

A 5-DAY PRAYER CHALLENGE FROM THE MOB SOCIETY

praying for
TEEN *boys*

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Peer Pressure
Laura Lee Groves



“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Teen boys stand on the brink of manhood, but they still totter back and forth. How can we help them—especially in the face of peer pressure?

When my first son was in his early teens, he had a strong desire to stand for God. A few of the other teens at school, even though they were from Christian families, were making choices in behavior that he couldn’t go along with. I remember one day as I picked him up, he practically jumped into the car, exclaiming, “I never want to go back!”

I gave him some time to decompress and I sat back and listened. He felt alone and abandoned by those who had been friends as they pressured him to go along. And he felt ostracized, even left behind. As the hurt and disappointment poured out, it struck me that what he needed was to be strong.

Years before, as children, he and his brothers had learned Joshua 1:9 in song, and I just quietly began to hum that tune. He stopped and looked at me, the verse suddenly registering in his head.

We talked that day about being strong and courageous as you face your peers. Peer pressure succeeds because of the pressure exerted by those peers. We find ourselves afraid to stand alone. Fear is a real threat for teen boys; they’re not children, but they’re not yet men. They’re not sure if they can “adult.” Most of them aren’t comfortable talking about this kind of fear, but they’ll go on and on about physical bravery, or the lack of it.

The story of Joshua who was under physical threat awakens in them a desire for courage, for bravery. They don’t often realize that the ability to stand against peer pressure hinges on the same trait—bravery.

Joshua 1:9, a command given to Joshua by God, reminds our boys to be what they long to be. It plants in them the hope that they will, indeed, some day grow to be what God desires of them.

This verse recognizes that being courageous isn’t something we do in our own strength—it reminds our boys that God stands with us. He stands with us now as we face fear, and afterwards when we sometimes face discouragement.

Food for Thought:

The main idea of Joshua 1:9 is that God is with us. We can stand firm with strength and courage. And as we pray this verse for and with our sons, we acknowledge God's sovereignty; we will not always be with them, but we can know God is.

Today's Prayer:

Lord, make (insert your son's name) strong and courageous. Help him not to be afraid or discouraged, because the Lord his God is with him wherever he goes.

Today's devotion was written by Laura Lee Groves, author of *[I'm Outnumbered!: One Mom's Lessons in the Lively Art of Raising Boys](#)*

Influence
Monica Swanson



"Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm" (Proverbs 13:20).

With three teenage boys in the house (and another one coming up behind them), my list of essential concerns has narrowed down a whole lot from when they were younger. Though a mother's heart is always full of prayers, hopes, and dreams for her sons, a few things rise up over time as being the very most important.

For me, one of the biggest areas of focus in the teenage years is INFLUENCE. I have discovered the power of influence in my boys' lives. I have seen the damaging effects of even a little bad influence, and I have seen the incredible blessings of positive influence.

There are two main ways I pray about influence in my boys' lives. One is that they would have good influences in their lives—that they would be drawn to and intentionally seek out good influences. The other is that when they are around bad influences, they would have the discernment to see it for what it is, and they would have wisdom on how to handle it.

When my boys were young I heard a phrase I have repeated about a million times since: "Show me your friends, and I'll show you your future." Though I love this phrase (so simple and straightforward, right?), it's really not original! God's Word says it quite well in 1 Corinthians 15:33 "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.'" And Proverbs 13:20 also nails the concept for us: "Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."

I pray for the influences in my sons' lives, but I also know as their mom I have a great responsibility to help them navigate the influences in their lives.

One way I can help them navigate this thing of influence is to simply talk to them about their friendships. We discuss who they are spending time with and their feelings about them. I ask questions—not in a nagging or condescending way, but in a way that communicates my role as a counselor and involved parent. I share with them from my own life when appropriate. I talk about the difference it makes to have friends who encourage you in your faith and share your convictions. My boys read the book of Proverbs (a chapter a day!) and together we discuss all kinds of wisdom principles—influence being a big one!

Food for Thought:

My husband and I are also very intentional about the people we surround our kids with. We invite young adults to our home we respect and want to be role models for our sons. We gather with families who share our values and will be an encouragement to our kids. And we are careful about who we allow our kids to spend time with. Sure, we encourage them to be friends with all of the kids they interact with through school, sports, or church, but we teach them the difference between the few people they really trust to get close to. We only allow sleepovers at a select few families' homes (and that is even a rare situations), and when we have kids at our home we keep an eye on them and encourage our boys to be leaders and to spend time doing positive activities.

My oldest son now leads a youth Bible study as he is very familiar with Proverbs 27:17 that says "As iron sharpens iron, one man sharpens another." He seeks out godly friends and tries to be a positive influence on others.

Today's Prayer:

"Lord, please surround my son with godly friends and role models. Let him choose to walk with wise people, and most of all, let Him look to you as his greatest role model. I pray You would give him wisdom and discernment to handle situations when he is in the presence of bad influences. Then let him grow up to be a positive influence in others' lives as he shines Your light wherever he goes. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Today's devotion is written by Monica Swanson, author of the [Grommom Blog](#).

