

PRAYING WITH YOUR KIDS BEFORE SCHOOL

ONE VERSE. ONE PRAYER.



HOLLY A MELTON

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Dedicated TO

My children, Carter and Briella. May you continue to read God's Word and pray it into your life daily so that you become more like Him and make an impact on the world around you.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command to you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Deuteronomy 6: 5-9 (ESV)

Preface

A new school year is getting ready to start. Whether your children are beginning kindergarten or their senior year of high school, it is never too late to begin the discipline of praying with your kids before school. Prayer changes us. Prayer changes them. Prayer brings us closer to God and each other by growing in our understanding of scripture and asking Him to help us to apply it to our lives.

Since this is a new journey you and your children will begin together, set aside time to share with them why you want to do this together. This one discipline, that may take 1-2 minutes a day, can renew our minds, change our attitudes and impact our behaviors and decisions. In the coming year, if we are faithful to spend these few minutes with God in prayer, we can be transformed together to become stronger and to become more of who God wants us to be.

Starting a new discipline won't be easy, for your kids or for you. You'll need a plan. Do you need to get up earlier to make time for this? I know some of you aren't morning people and the extra effort to do this will be difficult. The coffee just hasn't kicked in yet! Having a plan helps. Do you plan to do it in the car on the way to school, or at the door before they leave for the bus, or at the table before you begin homeschooling? You determine when and where. Set your alarm to remind you. Put this book in a place you'll see it each morning. And ask God to help you to take this new discipline of praying with your children to heart.

But it's not enough to have a plan. We need to invite the Holy Spirit to lead us in this new morning routine. How easy it is to yell in frustration when the clock is ticking and the kids are lagging, when their listening ears aren't on yet and their own brains are dealing with brain-fog. Let's remember as parents that we don't do mornings alone. We have the Holy Spirit to guide us on how to help our children prepare for the day.

Each week we will focus on a theme for us to explore in the Bible and prayerfully apply it to our lives. Each verse is paraphrased into an easier understanding for younger children, with a shorter prayer for them to recite. Having young children, I observed that they may not always fully understand the verse or prayer, but I know that God's Word does not come back void and the Lord will still use it in their lives. Reading the verses and praying out loud to obey them became so ingrained in my kids that my son started to pray before bed, "God, help me to obey the Bible verse tomorrow." So, even if some days, it seemed to go over their heads, I know God will still use this process of praying daily with them in their lives. At the end of each chapter there will be a blank page where you can write out a personal prayer related to the topic for your child or children. This will document what you've prayed so that you can look back to see how God answered your prayers for your children throughout the year.

What I love about God's Word is we can read the same verse at a different time in our lives and it will have a new impact and application to our current situation. This is true if you use this book the following year as well. Children need repetition. The more we pray these themes into our children's lives over the years, the more it will truly transform their minds and change their behaviors.

This one small addition to your morning can change you and your child's entire day. This small addition to your week can change you and your child's understanding of a theme in scripture. This small addition to your year can transform your lives for all eternity. This small addition to their lives will help them walk with Jesus daily and be more sensitive to His Spirit's voice.

So, let's link arms with our children and together enter His throne room of grace with confidence, knowing He will give us the structure and strength to seek Him daily.

WEEK 1

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

This first week we will be praying through verses about how to “be strong and courageous” with our children. The first week of school can be nerve-wracking for kids. They meet new teachers, new classmates, and have new concepts to learn. They are seeing where their place is in a new environment and it can be scary and overwhelming.

As parents, we too need to be strong and courageous as we release them from our care and give them the freedom to learn, try new things, fail, make mistakes and become more independent. I don’t know who needs more courage, us as we release our kids into environments where they may be influenced in ways we wish they weren’t, or our kids, as they enter into new environments not knowing what to expect. Either way, this is a week to link arms in prayer to grow in strength and courage together.

God promises that He will go before us and He will not leave us as we move forward. We do not need to be afraid or panic if we know our loving, all-powerful God is going to be with us. Our strength comes by putting our hope and trust in God and His promises. If He says He will be with us, He will be. We can be motivated by knowing that as we take steps of faith, our faith and work will be rewarded. God wants to encourage us on this journey. But God also wants to remind us that true success happens when we obey Him and His commands, not when we go off and do our own thing. We move forward in strength and courage with resolve that God is with us and we will continue to walk with God. Even though God is with us, there may be moments when anxiety arises. In those moments, we can pause and invite the Lord into that situation. We can wait on Him to calm us and renew our strength to keep going.

