

Faith@Home Basics - Prayer

By Tim Smith – *Faith@Home* Parents Coach March 16, 2012

Wouldn't it be helpful if we had a Basic Training for Parenting before you actually gave birth? Or a Basic Training for Spiritual Parenting? It's challenging enough just figuring out how to raise your first baby, but then discovering that God wants you to shape him into a citizen of God's kingdom as well as potty train him? *Too much!*

Don't worry. Here are the basics for spiritual parenting: 1. **Pray.** And when you are done, pray some more. Prayer is simply talking with God. Your words don't have to sound like Shakespeare. God understands your heart even before you utter a word. But he still wants us to pray. Why? Because it makes us closer to him. It makes us more dependent on him. Prayer reminds us that we don't have to parent in our own strength – nor should we. **God is our all-powerful Co-Parent!** Prayer is vital. Start by simply communicating what's on your heart to God. Mark Holmen offers some tips in *Faith Begins @ Home Prayer*



“Prayer is at the very core of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. *Why?* Prayer is **conversation with God**. How can you maintain a relationship with someone you never talk to? Yet many people misunderstand prayer. When they think of prayer, they think of a pastor praying a lengthy, well-worded, well-organized prayer that seems to be more of a mini-sermon than simple dialogue with another Person.

Some people are intimidated by prayer and are **afraid to pray** out loud or with others. This uncomfortable feeling directly affects whether they pray at home with their family. It affects how they pray and how often they pray at home.

Are you still asking the question, “**Why pray?**” You can choose not to pray in your home and then when trouble hits you won't have it as a resource to draw upon to help you through. Or you can **make prayer a part of your family life today** which will help you weather the storms by keeping lines of communication open between family members and God. Wherever you are in your prayer experience in your home, you can benefit from learning to keep prayer fresh and alive. God wants you and your family to enjoy long, everlasting life. Let's start praying!”

The Spiritual Discipline of Prayer – here are some ways to try: 1) Pray at **meals** thanking God for providing. 2) Pray at **bedtime** thanking God for his care and ask for his peace during the night. 3) Pray a scripture promise or **blessing** over your child each day. Here's one: “May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you. May the Lord continue to make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord continue to look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I love you. Amen.” 4) Pray for **another family** -keep a photo of the family on the fridge to remind you to pray for them. 5) Keep a **family prayer journal**. I learned about this from my friend Ken LaMont. Since his first child was born, Ken and his wife would record prayers in a blank book. As more children came along, and they learned to read, the children would take turns recording praises and prayer requests in the journal. When the oldest daughter got married, Ken presented her with her own family prayer journal at her wedding! 5) **Ask your children** who they want to pray for. “Who do you know needs our prayer?” Even young children know who needs our prayers.

Consider what Maria Holmen writes in *Faith Begins@Home Mom*: “Some of my first memories I have of my dad are of him praying by the side of the bed every night. He would get down on his knees, clasp his hands together, put his forehead on them and simply pray – just a time between him and his God every night. No matter what had gone on during the day or what time he was finally going to bed, he always took time to kneel and pray. At a very young age, I learned my first prayers with my father kneeling beside me at my bed.”