Developing Personal Responsibility
Alli Worthington



"Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you" (Proverbs 4:6 NIV).

Helping your teenage son learn to take personal responsibility, make wise decisions, and accept the consequences of his decisions (especially the ones that aren't so wise) is one of the hardest things for a mom to do. This process makes potty training seem like a breeze.

My husband and I received a phone call recently from the principal at my son's school. He told us that our son had been accused doing another student's math homework. Not only did he cheat, he was paid ten dollars for it, and there would be a disciplinary committee meeting the next day. The principal would let us know what the team decided to do after interviewing our son and the rest of the students involved.

We were heartsick.

When we talked to our son that evening, he admitted the accusations were true. He did ten math problems for ten dollars. Apparently doing homework for other students in the school is a big business. The student he did homework for had been hiring multiple people to do her homework for weeks. My husband and I encouraged our son to go into the disciplinary committee meeting and be completely honest about what happened, apologize profusely, and throw himself at the mercy of the court.

We found out after the disciplinary committee meeting that our son was the only student who owned up to cheating and we were the only parents who didn't come in and defend their child.

You know what happened next. Of course he was found guilty and suspended for a day. My husband and I told him that even though he did something wrong, we were so proud of him for owning up to what he did, not denying it, and accepting the consequences for his crime.

It would have been all too easy to march into that principal's office and insist it was a misunderstanding, that our son couldn't possibly have understood the repercussions, and he was just trying to help a friend out. But that would have made a bad situation even worse.

We would have taken away this huge life lesson—his chance to own up to his mistakes and accept responsibility for his bad behavior.

As moms, we have to go from protecting our children from every negative situation when they are little to advising them about potential negative situations when they're older. And when they do manage to get themselves in trouble, we have to fight the temptation to make it all go away like we did when they were little.

It is our job to help these man-children, our teenage sons, become men. And we do that by encouraging them, sharing our wisdom, and sometimes by not rescuing them.

The more we can step back, take a breath, and let them face the consequences of their own bad choices, the faster they will learn to make good choices.

I'm comforted to know that the more little mistakes my sons make, have to take responsibility for and pay consequences of, the faster they will learn not to make those mistakes in an even bigger way in the future.

Moms, we need to continually pray for our sons to make good decisions, to be discerning, and for the maturity to learn from their mistakes. And just as important, we must pray for ourselves. Pray for wisdom, patience, and strength to help shepherd our teenage sons through this process of growing from little boys to men.

Food for Thought:

There's no better gift we can give the world than a man who loves Jesus, lives his life with integrity, and accepts responsibility for himself. It's those men who change the world for the kingdom!

Today's Prayer:

Lord, may (insert your son's name) not forsake wisdom. Instead, may he run to it, embrace it, and choose it when the storms of life come. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today's devotion was written by Alli Worthington, author of [*Fierce Faith: A Woman's Guide to Fighting Fear, Wrestling Worry, and Overcoming Anxiety*](#)

Navigating Dating
Melanie Young



"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD" (Proverbs 18:22).

In just a few weeks, one of our boys is getting married. She's a sweet girl whose eyes light up when she talks about Jesus and when she talks about our son. We couldn't be happier! We love walking through this with him.

They do grow up fast, incredibly fast. One day you're looking at an eleven year old who is all awkward and stinky and you can't imagine him in a relationship. You blink and a lanky young man with a beard is saying, "Hey Mom, come look at this one! Do you think she'd like this ring?"

How do you get them ready? How do you prepare them to choose well? When we look at the Word of God, we see all kinds of patterns

You could kidnap your bride at a dance. Yeah, that happened at Shiloh—and the elders of Israel told them to do it (see Judges 21 if you're interested). Or a girl could follow her relative to work and curl up at his feet when he sleeps. That happened too, and Ruth was in the lineage of Christ. We're sure there were also lots of ordinary courtships as well. The point is God doesn't give us a step-by-step blueprint for falling in love. We've got some liberty here, but there are lessons from the Bible we can help our sons apply to their dating lives.

Here are some biblically based guidelines for helping your sons navigate relationships with the opposite sex:

- Honor your parents.

Children are told in Ephesians 6:1, "Obey your parents in the Lord for this is right," but the whole congregation is told in Exodus 20 to honor their parents. Our kids won't have to obey us any more once they're adults, but they'd be wise to honor us enough to consider our counsel. We let our guys know we'll try hard not to interfere, but we'll be praying and we're there to talk and to advise.

- Timing makes a difference.

Most relationships move pretty quickly toward either commitment or sin. It only makes sense to wait for a relationship until you are ready or close to being ready for

marriage. We encourage our guys to concentrate on getting ready in the high school years and think about pursuing after that.

- Friendship is key.

