

Foursquare Department of Christian Education

DIRECTIONS

Newsletter for Christian Educators

Spring 1994

CHILDREN - Mighty in Prayer

"Hearing the voice of God does not depend upon age, but relationship!"

Samuel, as a young boy, heard the voice of the Lord and prophesied when "the word of the Lord was rare in those days," (1 Samuel 3:1). Children can hear and perceive spiritual matters far greater than what we may realize.



While pastoring our first church, we were going through a study on the book of Samuel. One Sunday night, I began to relate the events when Samuel came to the temple to serve the Lord with Eli. As I paused, we heard our two-year old daughter, Shannan, saying "Samuel, Samuel." Her timing was great; I couldn't have planned it better. Two weeks prior she had been in an older Sunday School class where her mother was teaching, as there was no nursery. She remembered the lesson about Samuel and how he responded to the voice of the Lord.

As we grow in understanding and grace in the Lord Jesus we learn that prayer is not only you talking to the Lord but hearing His voice as well.

Children can and are significant in prayer for they believe with a pure heart.

One of the most beautiful things noticed while Jesus was in Jerusalem was the presence of children in the temple waiting for their King and then in happy chorus sang, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" The bigoted priests and scribes sneered at "the children crying in the temple" (Matthew 21:15), but the heart of Jesus was thrilled at the sight of boys and girls in the sanctuary as they saw in Him One who had every right to royalty. Those appreciative children teach us three profound lessons:

THOSE CHILDREN SAW WHAT OTHERS MISSED. The priests and scribes saw Jesus through prejudiced hearts and preconceived ideas about how the Messiah should appear. The children looked at Jesus with open hearts and expectations about their Savior Who had appeared.

THOSE CHILDREN SANG WHILE OTHERS REMAINED SILENT. The children led the praises of the people. The word "cry" denotes lifting up of the voice with strength; a bold, full, hearty song which Christ declared the perfection of praise. Jesus answered the priests and scribes' complaining with "Have you not read, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou has perfected praise?" (*Note: the average child laughs 150 times a day, while an adult laughs only 15 times a day.*)

THOSE CHILDREN RECEIVED A BLESSING WHICH OTHERS LOST. As they cried "HOSANNA" they were captivated by the full meaning of who Jesus was. To them He was indeed EMMANUEL...God with us!

We need to help children grow in understanding and opportunity of prayer, crying out to their Lord. There is no greater force in life than prayer.

Children identify with others in need - the pain of rejection, the anxiety of going to a new school, hearing about a homeless child. Children are rich in compassion and want to help. Your children should know that prayer is unleashing the power to overcome the twistedness of the day, and can supersede anything that man is able to do.

Children need to learn that prayer is intergenerational. They need to see adults worshipping and praying with pure hearts. As a church you are to train your children to be mighty in prayer. Let's inspire our kids to greatness and

equip them to handle the traumatic, unexpected events in their lives by teaching them to look at Jesus, Emmanuel.

We have listed some resources that will help you focus on teaching children to pray, and improving your own prayer life.

Portions of this article were excerpted from "All The Children of the Bible" by Herbert Lockyer 1970 Zondervon Publishing House

Rick Wulffstieg

How Can God Speak To You?

Picture an adult in a doctor's office telling the doctor all of their problems, but not listening for the help the doctor has for them. Some people treat God that way. They may even pray for a few people they see often. Then, getting up off their knees, they walk away from God, never giving Him a chance to say anything.

God can be compared to the doctor: He is the Great Physician. In your prayer time you need to be still and allow the Great Physician to talk to you. Let God show you answers to your problems. Give Him time to speak to you and give you direction.

You were created to have fellowship with God. To have fellowship with someone means to share with him or communicate with him. God wants you to get to know Him better, but you must listen.

PRAYER = TALKING + LISTENING

How can God speak to you? He speaks through your mind, through people (like your Sunday school teacher, pastor and parents), through the Bible, and through His Spirit. Jesus told His followers, "Be sure to put into practice what you hear. The more you do this, the more you will understand what I tell you" (Mark 4:24, The Living Bible). This is why listening to God is very important in your prayer time. You will know what He wants to tell you as you practice listening to Him in prayer.

