

TEACHING ACTS PRAYERS

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Lately, family prayer time has been causing problems in my house. My youngest wants to be the only one who prays, but he struggles with it. Sometimes he starts and finishes his prayers so quickly, I haven't even finished saying "Let's pray." Then, if anyone else tries to pray he starts to scream that he *already* prayed. It's in times like these that you know something has to change. We decided to try the ACTS format.



ACTS Format

ACTS is an acronym that stands for adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication (or supply needs).

- **Adoration:** Praising God for who he is and what he has done.
- **Confession:** Saying sorry for the hurt we've caused God and others.
- **Thanksgiving:** Thanking God for all he has done for us.
- **Supplication:** Asking God to grant us what we need.

Over the next few weeks, we're going to break down the different sections of the ACTS format. So, if you don't fully understand the different parts, begin where you can. To help you out, here are three different ways you can bring the ACTS format into your home.

Handprint Prayer Journal

Make a little book with your children. Start by tracing their hand six times and cutting out the handprints. Two hands will be the front and back covers. The remaining four will get one word from the ACTS format written on them. After your children have decorated them, staple the pages together in order and use them to remind you which letter you are on.

Take it Slow

Each word is actually the name of a specific type of prayer. As a way to teach each section, you can break down the ACTS format into its individual parts:

- As you pray the ACTS prayer, slow down on Mondays to focus on prayers of adoration. Talk about all the great ways you can describe God and the things that he has done for you.
- Tuesdays are for prayers of confession. In this ACTS prayer, focus on confession, talk about sin and forgiveness and how Jesus died for all our sins.

- Wednesdays are when you thank God for what he has done. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!
- Thursdays are when you can tell him what you need.
- Fridays allow you to practice putting all the sections together.

One thing to point out is that just because you're putting it all together on Fridays does not mean you will be spending an eternity praying that day. You can shorten each section to match your children's concentration levels.

Prayer Rounds

A third option is by praying through the ACTS format in a round. To pray in a round, your children can either repeat after you, or come up with their own short thing to say for each section. Here's an example:

Adult: Dear God, you are great.

Child: Dear God, you are great.

Adult: I'm sorry for hurting you and others, *like when I yelled at my son today*. Please forgive me.

Child: I'm sorry for hurting you and others, *like when I didn't listen to my parents*. Please forgive me.

Adult: Thank you for forgiving me, *and for our home*.

Child: Thank you for forgiving me, *and for my friends*.

Adult: Please bless our family, and help us to grow closer to you and each other.

Child: Please bless our family, and help us to grow closer to you and each other.

As your family gets more comfortable with the order and what each section means, you can let your children lead the round.

I hope these suggestions help revive your family prayer time and that the next few weeks about prayer are a blessing to you and your family.

Explore the why, when, and how to pray with your family. Check out [Kids Corner's Faith Practices for Families: Prayer](#) eBook.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article <https://familyfire.com/articles/practices-to-strengthen-your-relationship-with-jesus>

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