

ACTS Prayers for Children

One of the best gifts we can give our children is to teach them how to have authentic, personal conversations with our Heavenly Father. Here are some practical ways you can teach your children to pray. This uses the ACTS pattern of prayer (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication).

A=Adoration. This is also the same as praise - A is for Awesome. When we pray a prayer of Adoration, we tell God how Awesome He is. Children learn that praising God is very different from Thanking God. When we praise God, we recognize who He is instead of just listing off things He has given us.

- Brainstorm all the words you can think of to describe God and that would praise Him. Write these each on individual pieces of paper and put them into a basket. Take turns with each person in the family taking a slip of paper and praising God with the word he/she drew.
- Make a Praise Poster. Take a large piece of paper and fill it with words and pictures that praise God. Use the poster to spark a prayer of adoration.
- Flip through the Psalms and take turns reading out loud phrases that praise God.

C=Confession. This is when we tell God we are sorry and ask Him for forgiveness.

- Get out a dry erase board or chalk board and list all the ways you have sinned against God in the past few days. After saying a prayer of confession, wipe the board clean and talk about how God forgives us when we confess.
- Buddy up. This kind of prayer is intimidating to do in a larger group. Let your children pair up and say a prayer of confession with just one other person.
- Read through the 10 Commandments with your children. As you read them, ask if they need to tell God their sorry for anything. Place a piece of black paper in a metal can for each confession. Then, burn the paper inside the can and reassure your child(ren) of God's forgiveness...that God does not remember our sin.

T=Thanksgiving. This is when we acknowledge that all we have comes from God and we thank God for taking care of our needs and providing for us.

- Take a walk around the house. You could spread this out by doing one room a night for a few nights. Stop and pray at different items around the house – pictures of loved ones, food in the refrigerator, clothes in the closet, etc.
- Make a “Thanks God Collage”. Using magazines, have children cut out pictures of items that remind them of how God provides for them. After the collage is done, spend time in prayer thanking God for the things on the poster.
- Body, Mind and Heart. On a piece of paper, draw a body, a head, and a big heart. Have children draw pictures in those items of ways that God has provided for them (heart – spiritual, emotional, head – learning, skills, abilities, body – physical needs).

S=Supplication. We give our needs and requests to God. We can pray for the needs of others, or our own needs. Try these “Supplication” prayers at home!

- **Link Up:** This activity can be spread over a week’s time. On the first day, brainstorm all the people you know who need your prayers. Scan the newspaper to find more names and people to pray for. Think about people who might be sick or scared or in need. Write each of these people on a strip of paper. Take all of your strips of paper and staple them together in loops, forming one long chain. Every night that week, each member of the family can tear off one link and pray for that person, until your chain is gone.
- **Pass it On:** Find some encouraging postcards at a local card store. Have each member of the family pick one person to pray for every night for the whole week. (ex: a friend who is sick, a teacher at school) At the end of the week, send each of the people you have prayed for a postcard encouraging him/her and telling them you prayed for them during the week.
- **All in the Family:** Have each family member think of one thing he/she needs prayer for. (nervous about a test at school, sick with a cold, having a conflict with a friend, etc.) Each person can write (or draw a picture) of their personal need on an index card. Place all of these cards in a basket and have each person draw the card of someone else in the family. (Don’t draw your own!) During your family prayer time, pray for the needs of the person whose card you drew.