Let us walk into a new school year with strength and courage by trusting God is with us. He has our children and He has us.

MONDAY

DO NOT BE AFRAID.

“So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.”

- Deuteronomy 31:6 (NLT)

Father, help me to be strong and courageous as I walk into my new classrooms and meet my teachers and classmates. I choose right now to be courageous and work through my fears instead of being controlled by them. Amen.



younger kids

Be strong and courageous! Don't be afraid. God will be with you!

- Deuteronomy 31:6 (Paraphrase)

God, thank You for being with me on my first day of school. Help me to be strong and courageous today. Amen.

TUESDAY

PUT YOUR HOPE IN GOD.

“So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the Lord!”

- Psalm 31:24 (NLT)

Father, I chose to put my hope in You and not in my grades or popularity this year. Use me for great things as I walk with You and takes steps of faith. Amen.



younger kids

Be strong and courageous because God has a plan.

- Psalm 31:24 (Paraphrase)

God, help me to be strong and courageous today knowing You have a plan. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

YOUR WORK WILL BE REWARDED.

“But as for you, be strong and courageous, for your work will be rewarded.”

- 2 Chronicles 15:7 (NLT)

Father, help me to have integrity in my school work, to work hard, take risks, and try new things. Amen.



Be strong and courageous! God will reward your hard work.

- 2 Chronicles 15:7 (Paraphrase)

God, help me to be courageous and to try new things. Amen.

THURSDAY

BE COURAGEOUS TO OBEY GOD.

“Be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.”

- Joshua 1:7 (NLT)

Father, help me to be strong enough to obey your Word and to be courageous to follow it when others don't. Amen.



Be strong and obey God's Word. Be courageous to obey when others aren't.

- Joshua 1:7 (Paraphrase)

God help me to be strong enough to obey You. Amen.

FRIDAY

BE COURAGEOUS IN WAITING.

“Wait patiently for the LORD. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD.”

- Psalm 27:14 (NLT)

Father, help me to be patient while I wait on You for things in my life. Help me to not be discouraged. Amen.



Be strong and courageous while you wait for the Lord to work.

- Psalm 27:14 (Paraphrase)

God, help me to be patient in times I need to wait for things. Amen.

Personal Prayer

for your child(ren)

Once our children begin school, time with them is greatly decreased and other people begin to influence their lives. It is one of the most crucial times for us to be intentional in discipling our children. But how do we do it? And when can we do it with our busy schedules?

We disciple our children by reading the Bible, discussing how to apply it to our lives and then praying together for God to continue to make us more like Him. Praying with Your Kids Before School will guide you to do just that each day of the school year. You don't have to start in August, you just have to start. Remember, prayer changes us. Prayer brings us closer to God and each other by growing in our understanding of scripture and asking Him to help us to apply it to our lives. The sooner we bring this discipline into our homes, the sooner God can guide us how to disciple our children in the way they should go.

Each week has a theme to explore in the Bible that can be prayerfully applied to you and your child's lives. Every verse is also paraphrased into an easier understanding for younger children, with a shorter prayer for them to recite, so that the book can be used on both older and younger children. At the end of each chapter there will be a blank page where you can write out a personal prayer related to the topic for your child. This book becomes not only a guide on how to disciple your child, but a precious keepsake of how you've prayed for them and how God answered your prayers for your child throughout the year.

This one discipline, that may take 5 minutes a day, can renew our minds, change our attitudes and impact our behaviors and decisions. If we are faithful to spend these few minutes with God in prayer, we can be transformed together to become stronger and to become more of who God wants us to be. One verse, one prayer just might change the trajectory of their lives!

So, let's link arms with our children and together take time to meet with Him, so that, no matter how little time we have with our children or who else is trying to influence them, we know they are beginning their day armored in God's Word and prayer!



HOLLY A. MEITON is a wife, mother, speaker, author and ministry coach. She has a degree in Marriage and Family Studies and has served in ministry with Cru since 1999. Her passion is to train and disciple others in the Word of God so that they can impact the world around them for Christ.