Companionship is a foundational part of marriage. The Lord said it was not good for Adam to be alone and created Eve. Solomon's bride calls her husband, "my beloved and my friend" (Song 5). Young men are encouraged in 1 Timothy 5 to treat "younger women as sisters, in all purity." If our boys treat the young women around them as sisters, they'll get to know them, talk with them, and work alongside them. What better way to find a bride than to fall in love with your friend?

Food for Thought:

When your boys are trying to do right, you don't have to worry about relationships. We've actually enjoyed it a lot, thinking about the early years of our romance as we watch our kids. You can enjoy this time!

Today's Prayer:

Lord, please bring (insert your son's name) a wife of noble character, a friend to devote himself to in Your perfect time. Keep his ways pure, help him to treat her with dignity and keep him from sin. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's devotion was written by Melanie Young, author of [*Raising Real Men: Surviving, Teaching, and Appreciating Boys*](#).

Developing His Relationship with God
Bryan Pruett



"These words that I command you ... You shall teach them diligently to your children ... talk of them when you sit in your house ... when you walk by the way ... when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:6-9).

I am a sports fan who is genetically predisposed to live in "crazy fan-town" where things get thrown and grown men lose friends (therefore, I frequently cut the TV off and follow from a distance). In college athletics I cheer for the Virginia Tech Hokies.

By default, my seventeen-year-old son is also a Hokie fan. I suppose it is only natural, seeing as how his surroundings have always been wrapped with all things VT. As a child, his onesie pajamas, and bed sheets were all decorated in Hokie colors. At some point he connected the dots. Maybe it went like this: "Daddy wears shirts that match my bed sheets. When the team that matches my bed sheets is on television, Daddy gets emotional. He seems to love them; I think I will love them too."

I am not promoting environmental control in order to produce specific results. My eleven-year-old resident rebel debunks that theory. He is a trailblazer who decided to cheer for some team known as the Oregon Ducks. He's lucky we allow him to live with us. But it brings up a good point ...

Many of us worship foolish objects such as sports teams. We were created to worship. God implanted His image in us in order that we might long for external worship of Him and Him alone. An unavoidable reality is that what parents worship will likely trickle down to our children. They will worship what we worship, so God commands us to be intentional about what we surround them with.

In today's verse, Moses' instructions are clear, "Teach diligently, talk often, be intentionally God-focused in the environment of your children—maybe even their onesies."

Hard to do when our focus is on busy schedules—jammed with everything except time alone in worship with our children.

Teenagers can be scary animals and society seeks to convince us to give scary animals a lot of this idea known as “space.” However, the Bible knows no such concept. This space-agenda is a man-made. It did not come from God. He commands invasion of space.

Do we believe God knows the needs of teenagers?

Environmental control is not Moses’ sole aim. Controlled environments cannot change hearts. Raising them in church is the grandest of ideas, but it is not a guaranteed cause and effect (they may very well become fans of Ducks).

The key is found in verse 5, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” Everything else is inferior to this love.

A vision of consuming worship is the catalyst for teenage hearts, not space. Moses isn't requiring perfect family worship where we float in Shekinah glory as the children recite memorized Psalms. That would be splendid, but sometimes it will look more like trying to lasso a cat while reading to him. Whatever we do, we must teach truth—they can take it. However, we must show them the joy of our salvation as we teach.

Food for Thought:

Live unashamed to be smitten with God! That must supersede smITTENness with sports teams. Stop giving your teenagers space. Close the space, and show them worship! Sit beside them in church. Talk of the Lord and read Scripture daily. Clothe their surroundings in a garment of right worship.

Today's Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I pray that you would stir up in me a deep zeal for Your Word and a visible life-altering love for You, so that (your son's name) will have a model for what it looks like to be a man who worships the Lord.

Today's devotion was written by Bryan Pruett, pastor of Peterstown Missionary Baptist Church.

Four Verses to Pray to Help You Son Be a Man of God
Brooke McGlothlin



You guys all know that prayer is kind of my thing, right? But do you know why?

Prayer kept me connected when I wanted to run away. Praying God's Word for my boys reminded me of His many promises and fueled my faith. I had just enough faith to believe He would be true to His word ... so I prayed it back to Him over and over .

On my knees, God gave me peace.
On my knees, God gave me comfort.
On my knees, God corrected me ... exposed my sin.
On my knees, God met my needs, healed my heart, and increased my belief in His goodness ... and over the years, God has used my prayers to change the hearts of my boys. I believe it.

Prayer is the fuel of my motherhood, what puts me back together when I fall apart. So, yeah, you might say it's my thing.

"I pray because I don't have all the answers. I pray because I'm lost and can't see the big picture. I pray because I'm desperate for a word-touch from the God who made me and because I can't do this life thing without his direction. I pray because I don't know how to raise these two boys to be the godly men I dream they will be, but I serve the God who does. Believing that has changed my life." [*Praying for Boys: Asking God for the Things They Need Most.*](#)

There are character qualities more important to me than education, money, family, or fame ... more important than anything else I can think of. They're not rocket science, and I have no special insight into the Word of God that will make them happen. They're just my dreams for God to make my boys into good men, and to be good men, they must be men of God. So let's start there.

