

Baptist Bugle



September 2020

First Baptist Church of Morris

Pastor - Steve Larson

Youth Director - Leslie Meloun

1650 West Route 6 - Morris, Illinois

Phone: 815-942-0812 - fbmorris1650@gmail.com - www.fbmorris.org

Pastor's Ponderings -

Charles Wesley was in his second year at Oxford when he grew serious about spiritual things. He had not yet received Christ as his Savior, but began trying to live the Christian life very methodically, thus he was dubbed the "Methodist" by fellow students. With his studies completed, he volunteered to come to America to minister to those in Britain's debtor's prisons. But as a missionary, Charles was an utter failure. He demanded unlimited authority over others, and was very demanding in many other ways as well. He left America, ill, depressed, and in very low spirits. Later, as a real time of humbling had taken place, and Charles had truly surrendered his life to Christ, he wrote the hymn, "And Can It Be That I Should Gain?" Verse one records;

"And can it be that I should gain
An int'rest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, should'st die for me?"

In good times, and in bad, when trials are many, and when everything is going well, in times of struggle, and times of great joy; don't ever lose the wonder of God's grace to you. Always hold on to the awe and the amazement of what God has done. It's very easy, in days like these, to forget about, and lose sight of the wonderful grace of Jesus. The grace, and the love, and the mercy of God will still be here long after difficult days are gone, and the uncertainty is over. God's got this, and He has you in the palm of His mighty hand.

"Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart" Lord Jesus, be what we see, be the One we look to. You are very much still in control and very much still on the Throne. Thank you for Your grace, and Your love; the blood of Jesus that cleanses from ALL sin. We stand in awe of You, we stand amazed.

In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY



Women of Prayer
Tuesdays at 2:00 pm



Men of Action

Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm

Are beginning a new study, "*How God Makes Men*" by Patrick Morley

All men are invited to join us!



Women's Afternoon Bible Study

Wednesdays at 1:00 pm

We are studying a DVD series "*Perfect Ending - Why Your Eternal Future Matters Today*" by Dr. Robert Jeffress

All women are invited to come

Please contact Helen Brehm at 815-942-6625

Women's Evening Bible Study

Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

Have begun studying "*Better; Study of Hebrews*" by Jen Wilkin

All women are invited to come

Please contact Colette Kirby at 815-942-9527

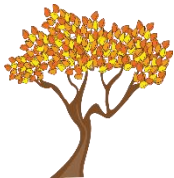


Single Moms' Group

Every other Wednesday Evening at 6:00 pm (*new time for now*)

If you are a single mom or know of one who would enjoy meeting with others, please invite them to come with you!

Please contact Kristi Larson





NO Congregational Prayer
Sunday, September 6
4:30 pm

(We are still holding off meeting together)

Boards to Meet on Tuesday, Sept. 8
 3:00 pm – Board of Diaconates
 5:30 pm – Board of Christian Education
 5:30 pm – Board of Trustees

Your Board Chairman will let you know for sure if you are physically meeting together

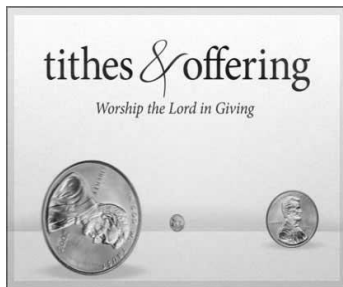
UNIFIED GIVING

| <u>Month</u> | <u>Monthly Amt. Needed</u> | <u>Monthly Amt. Received</u> |
|--------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| August | \$25,720.00 | \$27,254.00 |

“The Monthly Amt. Received includes offertory that has been mailed in.”

Church Mortgage Balance as of August 23, 2020 \$36,803.69

Thank you for your generous and faithful giving!!!



This past year \$7,266.00 has been given to be applied to the ‘principal only’! Anyone wishing to contribute toward lowering the principal should write ‘apply to principal only’ on their check. For accounting purposes, it would be appreciated if you would write a separate check if giving for ‘principal only’, rather than including it in your regular giving check. Thank You!

Why are you so afraid?

In Matthew 8:26 , Jesus asked His followers why they were so afraid their boat would overturn on account of some wind and waves, especially since He was right there in the boat with them. Certainly, if the Son of God was in their midst, they would safely get to the other side of the lake.

You and I have Jesus with us in every circumstance we encounter. Furthermore, He has promised to never leave us or desert us. Hebrews 13:5 So, what are we so afraid of? I want my answer to be *Forgive me, LORD, for fearing that anything is stronger than You or outside of Your control.*

Cindi McMenamin



SUNDAY SCHOOL
(temporarily not meeting)
Sunday mornings
9:30 am – 10:30 am

Nursery – 3 years and under
Preschool – 2nd Grade – Teacher Lisa Vaksdal
3rd – 5th Grade – Teacher Kara Paulson
6th – 8th Grade – Teacher Diane Gagliardo
9th – 12th Grade – Teachers Mark and Gayle Conrod
Adults – Teachers Jeff and Claudette Swiggett

Sunday School Matters – September

Jeff and Claudette Swiggett are the leaders of the Adult Sunday School Class that normally meets at 9:30am on Sunday mornings. They are parents of three married children and grandparents to seven. Jeff is retired from the Department of Corrections and is now a school bus driver. Claudette works for Morris Hospital in Health Information Management as a Data Integrity Specialist. Interests and hobbies include grandchildren, baking, lawn care and fitness classes. By teaching they have been blessed by becoming stronger in their faith by the leading of the Holy Spirit. They would like to be remembered by their Sunday School participants as saying “job well done”.

At the present time we are still in a ‘holding pattern’ regarding when we will be able to be in person in Sunday School. We are checking on other options with DIGIN, our curriculum supplier.

How is the Bible verse memory challenge going?