- 1 - God can speak to you in many ways. He may speak to you through your mind, giving you thoughts about what you've been praying about. (Proverbs 3:5,6).
- 2 - Proverbs 4:1 says to listen "to a father's instruction." Pay attention, and you will have understanding.
- 3 - God uses Christian teachers and ministers. Ephesians 4:11 and 12 says that God has given special abilities to do certain things. That God's people will be equipped to do better work for Him, building up the church, the body of Christ, to a position of strength and maturity" (The Living Bible).
- 4 - God speaks to you through His Spirit. John 14:26 says, "The Helper will teach you everything. He will cause you to remember all the things I told you. This Helper is the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name." He will give you strength and direction for your life.
- 5 - God speaks to you through His Word - the "**Book of Life**." You can find answers in it for every situation in your life. Proverbs 4:6 says, "Use wisdom and it will take care of you. Love wisdom and it will keep you safe."

This article was adapted from *Prayer Adventures for Boys and Girls*. We have tried to gear the information to speak to an adult group also. Amazing that what is being taught to children, still needs to be learned by some adults!

HOW DO WE PRAY?

Our emphasis is on prayer. We've talked about the need for prayer and the importance of listening to God, but how do we pray? Do we understand the relationship building that happens when we pray. Are we aware of the power released when we approach the throne of God by prayer.

Jesus gave us the ultimate model of prayer when He taught the disciples the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. He knew the importance of teaching the disciples how to release God's power in their lives as well as the lives of those people with whom they came in contact.

He tells us to approach God first with praise and worship in our hearts. He is an awesome God Who reigns in wisdom, power and love. Can anyone deny that? We need to understand our relationship with God was meant to be one of intimacy and acceptance and has been established through the blood of Christ.

We are to intercede for ourselves as well as others. We should daily seek forgiveness, not just for ourselves, but for others. We also need to forgive ourselves because He has.

He cares about every aspect of our lives, we should never be afraid to ask Him for anything. If what we ask for isn't right, He'll show us and give us something else.

We need to understand our Lord's omnipotence. "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world." As His children and through the blood of Christ we can bind the works of darkness and release God's power in all areas of our lives and in our communities.

Then we thank God for what He has done and will do. His kingdom-His power-His glory FOREVER. Not temporal, but ETERNAL.

The following excerpts were taken from the Spirit-filled Life Bible to help explain the Lord's Prayer. Many adults as well as children need to learn how to pray and release God's power. Whenever people have been united in prayer great things happened.

The Lord's Prayer is a prayer outline with seven major topics, each representing a basic human need:

- 1 **THE PATERNAL NEED: *Our Father*** - When you pray all needs are met by the benevolence of a loving Father. It signifies relationship as a result of Christ's atoning blood.
- 2 **GOD'S PRESENCE: *Hallowed be Your name*** - Enter His presence through praise and worship.
- 3 **GOD'S PRIORITIES: *Your Kingdom come*** - Declare that His kingdom priorities shall be established in yourself, your loved ones, your church, and your nation.
- 4 **GOD'S PROVISION: *Give us*** - Jesus, the need meeter, told us to pray daily, asking Him to supply all our needs. Our physical needs are linked with kingdom concerns.
- 5 **GOD'S FORGIVENESS: *And Forgive us*** - You need God's forgiveness, and you need to forgive others. Daily walk in love and forgiveness.
- 6 **POWER OVER SATAN: *Deliver us from the evil one*** - Pray a hedge of protection about yourself and your loved ones and verbally put on the armor of God.
- 7 **DIVINE PARTNERSHIP: *For Yours is the kingdom*** - Praise God for sharing His kingdom, power, and glory with you.

HIDDEN EFFICIENCIES OF PRAYER

Four ways that prayer is productive.

"Are all the activities that scream for my attention really essential?" asks one pastor. "Am I missing the burning bush while trying to keep the lawn cut?"

Many pastors lament that too many deadlines, meetings, decisions, phone calls, and appointments rob their prayer times. Facing a similar dilemma, early church leaders decided, "We will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4).

For today's pastors, time in prayer is squeezed by two cultural values: (1) self-reliant individualism, and (2) the demand for measurable productivity. These two philosophies, which greatly shape our approach to work, place little premium on all activity that is seemingly passive and difficult to quantify.

The struggle between prayer and "productive work" is as old as the conflict between Mary and Martha in Luke 10. Industrious Martha-types, however, may be surprised to discover four ways that authentic prayer is actually very productive.

INSPIRED DECISIONS

Prayer creates a climate for wise decision-making. Before Jesus chose his twelve disciples, He spent the entire night in prayer.

One of the poorest uses of our time is trying to patch up and live with unwise choices. I think of all the frustration and wasted time I've faced when I've chosen staff or lay leaders too hastily. My time would have been spent more efficiently had I followed Jesus' pattern.

