

FAMILY TOOLBOX



SERIES

TEACHING KIDS TO PRAY



Children's Ministry

Golden Hills Community Church

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A Note to Families

The Children's Ministry of Golden Hills Community Church exists to *“Glorify God by helping families develop age-appropriate disciples who impact their world for Christ”*.

In order to accomplish this task, we at GHCC have attempted to describe the discipleship of a believer, which includes these three elements:

- **Worship**
- **Grow**
- **Serve**

We believe that children, as followers of Christ, can also participate in the discipleship process. We have further identified twelve specific spiritual growth issues within these three elements of discipleship.

It is our desire in Children's Ministry, to create a balanced program, which addresses all of these spiritual growth issues, helping to produce a healthy, age-appropriate disciple.

However, statistics tell us that the national average for children attending Sunday school is 26 hours each year (that's only half of the time). And our church is no exception to this. Our average Sunday attendance is roughly half of our total registration. What does this mean? Well, we could have the best programming, the best teachers and staff (which, by the way, I think we do) and we would still have a very hard time in accomplishing the goal God has set before us. But there is a way.

The way in which we can realize the goal of making age-appropriate disciples is stated in our purpose: "...by helping *families* develop age-appropriate disciples..." In fact, the best approach to aiding your child's faith development is *not* in the formal setting of the church, but in the informal, everyday life of your home. God's Word clearly reminds us of this in Deuteronomy 6:4-7:

"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. The commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress (teach) them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down at night and when you get up."

We encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity to "impress upon your children" spiritual truth. Use dinner conversation, driving in the car, bedtime routines and getting ready each morning as times to reflect and teach about God and his faithfulness.

To help you in these discussions, we have developed a series of tools for you to use. These tools are series of booklets (**THE FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**), each addressing the spiritual growth issues. In them you will find information, discussion questions and activity suggestions to help you guide your children on their spiritual journeys.

Dear Parents,

Did you know that prayer is really an act of worship? As Christians, we worship God when we adore, confess, praise or ask (supplication) of Him in prayer. It is one of the highest acts of worship we can involve ourselves in. It is an amazing thing to contemplate-we can come before the creator of the universe and have dialogue with Him! We can communicate with the living, almighty God. Pretty incredible, isn't it? But, like any other spiritual discipline, our kids need to be taught what prayer is and given opportunity to practice.

This booklet (part of the **FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**) is designed to offer a basic understanding of what prayer is and some practical ways you can teach your children how to come before the throne of God in fellowship and communion with Him.

God bless you as you teach and model prayer to your children.

Pastor Mark

Teaching Kids to Pray

Prayer is important

1. Definition:

prayer n. An act of worship by which we offer up praise and thanksgiving to God and bring our requests before Him (see: *Proverbs 15:29; Philippians 4:6; 1 Timothy 2:1,2; 1 Peter 3:12; Mark 11:24,25; John 12:12-14*).

2. Other key Scriptures:

Jeremiah 33:3

Psalm 91:5

Some Basic Principles

Who can pray?

Anyone can pray.

Whose prayer does He promise to answer?

God promises to answer the prayers of those who have received the Lord Jesus as Savior. The answers to our prayers usually fall into three categories: Yes, No, Wait.

When can you or should you pray?

You can pray at any time.

Where should you pray?

You can pray anywhere (while playing, in school, while walking, in bed, etc.). You don't always have to kneel or close your eyes (these are signs of reverence and help us keep focus).

Why are prayers sometimes hindered?

Prayers are sometimes hindered because of unconfessed sin (Psalm 66:18; 1 John 1:9).

How do you pray?

According to God's will (1 John 5:14, 15).

In Christ's name (John 14:13; 16:23, 24).

In faith (Mark 11:24; James 1:6, 7).

How does *God* answer prayer?

He always does what is best for us.

If according to His will, He will answer yes (1 Kings 18:37, 38; Judges 6:36-40; Genesis 24:14, 18).

If it would not be good for us, God graciously answers no (2 Corinthians 12:8,9).

If it is not God's perfect time, He will answer wait.

God sometimes answers us by giving us more than we asked for (Ephesians 3:20).

God sometimes answers before we can voice the desire (Isaiah 65:24).

God answers prayer to glorify Himself (Psalm 50:15).

Help Your Kids See That Prayer is...

Praying to God is like coming home to a loving parent (see Matthew 7:7).

Prayer is enjoying God's welcome party (see Psalm 23:5-6).

Prayer is talking to God using words of love and respect, for God is greater than anything in this world (see Revelation 4:11).

Prayer is remembering that God is good and holy and giving God the praise and worship He is due (see Psalm 99:4-5).

Prayer is asking Jesus to come and set up God's kingdom-in the lives of people today, and throughout the world forever (see Revelation 22:20).

Prayer is asking for God's help to learn how to show His love in the world (see Philippians 1:3-11).

Prayer is telling God about everyday needs, and trusting Him for them (see Matthew 6:24-34; Psalm 23:1-2).

Prayer is asking God to forgive, and accepting the start He gives (see Psalm 51:1-13; 1 John 1:9).

Prayer is asking God to forgive our enemies for the wrong they have done and allowing them a fresh start (see Matthew 5:43-45; Luke 23:34).

Prayer is asking God to show us the right path through life (see Psalm 119:33-40).

Prayer is asking God to help in times of trouble (see Psalm 142:1-7).

Prayer is crying to God in very sad times, when it seems like God is doing nothing to help (see Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34).

Christians learn to pray to God from the prayer that Jesus taught (see Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4).

Practical How-to Ideas

Use the acrostic **A-C-T-S** to remind your kids of four things they can pray about:

A=Adoration

Adoration is telling God how much you love Him. You can tell Him you appreciate Him and how wonderful He is (Psalm 95:3; 104:1).

C=Confession

Confession is naming your sin and admitting to God that you have sinned. When you confess your sin, He will forgive you (1 John 1:9). Talk to God about it when you know you have sinned.

T=Thanksgiving

Give thanks to God for what He means to you and what He has done for you (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Thank him for the things He has given (salvation, food, clothes, family, friends, etc.).

S=Supplication

Supplication is to ask humbly or earnestly. Talk to God about the needs of other people (sickness, problems, their need of salvation). Pray about your own needs and requests (Philippians 4:6).

The Spiritual Growth Issues:

Worship

- Salvation
- Worship

Grow

- Bible knowledge/Application
- Bible Memory
- Stewardship
- Healthy Relationships
- Using Gifts, Talents and Skills
- Church Commitment

Serve

- Outreach
- Missions Involvement
- Christian Service