New Verses –

- 1. The Importance of Obedience:** *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise.”* Ephesians 6:1-2
- 2. The Fruit of the Spirit:** *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”* Galatians 5:22
- 3. God Gives Us Strength:** *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* Philippians 4:13

Verses for Review –

- 1. Christ died for us:** *“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were yet still sinners, Christ died for us.”* Romans 5:8
- 2. Assurance that God is Creator:** *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”* Genesis 1:1

3. Assurance that God is Always With Us: *“Remember I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* Matthew 28:20

4. The Value of Memorizing God’s Words: *“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”* Psalm 119:11

5. We Can Give Him All of Our Cares and Worries, Because He Cares: *“Cast all your worries on Him because He cares for you.”* 1 Peter 5:7

6. When We Feel Afraid: *“When I am afraid, I will trust in You.”* Psalm 56:3

7. God’s Great Love for Us: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will never perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”* John 3:16-17

8. Trust About Sin: *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* Romans 3:23

9. The Greatest Gift of God: *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:23

We, as a church family continue to pray for you especially as you start school in this unusual year of learning. May you be safe and well!

*Mary Motter & Kay Hemmersbach,
Sunday School Superintendents*

*“I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”*

Psalm 139:14





If You're Happy and You Know It



If you're happy and you know it, say AMEN! "AMEN!"
 If you're happy and you know it say AMEN! "AMEN!"
 If you're happy and you know it,
 then your life will surely show it
 If you're happy and you know it, say AMEN! "AMEN!"



If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands! (clap, clap)
 If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands! (clap, clap)
 If you're happy and you know it,
 then your life will surely show it
 If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands! (clap, clap)

If you're happy and you know it stomp your feet! (stomp, stomp)
 If you're happy and you know it stomp your feet! (stomp, stomp)
 If you're happy and you know it,
 then your life will surely show it
 If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet! (stomp, stomp)



If you're happy and you know it, do all three! (AMEN! clap, clap, stomp, stomp)
 If you're happy and you know it, do all three! (AMEN! clap, clap, stomp, stomp)
 If you're happy and you know it,
 then your life will surely show it
 If you're happy and you know it, do all three! (AMEN! clap, clap, stomp, stomp)



RALLY DAY!



Teacher Appreciation
 Picnic at the church

Fall Sunday School (*hopefully*) begins soon!
Watch for details of dates!

*"Children are not a distraction from more important work.
 They ARE the most important work."*

C.S. Lewis

OUR YOUTH OUTREACH



Awana Club
First Baptist Church
Ages 4 yrs. to 8th grade

We are very excited to have started an Awana Club here at **First Baptist Church!** Awana Club is held the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month at **6:00 – 7:15pm**. You may register by calling the church office @ 815-942-0812. Registration is required.

Awana Club mtgs. this month...

September 6 –No Awana
September 20 –Donut Night

Questions –
call Cheryl Johnson or Kristi Larson



Youth Group
Ages 5th – 12th Grade

Sunday, September 13
6-8pm
Snacks and a Movie
"Cars 3"

Sunday, September 27
6-8 pm
Game Night
All Church is invited!

Questions –
Call Leslie Meloun

Blindsided by a new generation of blazing-fast cars, the legendary Lightning McQueen finds himself pushed out of the sport that he loves. Hoping to get back in the game, he turns to Cruz Ramirez, an eager young technician who has her own plans for winning. With inspiration from the Fabulous Hudson Hornet and a few unexpected turns, No. 95 prepares to compete on Piston Cup Racing's biggest stage.



Youth Group
Snacks & Movie
Sept. 13
6-8 pm
at the church



WHAT: Live Nativity - "Oh! Come Let Us Adore Him!"

WHEN: December 11 & 12

TIME: 5:00 - 8:00pm

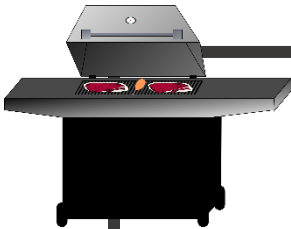
Plans are that we will go forward with this outreach.

We will be making costumes, a stable needs to be built, signs need to be made; and some will be purchased, publicity, food etc. The animals (including camels!), which are the majority of the cost, are already reserved and a deposit has been made.

Considering what the nation and our world is being faced with for the last few months, we feel that this will bring a hopeful message to the residents and visitors of our community at Christmas. We would like for you to remember this as you are led to make a donation for this outreach. If you donate, please designate it as "Live Nativity."

This will be a church wide endeavor and we are looking forward to working together as we bring God's message to a weary world!

****We still need - seamstresses, 1-gallon milk jugs (250-300 total), and a group of men to disassemble a barn given to us to use as the stable. Please contact Stan Motter with any questions.*



**Men's "Night Out" Cookout
Saturday, September 26
Stan & Mary Motter's home**



**More information will be forthcoming as the date gets closer,
or you can call Stan**



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

(Restrictions apply)

November 14, 2020

12 - 2pm

We are able to volunteer again at the
"Feed My Starving Children" facility in Aurora.

***Right now they are only allowing 5 people at a time,
so check with Jen or the church office for further information.***

This is the 6th year we will have gone, and it is
an amazing day of packing meals to
feed children around the world!

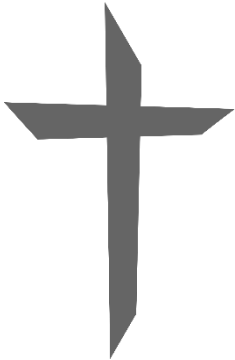
Any questions, contact Jen Goebel

SEPTEMBER MEMORY VERSE.....



“Be still and know
that I am
God”

Psalm 46:10



MOVING FORWARD...

WE HAVE BEGUN SUNDAY SERVICES AT CHURCH!!

One Service at 10:00 am

We will be meeting inside the building

(You may also sit in your car in the parking lot
and listen to the service on FM 103.9)

We hope to begin Sunday School again in the near future

NO Nursery is available at this time

Please bring your mask and your own Bible
Practice social distancing with chairs (if not family)
Offering plates will be available at each door

There will be hand sanitizer available throughout the building

The Church will continue to be sanitized regularly

**As we move forward and as conditions permit,
we will be putting together an outdoor service.*

We will notify all of you ahead of time, via the church's Facebook page.