Prayer helps us focus on our priorities. After waking before dark and spending time in prayer, Jesus had His priorities clearly defined. Although Peter reported an emergency, "Everyone is looking for you," Jesus calmly reported that He had other matters to attend to (Mark 1:35-38).

Prayer also forestalls one of the biggest misuses of time and energy: anxiety. "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" (Phil 4:6, 7). Most people find that a peaceful state of mind enhances creative thinking.

FAVOR WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Prayer releases favor with key people. Nehemiah knew that what he was called to do required the blessing and financial support of his authorities. His strategy was "I prayed to the God of heaven, ...and the king granted my requests" (Neh. 2:4,8 RSV).

Frequently our goals cannot be attained without the support of others. Countless good ideas have been squelched by superiors. Worthy projects have been

abandoned because key players were unsupportive. Prayer can promote teamwork and unity in godly endeavors.

Once I found myself being taken advantage of by a church leader. I complained to my wife for months. I went to the individual and couldn't resolve the problem. I then read Proverbs 29:26: "Many seek an audience with a ruler, but it is from the Lord that man gets justice." After I prayed this verse, there was an immediate change. I couldn't believe how seeking justice from God, not human boards and committees, quickly expedited the solution.

OPEN DOORS

Some doors are opened only through prayer. Some of the obstacles we face have been designed to drive us to depend upon Christ's power. "When we humbly call out to Him, doors that were once closed open miraculously."

Other times doors of opportunity may be closed due to Satanic hindrances. "These blockages demonstrate that much of ministry is beyond human capabilities. It requires the power of the One we are serving. Prayer once again is our means of releasing divine power to push back these forces."

When prayer becomes a part of our business plans, our partnership with Christ becomes a reality. Someone once said, "When we work, we work. When we pray, God works."

FUELED BY SIGNIFICANCE

Prayer adds spiritual meaning to our work. One complaint often heard among employees is a lack of fulfillment in their work. When work becomes perfunctory, mundane, and just going through the motions, low morale sets in along with poor time management.

That can happen even to those doing "the Lord's work." In *Too Busy Not To Pray*, Bill Hybels wrote, "It became obvious to me that the pace of my life outstripped my capacity to analyze it. It exhausted me to be constantly doing and rarely reflecting on what I did. At the end of a day I would wonder if my work had any meaning at all."

The apostle Paul instructed workers to add spiritual significance to their labor: "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Eph. 6:7). An effective way to shift our perspective from serving men to serving God is through time spent talking with the Lord about our work.

Prayer -- what a practical idea!

Written by Joseph M. Winger
Every Home for Christ International, Colorado Springs, CO
First printed in Leadership Magazine Fall 1993





A JOSIAH

GENERATION



There is a fresh call of God moving across the face of the earth today—a summons by the Holy Spirit that will affect the lives and destiny of an entire generation. This call may perhaps be the firstfruits of the revival that we have been praying for, and as with many great works that God begins, the selection of His instruments for revival and the targeting of the harvest field may not be where we would first look.

The call is going out to an incredible resource of potential spiritual warriors who do not carry the baggage of accumulated hurts which you and I often need to recover from. Their hearts are ripe, their trust is sincere, their spontaneity is refreshing and full of potential. The call is being issued forth to ...
...our children.

God's heart and plan is for a generation of children to arise who are spiritually mature, wholeheartedly steadfast and completely sold-out to Jesus.

He desires to raise up this army of children who will be bold warriors for the Lord. And He is—it's already happening in our country and in countries around the globe. It might even be happening in your church, and in your home. It is truly a "God-happening" presently alive within the spiritual growth and development of our kids. The call is to raise up a...
...Josiah generation.

Composed of children, this spiritual infantry patterns themselves after a dynamic king in the Old Testament—King Josiah. The accolade was given concerning him, "Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might...nor after him did any arise like him" (2 Kings 23:25). And scripture astonishing and enlightening fact concerning this one who smashed idols, pulverized false prophet's bones, and reinstated nationwide worship and revival—"Josiah was eight years old when he became king" (2 Kings 22:1). Even at the tender age of eight, this young boy was able to "reign righteously."

Josiah lived during a time of great national idolatry. We can note that few of his predecessors were godly men and that he followed the reigns of two wicked and evil kings. But rather than giving in to the pressures of the sinful society around, as a young boy he stood for righteousness, and he stood for the Lord...31 years.

The summary is given, "He did what was right in the sight of the Lord...he did not turn aside to the right or to the left" (2 Kings 22:2).

