

praying for a prodigal (part 1)

"for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." luke 15:24

we know this scripture applies equally to all of one's offspring. i was never blessed with children. i only have the spiritual children the Lord has blessed me with. (that is more than enough for me.) but i know there are loving parents everywhere who are lamenting the life their children are living. i know there are some who were truly bad parents as their life was also a mess. they need to take that to the Lord in prayer. just know there is no ultimate cause and effect. each one's free will dominates - what they do with what they have received.

others though, have raised their kids to know, love, and serve the Lord, only to see them pull away and seem to forget everything they were taught. others are new christians themselves, and desperately want their children to join them in the most important relationship they could ever have.

yet, more and more young people are deciding they want to find their own way, do their own thing, and believe what they want - without Godly influence. others have begun to grow weary and frustrated with their children's behavior. i want to encourage you not to give up - not to lose hope.

the following is a compilation of a writing i found online. even dividing this into two parts might make it longer than most would read, but i hope you will. i

believe there is truth to be had and wisdom to impart. as you read, i hope you will take each suggestion to heart and trust in God to handle the rest. "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you and your household will be saved." this is a scripture claimed by many through the years. claim it now for your own and practice the following suggestions. trust God - even as you do for your own salvation.

1. pray for others to speak into their lives
sometimes, parents feel like their words are bouncing off a brick wall and not making any difference at all. while it's important to keep speaking the truth in love, it's also important for our children to hear God's truth from others that they look up to and respect.

a suggested prayer:

gracious God, please speak into my child's life through others who love You and have a deep relationship with You. introduce my child to friends and mentors who will plant seeds of faith that will be watered in Your good time. i pray for Godly influences in my child's life, that they will want to know more about Your Son, Jesus. thank You, Lord, for surrounding them with people who bear Your name. i ask that you open their ears to hear and their eyes to see. i trust You to speak truth to my child through those who walk in fellowship with You. in Jesus' holy name i pray. amen.

2. pray for the Holy Spirit's voice to be heard
His tender voice is described as still and small in 1 kings 19:11-12: "and behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke

the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice."

pray that God's gentle call will break through the cultural winds that blow. pray that in these unsteady and uncertain times, your child will turn to the Father for guidance. and pray that the constant bombardment of media and culture will grow silent as God's voice grows louder.

a suggested prayer:

Lord God, thank You so much for never giving up on my child. thank You for loving them with an everlasting love. i pray that You will open my child's ears to hear the sound of Your still, small voice calling them—drawing them to Yourself. i pray that they will hear you loud and clear, above the noise of the world. Most of all, i pray that they will respond to Your call and be lead to repentance and salvation through Your Son. it is in His name that i pray these things. amen.

3. pray for a softening of their heart to receive in Ezekiel 36:26, the Lord spoke these words to israel: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

what powerful words! this message for israel is a beautiful message for us as well. let this passage in ezekeil be a springboard for your prayers. pray for God to give your children a new heart and put a new

spirit in them. pray for a softening of their hearts to receive the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

believe God can accomplish what seems impossible to you. and remember, no one is beyond the reach of the Lord. there is no heart so hard it cannot be molded into a vessel that is ready to receive Him. parents must hold on to this hope and continue to pray for softened hearts.

a suggested prayer:

Holy God, i come to You today and ask for a mighty working in my child's heart. i pray that You will turn their heart of stone into a heart of flesh – pliable and moldable in Your hands. please, Lord, keep my children from growing cold towards You. reignite the flame of truth in their hearts. remove all doubt and fear and draw them close to Your side. help me to continue to pray for them without losing faith and keep my heart softened as well. thank You for being a loving Father. i trust that You will work in my child's heart for your glory and their good. in Jesus' name i pray, amen.