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. **Be still, and know that I am God;** I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

Psalm 46:1-3, 10

"Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11

September Birthdays

3 Alex Adair
7 Jerry Marx, Denise Ellis, Annette Allen, Dianne Steinbach
9 Mary Hill
10 Ethan Duvick
11 Kristi Larson, Regan Zierman, Jim Goebel, Alan Love, Pete Butler
13 Marty Myre
14 Harmony Alford
15 Zachary Chapman, Dave Misek
16 Jack Wilkinson, Layne Taylor
17 Kaylynn Clausen, Amara Taylor
19 Orla Johnson
21 Wyatt Schultz
24 Mitzi Gross, Donna Livingston, Marge Garling
28 Tammy Binion



September Anniversaries

5 Bob and Lisa Cottingim
8 Joshua and Tanya Downey
10 Rich and Annette Allen
11 Harry and Debbie Kusters
12 Jerry and Cathy Planeta
14 Jim and Kara Paulson
15 Steven and Jessica Stirratt
23 Landy and Marie Walker
24 Terry and Diane Wakeman



CHECK OUT WHAT'S NEW IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY!

You'll find the books in the "Check Out What's New" section,
located on the top shelf next to the book return basket.
HAPPY READING!

"God Is Able" by Priscilla Shirer

Got an *IMPOSSIBLE* situation? The anxiety it brings can wake you in the middle of a needed night's sleep and then stalk you in the middle of broad daylight. It can sneak up on you and cast a cloak of fear and concern over your shoulders that you can't seem to shake no matter how hard you try. It can take you down. Squash all hope. Stop you in your tracks.

IMPOSSIBLE. IMPENETRABLE. UNCHANGEABLE. Maybe so . . . until God gets involved. No matter the details of your circumstance, His raw power potential and immeasurable ability refuse to cower in the face of any challenge. Nothing is impossible with God. *Nothing.* Not even *that* thing.

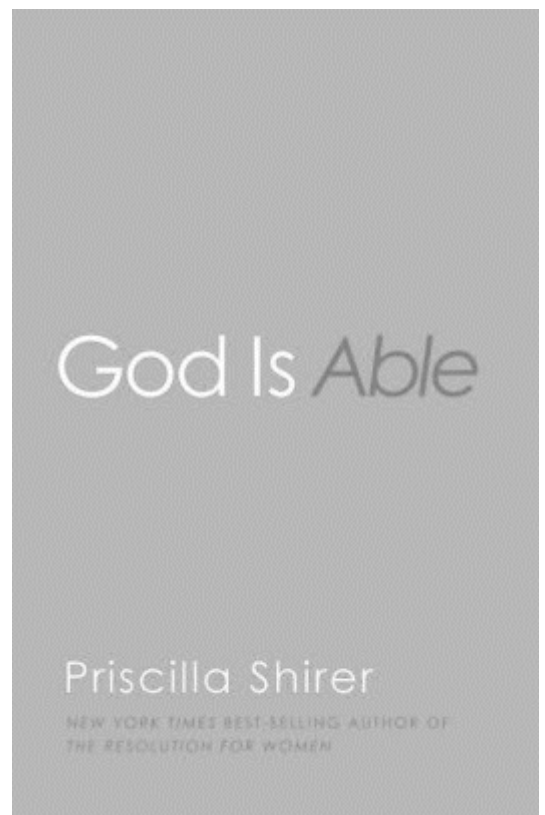
This is the uplifting, well-reasoned answer from New York Times best-selling author Priscilla Shirer—not a denial of life's adversities and troubles, but a biblical reminder that God is always up to great things, even when His great things are greater than instant remedies and visible change.

He is a God who cares . . . and a God who CAN.

Believe it....

Experience it....

God Is Able



ALSO NEW IN THE KID'S LIBRARY SECTION.....

VBS

Go on Five exciting adventures with a real life dinosaur researcher!! He also shares his passion for the Gospel and creation! (All ages)

ABC'S OF GOD'S PLAN (3DVD's)

Beginning with creation all the way through God's plan of salvation and His finished work in our world!!

THE ANSWERS BOOKS

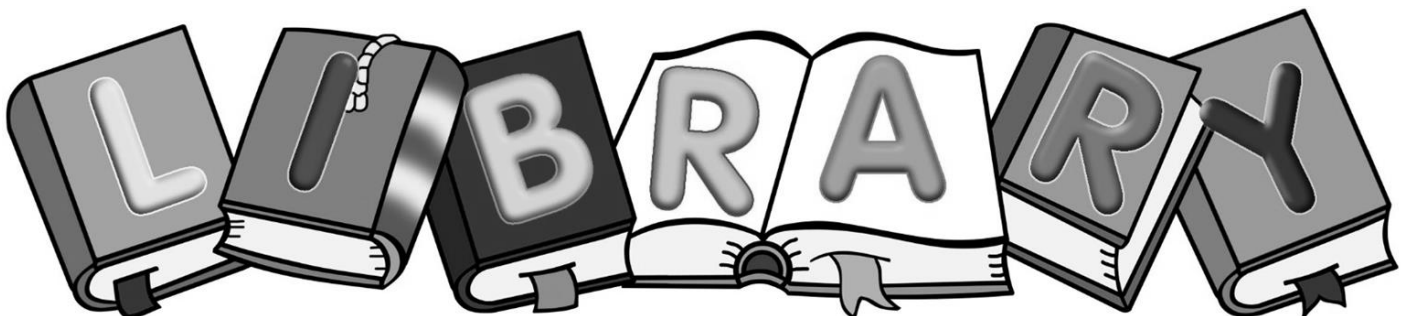
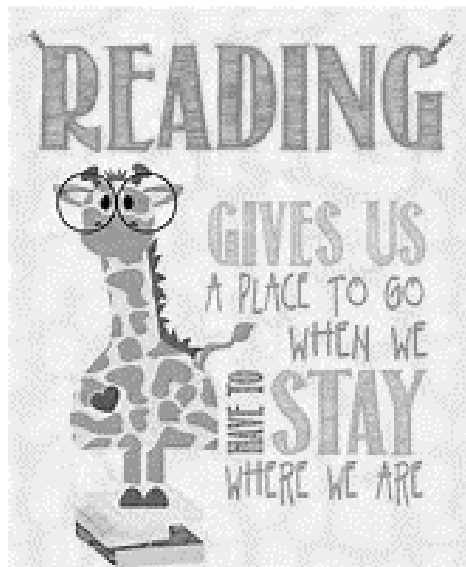
8 Books answering kids questions about God. It may answer some adult questions too!! (Ages 5-11)

I REALLY WANT ANSWERS

3 well-illustrated, scientifically accurate, fun to read books that inspire a love for the gospel and science! (Ages 4-12)

THE DOOR OF SALVATION

Only one door to be saved from the flood and one door to personal salvation! (Ages 4-10)



9 Ways to Make Your Children Feel Loved



Life as a parent is FULL and even more than that it's *demanding*. One-on-one time with our kiddos can be hard to come by. While our intention may be for our kids to feel fully loved each and every day, this can be a hard task to actually accomplish. And little ones need more than just the words "I love you" to fully grasp the concept. The reality is we have to be intentional about connecting with our kids on a daily basis. Here are a few simple ideas on how to connect with your kids so they know they are loved by you.