I believe that the Lord desires to raise up a "Josiah generation" in our world today. These children, like young Josiah, will be ready, able, and willing to follow the voice of the Lord. They will have spiritual maturity well beyond their physical years. They will not be necessarily "child stars," but will be ones who act as leaders at a young age and who will continue to do so for the rest of their lives. Like Samuel, a young boy who ministered alongside the priest Eli in the temple, these children will also minister alongside adults, with spirits finely-tuned to hear His voice, and hearts unquestionably ready to obey His leading. They will operate in the spiritual gifts—delivering words of wisdom, knowledge and prophecy. They will be used as instruments of healing, deliverance and comfort. This entire generation—a Josiah generation—will be mightily used of God.

"Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years." II Kings 22:1

This is exciting news for us. Yet it will require a great amount of sensitivity on the part of our generation. Like King Josiah's mother, Jedidah, the one who most likely trained him in the ways of the Lord, we too must be men and women who are constantly nurturing our children in their spiritual lives. We must be people who are willing to invest our lives into the spiritual development of young boys and girls who will in turn lead nations at a young age, like their biblical model—King Josiah. This will require that as adults we recognize God's gifts in the lives of children and devote our time and energy to cultivate their spiritual life in Christ. We must help them recognize the voice of the Lord, respond to His call, and move in the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

I believe that there are many young Josiahs in our nation today. They can be found in our churches—in the Sunday school class, the children's choir, or the Bible club. They can be found in our homes. They need to be strategically trained for the future. Will you respond to God's call and help raise up this godly generation of children who will become a mighty instrument in the hand of the Lord?

Written by Tanja K. Geue, Southern California Foursquare District Christian Education Representative.

Mobilizing Children for PRAYER and EVANGELISM

Children can be led to know what it means to really travail in prayer for the lost and to pray in the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:18). They can experience intercession for others. Most children are naturally selfish, so the amount of spiritual power and training we put into their lives will result in the same amount of sacrificial living in them.

Children should be encouraged to write down on a sheet of paper a list of those people God has placed on their hearts to pray for. That way they can pray consistently for their salvation and ask God for the boldness to share the gospel with them. When the children are at school or in the neighborhood, they will realize that they are not alone but part of an army of young prayer warriors who are agreeing with them for their friends to be saved.

As the children come together with this prayer focus, have them give a progress report on their endeavors to reach their friends with the gospel. With an ongoing report, intelligent prayer and a spiritual strategy, much can be accomplished. It is better for them to concentrate on one or two people and keep after them until they have made a decision rather than to talk once to a large number of people. Teach the children to be faithful not only in prayer but the life they are modeling before those they desire to come to know Jesus Christ.

Show the children that these principles are warfare tactics and should be taken very seriously (Matthew 10:16). Satan will be very active against these believing children. He would try to bring discouragement and fear. Many youngsters have reported back the first time with great excitement about how they talked to a friend about the Lord and made good progress. But often the next report they

give on the follow-up is that the friend is avoiding them or is not interested in continuing the discussion.

In most cases the children's friends are not really reacting negatively. The devil is just trying to trick the child and stop him from continuing to witness. If he witnesses just once and doesn't persevere, the seeker will not take him seriously or will feel that the matters they are discussing are not of great importance. Witnessing should again be a way of life in a natural manner.

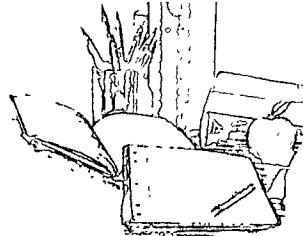
Excerpted from KIDS IN COMBAT written by David Walters, Creation House, 1992 pp 78-80

A Child's Answered Prayer:

During the campaigns up north, the people knew the south was very poor. They would send barrels of clothes and food. They knew our family didn't have a lot and they were mindful of Roberta and me. I really needed a pair of shoes, and they remembered shoes, but it had been about six months and little boys' feet grow about an inch in length and the shoes didn't fit. We were disappointed and we meditated. My sister would not let the subject slip. Finally she said to mother, "What did the children of Israel do out there in the wilderness, what did they do when their shoes were too little?" And mother said, "God must have stretched them." Roberta mulled that over a bit and said, "Well if He did that for them why can't He do it for Rolf?" Mother said, "Well, I guess He can, let's pray about it." We knelt down and prayed and when I stuck my feet in those shoes they fit perfectly, and we learned these miracles and wonderful things God did, and it built faith in our hearts.

