



# THERE'S NO WRONG WAY TO PRAY FAMILY GUIDE

The idea behind *There's No Wrong Way to Pray* came out of a nighttime discussion between a mom and a kid at the end of the bedtime routine—you know—put on pjs, brush teeth, suddenly remember the really important thing that has to go to school tomorrow, read a book, lights out, say prayers, get a drink, go back to bed, get another drink, go to the bathroom, go back to bed, then ask a parent a really deep question that would take two hours and a PhD to answer.

The hope of this book is to take some of the intimidation out of passing on faith and faith practices to your child. Whether adult or kid, you don't have to be an expert in prayer; you just get to talk to God. Folding hands and bowing heads is all fine and good, but prayer can take any form, any time, anywhere.



Why talk to God if God doesn't talk back?

You talk to your dog and he doesn't talk back, right? But your dog still wags his tail when you speak to him! We have faith that God hears our prayers and responds—maybe sometimes in ways we don't understand.



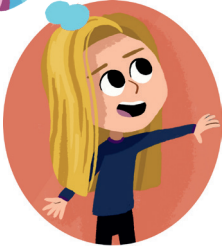
Can I talk to God when I'm really mad?

Yes! You can talk to God when you're mad, sad, bored, excited, or anything in between. Sometimes it might help calm us down. Sometimes it might help us get mad about the right things, like when people aren't treated like how all of God's children should be treated.





## Is prayer like a magic wand?



Not so much. Think of it this way: when we see a friend being picked on at school, we can pray that it magically stops or we can pray to have the courage to help stop it. Either way, you get to decide how you talk to God!

### Here are some questions to ask each other:

- What do you pray for when you pray for me?
- What is the weirdest thing for which you've prayed?
- How do you think praying changes us—like when we pray about a fight we had with a friend or when we pray for the earth?
- Do you ever tell people that you are praying for them? How does it make you feel when you know someone is praying for you?
- In what funny times and places do you find yourself talking to God?
- If you could ask God for anything, what would it be?

### Here are some questions to ask kids:

- What are your favorite things to talk to God about?
- Some people like to fold their hands and bow their heads to pray. But you could hop on one leg and clap your hands while praying too. What are ways that you like to pray?
- Do you think there's any difference between praying silently and aloud? Which do you like better?
- How can I help you pray?
- What might you tell your kids someday about how you learned to talk to God?

### Here are some questions to ask grown-ups:

- Who taught you how to pray?
- Did you learn any special prayers when you were a kid? ("Now I lay me down to sleep...", the Lord's Prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest...", and so on?)
- Do you pray in a different way as a grown-up than when you were a kid?

### Family Activity Idea: Prayer Pocket

Decorate an envelope and write the words "Family Prayers" on it. Glue some magnets on the back corners and stick it to the fridge. Invite family members to write down people, places, or things they want to pray for on bits of paper and stick inside the prayer pocket. Empty it out when you say prayers together. Invite family members to randomly grab slips of paper and offer a prayer petition for what is on the paper.