1. Read Together

I've never met a kid that doesn't love when you sit with them with a pile of books! This activity works for kids of all ages. Babies need the nurture and closeness that snuggling together with a pile of books brings. Toddlers soak up all the words you are offering with their hungry growing brains. Kids are mesmerized by the tales a good book introduces them to. Even older kids can enjoy reading through a chapter book or devotion with their parents. This shared experience of enjoying a book offers a way to connect with your kids at any age.

2. Show Them They Are Loved at Bedtime

Bedtime is a chance to catch a breath together as a family. Even if everyone has been out and about doing entirely different things all day long, you still all share the fact that you rest your head to sleep under the same roof. Stick to a bedtime routine that sets aside a moment to speak individually with each of your children. Devote time to nightly tucking them in, offer them hugs, ask them about their day, and pray over them before they close their eyes. *There is nothing more important for your kids than ending the day hearing, feeling, and seeing that they are loved.*

3. Play a Game Together

For the Mommas with young ones, I just want to tell you that there will be a day that you can sit down with your kids and play fun games all together at the kitchen table. It will be wonderful! If you have young ones the precursor to playing games you enjoy is engaging in the games *they* enjoy. Stacking blocks, scribbling pictures, showing together chunky puzzle pieces, or lining up rows of toy cars. For me it was a struggle to enjoy those more mundane interactions when my kids were little, but I'm thankful for them because they were the foundation to the closeness I enjoy with my kids now.

For Mommas with older ones, bring back the board games or even some good old card games. You seriously can buy a deck of cards at the Dollar Store and Google a million card games to test out at home. While our tech-loving kids may protest sitting down to play a screen-free game, chances are they will quickly fall in love with these unhurried moments spent together. There is nothing like a little friendly competition, problem-solving, and uninterrupted time together to build the bond you have with your kids.

4. Cook Together

Cooking dinner can, for many parents, be a dreaded time of day. Most of us are doing everything we can to busy our kids *away* from us so we can get food on the table. If you are up for embracing a little mess, this can be a great time to work in some one-on-one time with your kiddos. Start small (so as to not lose your mind while attempting this) and let your kids get their hands dirty in the kitchen by your side.

For example: a 3-year old who loves to 'help', you'll have to get creative on how to include them. Some ideas that have worked well – letting them 'wash' the dishes in the sink while standing on a chair, allowing them to stir baking mixes or add in the ingredients after you measure, or allowing them to help set the table.

An older child, is able to chop vegetables, season dishes, stir ingredients on the stove, retrieve and measure ingredients for recipes. The reward is seeing the confidence, pride, and joy they gain from being able to help in this important daily task.

5. Wake Up with Hugs

Start your day saying “I love you” to everyone in your family and generously give out hugs each and every morning. Don’t let your kiddos leave the house without hearing that *you love them*, no matter what their age! My oldest son is no longer small and snuggly but he still expects a hug each morning from me and tenderly replies with a “love you too, Mom”. His sincere reply makes my heart smile.

It is important that we don’t buy into the mindset that our kids get too old for hugs and affection. Even as an adult I relish hugs and “I love yous” my parents dole out for me. Feeling loved never gets old.

6. Share Meals Together

Even if you’re not a great chef, carve out time to share a family meal with your kiddos. You are able to connect over homemade delicious feasts and store-bought pizzas just the same! There is something powerful about breaking bread together and committing to a routine that makes time to eat together. This simple practice helps affirm to your kids that they are a priority and is a simple way to communicate to them that they are loved. I’m not sure what makes eating together so special, it may just be because you can’t do too many other things while you stuff your face! Meals are a time when conversation usually starts to pour out. It’s a chance to reflect on the day, ask how everyone is feeling, and it’s usually a pretty distraction-free space!

7. Plan Special “Dates” with Your Kids

One-on-one time with your kids is when they really open up in new ways! My oldest is so very talkative. We love how open he is with his thoughts but he leaves almost no room for his younger siblings to get a word in edgewise. This is why when we get our quieter middle child alone, he talks SO MUCH! Being together as a family is great, but as your kids grow and mature, personalized outings are a great way to give them the space to really deeply share their hearts with you. Connection equals love for our kids. The more time we carve out to connect individually with our kids the more loved our kids will feel. It doesn’t have to be big, it just needs to be one-on-one.

8. Sit Down to Watch a Movie Together

If you are like me, I almost always utilize screen time when I want to keep my kids occupied away from me. It’s an “easy” babysitter when you are in a pinch! Movies can be more than a distraction though, they can be a way to connect, relax, and make memories together. A few weeks ago my boys invaded me on the couch when they were supposed to be going to bed. I decided to give in and we chose a nature show for us to watch together. I made some popcorn, got all the cozy blankets out, and we learned about bears together before bedtime. We all loved it! I loved seeing their faces of amazement as they learned about God’s creation. They loved eating popcorn and being together on the couch past bedtime.

