

PARENTING | WEEK 3

*He asked for strength that he might achieve;
He was made weak that he might obey.
He asked for health that he might do greater things;
He was given infirmity that he might do better things.
He asked for riches that he might be happy;
He was given weakness that he might feel the need of God.
He asked for all things that he might enjoy life;
He was given life that he might enjoy all things.
He has received nothing that he asked for,
All that he hoped for; his prayer is answered.*

—ANONYMOUS

T: Thanksgiving (“thank you” prayers)

There is so much to thank God for. Just look around you, think through your day; think about what happened and what *didn't* happen! Thank God for His mighty acts, both in the Bible and now. Thank God for who He is.

Do | This week in your family prayer time, try to add thanksgiving prayers to your prayers of adoration and confession. Thank God for His mighty acts, both in the Bible and now. Thank God for who He is. Read through the two prayer stories below with your children to help them see how God can work in prayer.

Prayer focus

All around you—in your neighborhood, your school, your workplace, maybe even in your family—are those who do not know Christ.

This week, pray for those you know who do not know Jesus as their Savior. What can your family do to bring the good news of the gospel to one or more of the people on your list?

Read | Sometimes God answers, “no”

As a child, Amy Carmichael disliked her brown eyes. She wanted beautiful blue eyes like her mother. But her mother had told Amy that God answers heartfelt prayers. So Amy prayed before she went to bed

that God would give her blue eyes. When she woke up in the morning, Amy rushed to the mirror. When she looked at her eyes, she wailed in disappointment—they were still brown! What about her mother's assurance that God answers prayer? Mother explained to Amy that "no" is also an answer to prayer. God knew it best that Amy have brown eyes.

Later, as a missionary in India, Amy smuggled children out of pagan temples where they were mistreated. She would have been easily discovered had her eyes been blue! But with her brown eyes, she was not spotted as a foreigner because her brown eyes enabled her to blend in with the Indian population. God, in His wisdom, had answered Amy's prayers for blue eyes with a "no" answer. All His answers are good and right.

Read | Sometimes God answers, "wait"

The grandfather of a Vietnamese man taught members of his family for over 15 years from the 500 verses he had memorized. But he realized that it was time "to find the rest of the sacred texts." When asked who would find these texts, His answer was "God will; we must pray." And they did—for two years.

One Sunday as they were praying, a chicken came into the house and laid an egg. Grandfather tied some money to the chicken's leg for the egg. Before an hour passed, a high-ranking member of the Communist party yelled in the streets for the person who tied money to his chicken to identify himself. Though the official sounded angry, he really came to praise grandfather's honesty. "Tell me, what makes you so honest?" The old man answered with two words: "Jesus Christ!"

"Can I do anything for you?" the official asked.

The old man boldly replied, "We would like to find the sacred texts of Christ! Can you help us get a copy?"

The official went back to Beijing, but nothing happened. Months went by while the family continued to pray. One day a young man appeared—with seven brand new Bibles. A leader of his house church had been arrested and in jail had met the Communist official with the chicken, who promised to let him go if we would deliver the family a Bible.