

## **April 17, 2020 ~Praying for Our Children~**

Preface: Sheltering and safe distancing has completely changed our children's world. Not only school and its familiar routine was taken away so suddenly, but also all the ways children spent time being with children. They are prohibited from soccer, lacrosse, softball, baseball, swimming, and all athletic teams. Their gyms and dance studios are locked. Their scout troops, youth groups, and Sunday school classes don't meet or meet electronically. Zoos, aquariums, amusement parks, and even playgrounds are closed. Our children are grieving the loss of so many social opportunities. Let us pray for our children today and add them to our prayers every day.

Lord Jesus, today we lift up special prayers for your precious children and teenagers. The pandemic declaration changed so much about the world they knew suddenly and without warning. They are our children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, neighbors, and students. They are your children, Jesus. Our Heavenly Father chose each of them to be part of a family in this world; to be loved and treasured as precious blessings. You placed them into the care of people who love them and now have an overwhelming responsibility; to keep their children safe, both in their bodies and in their minds. We know that Abraham was told that God would bless him for his obedience and trust so that his children would be blessed through his belief. Fill the parents and guardians of all children with a desire to bless your children and teenagers with their belief in your promises.

Before the coronavirus numbers spiked in clusters across America, our children's anxiety and confusion had already spiked. Their schools were open one day and without warning, closed the next. They left their teachers and classmates, and perhaps even their own belongings in a cubby or a locker that last day, confident that the next day would be yet another day of learning, laughing, playing, and socializing. They had no idea, nor did their parents, teachers, bus drivers, librarians, staff, and administrators, the doors of their school would be closed, not just for a break, but for weeks, and probably, the remainder of the school year. None of your people really knew the scope of schools' closure to protect all ages from infection. Overnight, familiar routines, expectations, responsibilities, and teachers completely changed.

For the first weeks, children and adults felt relief and a sense of safety being distanced from social encounters with a large group of people. Teachers scrambled to plan for the students suddenly taken from their daily care, and parents felt overwhelmed with the unfamiliar home teaching responsibilities of the children suddenly placed in their care every school day. Now, some parents and teachers know their state's public and private schools will not reopen this year, and others are waiting for decisions. Lord God, help parents and children process all that is totally out of their control.

Lord, give wisdom and right words to parents. Now is the time to teach or reteach children that everything and everyone in this world was created you, Father God, and will ultimately be controlled by your authority. Lead parents to remind their children that everything they have, the necessities and the extra 'stuff', is from you. Prompt parents to affirm that you made all of us. know us better than we know ourselves, and you know what we are thinking. In your omniscience you know what all your children need and what we don't need, what will help us and what will harm us. In this uncertain pandemic world we know that worldly promises are uncertain, but we ask you'd help parents teach children that you are dependable and will keep all your promises to love them and be with them now and forever.

You've intervened in what the world has done or what accidentally happened, and we know that by your nature, you use everything, the suffering and dying, the anxiety and fear, the locked schools and churches, and the safe distancing and separation from friends, to achieve your plans for goodness. Father, bring families together in new routines to share meals, play games, exercise, and pray together. Help parents share your story of forgiveness and eternal life when they are frightened by pandemic deaths. Give parents wisdom in knowing when children need to talk about what they're feeling and when they need to be alone, away from siblings, or perhaps FaceTiming with a friend or grandparent.

Merciful and Gracious God, when parents live in your grace, their grace spills over to children. When they know they are loved, their children feel loved. Help parents who know and believe your truth find times to repeat and share that gospel truth with their children. Enter into the hearts and minds of parents who don't know who you are or what you have to give them. Draw them close to you and use the many opportunities to worship in their homes to plant seeds and a desire to know more. Use all of us to be your light in the darkness of a life without you.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd who led your children into the safety of Your Father's eternal protection and unconditional love. If parents lead in loving words and actions, their children will follow. The precious children and young people will surely be blessed with what they need until the time that only you know when:

- they feel more secure and less anxious
- they have more hope and less anger
- they find comfort in your authority and control over all that threatens them.

We ask in Your Precious Name, that the parents and guardians you chose would lead your children to know and feel your blessings, your peace, and your love. We lift up all our children into your care because we know that you love each one of their precious lives even more than we do. Amen.

Photo from Lord of Life's Children's Birthday Party for Jesus ~ December 2019



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Your



Light  
Shine!

