

## **Praying The Commands Of Christ Over Your Children**

*By Kim Butts*

Today's children are under attack by the enemy of our souls! We all know the obvious things that are vying for the minds and hearts of our children – television and technology; however, the world views of our kids are being damaged day by day and their understanding of absolute truth is being shaken continually.

Besides being godly examples to our children of how to live as Jesus – in the world but not of the world – what is our best plan for keeping their hearts fixed upon the Father? I firmly believe it is prayer. We cannot train up our children apart from seeking the heart of God for them. We want His plans and purposes to be fulfilled in their lives, and the designs of the enemy upon them to be thwarted completely.

Within our grasp is a most powerful and perfect way to engage with the Father in prayer – through the pages of His Word. One of the best ways to train others, or to be trained in prayer, is by God Himself.

We have the privilege of opening the pages of the Word of God and instantly engaging the perfect will of our Father. Learning to pray Scripture is powerful and effective. It is a way for struggling intercessors to learn more about the character of God and His plans and purposes. We can know without a doubt that when we pray the Word of God back to Him He will hear and answer. When we learn to do this on behalf of our children, we will see things happen in their lives we never thought possible, for we are laying our prayers alongside of the heart of God for them.

Below is one practical set of prayers to offer up on behalf of children, which will also help them to learn the commands of Jesus, and ultimately the absolute truth that is missing from the world. As you pray the commands of Jesus over children, grandchildren or other kids in your spheres of influence, they will not only grow spiritually strong, they will also learn to walk in the truth and begin to desire more of what the kingdom of heaven has to offer and less of what the god of this world dangles temptingly in front of them. Begin with great hope that God wants to teach you and your children to meet with Him in the pages of His Word. Make His Word your "tent of meeting" with Him as you lift up the precious children in your life to the One who can transform them by the renewing of their minds (Rom. 12:2). We cannot "fix" our children, but God can change them from the inside out by the power of our prayers for them.

## Praying the Commands of Jesus for Your Children

**Love God and love others:** *"One of them, an expert in the law, tested Him with this question: 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments'" (Matt. 22:35-40).*

**Your Prayer:** Father, teach my child how to love You with all of his heart, soul and mind. Draw him into an intimate relationship with You so that he will come to know You fully and completely. Guard his heart from lesser things. Lead his soul into Your perfect presence and protect his mind from the worthless things of the world. Give my child a great love for people. May his heart resonate with the broken, the lost, the poor, the weak, the enslaved, the imprisoned and the hurting. Give him Your heart for the nations. Help my child to be a world-changer as he cries out to You for unity in the body, for revival, for all people to come to a knowledge of the truth, and all that You place upon his heart.

**Man shall not live on bread alone:** *"Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God"'" (Matt. 4:4).*

**Your Prayer:** Lord Jesus, it is so easy for my child to feed upon things that will never satisfy. Give her a deep desire to live upon every word that comes from the mouth of God. Draw her to the Word and may it satisfy her every desire in a way that nothing the world holds out to her can ever do. May she hunger and thirst after Your truth and turn away from the emptiness of the things that the enemy would tempt her with. Draw her close and allow her heart to be open and receptive to the loveliness of the Word. May she not be deceived by the bread that cannot fill the needs in her soul. May Your Holy Spirit give her the ability to understand and to obey Your Word.

**Do not store up treasures on earth:** *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"(Matt.6:19-21).*

**Your Prayer:** Father, how easy it is to become attached to the shiny things of the world – the technology, the phones, the name brands, and all of the alluring "must-have's" of this generation. Please give my child good discernment to turn away from the things that are pleasurable but not eternal. Help him to connect his heart to Your heart so that every possession and activity is focused upon giving You glory rather than upon worthless idols.

**Take up your cross:** *"And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:27).*

**Your Prayer:** Holy Spirit, show my child how to turn away from wicked things and focus on heaven. Give her the strength to die to self day by day in order to become Your disciple. May she desire Your purposes and promises above every other thing and hear only the voice of God whispering to her, *"This is the way, walk in it"* (Isa. 30:21). May she turn away from the easy road that takes her where the enemy would tempt her to go and seek out wise counsel rather than the counsel of foolish people. Help her to choose her friends wisely and well so that they may spur one another on toward love and good deeds each day (Heb. 10:24).

**Remain in Me:** *"Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me"*(John 15:4).

**Your Prayer:** Lord Jesus, You are the True Vine. May my child be a faithful branch, staying attached to You continually. May he always know that he can never bear any fruit apart from his connection with You. Teach him to draw near moment by moment and never try to do anything in his own strength, recognizing his complete dependence upon You. May his journey through life be under Your authority, and lived out in Your power. May his kingdom effectiveness be useful to others because he keeps his eyes faithfully upon You. May he be a strong witness and a joyful disciple because he chooses to remain committed to Your cause alone.

**Love your enemies and pray for them:** *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:43-45).*

*"But I tell you who hear Me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:27-28).*

**Your Prayer:** Loving Father, it is so easy in this age when anger and evil are rampant around us to forget that forgiveness and love are more important than revenge and hatred. Give my child a compassionate heart to treat people as Jesus would, and to be His hands and feet in the lives of those who would harm her or speak ill of her. May she learn to love the unlovely and difficult people in her life so that the hurt and pain that cause them to behave as they do can be diffused by the One who loves unconditionally. Show her how to pray for those who set themselves up as her enemies so that her heart will be filled with mercy and a deep desire to show them the kindness of Jesus.

**Let your light shine:** *"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).*

**Your Prayer:** Light of the World, shine into my child's life so that he may have courage to put that light upon a stand to shine upon everyone he comes into contact with. May people see the difference in his life lived out within the purposes of Your kingdom and be drawn out of darkness into the light. Help him to do and say only what he hears from Your kind heart so that others see Jesus in him. May he never be afraid to speak Your name or to be known as a Christian. Lead him toward the kind of lifestyle that gives hope and life to others. May he shine like the stars in the universe in ways that bring honor and glory to Your name alone.

Do you see how you may take any Scripture and apply it prayerfully into the lives of your children? As you pray the very Word of God into their lives, the Holy Spirit is pleased to hear the heart of God, and as you pray through the power of the name of Jesus, the Spirit will do extraordinary things in and through them.

Be prepared, as this is not a formula that works instantly and according to your own personal desire and time frame. Our children are free to choose the narrow way, but they also are free to select choices that grieve our hearts. Yet,

the Word of God will not return void, and sometimes only as we faithfully lift up our children day after day, month after month and year after year will we see the work of God in them. Pray and do not give up! You can have confidence in knowing that God is at work in your children. And, as you train them to pray His Word they will also be able to see that He *"is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us"* (Eph. 3:20)