4 Verses to Pray to Help Our Sons Be Men of God

What is good apart from God? Only God is truly good (Mark 10:18), and sadly, even our best attempts at goodness fall pitifully short of God's standard (Isaiah 64:6). It isn't enough to be good as the world defines it. There are millions of "good" men out there. Men who love well, protect, serve. But if their hearts don't belong to Jesus, it's all for naught.

So I pray for my sons to be truly good men of God.

1. Lord, give (your son's name) a heart softened toward you.

"Give him a new heart and a new spirit put within him. Remove the heart of stone from his flesh and give him a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26).

2. Lord, give (your son's name) a clean heart.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

3. Lord, let (your son's name) desire you alone.

"One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple" (Psalm 27:4).

4. Lord, may (your son's name) find his strength, and the true power of manhood, in you.

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Today, add these verses to your prayer time. As you do, allow God to change your understanding of what a good man truly is. If he doesn't have a dad who is a model of these things for him, pray for dad too, and join me tomorrow as we pray to help our boys be men of purpose!

To see me talk about this post live, and teach you what a GOOD man really is, [click here!](#) It will take you to a Facebook live video I shared with others who are praying for their teen boys!

Four Verses to Pray to Help Your Son Be a Man of Purpose
Brooke McGlothlin



"Give me one pure and holy passion. Give me one magnificent obsession. Give me one glorious ambition for my life, to know and follow hard after You" (Passion).

I heard that song for the first time when I was just twenty-three years old. Single, working in my first full time ministry job, and spending a couple hours a day in the Word of God, I was filled to the brim with a desire to know and follow hard after God.

Even back then, I knew I wanted to raise boys, and so as I sang ... as I worshipped and belted out those lyrics with all my heart and at the top of my lungs ... I asked God to make it so, and to help me raise boys with the same magnificent obsession.

Now, sixteen years later (yikes!) it's still my prayer. But as it turns out, keeping one pure and holy passion is harder than I thought it would be. Making it my highest ambition to know and follow hard after God is easier to say but much harder to do. If I find it hard as a thirty-nine-year-old woman, I know my boys will find it even harder as they grow up in a world filled with so many distractions.

I worry about them trying to fit in, comparing themselves to other men, being too focused on their careers, or thinking their names have to be in lights to have value. Already, my oldest wishes he was the star athlete, and thinks that somehow his worth as a person is tied to his performance on the field.

4 Verses to Pray to Help Your Son Be a Man of Purpose

We hear a lot about the pressures women face to "have it all," "be it all," and "keep it all together," but I believe men face equal pressure from the world today to be the best athlete, excel in school, get a good job, provide for their families, etc, etc. With all the tasks the world says they need to achieve swirling around them, I pray they'll be men of true purpose, with one pure and holy passion...

1. Lord, let (your son's name) truly, and deeply love you.

"And he answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself'" (Luke 10:27).

2. Lord, may (your son's name) be a man *after* (pursuing it with reckless abandon) your own heart.

"And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will'" (Acts 13:22).

3. Lord, may (your son's name) seek to abide (remain) in you.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me" (John 15:4).

4. Lord, may (your son's name) be led by you.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

This week, add these verses to your prayer time each day. Ask the Lord if you're modeling a pure and holy passion and magnificent obsession for your son in your own life. If you're not, make the change.

To see me talk about this post live, and teach you what a man of purpose really is, [click here!](#) It will take you to a Facebook live video I shared with others who are praying for their teen boys!

Four Verses to Pray to Help Your Son Be a Servant Leader
Brooke McGlothlin



Today, we talk about leadership.

Over the last few years, I've read my fair share of books about leadership. I've tried to understand what it is, how to do it with excellence, and what it means to me as a woman in the church today. One of my favorite quotes so far on this topic is from a book that isn't even faith-based. It's a training manual for [the company my husband and I work with](#), and I don't know who wrote it! But it's made an impression on me nonetheless. It says:

"The secret of leadership is simple: Do what you believe in. Paint a picture of the future. Go there. People will follow."

Let's unpack that a bit, shall we?

1. Do what you believe in.

Yesterday, we spent time praying for our sons to be [men of purpose](#), with clear vision and direction from the Lord, staying on a path that has Him as the end result. As new opportunities come our way, my family is constantly asking, "how does this serve our greater mission? Does this fit with what God has called us to do? How will it get us closer to the vision we feel God has given us for our lives?" It helps us know what to say "no" to, and creates a training ground for our boys as they figure out God's call for their own lives.

2. Paint a picture of the future. Go there.

One thing a leader needs to be good at is telling the story. Where is your company/family/ministry/relationship going? Can you see a clear picture of what you're working towards? If not, ask the Lord to make it clear to you. If so, just go there. Make calculated, purposeful steps each day that will get you closer to where you're going, and work to keep your picture of the future always before you...always before those you're leading. Everyone feels more secure when they know where they're going.