*Excerpted from the video "Heritage of the Foursquare Church."
by Dr. Rolf K. McPherson*

Prayer Resources



Organizations:

A.D. 2000 United Prayer Track

215 N. Marengo Ave., Pasadena, CA 91101
(818) 577-7122. A worldwide prayer network coordinated by C. Peter Wagner. 160 million Christian will pray for world evangelization on June 25, 1994. It will be "A Day to Change the World."

Concerts of Prayer International

Pentagon Towers, P. O. Box 36008, Minneapolis, MN 55435. (612) 853-1740. Equips and mobilizes movements of united prayer for spiritual awakening and world evangelization. Services are useful citywide and in the local church.

Esther Network International (ENI)

Esther Ilinsky, 854 Conniston Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33405. (407) 832-6490. Prayer for global intercession. Children's subtrack of A.D. 2000

Every Home for Christ (EHC)

7899 Lexington Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920-4203. (719) 260-8888. A prayer network and resource center providing books, audiotapes and videotapes relating to world evangelization and spiritual awakening in the Church.

Ministry to Today's Child

Pat Verbal, 503 E. Leadora Avenue, Glendora CA 91741. (818) 963-4326. Prayer seminars for children, parents and teachers.

Moms in Touch International

P. O. Box 1120, Poway, CA 92074. (800) 949-MOMS. mothers meeting to pray for their children and schools. Founder, Fern Nichols, says, "*if you aren't praying for your child, who is?*"

National Children's Prayer Network

P. O. Box 9683, Washington, D.C. 20016
(703) 759-3778.

National Day of Prayer (May 5, 1994)

P. O. Box 15616, Colorado Springs, CO 80935-5616. (719) 531-3379. Local, State and federal observances will be held to unite Americans in prayer for our country on the first Thursday in May. See blurb on back page.

The following printed materials can be ordered through: **Foursquare Publications**
800/992-7444

52 Simple Ways to Teach Your Child to Pray.

Hromas, Roberta. Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1991. Nashville, TN

Giving Meaning to Your Child's Prayer Life

Fuller, Marty Gospel Light Publications, 1989. Ventura, CA

Kit Cat and the Whirling Watch: The Story of the Nation Built on Prayer.

Sorensen, Susan and Whims, Joette. Joy Publishing 1993. San Juan Capistrano, CA

My Spiritual Diary--The ABC's of the Christian Life.

Waters, Eric and Heidi. International Evangelism Association, 1992. Fort Worth, TX

Teaching Your Child About God

Haystead, Wes. Regal Books 1981, Ventura, CA Shows parents how important modeling is in your child's life.

52 Ways to Teach Children to Pray, Easy to do Activities for Ages 3-12

Christian Education Publishers, 1991 San Diego, CA

Prayer Adventures for Boys and Girls Changing Our World Through Prayer

Nepstad, Verna Gospel Publishing House 1992. Boonville, MO. This instructor's guide and student manual can assist you in teaching your students about prayer and training them to be "world changers" through prayer.

My Family's Prayer Calendar

Dobson, Shirley and Verbal, Pat. Gospel Light Publications, Ventura, CA. Included in this mailing packet. This calendar regularly sells for \$9.99. Foursquare Publications is offering it for only \$5.00. It is well worth the money especially for teaching young children about prayer.

National Day of Prayer

On **May 5, 1994** local, state, and federal observances will be held to unite Americans in prayer for our country. In schools, businesses, and churches across our nation people will stop their work and gather at 12 noon for 5 minutes of prayer.

The National Day of Prayer is a wonderful opportunity for involving children in prayer for the country. We can direct their young faith to understand that they can be an effective force in shaping our nation's future. Here are some ideas for involving them in this national prayer event:

✦ Have them write prayers for our country and send them to their school principals, city, state, and federal government officials.

✦ Parents can help them design creative posters that will encourage people in the church and their neighborhood to pray.

✦ Children can pray for the missionary representatives from their church. Pray they will have wisdom and insight into the culture they serve, that they would have favor in telling the good news of Jesus Christ, that they would have protection and good health. They could also send them a card and let them know that they are being remembered in prayer back home.

✦ Write a note to your pastor and his family and let them know you are praying for them.

✦ Watch the evening news or look over the front page of a newspaper. Ask the children what event or events they could cover with prayer.

DIRECTIONS FOR FOURSQUARE CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS

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You may receive bundle (5 or more) copies of the newsletter to distribute in your church for a small charge to cover shipping costs.

If you would like to make a contribution to this newsletter we would appreciate hearing from you.

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Future Christian Education Conferences:

Utah	1/22/93	Salt Lake City
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So. California	3/5/93	Van Nuys, CA
Western District	3/12/93	Danville, CA

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