

PRAYING  
LIKE CRAZY KIDS  
FOR YOUR

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T A M Y R A  H O R S T

# PRAYING LIKE CRAZY KIDS FOR YOUR

*April 17*

*Dear Lord,*

*Thank You for the way You care for Your children. Help them to choose the right path, and to love You in prayer. May they know, no matter what happens today, that You are always with them, caring, and loving them so much. Help them to choose the right path, and to love You. Strengthen them in their walk with You. Convict them of their sins, and help them to know You, and to serve You. May they know that You are always with them, through the hard times. The silent times. And let them know that You are always with them, loving them, and loving You, Jesus.*

*Amen.*



Pacific Press® Publishing Association  
Nampa, Idaho  
Oshawa, Ontario, Canada  
[www.pacificpress.com](http://www.pacificpress.com)

Cover designed by Gerald Lee Monks

Cover design resources from Dreamstime.com

Inside design by Aaron Troia

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Printed in the United States of America

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Additional copies of this book are available by calling toll-free 1-800-765-6955 or visiting <http://www.adventistbookcenter.com>.

ISBN 13: 978-0-8163-2345-6

ISBN 10: 0-8163-2345-3

09 10 11 12 13 • 5 4 3 2 1

# Dedicated to

Joshua and Zachary,

for whom I have prayed like crazy

and always will.

You can count on it!

# Acknowledgments

To Miles Yoder, principal of Lancaster Mennonite School, who invited me to give a seminar to parents at a parent-teacher fellowship meeting. That invitation was the beginning of this book.

To Linda McCabe and Denise Reinwald, who not only supported me with prayer and encouragement as I wrote, but who also brainstormed ideas for the journaling section of each chapter.

To an amazing group of women who prayed for this project while I wrote: Starla, Tina, Lilly, Tracy, Linda, Denise, Tanya, Kathleen, and Judy.

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# Introduction

Dear Friend:

You’ve probably picked up this book because you have a burden to pray for your children. You may want to learn new ways to pray for them or may be looking for encouragement that prayer makes a difference. I hope you’ll find both within these pages.

At the end of each chapter, I’ve included a few questions to help you apply what you’ve just read, and offered an opportunity to write down things and people you want to pray for in relationship to the chapter. This journaling opportunity is optional and included to enhance what you’re reading. Know that what you discover in these pages is my prayer journey for my sons. It’s not the only way to pray or the only things to pray about. When it comes to prayer, there really isn’t a right or wrong way. There is no magic formula that if you follow all your prayers will be answered the way you desire. You don’t have to convince God to move on behalf of your child or grandchild. God wants to and is working in their lives. He loves them more than you possibly can. Prayer is important often because of the work it does in us. It is honest conversation between an earthly parent and a heavenly Father. It has to be honest more than anything else. God wants it to be a conversation—intimate and personal. When you open your heart honestly before God about anything, and especially about your children, He hears and moves.

I’ve also included a “Pray for” section that recounts the main thoughts suggested to pray about in the chapter.

This book has been designed as a book for parents to pick up and read and deepen their own prayer journey for their children. However, it could also be used in a small group or book club. The journal thoughts at the end of each



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## Praying Like Crazy for Your Kids

chapter can be used as a catalyst for discussion and lead into a prayer time.

My prayers have been with you as I've written this book, and they continue to be with you as you pick it up and read it. I pray that God will help you find encouragement, resources, and tools, but, most of all, that you will discover an amazing Father who is working in your children's lives in ways you may not even know.

With love,

Tamyra Horst

# The Importance of Praying for Your Kids



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*Be anxious for nothing [not even your kids], but in everything [including parenting] by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. —Philippians 4:6, 7*

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Like most moms, I'll never forget the moment each of my sons was born.

My oldest came in the middle of a stormy night. My water broke, and the doctor encouraged us to come to the hospital. Labor began when we got there and lasted only an hour, but was incredibly intense. The umbilical cord was wrapped around my son's neck, and he was blue. My

Parenting has been one of the most amazing and most difficult adventures of my life.

first words upon seeing him revealed my amazement at the miracle that I had just participated in: "It's a baby!"

I adored him from that moment on. Today he's a young adult forging his own life, but his smile still melts

my heart every time I see it. And those black eyes with their twinkle—they always make me smile. There were moments when I thought I could never love another child as much as I loved him.

Three years later, in the middle of the day, his brother was



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born. He was two weeks overdue, and this time labor lasted four hours. That doesn't sound long compared to other labor stories, but this baby seemed determined not to arrive no matter how hard I pushed. Then finally there he was—all eight pounds and seven ounces of him. They held him up for me to see; his eyes were wide open— and so was his mouth! I was totally consumed by love for him in that second. (Though I should've known what kind of child he would be by his stubbornness to be born and those wide-open eyes and open mouth!) He has brought me such joy and laughter.

