

Thirty Ways to Pray for Your Family

Day 1 What marvelous love the Father has extended to us! Just look at it—we're called children of God! . . . And that's only the beginning. Who knows how we'll end up! What we know is that when Christ is openly revealed, we'll see him—and in seeing him, become like him. (1 John 3:1–2)

Dear God, thank you for being my Father and for not being finished with me yet. Help my family reflect your relationship with your Son until the day He comes again, and we see Him as He is.

Day 2 Like a shepherd, he will care for his flock, gathering the lambs in his arms, hugging them as he carries them, leading the nursing ewes to good pasture. (Isaiah 40:11)

Good Shepherd, have mercy on my family, your lambs. Hold my children close in your arms while you lead me to good pastures filled with what we need.

Day 3 Yes, I've settled on him as the one to train his children and future family to observe God's way of life, live kindly and generously and fairly, so that God can complete in Abraham what he promised him. (Genesis 18:19)

God who chose Abraham, I don't know why you chose me to parent my children, to train them to observe your ways. But because you promise to complete whatever you begin, I have your confidence to teach them how to live kind, generous, and righteous lives.

Day 4 If we go through the hard times with him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with him! That's why I don't think there's any comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times. (Romans 8:17–18)

Jesus, you went through hard times while you were on earth, and you promised better times ahead. That's why my family is moving forward despite the challenges of special needs. We believe your promise and look forward to what's to come.

Day 5 Don't be obsessed with getting more material things. Be relaxed with what you have. Since God assured us, "I'll never let you down, never walk off and leave you," we can boldly quote, God is there, ready to help; I'm fearless no matter what. Who or what can get to me? (Hebrews 13:5–6)

Dear Provider, when time is short and money is tight, it's hard to believe you are with us. But you are there. You are protecting us. Please, Lord, meet our needs.

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Day 6 But we're not quitters who lose out. Oh, no! We'll stay with it and survive, trusting all the way. (Hebrews 10:39)

Lord God, some days I am tempted to give up. But what kind of example would that be for my children? Give me faith to persevere so my kids will see how to survive by faith.

Day 7 By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path. (Psalm 119:105)

Word of God, in the Bible you say that your Word is a believer's guiding light. Give me motivation to gather my family to read and study it together often.

Day 8 That clinches it—help's coming, an answer's on the way, everything's going to work out. See those people polishing their chariots, and those others grooming their horses? But we're making garlands for God our God. The chariots will rust, those horses pull up lame—and we'll be on our feet, standing tall. (Psalm 20:6–8)

Strong Deliverer, sometimes the onslaught of daily demands feels like an attack. But you promise to help. Please send help to keep me standing when I feel overwhelmed by the needs of my family.

Day 9 Look at me and help me! I'm all alone and in big trouble. My heart and kidneys are fighting each other; call a truce to this civil war. (Psalm 25:16–17)

Lord, I need your help. I'm being pulled in so many directions. I want to do everything and please everyone. But I can't, so show me your will for my family this day so the war within me will cease.

Day 10 That goes for all of you, no exceptions. No retaliation. No sharp-tongued sarcasm. Instead, bless—that's your job, to bless. You'll be a blessing and also get a blessing. (1 Peter 3:9)

Giver of Breath, the life you breathe into us is a blessing. My child is a blessing. Show me how to bless my child and to recognize each blessing you settle on my family.

Day 11 The suffering won't last forever. It won't be long before this generous God who has great plans for us in Christ—eternal and glorious plans they are!—will have you put together and on your feet for good. (1 Peter 5:10)

Eternal God, some days it is so hard to look beyond our present challenges to your hope. Sustain us until that day comes. Calm our hearts. Put us on our feet.

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Day 12 God's a safe-house for the battered, a sanctuary during bad times. The moment you arrive, you relax; you're never sorry you knocked. (Psalm 9:9–10)

God of sanctuary, I don't know when or if these special needs obstacles will end, but your Word says you are a safe house for battered people. Walk my family through your doors so we can relax in your arms.

Day 13 Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. (James 1:2–4)

God, you are determined to mature our family, aren't you? The pressures of raising a child with special needs force us to live our faith and grow. But we can only continue doing this if you hold us close during the painful maturing process.

Day 14 Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with. (James 5:16)

Forgiving God, give everyone in my family courage to confess sins so we can forgive one another and be whole. Give us compassion to pray for one another every day.