This doesn't mean you have to have all the details all the time. Many times throughout scripture God asked someone to go without telling them where. At its most basic level, working toward the future God has called you to simply means purposing to walk in obedience to him, no matter where that obedience takes you.

3. People will follow.

Do you know why people follow the leader? It's not because they're so far advanced in their life, or because they have so much more experience, or even because they've finished well and have much to show for it. It's because the leader is at least one step ahead of where they currently are. When I lead my team well...when I lead my boys well by staying true to the vision God has given me for our lives and doing what I believe in, they'll follow. I've seen it over and over again. As my boys have grown and matured, I've gone from a "do they ever hear anything I say??!" mentality, to a deep knowing that they are indeed hearing me. I know it, because I'm watching them make choices in alignment with their faith and what their father and I have tried so hard to teach them. It's not perfect (they're only almost 10 and 12), but seeing God move in their lives now gives me faith that he'll continue to do so in the future.

What do all these things have in common?

Service. The mindset of a true leader must be one of service. Whether it be service to God, service to the vision God has given, or service to the people God has placed around him, the leader must be service-minded or he'll eventually fail. In fact, Scripture tells us Jesus Himself came not to be served, but to serve (Matthew 20:28). Our boys don't have to have their names in lights in order to lead people. True influence comes as we lower ourselves to a place of obedience to God, and serve those around us out of love for Him.

So let's take time this week to pray for our sons to be leaders who serve God's greater call, and the people that go with it.

4 Verses to Pray to Help Your Son be a Servant Leader

1. Lord, may (your son's name) be strengthened, motivated, and lead by the knowledge of your grace.

"You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus..." (2 Timothy 2:1).

2. Lord, may (your son's name) fear you and serve you only, putting away all other gods.

"Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:14).

3. Lord, may (your son's name) use the freedom you've given them in Christ to serve others without reservation.

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

4. Lord, may (your son's name) share all that you teach them with others, helping them be strengthened in the faith.

"...and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also...." (2 Timothy 2:2).

This week, add these verses to your prayer time each day. If your family doesn't really have a vision for what God has called you to do together, take the time to pray and listen for his direction. It will change everything!

To see me talk about this post live, and teach you what a servant leader looks like, [click here](#)! It will take you to a Facebook live video I shared with others who are praying for their teen boys!

Four Verses to Pray to Help Your Son Be a Man of Integrity
Brooke McGlothlin



If you're anything like me, you dream of your son becoming a mighty man of God—a man of integrity, a man of principle, a man who loves Jesus. You dare to hope that when the day of temptation comes, he will stand strong and fight for truth.

That's the greatest desire of your heart. But I'm guessing you have no idea how to make it happen.

Me neither. Not exactly.

But I do know this: The best parenting in the world cannot make this dream come true. The only way our boys will become men of integrity is for their hearts to be changed ..." (Excerpted from [*Praying for Boys: Asking God for the Things They Need Most*](#)).

Men of Integrity

The best equation I've found for growing men of integrity is this: **Modeling + Heart Change = Integrity**, and it's not an exact science, doesn't have a guaranteed outcome because we can only control one part of the equation—modeling.

As parents, it's our responsibility to model a life of integrity for our kids so they know what it looks like. They need to see us make the hard but right decisions. It's doing right when everyone else is doing wrong. Making choices that might not be easy but are good. Even making decisions that might hurt us, just because they're right. Those of us who follow Jesus have been given the power to choose. We can do it because God empowers us to live godly lives.

The part that isn't within our ability to control is heart change. According to Ezekiel 36:26, that's God's job, and unfortunately, our boys may not be interested in living a life of integrity that honors God and others until this work of God is done in their hearts. True integrity is a bending of the will to something greater than ourselves. It's responding to a greater authority than ourselves, choosing to honor God even when no one is looking. It's giving up the right to have rights ... a kind of submission that only comes as our boys give their hearts to Jesus and call Him Lord. And ...

If their knees are ever to bend to Jesus as Savior, their hearts must bend first. This is the place a mama's prayers.

4 Verses to Pray to Help Your Son be a Man of Integrity

1. Lord, may (your son's name) walk blamelessly, do what is right, and speak truth in his heart.

"O LORD, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart" (Psalm 15:1-2).

2. Lord, may (your son's name) trust in the Lord without wavering.

"Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering" (Psalm 26:1).

3. Lord, may (your son's name) turn away from evil and do good.

"Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it" (Psalm 34:13-14).

4. Lord, turn (your son's name) heart of stone to a heart of flesh.

"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26).

This week, add these verses to your prayer time each day. In your time alone with the Lord, ask him to show you ways you can improve your own walk of integrity so you model it more effectively to your sons.

To see me talk about this post live, and teach you what a man of integrity looks like, [click here](#)! It will take you to a Facebook live video I shared with others who are praying for their teen boys!