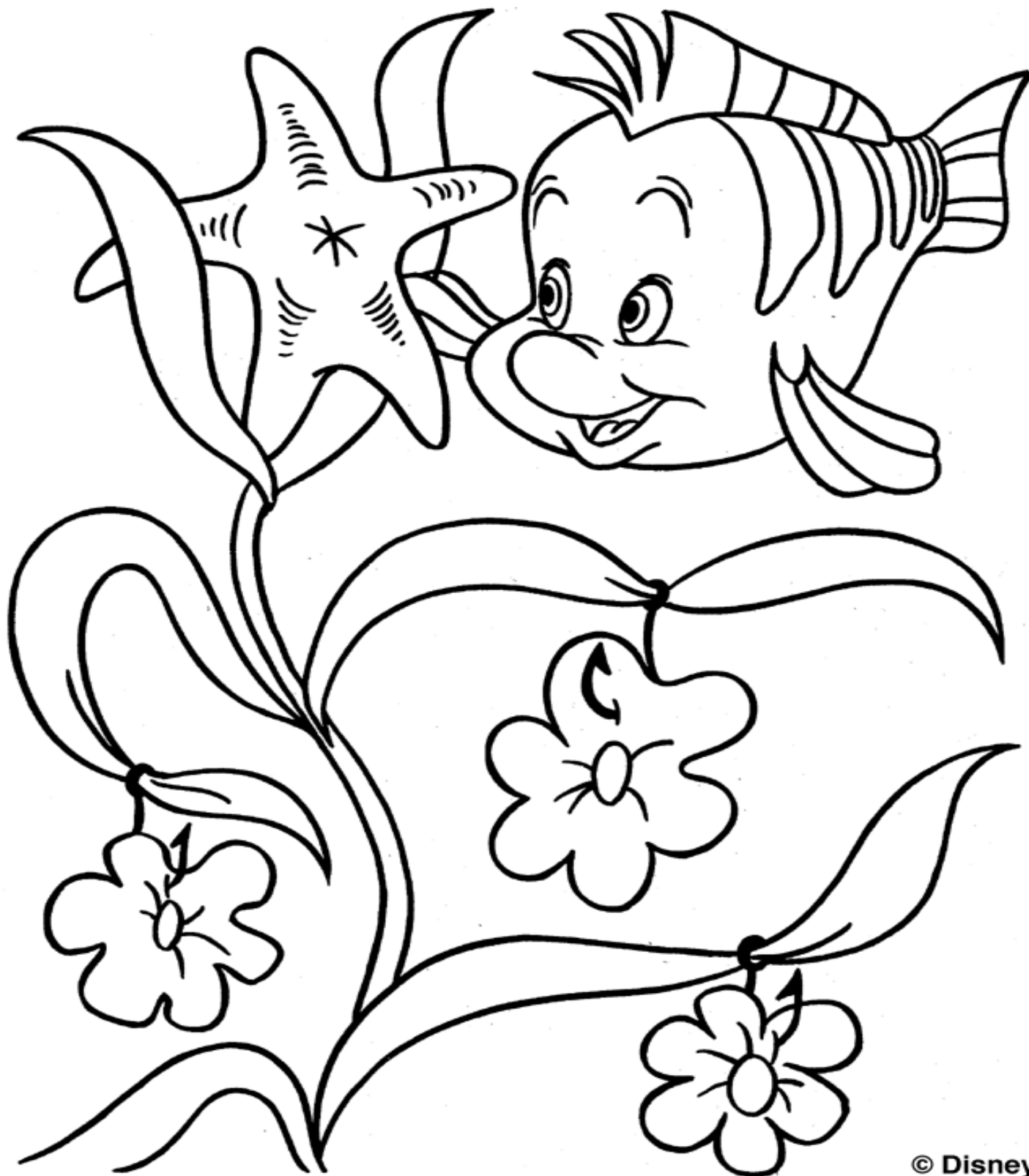
For me, I think this was a really valuable deviation from our normal because SO MUCH of my time with my kids is spent in directing their days, teaching them, disciplining them and just being busy. My boys loved laughing with me and I needed that time to be reminded that being a parent is more than work, it should be fun too!

9. Help Them Practice Learning a New Skill

When our kids are young, this comes so natural! We cheer on their first rolls, crawls and steps with enthusiasm. As they grow it can become more challenging to invest that same time and energy in joining in their learning. Even as they get older they are still looking for our praise and validation. Bring out the soccer ball to practice dribbling the ball around together, review those pesky math facts together, or sit and watch when they rehearse those new dance moves. Whatever it is they are into, carve out space in your schedule to be a part of it with them. Your undivided attention given to helping them progress is a great way to let them know they are loved.

What our kids need most to feel securely loved is time. Just us making it a priority to consistently check in with them goes a long way in growing secure humans. More than anything else we can gift our kids, our willingness to hear and see them at each stage of their life makes the biggest difference. If we observe one of our kids struggling, then there is a good chance they need a little more of us than what we are giving at the moment. Evaluate your time together and see where you can make changes to create more togetherness between you. You showing up will be sure to let them know that they are really loved!!

*****Amanda Idleman** is a writer whose passion is to encourage others to live joyfully.



In the Heat of the Battle

Some days get hard. We feel exhausted and worn. Tired of fighting and ready to give up. Feeling like we can't go on or still struggling through defeat. The enemy seems to be hot on our trail, and we wonder if we've been left on our own.

But no matter what we find ourselves up against in these days, one thing is true – God is near. He will never leave us to fend for ourselves and try to fight our own battles. He reminds us through His word that He is the One who is greater than anything we may face.

When we choose to live as salt and light in a dark world, we will encounter obstacles. The enemy is stirred to action and will do all that he can to hurl attacks in our direction. And other times, just the struggles and uncertainties of daily life mount up high.

None of us are immune. Life can feel hard. And often there's not even just one "big" thing, but lots of little battles that can drain us dry. Troubles in parenting and marriage, difficult relationships, fears, worries, illness, debt, facing loss and discouragement—it can all leave us feeling completely drained.

For those who are experiencing those tough struggles today, here's a prayer to help you find strength again. Remember, you are sheltered safely in the refuge of our Almighty God.

Dear God,

The troubles that surround us feel like they're pressing in. We feel overwhelmed and burdened down with so many cares. Please help us to find our strength in You again, renew our hearts, and turn our focus back to You. We need You today and every day.

*The world seems dark and the spiritual battles we're facing are real. Thank You, LORD, for Your reminders, that You hold the victory over sin and death, and came to set the captives free. We're so grateful for the redemptive work You've done in our lives, and for the freedom and hope only You can bring. Your Word reminds us to "stand our ground," and that's what we will do, **in the power of Your Name**. We know the enemy we face has no control over us, and we bring Your truth straight against his schemes. Thank You that we're never alone, for You are constantly at work on behalf of Your children – shielding, protecting, strengthening, bringing to light what needs to be known, and covering us from danger even when we're unaware.*

We ask for Your wisdom and spiritual discernment to recognize what we're up against and to live strong through Your Spirit within us. We ask that you remind us to pray, constantly, for all believers. Please help us to stay alert in this world, to be salt and light, living a life of love and grace. We choose to put on Your armor every day, for you give us all that we need to stand firm in the battles.