Day 15 God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need him. (Psalm 46:1)

Dear God, some days I am so tired and scared I want to hide from the demands of parenting. Show me how to hide in your promised safe place and be present with my family at the same time.

Day 16 As parents feel for their children, God feels for those who fear him. He knows us inside and out, keeps in mind that we're made of mud. (Psalm 103:13–14)

Dear Father, it's hard to believe you could love me as much as I love my kids when you know my bitter thoughts, my doubts, my anger. I bow in the presence of your compassion and grace. May I show your grace to my family.

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Day 17 Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes. (Matthew 6:34)

Dear God of the present, when I think about my child's special needs and the future, I am overwhelmed. Teach me to be present with my family today and to trust that you will help me deal with what lies ahead.

Day 18 These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever. (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)

Lord of all eternity, the challenges facing my child seem huge right now. Give us both eyes to see beyond this life. Give us feet to stand on your eternal promises. Give us hope.

Day 19 Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. (Philippians 4:6)

Dear God who answers prayer, will you wave a red flag when I begin to worry? Stop me in my tracks, so I can turn my worries into prayers. Nudge me to share all my concerns with you.

Day 20 "I don't think the way you think. The way you work isn't the way I work." God's Decree. "For as the sky soars high above earth, so the way I work surpasses the way you work, and the way I think is beyond the way you think." (Isaiah 55:8-9)

God of wisdom, I am so thankful that even when I don't understand what's happening to my child and our family, you do. Give me faith in your plan, which is far superior to anything I could devise.

Day 21 Don't panic. I'm with you. There's no need to fear for I'm your God. I'll give you strength. I'll help you. I'll hold you steady, keep a firm grip on you. (Isaiah 41:10)

Dear Lord, you tell me not to panic, but it is so hard to stay calm when I think of my family's needs. Wrap your arms around us, steady us, hold us. Keep me from being fearful so my children won't be afraid.

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Day 22 Don't bargain with God. Be direct. Ask for what you need. (Matthew 7:7)

Dear Provider, you say not to bargain with you but to ask for what my family needs. I need you to show me how to handle this child or bring someone to help us.

Day 23 God's name is a place of protection—good people can run there and be safe. (Proverbs 18:10)

God of protection, if you are the safe place you say you are, I want to run to you and be safe. Give my family time to spend in your Word, so my child will run to you and be safe too.

Day 24 Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am. (Philippians 4:13)

Dear Creator, you made everyone in my family who we are: wives, husbands, sons, daughters. So I claim your promise to lead us through whatever lies ahead, wherever we are.

Day 25 When I get really afraid I come to you in trust. I'm proud to praise God; fearless now, I trust in God. What can mere mortals do? (Psalm 56:3–4)

Dear Lord, train every person in my family to come to you when we are afraid. Show us how much stronger you are than humans, so we become fearless and praise you always.

Day 26 God, the one and only—I'll wait as long as he says. Everything I hope for comes from him, so why not? He's solid rock under my feet, breathing room for my soul, an impregnable castle: I'm set for life. (Psalm 62:5–6)

Dear God, you are using my child with special needs to teach me patience, aren't you? I will wait, confident that in you we can meet every challenge of life. Please teach my child patience too.

Day 27 If God doesn't build the house, the builders only build shacks. If God doesn't guard the city, the night watch- man might as well nap. (Psalm 127:1)

Dear Builder of our house, your Word says my family must be built on you, or it won't stand. Work in our hearts so we all claim you as Lord of this house.

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Day 28 Friends love through all kinds of weather, and families stick together in all kinds of trouble. (Proverbs 17:17)

Dear God of our family, you created families to stick together. Be the glue that holds us together in good times and bad so our children will trust you as their Lord and Savior.

Day 29 Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! (Colossians 3:15–16)

Dear Christ, fill this house with your peace, your song. Bind us together as a family, thankful and supportive, obedient to your Word. Show me how to live my faith so my children learn to trust you.

Day 30 Listen to me, family of Jacob, everyone that's left of the family of Israel. I've been carrying you on my back from the day you were born, and I'll keep on carrying you when you're old. I'll be there, bearing you when you're old and gray. I've done it and will keep on doing it, carrying you on my back, saving you. (Isaiah 46:3–4)

Mighty God, I am too tired to meet my family's needs tonight. Would you carry me, as you have carried me since birth? Will you carry my family too, and save us during this adjustment to life with special needs?

This excerpt was taken from *Different Dream Parenting: A Practical Guide to Raising a Child with Special Needs* ©2011 by Jolene Philo 978-1-57293-467-2

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