

Let my child . . .

love God and others

“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”” (Matthew 22:37-39).

Dear Jesus, let my children love you with their whole being, their hearts and souls and minds and strength, and let them love the people around them as much as they love themselves.

be marked by integrity

“The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity” (Proverbs 11:3).

Dear Father, this world is full of deceit, white lies, and half-truths. People go back on their word and scheme to get ahead. Let my children stand out. Even when it seems tempting to follow the crowd, let them be led by their integrity, which is your integrity.

seek justice

“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow” (Isaiah 1:17).

Lord, there is so much injustice in the world because it is no longer how you created it to be. I pray that my children would love justice. I pray that their hearts would be broken by the things that are broken in this world, whether bullying, violence, bribery, cheating, or people who take advantage of someone who is hurting. Let my child stand up and protect and defend others.

have courage

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Oh, Jesus, you tell us there is so much to be afraid of but not to fear. Let my children be filled with courage as they live in this world, knowing that you are always with them and refuse to leave them.

be pure in heart

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).

Dear Holy Spirit, I pray that you work in my children's hearts so their actions flow out of pure hearts. I don't want them to behave simply to "be good," but let their actions flow from hearts that find peace in you.

love God's Word

"Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble" (Psalm 119:165).

Dear Father, thank you for giving us your Word. It has pages and pages that record exactly how big and high and deep is your love for us. Let your Spirit work in my children so they love your Word, which gives them the peace that passes understanding and guards them as they live on this earth and bring you glory.

be kind

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Dear Father, it is so easy to repay wrong for wrong or to want to hang on to grudges. I don't want my children to accept sin, though, but let them see others through your eyes with patience, kindness, and mercy.

live generously

"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed" (Proverbs 11:25).

Dear Father, let my children be generous, not only with their money but with their time, their energy, and your words. Help them share freely and joyfully.

learn to persevere

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" (James 1:2-4).

Dear Jesus, it is so tempting to simply pray for my children to have it easy. But the truth is you tell us there will be trouble in this world. So I pray they learn how to endure, to persevere. Develop in them a deep faith that cannot be shaken.

live joyfully

"If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John

15:10,11).

Jesus, happiness in this world is short term, so please give my children *your* joy, the joy that lasts, not only in good times, but that shines through even when struggles come.

be humble

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others” (Philippians 2:1-4).

Dear Father, arrogance and pride are our default condition. Let your Spirit work in my children’s hearts so you give them new hearts, hearts that are humble, not looking to give themselves glory but to give it all to you.

spread compassion

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3,4).

Jesus, over and over you looked at crowds of people and had compassion on them because you saw how lost and broken this world is. Let my children be thankful for the compassion you give them and then pass it along to others.

act responsibly

“But while Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph’s care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did” (Genesis 39:20-23).

Father, sometimes life is unfair. Joseph acted responsibly and was thrown in jail for it. Instead of giving up, he continued to act responsibly and you blessed him. You used these events to bring you glory. Help my children model Joseph’s work ethics and moral ethics, working responsibly because they are ultimately serving you.

control their tongues

“Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless” (James 1:26).

Holy Spirit, we live in a culture where words, both spoken and typed, are unfiltered. I pray that my children will use words differently. Help them use words that are both full of truth, not backing down from your words, but also full of grace, sharing your mercy with everyone they meet.

learn to be content

“But godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6).

Contentment is hard, Father. We forget that you give us everything we need, and we start to look for things to give us value, purpose, and importance. This will be a hard battle for my children to fight. So let me model contentment and teach them that only in you (not in stuff) will they be truly satisfied.

be filled with faith.

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ” (Ephesians 3:16-18).

Lord, you tell us that you won’t snuff out a smoldering wick, but I don’t want my children to have shallow, weak faith. Please let them be filled with faith and on fire for you. Plant your faith deep in them and give them strong roots so they stand tall when troubles come.

be transformed

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1,2).

Dear God, you sent Jesus to transform my children from dead to alive, from enemies to heirs of heaven. Continue to transform their lives so

they resist the temptation to look like the rest of the world. Let them serve you fully, completely, wholeheartedly for their whole lives.

love worshiping you

"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'" (Psalm 122:1).

Father, work in my kids so they can't even imagine a life without regular worship. Surround them with believers who pray for them, encourage them, hold them accountable, and offer forgiveness. Let them look forward to worshipping!

live with true hope

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

God of hope, fill my kids so that their hope is only in you, not in their relationships, their possessions, their talents, their money, their athletic or musical gifts. Let them know that all these things will eventually fade away. Give them peace in the true hope that comes from knowing they will spend eternity with you.

respect authority

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." (Romans 13:1).

Dear Father, whether it is parents, teachers, law enforcement, or bosses, please help my children show appropriate respect to those in authority over them.

practice self-control

"The grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).

Holy Spirit, so much of this world is based on doing what makes us feel good. Work powerfully in my children so that their thankfulness for Jesus' grace helps them do what brings the Father glory until we all can live eternally with him.

pray

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” (Romans 12:12).

Dear Father, I want my children to pray continually. Let them see how regular, faithful communication with you will help them face this world with strength, peace, and confidence.

care about others’ faith

“Be merciful to those who doubt; save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh” (Jude 22,23).

Dear Jesus, you warn us to not make friends with those who are hot tempered; you tell us to choose our friends wisely. Yet if we don’t interact with people who don’t know you, how will they hear? So help my children show mercy to those who doubt and actively, passionately share the good news of peace through Jesus with those who are in danger of hell. At the same time, let them guard their hearts and not fall into temptation.

be grateful

“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

It’s so tempting, God, to look around this world and see the things we haven’t been given. Let my children stay focused on the way you have overfilled their cup of blessings and let them be thankful. Even when trouble comes, help them to look for the ways you bring them closer to you.

be caught when they’re guilty and accept correction

“It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees” (Psalm 119:71).

“A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a mocker does not respond to rebukes” (Proverbs 13:1).

Father, you are a just God. You give us forgiveness, but you also allow us to live with the consequences of our actions so we can learn from them. Let my children not be able to hide their sins and when they do suffer consequences, help them accept them and learn from them.

choose friends wisely

“My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them. My son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths” (Proverbs 1:10,15).

Dear Jesus, the older my kids get, the less I can control who they spend time with. Surround them with friends who will encourage and help them. Keep them away from friends who will lead them away from you. Please let my children be good friends to others too.

honor us

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise—‘so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth’” (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Dear Father, rebellion is so easy. It’s honor, respect, and obedience that are hard. Help my children see that obeying us is a way to show love for you. Help me so that I model your parenting style, not accepting sin but lavishly sharing grace too.

find a God-fearing spouse

“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (Revelation 21:2).

Dear Father, you’ve given marriage as a picture of your love for us. If marriage is in your plans for them, I pray for my children and their future spouses. Let them learn more about you now and be committed to following your design. Let their marriages show the world what relationships based on unconditional love and joy really look like.

stand up against temptation

“Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” (Hebrews 2:18).

Jesus, temptation is appealing, alluring. It’s so hard to resist. But you already know that. When my kids are tempted, let them hear you say, “I know. I’ve been there. Here’s my strength to help you get through it.” Then let them stand strong.

learn how to confess their sins

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

Dear Jesus, help my children find a spiritual family who hold them accountable. Let them confess their sins to each other and remind each other of the full and free forgiveness that you have won for them.

always be ready to share Jesus

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander” (1 Peter 3:15,16).

Dear Jesus, Do not let my children be ashamed or embarrassed to call you Lord. Give them the quiet confidence to live wisely and share you lovingly whenever possible.