Thank You that You are far greater than anything we face in this life, and we have overcome, because You've set us free. We thank You for Your truth that, "no weapon formed against You will prosper."

Lord, we ask for Your peace, for Your protection to surround us and carry us through the most difficult of days. We trust You for Your constant work on our behalf. We ask You to bring justice and extend mercy. We ask that You would bring light, knowing that You alone are able to expose the deeds of darkness.

Thank You for the power of your presence living in us and through us. Thank You that You go before us and You cover us from behind. May Your name be glorified in our lives as You are building greatness through the heat of hard times.

We love You LORD; we choose to hold fast to You alone.

*In Jesus' Name,
Amen*



Lord, help me to be **STRONG**
and take **ACTION** in the places
YOU have called me!

iBelieve.com

"He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."

Psalms 91:4

A NOTE FROM MAX LUCADO...



Victory

The Christian life can be likened to walking up an incline. Jesus called it “the narrow road”. Along the way are many opportunities (temptations) to stop, or at least to become distracted. Our potent enemy (Satan) has littered our path with every stupid, pleasurable, and deadly thing at his disposal. Too often we fall for the “apple” he offers. We think it’s just “kids’ stuff” or exploring what’s out there. But Eve found out that it’s much better to avoid getting ensnared than to try to get out of the trap. Many of us, as adults, have learned this same hard lesson.

But there’s a secret here that might help. It’s called discernment. If we could quickly recognize sin for what it is and not be fooled by the packaging, we could resist it every time. If you knew that the beautiful candy-coated apple was really poison, you wouldn’t think of biting into it.

I have discovered an encouraging truth – the lure of something gets weaker the longer I resist it. Sure, at first it seems almost overwhelming, as if there is no way to refuse it, but that perception is only an illusion. Temptation is going to come to you through an enticing picture in a magazine or through a “friend”. It will not look like poison, but it is. Everything inside you will scream, “Go ahead and take a small bite”. Don’t. The secret to staying on the road is making the decision to resist long before the offer comes.

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” 1 Peter 5:8, 9

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

“Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground.” Ephesians 6:11-13

A NOTE FROM MAX LUCADO...



Peace

Over the years I have often heard people say things such as, “I’m happy in the Lord.” They probably mean that at that particular time everything in their lives is going well. The family is healthy, the job is okay, they got the new car, and they have a few dollars to put away. But what happens if God allows one of those things to change?

I’ve often wondered how Peter and Paul sang in prison. Beats me. I once heard that peace is not the absence of storms in our lives. Peace is what you get *in* the storm. Too many times I haven’t allowed God to give me His peace in the storm because I was too busy trying to convince Him to get me out of there – post haste. Sound familiar?

Wouldn’t it be wonderful to experience the “peace that passes all understanding” before the storm so that after the storm we can say without feeling embarrassed, “I knew You would take care of me.”

That would be worth its weight in gold.

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.” Isaiah 26:3

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6, 7

“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.” 2 Thessalonians 3:16



6 Amazing Roles Grandparents Fill in Our Families Today

This past weekend our kids spent the morning with their grandparents so my husband and I could attend church on our own. When we came to pick them up our three kids, they all begged to stay the rest of the day.

That evening when they finally came home my middle son declared that he had a blast that day! I promise you my parents did nothing special with my kids. They didn't take them to the store or on a special outing. It was just them *being together* snuggling, reading, playing games, and watching movies that constituted a *blast* for my son!

This joy, support, and love that grandparents offer is so *very important* and impossible to fully quantify. Grandparents offer wisdom to those of us struggling through our parenting years and grace for grandkids that they can spoil in sweet snippets.

Grandparents are marriage savers as many times they can offer dependable and safe childcare for always needed date nights. Grandparents even step in as parents to their grandchildren when their own children become parents before they are ready or lack the skills they need to parent on their own.

Grandparents are an invaluable asset to the upcoming generation.

What roles do we see grandparents filling in our society? The answer is *so many!* As life expectancy has increased the amount of shared life between grandchildren and grandparents has increased.

The love and support shared between them has grown too! Let's explore some of the ways grandparents fill hugely important roles for their families.

Why Is the Role of Grandparent Such an Important One in Today's Society?

Despite factors such as spread out families, rising divorce rates, and family disharmony that make maintaining a connected extended family more challenging, research still shows there are real benefits to grandparents being involved in their children and grandchildren.

Grandparents fill many vital roles in their family structure and can offer great help to the generations coming up behind them. Even if grandparents are not geographically close to their grandchildren technology and the ability to easily travel to visit allows them to still remain connected to their grandchildren.

Here are just a few of the special roles grandparents fill in their families.....

1. Grandparents Fill the Role of Historian

Grandparents fill the role of historian and pass on stories, understanding, and context for their children and grandchildren. This shared history helps grandchildren discover a significant sense of identity in the greater context of their family trees. Grandparents are the great storytellers of their families' past.

Sharing with their grandchildren tales about relative, family traditions, and important memories from their own growing up years. Hearing these stories help grandchildren gain a more positive image on aging and their place in their family becomes more clear. They feel like they belong to a family unit and a strong sense of belonging develops that gives them a feeling of safety and security.

2. Grandparents Are Role Models and Heroes

Grandparents have street credit! They have lived through hardships, trials, struggles, and all the many ups and downs that comes with having the chance to live a long life. These experiences make them into real-life heroes and role models to their grandchildren.

In the eyes of a grandchild, a loving grandparent who has lived through hard things is a safe-haven. They know that no-matter-what, their grandparents will be able to help them when they have a need.

3. Grandparents Are Amazing Caretakers for Their Grandchildren

Research has found that Preschoolers cared for by their grandparents develop more robust language skills. Another study by the University of Oxford shows that when grandparents are involved with their grandchildren's lives their grandchildren are less likely to experience emotional and behavioral problems.

Grandparents being there to help take care of their grandkids gives them the chance to influence their futures for the better. Grandparents offer stability, fun, wisdom, and love when they are able to help in caring for their grandchildren in a fill-in-the-gaps caretaker or as a primary child care provider.

Grandparents also offer financial support to help in the raising of strong and well cared for grandchildren.

