we employ God’s Word in prayer, we are laying hold of the promises He gives us and appropriating them into the lives of our children. Through His Word, God guides us, speaks to us, and reminds us He is faithful. In that way, He builds faith in our hearts and enables us to understand *His* heart. This helps us to pray boldly in faith, knowing exactly what is *His* truth, *His* will, and our authority.
When Jesus spoke to the devil, He rebuked him. Sometimes in doing this He quoted Scripture. For example, when Satan said to Jesus, “If You will worship before me, all will be Yours,” Jesus replied, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve’” (Luke 4:7-8).

Jesus is our role model. We are to observe Him and do what He does. He said, “Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father” (John 14:12). He also said, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:7). We can resist the devil more effectively if we pray to God according to His directions found in the Scriptures, and if we understand the power and authority given to us through Jesus Christ. If we . . .

WATCH Him,
WALK with Him,
WAIT on Him,
WORSHIP Him,
and live in His WORD,
WE WILL WIN this battle for our children.

Whenever you pray for your child, do it as if you are interceding for his or her life—because that is exactly what you are doing. Remember that while God has a perfect plan for our children’s lives, Satan has a plan for them too. Satan’s plan is to destroy them, and he will try to use any means possible to do so: drugs, sex, alcohol, rebellion, accidents, disease. But he won’t be able to successfully use any of those things if his power has been dissipated by prayer. The Bible says, “How can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man?” (Matthew 12:29). In other words, we can’t have any effect in the devil’s territory unless we take dominion over him and forbid him any authority there. Thus, we can also forbid him access to our children’s lives.

Of course, Satan can do a lot of damage if we don’t teach our
children God’s ways and God’s Word and help them to respect God’s laws, and if we don’t discipline them, guide them, and help them learn to make godly choices. The Bible tells us, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). When we don’t do those things, our children can fall into rebellion and make choices that take them out from under the umbrella of God’s protection. Prayer and proper instruction in the ways and words of God will make sure that does not happen and that God’s plan succeeds—not the devil’s. The Bible says, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). Binding Satan’s plans in prayer is part of resisting the devil. Resisting him on behalf of our children can free them to make godly choices.

Satan will always try to make a case against our children so that he can have access into their lives. If we are armed with Scripture, however, he will have to contend with the Word of God. The Bible says, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before God day and night, has been cast down” (Revelation 12:10). Jesus’ death on the cross broke the back of the accuser, but the evil one will still harass all who don’t know their God-given authority over him. This is where our prayers come in. Our children will stand accused until we break the stronghold of the accuser in prayer, using the Word of God as hard evidence against him.

A Good Example of Answered Prayer

From the time our son was about two years old, my husband and I had regular prayer groups in our home. Our church had organized small home groups and we led one of them. Gradually we realized that the needs of our group were too great to handle in one monthly meeting, so we added another night each month just for prayer with the adults. During that time we prayed for every kind of need, but the volume of prayer requests for our children was enormous. As a
result, I felt that we needed to have an entire day devoted specifically to praying with and for each of our children. This time of intercession, which we called “Interceding for Our Children’s Lives,” became so popular that people requested it again and again. In fact, the foundation for this book began more than thirty years ago in those very prayer groups. None of us had any idea how important they would become. We only knew we were following the leading of the Lord as we learned how to intercede, and we rejoiced together when we witnessed the many answers to our prayers. (See the Appendix, “Praying Together with Other Parents,” for suggestions on how to organize your own time of group intercession for children.) The good news is that in all those years since praying for these children, we never lost a single child—not to disease, accident, rebellion, ungodliness, or to the enemy’s plans. That is miraculous!

The Bible says, “If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:19). Also, one can put a thousand to flight and two can put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30). It doesn’t take much of a mathematical mind to figure out, then, how powerful ten to twelve parents can be when they join in prayer and cry out to God for their children.

In the Scripture I used as the guiding verse for this entire book, God commands, “Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord. Lift your hands toward Him for the life of your young children” (Lamentations 2:19). How much clearer can it be that we are to pray with fervency and passion for our young ones, and look forward to those prayers being answered?

We have had so many answers to the prayers offered during our group times over the last thirty-five years that I could write a book on those alone, testified to by the parents and children who were involved. However, one specific instance stands out in my mind because it was a direct result of our very first prayer time and it was a compelling request for all of us in the group.
Nancy, a single mom, requested prayer for her daughter, Janet, who knew the Lord but was walking away from Him because of her disappointment and hurt over her parents’ divorce. One of the specific things we prayed for was Janet’s protection, for we knew that children who choose to walk out from under the umbrella of God’s blessing open themselves up to all kinds of harm. Within a few weeks of that prayer time, Janet was driving on the freeway late at night and was hit head-on by a drunk driver who had driven up the off-ramp and was traveling full speed in the wrong direction. The doctors said it was a miracle she wasn’t killed, but she did have severe injuries to her head, neck, shoulders, and back.

