

Power-Packed Holiday Prayers for Your Children

As adults, most of us have come to expect a certain amount of stress and struggle during the holidays. Our to-do lists lengthen to epic proportions as we work to make this a meaningful time for those around us. We get caught up in expectations—real and imagined—and whether we admit it or not, it takes a toll on our families.

In the hectic blur of the season, we can overlook the fact that our kids—no matter how young they are—also feel some of the strain. From Halloween to Christmas, it seems that most of the year-end holidays are kid focused. It's easy to let that fact cloud us to what's really happening in their young lives. The changes in schedule, diet and even our own stress can increase their anxiety.

We can't always put a halt to the hectic happenings, but we can pray. And prayer is always the most powerful thing we can do. As we begin to round the final turn into the year-end, holiday home stretch, I'd like to share some of the ways and verses I pray for my kids during the holidays.

1. **I pray that they keep their focus on what's important.** This holiday season is based on celebrating the birth of Christ. Every day, I ask God to make sure this amazing gift doesn't get lost in the craziness (Col. 3:2).
2. **I ask God to give them a sense of balance.** Every year, the holidays seem to get more frantic. We can combat this by praying for God to teach them balance (Matt. 6:33).
3. **I pray for protection from the food they're eating.** Let's face it, most of us tend to over-indulge during the holidays. It's even harder for our kids.

They're bombarded with sweets and temptations from every side and at every gathering (1 Cor. 10:31).

4. **I ask that they be protected from materialism.** We are a culture consumed with more. I truly believe the greatest gift we can offer our children is the ability to be content with less (Phil. 4:11-12)
5. **I pray for them to experience true joy, not just fleeting happiness.**
6. **I ask God to give them opportunities to serve others.** When we can take the focus off ourselves, our perspective changes, and that's what I want for my kids (1 Pet. 4:10).
7. **I pray for God to keep them from poor choices.** Anytime there are groups of children, the opportunity for mischief increases. I ask God to help them be wise (James 1:15).
8. **I ask God to reveal Himself to them in a new way.** I want my children to recognize God's voice and to be continually growing in their relationship with Him (John 10:14).
9. **I pray they'll finish the year strong.** Just because the holidays are just around the corner doesn't mean we can neglect our responsibilities. I pray they'll remain focused on school work and other commitments (Phil. 3:14).

So often, it feels like as parents, we need to take a more active role in our children's lives. We look for opportunities to nurture, teach and love them. These are all important aspects of raising our kids. But we need to remember that prayer isn't a last resort. It's the first line of defense when it comes to bringing up healthy kids. {eo}

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