Wisdom for Online Usage
Connie Albers



*"Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future"
(Prov. 19:20).*

"Time to stop playing video games."
"Who are you talking to online?"
"What are all the apps on your phone for?"

As a mother of five children, three boys and two girls, I was determined to stay one step ahead of them regarding their online activity and social media usage. I admit it was easier during the tween years because I could limit their online access. But as they got older, I could not monitor everything they did. When they were away from home, I couldn't stop them from clicking around, not really. Sure I could tell them to be wise, make smart decisions, and remember God is always watching. However, that wasn't always enough. That didn't keep them from stumbling into danger.

Now, to be honest here I did freak out a time or two when they were introduced to things that they should not have seen. But I learned the best way to help them was to ask the right questions and listen to their responses before reacting.

Here are five pieces of wisdom I learned in raising boys in an online world.

Pray for discernment. I know many moms say this. Well, that's because prayer works. It is not possible for us to know everything our teens are being exposed to online. Being specific about asking God to give you discernment as to what they are witnessing online is so important. I can't tell you how many times I was prompted to check something out that could have been a problem for my sons. An inappropriate conversation, a conflict they were having with a friend, or some rumors that were being circulated about them. These are but a small sampling of the many things God allowed me to discover that I otherwise might not have known about. Your list may be different. That's okay. What is most important for you is to make time to pray for discernment in navigating the online world with your son.

Teach him why being careful matters. Most teens don't realize everything they say, see, and share is captured on a server somewhere in the clouds. And that what they do online can be used to ruin their reputations. Honestly, that's how so many teens are caught doing something they shouldn't be doing. In addition to teaching them God's standard for behavior, I would tell them "If you don't want law enforcement to know what you're doing, don't post it." The reality is their immaturity often blinds them from considering the ramifications of their online

actions. They are in many ways like most young people, oblivious. They think what they say, see, and share can't be traced. Sadly, far too many young men learn the hard way.

Equip him to stand up to peer pressure. The desire to be popular on social media often causes boys to cave to peer pressure. He wants to fit in and be noticed, like most kids his age. But here's the deal, your son needs to learn how to go against the flow of the online culture. His developing faith and your family are under attack. Everyday. What's right is wrong. What's wrong is right. And if he doesn't agree, he will be ridiculed, marginalized, and bullied. Your willingness to help him understand his identity is not found in popularity but in who God says he is and what God created him to be is vital.

Help him avoid a fatal click. I've talked with thousands of teens who ended up in trouble because of one click. "It's so easy, no one will know. I'm not hurting anyone," they rationalize. By taking the time to help them learn how one decision during the teen years can forever alter their lives, you could be saving him from a lifetime of heartbreak.

Explain how to create a positive online footprint. A positive social footprint can make or break being accepted into the college of his dreams or landing that dream job. As a woman who speaks on social influence, I see it all the time. Today's teens want to be seen and heard. With a little effort and guidance, you can help him create awareness for causes he believes in and encourage him to be a positive voice in a sea of noise.

In God's Word we are told to seek wisdom. To seek requires action. Raising boys during the teen years takes wisdom, the wisdom that comes from being in tune with their Creator. They need you to invest time, even when they push you away or communicate they don't appreciate your interference in their online lives. Your goal is to protect and prepare your sons for manhood and leadership. To become strong they need your loving engagement as they transition from child to adult.

Food for Thought:

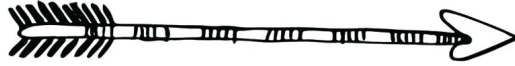
Teach your sons why they must be careful. Knowing why helps them understand how easy it is to ruin their future and grieve the Lord. The online world isn't safe. Help them learn to create a positive online footprint.

Today's Prayer:

God, I pray for _____ to be wise online, for him to create a positive social footprint that honors you and that he can be proud of in the future. Help him to be strong enough to resist temptation. Protect him from becoming the next online casualty or being exposed to more than his developing mind can process. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today's devotion is written by Connie Albers, who writes at conniealbers.com

How to Pray When They've Stepped Over the Line
Gina Smith



"And a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes" (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

When our children were very young, we lived in a cute little townhouse that had a fireplace in the living room. Often the evenings would find us gathered around the fireplace as a family. We quickly discovered we needed to set some boundaries for our son, who was two years old, so we taught him that he was not to step over the edge of the stone hearth that wrapped around the front of the fireplace or there would be consequences. Caleb eventually got to the point that he would stand right on the edge of that hearth and cry. He was obeying us, but in his heart he still wanted to touch the fire.

Over the years we directed him the best we knew how, especially when it came to being careful with what he put before his eyes. His father was an excellent example, movies and TV viewing were carefully monitored, we had every safety measure on our computers so that he couldn't find his way to inappropriate websites, and he was required to use his computer in a central location in our home for accountability.