My sons have always been one of the most important things in my life. I chose to quit my job and stay home with them. When they were in high school and I needed to go back to work to help financially with their Christian school tuition, I chose a part-time job that allowed me to work while they were in school, so I was home when they were. For years, I drove them to and from school because busses weren't available. I cheered at every cross-country meet in high school, volunteered at their schools, read hundreds of books to them, built Lego forts, learned to Rollerblade with them, climbed mountains with them, enjoyed camping in a tent because of them, learned to identify makes of cars because of my youngest son's passion for cars, and searched for books on backpacking through Europe when my oldest decided to go on the adventure of his life. I have chosen to make them a priority over career, material goods, and other things; and I have no regrets. Parenting has been one of the most amazing and most difficult adventures of my life.

I knew it would be.

My husband and I attended birthing classes before the birth of our first child. They taught us breathing techniques, what to expect, what to take to the hospital with us, and ways to cope with the hours of labor. The films they showed of women in labor frightened just about everyone in the class. But not me. I knew most women live

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through labor. It would be hard. I'd have a story to tell when women talk. But I would most likely get through it one way or another. My fear was what came after delivery, when they handed me a tiny bundle and sent me home. Being totally responsible for this helpless baby frightened me terribly. I had no experience with babies. I was unsure of my parenting skills. Would I know what to do? What if he got hurt? Would I teach him all the right things? Would

The older they get, the more I find myself on my knees—both literally and figuratively.

I make too many mistakes and scar him for life? Would he hate me? Love me? Be embarrassed by me?

While my husband was excited about having a baby in the house, I

was more frightened and unsure about parenting than I had been about anything else in my life. So I did the one thing I knew how to do.

I began praying like crazy.

And I've never stopped.

In fact, the older they get, the more I find myself on my knees—both literally and figuratively. I have begged God, cried to God, gone to Him when my heart was in such pain for my children that I couldn't even form words or clear thoughts, I've praised Him, thanked Him, asked Him if He was sure He knew what He was doing, and constantly laid my sons at His feet and watched Him answer and move and work in their lives—not always the way I wanted, but always working the way He knew was best. And I've learned, and am continuing to learn, to trust Him with knowing what's best.

### Pray like crazy

While the Bible doesn't give specific instructions about



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praying for our children, it does tell us to pray. About everything. *Everything* includes our children.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6, 7).

This verse teaches me to “be anxious for nothing,” not even my children. Or my parenting. How?

“By prayer and supplication.” By praying, giving it to God, and through supplication. *Supplication* means “humble, earnest prayer”; *earnest* means “serious.” To earnestly pray means to pray with a seriousness and dedication that shows the depth of importance the request has to us. Basically, the Bible instructs us to pray like crazy and really mean it.

### That’s not all

It’s easy to stop there. But the scripture gives an important treasure that can be easy to overlook, but makes a huge difference in our prayers. “With thanksgiving . . .” To pray with thanksgiving. Sounds easy. But all too often, we forget to give thanks. We’re so caught up in what we want God to do that we forget to thank Him. Or the things we’re praying about are so painful and hard that we don’t see what there is to be thankful for. Cancer. Rebellion. Walking away from God. A life-impacting or life-ending accident. Parents face so many things that cause us to wonder what we can find in them to give thanks for. While we’ll talk about this in-depth in a later chapter, thanksgiving is huge in prayer because it reminds us of who God is and what He has done and can do. I’ve

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found that no matter how difficult the challenge I am praying for concerning my sons, I can always thank God that He loves them even more than I do. I can thank Him that He knows what's best for them and is capable of moving in ways that I can't. I can thank Him for seeing the big picture and knowing what it takes now to get them where they need to be later. I can thank Him that He will allow only what's best for my sons' eternal purposes and nothing just for pain or harm to them. When I thank Him for these things, it gives me courage and strength, hope and peace.

### Prayer brings peace

In fact, verse 7 of Philippians 4 promises peace: "The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your

We find . . . peace when we remember what kind of God we serve.

hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." God's peace. A peace that comes even when the world looks like a very nonpeaceful place.

A peace that will "guard" our hearts and minds. A peace that will protect us from doubts, fears, and worry. From feelings of failure and worthlessness. Of despair and discouragement. We find this kind of peace when we remember what kind of God we serve and have trusted our kids to.

As parents, we can't fix every problem our kids face (nor should we). And not every hurt can be made better with a kiss and a Band-Aid. At some point, our children reach an age at which we can't make them do what we want them to, but have to trust that God is working in them to help them make the right choices. We have to choose the battles we fight with them, but we can take *everything* to God in prayer. Big or little, He cares—and is able to do way more than we're capable of.



## Praying Like Crazy for Your Kids

So join me on a journey to learn how we can pray like crazy for our kids.

### Journal

- Remember when your children were born. Write a bit about their births, what you felt, what you feared, and what you were excited about.
- What has been the biggest prayer burden on your heart for your children?
- What can you be thankful for as you've prayed?
- What impressed you the most in this chapter?
- How will you apply the information from this chapter to your prayer life?
- Choose a scripture passage, personalize it by putting your name in it, and pray it for yourself as you begin or continue this journey of praying like crazy for your children. John 14:26, 27; Philippians 4:6, 7; 1 John 5:14, 15.
- Keep a record of other scripture passages you want to personalize and claim.