



Thoughts on Praying WITH Your Teens

Bringing prayer home... That's what our H.S.B.C. "Prayer@Home" emphasis is all about. Praying with your teenager may seem awkward & might even be like pulling teeth at times... but it doesn't have to be.

TAKE the lead, **ENCOURAGE** them in spiritual conversations, & **GUIDE** them in prayer! Start small: sentence prayers, taking hi/low conversations about their day & turning them into prayers, simply praying with them for their friends or other family members are all great ways to get started!

Prayer starts at home with you as the parent. The parent must demonstrate that prayer is a priority in the home by letting their kids see them in prayer & praying with them. Here are a few tips on how to growing, learning, & praying with your teenagers.

#1 Talk about how God answers prayer. Share stories of God answering prayers that you have prayed. Let them hear the exciting adventures of God stepping into your struggle when you cry out to Him. These stories arouse their appetite for prayer.

This means that YOU need to keep a record of answered prayer! Most people have an anemic confidence in prayer because they don't have a clear record of consistent answers to prayer. This is one of the best ways to teach your teens to trust in God!

#2 Teach your child how to pray. There is no shortcut & this topic could be a book in itself. But there is no substitute for mom or dad taking the time out of a busy day (or a busy life) to teach their child to pray *by praying*. You can't delegate this job to the Children's Ministry or to our Student Ministry. You are their first teacher for prayer. Pray together as a family & show them that this is the first response to an emergency or an opportunity to worship God for answered prayer.

***YOUR STUDENT NEEDS TO LEARN FROM YOU THAT
PRAYER IS A FIRST RESPONSE...
NOT A LAST RESORT!***

#3 Give direction to prayer. Dig into the Word of God which is the best book of prayer. There are lots of great references, articles, & even books on praying Scripture. Let the Word of God give you prayer points scriptures for all of you to cover. Don't just "wing it". Grow in your own pursuit of God in prayer & then you set the pace! They will follow! Your intentionality & intensity will spark their own personality & passion.

#4 Write "Thank You" notes to God. Buy cards and keep them in a common place. Each day, write a thank you card to God for something that He blessed you with or something you are thankful for... Keep them in a bowl or a special box. Take time (maybe once a month) to pull them out and read them together. This is a great way to foster gratitude and to encourage conversational interaction with God!

#5 End with a time of praise & worship. Singing songs of praise & worship can be a great exclamation point on a time of prayer. Lifting His name together brings His presence in a beautiful corporate setting for the whole family to experience. Teenagers are naturally emotional & passionate. God has wired them to experience His presence in a deeper manner.

It may feel awkward, but I believe that nothing can replace dad & mom praying with their teenager. Prayer doesn't have to be complicated or super-exciting but a priority. Start with one need, one scripture & let your teenager flow with the Word of God. There is nothing like coming before God as a family & seeing Him move among your teenagers!

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