One summer while vacationing, my husband and I laid down to rest, leaving our son and daughter watching a parent approved program. Later that evening our son came to us and confessed that he had spent time on the computer while we were resting and had found his way to some porn sites. There were no safety measures on the resort internet. His curiosity had gotten the best of him and he had given in to temptation.

Our son had stepped over the line.

We can teach our boys the way they should go, but if isn't their hearts' desire, they will find a way to that which is not pure. What can we do?

- 1 Teach them what God's Word says about purity. Pray they would understand and hold it as their own.
- 2 Pray for God to work in their hearts. What our boys know in their heads must move into their hearts—a work only God can do.
- 3 Let them know they can come to you even if they stumble. They need to know they will be accepted and loved unconditionally no matter what they

do, and that you are there to help him fight the battle. In this way, we demonstrate God's love and care for them.

- 4 Pray for the provision of friends who will work with our sons to combat the pervasive presence of sexuality in society.
- 5 Engage our sons in conversations that draw out their struggles and temptations, and help them to flee youthful lusts and pursue God.

Food for Thought:

We had done everything we could as parents. We shared with him what God's Word says about purity, drew the line, and told him the consequences of disobedience, but we could not give him a heart's desire to do the right thing. After a few years of battling the desire to look at porn, our son completely yielded his life to Christ. The battle hasn't miraculously gone away, but he no longer stands on the line wanting something that he has been told he cannot touch. He wants to fight for purity because God has captured his heart!

Today's Prayer:

"Father, please open my our son's eyes, and cause him to desire with all of his heart to be totally yielded to You. I ask that you would do a work by putting within him a new heart and spirit. Take away the heart of stone, and give him a heart of flesh. Cause him to desire to walk in Your statutes. " Amen

Today's devotion is written by Gina Smith, author of [*Grace Gifts: Celebrating Your Children Every Day*](#)

Praying for His Relationship with You, Mom
Tricia Goyer



“My child, listen when your father corrects you. Don't neglect your mother's instruction. What you learn from them will crown you with grace and be a chain of honor around your neck” (Proverbs 1:8-9, NLT).

It may seem selfish to pray for our teen sons to have a good relationship with us, but as the mother of two sons who have passed through the teen years and are now adults, prayerfully building relationships with them was one of the most important things I did.

With one more son moving closer to his teens every year, I know the relationship with him that I foster during this vital time will be the building blocks for the adult years to come. It's a hard balance between still trying to parent, while also pushing our sons toward independent choices, and that's why prayer is necessary.

When we don't know how to give advice. Pray. When we question how to guide our sons from teen to adult. Pray. And when he needs help or advice, it's important to pray *with* him, turning to God together.

And it's also important to keep working at building the relationship too. As my sons have gotten older we've found new ways to become friends. We've spent many nights laughing over board games that they love and YouTube videos they find funny. It's different than when they are little, but it's good.

Most importantly, these small moments of relationship building and prayer will keep the doors open for the future. Our adult sons visit or call weekly, and they continually turn to my husband and me for advice. It's something I'm thankful for. While the relationship may change, it's a wonderful feeling to still feel the bond between parent and child. And now when I get a call that says, “Mom, want to hang out?” I know all the prayer and time given was worth it.

Food for Thought:

May I always be quick to choose my son and to engage him, even when my to-do list seems unending. For I know this time, too, is fleeting. And may our time together during these years be strong foundation for those still to come, and may my instruction bring him honor all the days of his life.

Today's Prayer:

God, Sometimes my heart aches when I think about how my little toddler my son used to ask over and over again, "Play with me, Mommy!" I was his most desired playmate, and it seemed so overwhelming at the time. But now I miss the moments where my son wanted to be around me more than anyone. He used to talk to me about anything. I miss that, too.

Lord, I pray that you will help me to recapture those moments with my son. Make our relationship strong so I can speak into his life. Even as my son grows toward independence, help me to find ways to strengthen the relationship. May your Holy Spirit remind me to pick my battles. And may I always remember that my son will listen more to what I have to say when he knows I'm behind him in so many other ways. In Your Son's name, Amen.

Today's devotion is written by Tricia Goyer, author of [*Walk It Out: The Radical Result of Living God's Word One Step at a Time*](#)

Praying for His Future Career
Lori Mercer



For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

As a wife, there is nothing I want more for my husband than to be fully living out his calling from the Lord. A man who is chasing dreams the Lord has planted on his heart and seeing the fruits of those efforts is an attractive, confident man trusting in the Lord each step of the way.

Of course we all have doubts and must stand in faith at the calling the Lord has for us. But what does it look like when we follow the wrong path? When we chase something the Lord has not intended for us? When we get stuck in a wrong decision paralyzed with fear and hanging onto a paycheck instead of following the freedom Christ gives us and trusting Him with our purpose?

A man's identity is grounded so much in what they do that we often identify the men in our society by their professions—he's a firefighter, a police officer, a teacher, an executive, a truck driver, an IT guy. The pressure on men to serve their callings and provide for their families is immense and perhaps I can only relate it to the pressure us women put on ourselves in doing what only we can do—bear children and physically nurture and care for them.

