

special edition MONDAY'S MEAL

SUSTAINABLE NOURISHMENT FOR THE LONG DISTANCE RUN

Pray Big Things for Your Little Ones

by Stacey Pardoe

Monday's Meal is a service of The Oaks Classical and Christian Academy.

Each meal is selected specifically to feed and nourish parents for the long distance run. If you found it helpful, consider passing it along.

"...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds..."
Hebrews 10:24

How do we pray for our children when our words seem to run dry? How do we faithfully lift them before the Lord with confidence that our prayers match *his* desires for them? When we're not sure of how to pray, God's word enables us to stand with him and lift our children before his throne with confidence. As a parent, I long to pray for my kids more faithfully. I long to stand in agreement with my Savior, and pray bold and powerful prayers for my kids. But sometimes I get stuck. Sometimes I can't find the words. Paul's words to the Colossian church offer eight spiritual truths to pray over my children.

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. (Colossians 1:9-12).

In the end, God doesn't care about the eloquence of our prayers — always knowing the perfect words to say for our children — so much as the condition of our hearts. Offering these prayers for my kids daily has centered my focus and blessed my prayer life, molding my heart to want the things God wants for my children.

1. Pray they will be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. (Colossians 1:9)

Jesus models this prayer when asked how we ought to pray: "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). When we follow his example and pray that our children will know God's will, we pray according to the example Christ himself set for us.

2. Pray they will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10)

While it's tempting for parents to spend excessive time praying for the behavior of our children, we honor God when we remember to pray that their behavior will not just be obedient, but will glorify him. This goes for our spouses, friends, parents, and other loved ones as well. When we ask God to intrude in their lives in such a way that they honor him in the way they live, we are praying godly prayers for godly behavior with godly motives.

3. Pray they will please God in all respects. (Colossians 1:10)

I have prayed this prayer often during seasons when my children were struggling

with sin. Whether it's a child with a sudden inclination to fabricate information, a child who is struggling with an ungodly temptation, or a little one who is struggling with sadness, this is a relevant and powerful prayer. It's a prayer God loves to honor, because it is the desire of his heart as well.

4. Pray they will bear fruit. (Colossians 1:10)

When the good deeds of our lives overflow with positive spiritual outcomes, we bear good fruit. When I pray for my kids to bear fruit in their works, I pray for each of them differently. I pray my daughter will interact with her schoolmates with compassion and kindness. I pray my toddler will see the benefits of treating others with love and respect.

5. Pray they will increase in their knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:10)

Increasing in our knowledge of God ultimately leads to loving him more deeply. I want nothing more for my children than to see them in a deeper relationship with God. As we come to know God more deeply, our love for him grows. As our love for him grows, he transforms the way we see others and the way we live. We begin to live out of his endless love for us, and no longer crave the affirmation and acceptance of the world.

6. Pray they will be strengthened with all power, according to God's glorious might. (Colossians 1:11)

We all need strength. Whether it's strength to stand up to the bully at school, strength to walk away from temptation, or strength to witness boldly for our faith, we all rely on God's strength. When God's strength flows through us, we are able to give without burning out, stand in fiery trials, and endure through the valleys of life. This is what we want for our children, regardless of their season of life.

7. Pray they will have steadfastness and patience. (Colossians 1:11)

Whether or not we pray to bear the Spirit's fruit of patience (Galatians 5:22), life will test our patience. We should pray to God to help us die to our self-centered impatience and bear his fruit of a patient heart. We are called to pray this for our children as well.

8. Pray they will be filled with joy and thanksgiving. (Colossians 1:11–12)

My daughter loves it when I pray for her joy to abound. We all want more joy. Let's bless our children by praying they will have greater joy and greater thanksgiving, which go hand in hand. Joy is a beautiful fruit of a life deeply rooted in God's love. When we learn to see all things as representations of God's goodness, we move deeper into joy.

I cling to the confidence that God's word never returns empty, and I see the fruit of my prayers often in the midst of my everyday life with my kids. Find a passage or set of verses to pray over your children, and watch God respond to his word with faithfulness and power.