

The Best Kingdom Practice for Your Family for 2021 and Beyond

Each of us is part of a family. We have or had parents and siblings; we may have nieces or nephews, and some of us have children and perhaps grandchildren.

The writer of Proverbs suggested this profound wisdom for family life: “Through wisdom is a house built, and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge the rooms will be filled with all precious and pleasant riches” (Prov. 24:3-4). The idea behind this verse is that relationships within the family system take wisdom, understanding and knowledge. Family life offers us the opportunity to practice our relational skills. Think about it. You are most like your true self when you’re at home, right? There is no pretending at home.

As you move into this new year, what are the best practices for you to put in place to live a holy life even within your family system? There are lots of practices you could put in place, but there’s one practice that I want to focus on in this brief devotional. It’s the practice of praying Scripture for those you love.

Why is this the most important practice in my view? Because Scripture is the one offensive weapon the apostle Paul talks about in Ephesians 6 when he writes about the armor of God. Every piece of the armor is defensive to protect us from the enemy except the sword of the Spirit—which is the Word of God. This is our offensive weapon. We must learn to use it wisely.

Here’s the thing: The enemy of our souls, Satan, is after your kids and grandkids, your nieces and nephews, your aging parents and your siblings. You may be filled with concern and

anxiety thinking about the world in which the young people in your life are growing up in. However, you don't need to shrink back to just passively watch how it all pans out.

You have a weapon; use it! Learn the power of praying Scripture over your family.

To help you get started, here are 3 passages I love to pray when I feel concerned for one of my family members:

Ephesians 3:17b-21 (NIV): *"And I pray that _____, (Put in the name of your family member) being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever! Amen."*

Kids and adults alike need deep rootedness in the love of Christ. I pray that my kids, their spouses and my grandkids will know categorically how deeply Christ loves them and that their identity will sink down so deeply into the love of Christ that no matter what comes their way, they will be able to stand firm in their value as one who is deeply and unconditionally loved by Christ.

Colossians 2:2-3: *"My goal is that _____ (Put your child's name in the blank) may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*

I like to pray this prayer for my kids who are married—that they would be encouraged and united in love. I like to pray

this for my grandkids—that they would be full of understanding about who Christ is and how deeply He loves them.

Isaiah 42:6: “I, the Lord, have called _____
(Put in the name of one of your family members) in
righteousness; I will take hold of _____’s (Put in
name) hand, I will keep _____ (Put in name) and will
make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for those
around them.”

I love to pray this prayer, especially for my grandkids. It reminds me that God knows their names. He walks with them, holding their hands, and will enable them to be little lights shining encouragement to those around them.

For those of you who are parents, I firmly believe that it is essential that you learn the power of praying Scripture over your family. The next time worry or anxiety creep in, crush Satan by wielding your sword. Pray Scripture over your child, and don’t give up praying until you see a breakthrough. I cannot tell you how many times Steve and I did this and continue to do this on behalf of our kids and grandkids. Not only will it help quiet your anxiety, but I believe you will see tangible changes in your family if you persist.

For more helpful tips on parenting and connecting with your family, order a copy of *How to Listen So Your Kids Will Talk*.
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*Authentic, passionate, funny and biblical all describe **Becky Harling**. A bestselling author, Becky is a popular speaker at conferences, retreats and other events. Her most recent book, How to Listen so Your Kids Will Talk has become a favorite among parents. Becky is a certified coach with the John Maxwell Team and offers coaching for parents who are struggling in their parenting journey. You can connect with Becky at , , Facebook , Twitter @beckyharling or on Instagram at Becky Harling.*