Eventually, through continued prayer and physical therapy, Janet recovered completely, physically and spiritually. She and her mother and all of us who prayed believe she would not be alive had we not interceded for her life before the accident. Today, Janet is happily married, with a beautiful daughter of her own, and she is a devoted Christian woman. She became our secretary and assistant for eight years, and she will always be our most wonderful reminder of the power of a praying parent.

When the Answers Don’t Come

Possibly the hardest part of praying for our children is waiting for our prayers to be answered. Sometimes the answers come quickly, but many times they do not. When they don’t, we can become discouraged, despairing, or angry at God. Everything seems hopeless, and we want to give up. Sometimes, in spite of all we’ve done for them and all our prayers for them, our children make poor choices and then reap the consequences. Those times are hard for a parent to watch, no matter how old the child.

If your child has made poor choices, don’t berate yourself and stop praying. Keep communication lines open with your child, continue interceding for him or her, and declare God’s Word. Instead of giving up, resolve to be even more committed to prayer. Pray with...
other believers. Stand strong and say, “I’ve only begun to fight,” keeping in mind that your part of the fight is to pray. God actually fights the battle. Remember, too, that your fight is not with your child; it’s with the devil. He is your enemy, not your child. Stand strong in prayer until you see a breakthrough in your child’s life.

One of the most encouraging Scriptures I have read with regard to such perseverance is when David said, “I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them; neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed. I have wounded them, so that they could not rise; they have fallen under my feet. For You have armed me with strength for the battle” (Psalm 18:37-39). He didn’t stop until the job was done and neither should we. We should pray through until we see the answer.

If you have anger or unforgiveness toward God or your child—yes, even loving parents can have these feelings—tell God in total honesty. If you feel disappointment and hopelessness, state it clearly. Don’t live with negative emotions and guilt that can separate you from God. Share all of your feelings honestly with Him and then ask Him to forgive you and show you what your next step should be. Above all, don’t let any disappointment over unanswered prayer cause you to stop praying.

I Said “Praying,” Not “Perfect”

When things go wrong in our children’s lives, we blame ourselves. We beat ourselves up for not being perfect parents. But it’s not being a perfect parent that makes the difference in a child’s life, because there are no perfect parents. None of us are perfect, so how can we be perfect parents? It’s being a praying parent that makes the difference. And that’s something we all can be. In fact, we don’t even have to be parents. We can be a friend, a teacher, a grandparent, an aunt, a cousin, a neighbor, a guardian, or even a stranger with a heart of compassion or concern for a child. The child may be someone we hear of or read about in the newspaper; the child may even be an adult for whom we have a mother’s or father’s heart.
If you’re aware of a child who doesn’t have a praying parent, you can step into the gap right now and answer that need. You can effect a change in the life of any child you care about. All it takes is a heart that says, “God, show me how to pray in a way that will make a difference in this child’s life.” Then begin with the prayers in this book and see where the Holy Spirit leads you.

At the end of each chapter I have included prayers for you to pray. You may want to pray one each day for a month, or pray one specific prayer for a week, or concentrate on your most pressing concern of the moment until you feel released to move on to another.

Repeat these prayers as often as you like. God didn’t say, “Don’t come to Me over and over with the same request.” In fact, He said to keep on praying, but don’t make empty repetitions in your prayers.

And remember, you don’t have to keep to any schedule or pray these specific prayers. They are simply a guide to get you going. Begin by submitting yourself to God and asking Him to help you be the parent and intercessor He wants you to be. Pray as the Holy Spirit leads you, as you listen to His prompting in your heart for your child.

I look forward to hearing about the answers to your prayers.
Prayer

Lord, I submit myself to You. I realize that parenting a child in the way You would have me to is beyond my human abilities. I know I need You to help me. I want to partner with You and partake of Your gifts of wisdom, discernment, revelation, and guidance. I also need Your strength and patience, along with a generous portion of Your love flowing through me.

Teach me how to love the way You love. Where I need to be healed, delivered, changed, matured, or made whole, I invite You to do that in me. Help me to walk in righteousness and integrity before You. Teach me Your ways, enable me to obey Your commandments and do only what is pleasing in Your sight.

May the beauty of Your Spirit be so evident in me that I will be a godly role model. Give me the communication, teaching, and nurturing skills that I must have. Make me the parent You want me to be and teach me how to pray and truly intercede for the life of this child. Lord, You said in Your Word, “Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive” (Matthew 21:22). In Jesus’ name I ask that You will increase my faith to believe for all the things You’ve put on my heart to pray for concerning this child.

In Jesus’ name I pray.
WEAPONS OF WARFARE

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

John 15:16

The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.

Proverbs 20:7

Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

John 14:13-14

Do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4

Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:17-18