4. Grandparents Offer Spiritual Guidance

The *faith* of grandparents makes a huge impact on the life of their grandchildren. As a respected and loved figure in their lives your beliefs matter hugely and have the power to influence how they see the world. Grandparents have the chance to model how to treat others with compassion, love, kindness, and model how to be a person of integrity for their grandkids. Create experiences for your grandkids that help them engage with faith and the community.

Bring them to a service, a Bible study, to a community service event, talk to them about God's hand in creation, and share the ways you are praying for them! They will never forget the way you are living out your faith and it is sure to influence how they see the world as they become adults.

5. Grandparents Make Great Playmates

Nothing is sweeter than watching grandparents and grandkids laugh together! Parents oftentimes are so busy parenting they don't have the same time and flexibility to be silly as grandparents do. Grandparents can break some of the rules and do things that may feel a little off-limits for parents.

Consequently, memories are made! Some ideas for playing with grandkids is to engage imaginative play, read books together, create art together, plan a special outing to the movies or to the park, or just dial into whatever they are doing, embracing their energy rather than shying away from it!

6. Grandparents Make a Wonderful Teachers

Grandkids admire their grandparents' skills and life experiences. Most of us can think of a special recipe they loved from their grandma or a hobby grandpa had that captured our interest. Teaching grandkids practical skills like how to cook that special dish or share with them about your hobby is a great way to connect.

Many of these skills are lost if not passed down. Grandparents can also offer support for academics too. They may have the patience to step in as tutor or homework cheerleader when grandkids may need extra help.

What Role Have Grandparents Filled Both Past and Present?

As technology, medicine, wealth, and more have made it possible for people to live much longer, grandparents have become more of a fixture in society. Over the past 200 years or so the shared lifespan with grandparents and grandchildren has grown dramatically.

In 1860 Finnish children could expect to share about 4 years of life with one grandmother and grandfather. By 1950 that same child would expect to share 24 years with a grandmother and 13 with a grandfather.

Grandparents have consequently grown to become more of a prominent fixture in their grandchildren's lives. Societal changes such as a longer lifespan, divorce, single parenthood, households with two working parents, and more have changed what the family looks like. Many times grandparents are the ones stepping up to help with child care and child-raising for grandchildren.

In most Western societies grandparents generally are expected to take a secondary role to parents in the actual hands-on-parenting. Grandparents tend to take the role of "being there for extra support." The exception is when their child is a single-parent or in the event of a divorce. In those

cases the grandparents may step in more as a “replacement partner” and take a more active parenting role.

Another recent change in grandparenting is that Grandfathers are taking a more active role in the lives of their grandchildren. In the past when we talked about grandparents people mostly were referencing grandmas but as gender roles have shifted grandpas are becoming more engaged with their grandchildren.

Grandparenting Roles and Boundaries

Grandparents are a treasure! As they navigate their role in their children and grandchildren's lives they have to figure out what boundaries are best to help keep harmony in the family. Deciding how much they are willing to help with childcare, what level of parenting is comfortable in your family dynamic, and what other ways you are comfortable supporting each other is very important.

Sometimes grandparents may want to have more influence than parents are comfortable with or other times parents need more support than a grandparent is able to give. This is part of the work it takes to be family. Sometimes it takes tough conversation but finding the right boundaries and balance can help bring so much joy to your family dynamic!

When these situations arise make a point to get together to talk through your needs and expectations in person. Be clear, kind, and specific about what is working and what may need to change in your interactions with kids. Remember that grace is necessary to address these issues well! If the issue may be extra sensitive enlisting the help of a mentor, pastor, or counselor can help too!

Communicating your love and appreciation for one another while addressing needed boundaries always helps to steer clear of hurting one another while navigating these tougher talks.

Another factor to consider is that over time roles and the needs of your family change. Being adaptable to the new seasons that life brings is helpful to keeping the family unified over time. Talking through new needs, challenges, and limitations as grandkids and grandparents age is important.

Grandkids may need different kinds of support as they enter new developmental stages. Toddlers need love and supervision while kids may need someone to play a game with them and help them with homework and teenagers need guidance and a listening ear.

As grandparents age their ability to offer childcare or other supports may change. They may require more support from their family as aging brings new physical challenges.

Galatians 5:13 says, *“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.” It is a beautiful thing to see each member of our families find the best way to serve one another with love. We all benefit when we are able to offer each other support and God’s love.*



How to Find Peace

When Longing to Have Your Own Family

The desire to have a family is a beautiful one, one often planted by God. For many women, the desire to get married and have children has felt even more halted by quarantines and limitations unforeseen before. It is a common question to ask a little girl what they dream of being when they grow up. Many will say a doctor or a teacher, some a veterinarian or perhaps even an astronaut, but for some little girls, their dream is to be a wife and mother. For many that little girl dream has never changed, even if it has not yet come to pass.

The world has changed overnight it feels, but those deeply rooted hopes have not. For many, it can be even harder to see picture-perfect families on social media. Not so much a jealousy that they have such a gift, but the desire to have your own blessing. This is a fitting opportunity to share vulnerably and transparently with the Lord.

The writer of Proverbs 13:12 knows this by pouring out, *"Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life."* God does not turn a blind eye to the pain experienced in the ache that comes from longing for something as a family, yet not having one. This is seen vividly through the story of Hannah, mother of Samuel the Prophet. Sarah also longed for a family, yet was in her old age before she saw such a blessing. *Genesis 17:15-16*

The Lord knows what we are to ask before we even utter the words, if we can even utter the words (*Romans 8:26 – "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."*) and He longs for us to present to Him our hearts (*Psalms 37:4 – "Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart."*)

The Bible does not promise that every woman who longs to be a wife and mother will be, but the Bible does share promise that God will be faithful to His people. The role of being a mother does not always come from natural-born children. Often God will raise up women to be mothers to children they did not birth, yet a sacred and holy bond can be formed. This is evident in the story of Ruth through Naomi. (*Ruth 4:14-16*)

Yet a verse the Lord graced me with recently has become the prayer of my heart, *Psalms 27:13-14 "I will remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."*

We can remain confident that the Lord does hear our prayers, and that He will answer them in His timing and in His way. We serve a gracious and loving Father, He is full of compassion and kindness.

