

One Child, One Prayer Cup

Connecting children to God and the Church.

For forty years our group of Christian Day Care Providers has asked ourselves and God what is the one thing that would give children worldwide a deep sense that God is real...a sense of being CONNECTED. Scripture of course comes immediately to mind. But what about God's second life line, his second path to him. What about prayer. Do we make a conscious effort to support children in a HABIT of prayer...a habit of taking prayer seriously... sticking with a prayer until they hear from God?? May the following prayer cup be a miracle first step for millions of children.



Pick up a Styrofoam cup for each child in the family and one for each adult. On one side of each cup (in the language of your choice) write "From Me to Jesus". On the other write "From Jesus to me". The point is: every prayer has two halves...first we talk to God then we listen. *No prayer is finished until a child experiences God's comfort either in the world around him or ... in his heart.* In the words of Doctor Charles Stanley: "**The ONE thing** that has molded my life is learning to **LISTEN** to God at an early age".

For one week take turns praying one sentence prayers with each child. Explain that prayer is not guaranteed to move God's hand. His hands belong to him but he has given us his heart and every prayer we pray goes from our heart to his. Prayer is a great way to get to know God personally. After choosing a prayer each child gets their own cup. Explain that after the Amen our job is to listen...to keep praying and TRUSTING that God will answer...that we should not give up believing until we hear from God...his invisible spirit speaking

to ours. Line up the cups near where you eat breakfast and each day for a week invite each child to read their prayer out loud. Praying the prayer last thing at night is also a good idea. After a week if the child does not think he has heard from God then he should ask others to pray with him. (Matthew 18:20). It could be a family member, someone in his Sunday School Class, even a pastor. If necessary ask the entire church to pray with the child until he believes he has heard from God...*BUT... No child should reach the age of 18 without at least one prayer answered.*

The central goal of helping children develop a HABIT of prayer is to help the child form a personal relationship with God... to **CONNECT to Him.** Part of that connection will be including scripture in prayer... we can't pray rightly without scripture and we can't understand scripture without prayer. After a child has had at least one prayer answered and is comfortable with a prayer cup try putting a Bible verse in the cup and asking God to help move it from the paper into your heart. *Learning to pray (connect with God) will take a lifetime but a prayer cup in the home will REMIND him/her every day of their lives that God is real.* For prayer to become a habit in a child's life reminders are the family's number one need. Needs 2,3 and 4 are practice, Practice and MORE PRACTICE. A prayer cup at the breakfast table should be as much a part of childhood as riding a bicycle or learning to read, something the child will remember all his or her life ...something that helps him CONNECT to God... something he SEES every day. Four great examples from scripture are Joseph, Moses, Daniel and Samuel. They ALL felt abandoned and faced SERIOUS problems but **THEY PRAYED...**and god was with them. Each of them became strong men, LEADERS of their nation...FRIENDS of GOD.

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