As the little boys in my house have grown man-sized feet, broad shoulders, and thick muscles, I glimpse the men who will be leading their own households. How will they serve their callings from the Lord? How will they know what path to follow? Am I doing everything I can to be sure he sees the calling God has placed on his life so his future wife can see a confident, faithful leader of their household?

Sometimes we think that calling starts when they are just two or three years old and can throw a football like no other child can at that age. Or in the way they just love tractors and trucks. Everything becomes a moving vehicle with wheels and vroom vroom noises. We think they must be destined for a career that involves heavy machinery.

Sometimes those inklings of interest come full circle, but sometimes it's our own selfish desires we place upon them. As I mentor young people in a variety of career fields, I have learned that we can never just tell them, we must lead them to the answers that are hidden within their own hearts and minds. We can ask the right questions and give the right space to help them eliminate the weeds and find the fruit in their calling. Just as Jesus taught us in parables that we then apply to our

own life situations, we must not preach laws to our boys, but instead teach them to discern the calling the Lord has placed on them.

Now that I have teenagers in my own home, we are having these conversations on an almost daily basis. As much as I want to grab his arm like I did when he was three and scream "don't go there" as he picks up a college brochure for a program two thousand miles away in a very liberal community, I'd look like a fool and he'd never listen. As he starts like military pages on Instagram, I catch my breath and think for a moment "No! That can't be what he wants to do. I can't handle that." But I don't need to handle it—he does. And I thank the good Lord that He makes a place for everyone in this world because we do need warriors and thinkers and artists and all types. "But, Lord, he's my son and I'm not ready for that," I try to argue back with the spirit.

Boy moms, our sons are first His and just like the Lord may be calling Him into military service (or insert any other profession or location that worries you), the Lord also called you to be the mom of a soldier / warrior / artist / accountant / teacher / missionary. You were equipped to be the mom of a boy with this calling. Praise Jesus! Change my heart Lord! I can't wait to be the mom of a _____.

So instead of barking my control-freakish mom words at him, I wait for those moments when the spirit is telling me, "Talk now mom, his heart is ready." And I carefully choose the words that may lead him to seek first the kingdom of God and to ask the Lord for the desires of his heart and clear next steps to get there.

I ask him ...

What do you see yourself doing after you graduate with that degree?
What kind of people do you want to be making new friends with in college?
What are the things you love to do that come so naturally you don't even feel like time has passed?

I have learned as we have these conversations that the first eighteen years of his life have taught him how to win at the game of school. Quarter after quarter he gets a syllabus, studies, and tests. He's really, really good at the game of school and knowing how that system works. But what about the game of life? These questions cause him to pause and stumble, and worse yet, feel inadequate, unprepared, and insecure.

At that moment, I am so not ready for him to go beyond earshot of my voice (even if he is more often buried in his bedroom doing homework these days). I still see my wide-eyed, but slightly fearful little five-year-old standing next to Daddy's giant fire truck, afraid of the loud siren noise. I want to cover his ears and tell him all the noise of the world will end in a minute.

But it won't and I can't. Now is the time he needs to discern that on his own. His heart and mind have been preparing for these moments and I am the one who must trust that the Lord will put the right people and colleges and programs in his path to guide him to the right calling.

My teenage son needs some space and freedom to think, listen to God, and decide on his own what will be his next step.

When he comes to me with questions, I need to stop myself from telling him HOW to do it or what I think the answer is, because I'm not in his shoes. I need to find the right words to help him discern, "Is this the path for me? Is this the calling for my life?" And of course I need to continue to be the safe, non-judgmental place for him to fall when he's made a step in the wrong direction.

Food for Thought:

My heart wants to be anxious. I have a skewed view and think I am losing control over parenting my son as he goes off into his future. The Holy Spirit steps in and reminds me that I, too, was made to be his mother through all of his ages and stages and will always have the power of prayer to ask for the Lord's protection and guidance over him no matter where his calling in life takes him.

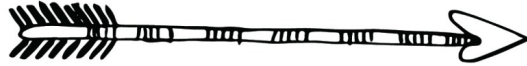
Today's Prayer:

God, thank you for allowing me to be the mom who is a safe place for him to experience insecurities and for giving me the words to build him back up. Help me to show your grace and mercy to my teenage son so the pressures that life puts on him feel like nothing and he knows you are bearing all his burdens.

Lord, I pray for clear calling and discernment in my son's life even if that means doors that close quickly and harshly, sometimes leaving shock and hurt. Help me to let go of what's not in my control and hand everything to you in continual prayer.

Lead him to Your will. Build his character through each step. May he grow to be sure that his ways are Your ways and never, ever forget to ask you Lord when he needs to know what's that next step to take. Amen.

Today's devotion was written by Lori Mercer of FireFighter Wife (<http://firefighterwife.com/>) and How She Quits (www.howshequits.com)



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