He knows things we do not, and He prepares things in His perfect and precise timing. We can rest assured that we are seen, we are fully known, and that He will bring about goodness in the land of the living.

Pray with Me....

Dear Lord,

We pray for those who long to have a family of their own, yet do not yet. You know the desire of their hearts. You know the genuine desire within them to love a husband, to cherish him and to embrace and encourage him to seek You. Help prepare them to be the wives their husbands will need, and to grow into the women You desire them to be.

Lord, we pray for the husbands yet to come to their wives that You would prepare them as you are preparing these precious women praying. Help them to find each other through Your Holy Spirit. Help them to grow in the knowledge and goodness of Your love, and to love each other through Your Spirit. Help them love each other even before meeting as You love the Church, help them to be obedient to Your Spirit as they trust Your timing, Your ways, and Your leading.

We pray for these women longing for a child, Lord. In Your Word, it shares that children are the heritage of the Lord, and Lord we know that You have such a dear heart for the little children. Please bless these women with children of their own. If You choose for that to be a child of natural birth, a child of adoption, or a child of fostering we pray that those relationships would be abundantly blessed and sacred.

We pray for these children yet to come that they would grow to love and serve the Lord, and that they would know how truly they were loved even before their births. Father, please give these women the opportunities to become mothers. To serve You in a new way as mothers.

In the meantime, as they pray and await Your answer, please give them peace and revelation. Please comfort them as You did Hannah through others, please assure them of Your goodness as You did Sarah, and please help them to see that You do care for them.

In Jesus name we pray,

Amen.

Families are a cherished gift, yet for so many they feel so stuck in a waiting room to be called up for their time. Seeking the Lord for His heart and plan will reveal not just His answer, but it will grant the opportunity for growth in a relationship with Him. Hold firm that He will answer, and that goodness will be seen in the land of the living.

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Types of Prayers We See in the Bible



Prayer is one of the most intimate ways we can connect to God. In prayer we share our feelings, our thoughts, our deepest concerns and fears, and what we are most grateful for in life. When we spend time in prayer, we hear from God and make space for the Spirit to guide our steps and transform our hearts. Scripture teaches that God is truly just a prayer away, and what a privilege it is for us to be so close to God.

One fascinating feature of prayer is that it is unique between every person and God. No one prays quite the same. Each of us may find ourselves praying in a different way depending on the situation, the need, or what we have to say to God. You may wonder how many different types of prayers there are. We can look to Scripture to discover at least ten notable kinds of prayers.

What Does the Bible Say about Prayer?

Having a vibrant prayer life is often cited as a significant spiritual practice among followers of Jesus. In fact, when we read about the life of Jesus, we discover that he made prayer a priority. We learn from Jesus how meaningful time for prayer is to the life of a believer.

“Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16).

Scripture affirms the concept of praying not only individually, but also as a community. Praying with others becomes a powerful way to lift up our voices to the Lord and to share our petitions with God as the body of Christ. When we pray, we often do so by ourselves, but we are encouraged to pray with others, as well.

“Jesus said, ‘For where two or three gather together in my name, I am there with them’” (Matthew 18:20).

Throughout Scripture, those who devoted themselves to God made prayer a part of their spirituality. Adam and Eve talked to God. Abraham spoke to God. Moses prayed as he led the Israelites. Esther fasted and prayed. Daniel prayed in the lion’s den. There are many instances of God’s people spending time in prayer. It is no wonder that when we look at the scope of the Bible, we realize it teaches us to commit ourselves to prayer.

“Devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).

An amazing moment during Jesus’ earthly ministry is when he gave the Sermon on the Mount. During this sermon found in the Gospel of Matthew, we learn from Jesus how to pray. The Lord’s Prayer is an amazing guide for us as believers. Prayer doesn’t need to be wordy or impressive or polished, it just needs to be honest and real.

“[Jesus said,] ‘This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one’” (Matthew 6:9-13).

Are There Different Ways to Pray?

The Bible is full of robust prayers that are said for a variety of reasons and circumstances. We get amazing glimpses of vibrant prayer lives in individuals and communities throughout God's word.

Prayer is powerful, it is intimate, and it changes the hearts of those who pray regularly by drawing us closer to God. There are many types of prayers and we find evidence of this in the Bible. Some prayers may be motivated by a need for healing, help, or a grateful heart. Other prayers are a result of considering and declaring the grandiosity of God.

Whatever the kind of prayer we bring to God, what's most important is that we make prayer a priority because it is how we fellowship with God and develop a personal relationship with him.

- **Prayer of Quiet Reflection**

Prayers of silence draw us away from prayers filled with words, and into a place where we quiet ourselves down and reflect. These types of silent prayers provide us needed time to reflect on God's goodness. This type of prayer is valuable to how we learn to hear from the Lord and allow him to guide our steps.

“On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night” (Psalm 63:6).

- **Prayer of Confession**

Confessing our sins is a significant way to pray as followers of Jesus. Often, Jesus called those he interacted with to confess their sins and sin no more. In the Bible, we get a glimpse of confession prayers and many reminders that God forgives those who confess their sins.

“Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.’ And you forgave the guilt of my sin” (Psalm 32:5).

- **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

For some, beginning each day with a prayer of thanksgiving is a habit they practice. Prayers of gratitude are prompted by an answered prayer, deliverance, recognition of how good and merciful God is, or simply because we have been given another day of life.

“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Cry out, ‘Save us, God our Savior; gather us and deliver us from the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your praise’” (1 Chronicles 16:34-35).

A Prayer for Every Need

Prayer is conversation with God and that conversation may differ when it comes to the motivation, meaning, and purpose. Hence, we find there are a variety of prayers in the Bible. We can look to the Bible to learn how to pray, to develop our prayer lives, and to allow prayer to nourish our relationship with Jesus.

1970'S TV WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



ALL IN THE FAMILY
BARNEY MILLER
BIONIC WOMAN
BONANZA
BRADY BUNCH

CHARLIES ANGELS
EMERGENCY
FANTASY ISLAND
GOOD TIMES
GUNSMOKE

HAPPY DAYS
HOGANS HEROES
LAND OF THE LOST
NIGHT GALLERY
POLICE WOMAN

ROCKFORD FILES
THE JEFFERSONS
THE ODD COUPLE
THE WALTONS
THREES COMPANY