

let's play



Never discount a child's prayer as too outlandish, too silly, or too selfish. By your unconditional love, you teach that *God* cares for your child and hears his or her prayers. Praying together can create a vital bond between you and your child—and your child's example may also teach you greater faith!

Prayer Perks

We all know it's good to teach our kids to pray, even when meals are rushed or when it's just part of a bedtime routine. But listen when your little one prays—it has some definite perks beyond building a good habit!

- **Listen to learn.** As you listen without commenting, you are (1) letting your child learn that it's okay to talk to God about anything, and (2) getting a glimpse into what your child does or doesn't understand about God. This will help you know how best to pray for and talk with your child.
- **Listen to bond.** What may seem trivial to you may be earthshaking for your child—and you might never hear about it except as your child prays. Want to know what stands out in your kid's day? Listen! What you'll learn is a precious gift that pays rich relational dividends!



Hidden Hearts

Hide a construction-paper heart in each room of your house. (Valentine's Day Bonus: Tape a chocolate kiss to each heart.) Have your child race to find each heart you have hidden. Once the hearts are gathered, ask your child to tell things he or she thanks God for. Print each response on a different heart. Then let your child tape the hearts on the wall to decorate his or her room. **We can talk to God and tell Him thank-You for the good things He gives us!**

For Younger Children

“I will be glad and rejoice in your love.”

Psalm 31:7

For Older Children

“Pray to [God], and he will hear you.”

Job 22:27

let's talk

Today I learned:

We can talk to God anytime—when we are glad and when we are sad. We can tell Him we love Him!

Ask me:

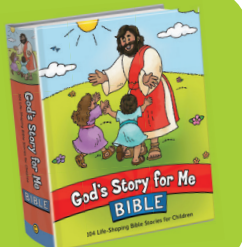
When can you pray to God? What can you talk to God about?



What is Jesus doing?
Who is Jesus talking to?



Read the story on the next page and on pages 374-378 in *God's Story for Me Bible Storybook*.



let's listen

Bible Story

Matthew 6:5-13; Mark 1:35-37;
Luke 11:1-4

Invite your child to answer each question before reading the next paragraph. **For older children:** How many times can you find the word "pray" hidden in the picture of Jesus praying?

The sun crept up in the sky, brighter and brighter. It was time to get up! Jesus' friends rubbed their eyes. They yawned and stretched. They looked around. They didn't see Jesus. **Where could He be?**

Jesus' friends went out to look for Him. They called and they walked. They walked and they called. Finally, they came to a quiet place, away from people. That's where Jesus was! **But what was He doing?**



Jesus was praying! His friends were glad to find Him! They wanted Jesus to come with them. But they wanted something else too. **What did they want?**

Jesus' friends didn't know how to pray the way Jesus prayed. Jesus' friends asked Him to teach them how to pray! **What did Jesus tell His friends?**



Jesus told His friends, "When you pray, pray like this: Our Father who is in heaven, we love and respect Your name. We want You to be King over us. Give us what we need today. Forgive the wrong things we do. We forgive everyone who has done wrong to us. Please protect us. Help us to do right. You are the King. You can do anything. Amen." **What name did Jesus tell His friends to call God?**

Jesus told His friends to call God their Father. He told His friends to ask God, our Father in heaven, for whatever they need. **When can we talk to God?** Anytime!



Family Talk

Eat some bread and water with your child. Ask,

- What food do you like best?
- What do you like to drink?
- What did Jesus tell us to pray to God for every day?

Prayer Time

Things to talk about:

- When does our family talk to God?
- What can we thank God for?
- When do we need God's help?

Words to pray together:

Dear God, we are glad we can talk to You. Thank You for [repeat items your child mentioned]. Please help us when [name times your child mentioned].

We love You. In Jesus' name, amen.

