



prayer & confession

In an ever-changing world and society, raising children can feel overwhelming, but thankfully, we serve an unchanging and immovable God that has already taught us how to be close to Him! We have put together a set of activities that you can use throughout your normal routines with your children to teach them about how we can be close with God in a busy world. We are challenging you to commit to one activity/week and see how it transforms your family's faith into something that is truly

immovable!



When spending time with your children and God...

- ...always make it a positive experience
- ...associate “God Moments” with “good times”
- ...the heart is more important than the discipline itself
- ...be sensitive to how your child responds
- ...try not to let this time be associated with boredom or forcing
- ...listen to the Holy Spirit’s guidance inside of you
- ...giving them choices gives them a feeling of “ownership” (prompt decks, decorating book covers, illustrating, etc)
- ...if it is enjoyable, it can become a habit that they can start at a young age and continue throughout their lives



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Keys to Communicating with God:

- Intimate
- Constant conversation, not periodic act
- Natural
- Relational
- Vital
- Effective (point out to children when prayers are answered and thank Him)





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1. Prayer Prompt Deck

Use these cards or make your own deck of prayer prompt cards. Include familiar names and pull out at least one card and pray with your child for that person. These cards can be used at mealtimes, bedtime, during car rides, etc.

Grandma	Grandpa	Church Family
Mom	Dad	Sister
Brother	President	Teacher
Pastor	Hungry Children	Friends



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2. Gratitude Journal

Take a few minutes daily to add a person to each child's journal to pray for. Let the child choose the person and pray with the child for that person. Younger children can draw a picture of the person and you can write their names. Allow the children to decorate the cover of the journal. Every few days, go back and pray for people on previous pages.

3. Popcorn Prayer

This type of prayer can be done at mealtime, bedtime, in the car, etc. Your family sits together and prays aloud. Each person "pops" in a sentence prayer about someone as it "pops" into their head. For younger children, they can just "pop" someone's name into the prayer and you can pray for that person.

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4. Prayer Habits

Praying aloud during these times with your child helps foster lifelong, healthy prayer habits within your child.

- after a nightmare
- after a bad time with a friend
 - when you hear sirens
- after a disciplinary moment
 - when afraid or worried
- after showing a good character trait
- on the way to/from the dentist/doctor
 - when hearing good/bad news
 - in the car, for safety
 - when making a decision
- for a person who has been mean/making wrong choices

5. Five Finger Prayer Prompt

Children of all ages can be taught this easy prayer reminder.

You can trace your child's hand on construction paper and write words or draw a picture reminder in each finger to help with memorization. In the center of their hand (palm) write the words "It is easy to talk with God!"



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Keys to Talking to Kids about Sin:

- Difference between sin and mistakes
- God ALWAYS loves us
- Everyone sins
- God washes away sin when we ask Him to
- Can confess sin in prayer



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1. *Disappearing Sin*

Materials:

Paper towel, 1 black permanent marker,
washable markers, water

Instructions:

- Fold the paper towel in half.
- Using a permanent marker, draw a heart shape on the top layer.
 - Scribble on the bottom layer with washable markers.
- SAY: This picture is like my heart. I like to pretend that it's all nice and clean inside, like this white paper towel. But underneath, I'm really all messy with sin.
- Drop the paper towel in the water. The water-color will initially show through the front of the heart but eventually, wash out of the paper towel.
- SAY: When I invite Jesus into my life, he sees all the messy sin. But when I accept his forgiveness, he washes the messiness away and leaves me with a clean heart.

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2. Erasing Sin

Main Point:

God will forgive us when we go to Him and admit we are wrong when we sin.

Materials:

dry erase board, eraser, markers, sticky note

Scripture:

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Lesson:

- Write a misspelled word on the board that kids your child will recognize. (For older kids, put the word in a sentence. For younger kids, draw a smiley face, but draw 3 eyes, etc).
- Begin talking about a subject and let your child find the misspelled word.
- When noticed...FIRST, pretend that you don't know what they are talking about.
 - SECOND, argue that it is the correct spelling (have someone Google it).
- THIRD, after discovering that it is spelled wrong, then say that is the way you want to spell it.
- FOURTH, agree that it is misspelled, but just cover it up with a sticky note.

- FIFTH, ask what you SHOULD do about it (hopefully they say to erase it and write it correctly).

Explanation:

- Explain that these are the same ways people treat sin in their lives.
 - pretend we don't see it
 - argue that it is right
- decide we don't care/going to do it anyway
 - agree that it is wrong/try to cover it up

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3. Dirty Laundry

Mail Point:

Just as dirty laundry smells bad, our sin “stinks” to God. We stay clean by regularly confessing our sins.

Scripture:

Proverbs 28:13 “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”

Lesson:

- Hide dirty laundry around the house for your child to find.
 - Let your child find the clothes.

Discussion Questions:

What would happen if we never washed our clothes?

How would our home smell?

Read Isaiah 1:16-18. What can we compare our dirty laundry to?

Do you think God likes your bedroom clean or your heart clean?

Read 1 John 1:9. How can sin be washed from your heart?

Who picks up your dirty laundry?

Who washes your dirty laundry?

Who washes sin from your heart?

Who should confess their sins?



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Key Concepts:

If our laundry was left unwashed, the whole house would begin to smell. Dirty laundry is like having sin in our hearts that we have not confessed. To God, that sin stinks. Just as it is impossible to hide the dirty laundry, it is impossible to hide sin from God. Just as it is our responsibility to pick up our own dirty clothing, so it is each person's responsibility to tell God he or she is sorry for the sin he/she has done. A parent can wash dirty clothing, but they can't wash a child's heart. God loves us so much that He gets rid of our sins completely when we confess them.

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4. Washed Away

Mail Point:

When we confess, our sins can be “washed away” because of Jesus’s sacrifice.

Scripture:

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

Materials:

A white cotton cloth, berries (fresh or frozen blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries), lemon juice, measuring cups, a cookie sheet, a spoon

Lesson:

- Prior to beginning, create a stain on the cotton cloth using the berry juice.
- Have your child try to wash the stain out using water (bath time is a good time for this activity for younger kids). Point out that the berry stain is like sin, no matter how hard we try, we cannot get rid of sin on our own.
- Place the stained cloth on cookie sheet. Have child pour lemon juiced on the stain, one teaspoon at a time. Explain that the lemon juice represents God’s power.
- Read 1 John 1:9 and rinse the cloth with water. Explain our job is to confess our sins and that God is the one who washes them away. (Use hot water if necessary)



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Discussion Questions:

Could you wash the stain out using your own strength?

How do we get the dirt off the outside of our bodies?

Can we wash our insides?

What did get rid of the stain?

Who does the lemon juice represent?

What do we need to do to get rid of our sin?