

TALKING TO GOD, LIKE A CHILD

July 18, 2026

Bible Verse

"You have looked deep into my heart, Lord, and you know all about me.... Before I even speak a word, you know what I will say..."(Psalm 139:1,4)

One of the sweetest things I've ever heard is my five-year-old's dinner prayer. His voice, his rhythm, his heart—it's all there.

Most evenings, it goes something like this:

"Thank you for Mom and Dad. Thank you for my brother and my dogs. Thank you for Grandma, and Grandpa, and all my friends... and Lightning McQueen."



He doesn't always remember to pray for the sick or hurting people, say sorry, or ask God for help, but he is talking to God. And that's the whole point.

As parents, it can be tempting to "correct" our children's prayers to make them deeper or more theologically balanced. But sometimes, it's more important that we model than modify. After dinner, I'll sometimes mention to my kids that prayer can include asking for help or saying sorry, too, but I tend to think the better way to teach those lessons is to model it when it's my day to pray before dinner.

One of the beautiful things about prayer is that God isn't grading our vocabulary. He's listening to our hearts ([Luke 18:9-14](#)).

Psalm 139 reminds us of another truth about prayer: God already knows it before a word is even spoken. Even the hard, messy, honest things—like David saying "I hate my enemies"—God welcomes them all. Prayer isn't about performance. It's about presence.

Our family often reads a story at bedtime before it's time to sleep. They're not always Bible stories. Sometimes they're silly or full of trucks or dinosaurs. But afterward, I try to connect the story back to God in our prayers. For example, after reading *Little Blue Truck*, we might pray, "God, help us be like the Little Blue Truck and stop to help, even when others don't seem to deserve it." This simple shift reminds my kids that God is part of all of life, not just Sunday mornings or mealtimes.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." He didn't say, "Let the little children come to me with well-structured sentences." He just wants them near. The same is true for us.

You don't need to fix your child's prayers. Just pray with them. Show them by example that God wants our honesty more than our eloquence. Connect the dots between everyday moments and conversations with God. He already knows what we'll say, but he still wants us to say it.

Want to go deeper?

Read Psalm 139 as a family. Ask your kids what they notice about how the author talks to God. Then read one of your children's favorite books and try praying together to connect the story to something real in their world or their heart.

