



**Title: Petitions for the Next Generation**  
**Theme: Praying With Authority for Our Children**  
**Series: Girding up the Church**

## **Prayer for our next generation**

*There is a battle for the minds, hearts and souls of our kids.* Anyone who enters this battle seriously spends many hours thinking up ways to have the greatest influence possible on their children and grandchildren. These influences take many forms. A couple of those influences are athletic gyms are open at 6:00 a.m. and close 9:30 p.m. at night most days of the school year. Also, there is a great deal of money spent offering our generation the highest quality of education possible around the world.

*I would propose to you that prayer for our next generation is needed more today than ever before as we live in the last days of the return of Jesus Christ.* The Bible says, "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:4)

*Just how can we pray with true authority for our children and grandchildren?* The church is always exhorting the Body of Christ to pray, but too often the leadership of the church fails to equip the people of God for the most powerful ministry in the world. That is a ministry led of the sword of the Spirit that will have the greatest influence regarding the eternal future of children, the ministry of prayer.

The ministry of prayer could enable parents, grandparents and the true church to rejoice as the apostle John did when he wrote 2 John 1:1-4, "The elder. To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth--and not I only, but also all who know the truth--because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. It has given me great joy..." catch that, great joy, "...to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us." (2 John 1:1-4)

It is my conviction that this passage of Scripture has a dual application covering individuals and the whole Body of Christ who love the truth and serve the Lord in sacrificial love. Those to whom it is written were ordinary people, such as any church is made up of ordinary people today and generations to come. Therefore, there is great assurance in this passage of Scripture for all Christians who will show true love by sacrificing time and energy to pray according to Biblical truth for their children and grandchildren, because we will see some of them living according to God's Word.

**We must enter His presence with praise**

*Petitions for the next generation begin with faith that God loves us and He will take care of us. We must enter His presence with praise. Psalm 100:3-5 says, “Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.” (Psalm 100:3-5)*

Take time to thank God for every child by name, then ask for forgiveness for anything the Holy Spirit brings to mind about your attitude or treatment to His children. As we enter the presence of God in Christ’s name we are to be thankful for the work He has already done in the lives of our children and the blessings He has bestowed upon them.

### **Holy Spirit revelation**

*After you have enjoyed the Holy Spirit’s bringing to remembrance of all the Lord has done for your children you can then pray for Holy Spirit revelation for them.*

*Ephesians 3:16-19 says, “I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:16-19)*

The most important prayer that you can pray for your children and grandchildren is that God would send His Holy Spirit into their spiritual hearts to reveal Christ. That they be truly born again and live in the fullness and the abundant life promised in Christ.

Christian parents and grandparents can pray as the Apostle Paul prayed, that Jesus Christ would be made so real in the lives of their children and grandchildren and His love for them made so real that Christ would be allowed to be Savior and Lord, not treated as a tolerated authority in their lives. We can ask God to make it known to our children and grandchildren what it really means to have Christ dwell in their hearts.

The word “dwell” (*katoikeo*) here means to allow Christ to take up full residence by His Spirit in their spiritual hearts so that He might have full control over their lives. So Jesus Christ might use them fully as He wishes for His Father’s purposes. The application is that our children and grandchildren will truly be full of the Holy Ghost responding joyfully to His promptings as He makes God’s Word so real to them.

### **Hungry to live according to God’s good purposes**

*The church that is girded up for the future has offspring with Divine revelation of Christ and they are hungry to live according to God's good purposes. Philippians 2:12-13 says, "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose." (Philippians 2:12-13)*

**Pray that** our children and grandchildren will have hearts to obey the Lord and be involved in the things of God even when they are not in our presence. Pray also that they will walk in a true fear of the Lord and that they will have hearts that will ask the Lord to do His work in their lives. Pray that God would bring them to a condition in their spiritual heart that says, "Make me hungry to do your will."

The church needs Christians who understand that it is God who is at work in them and only He can enable them to want and do His will. The word "works" (*energeo*) means that the Lord is the one who energizes us to have the desire to seek His will and He provides enablement for Christians to do the Lord's will. Our children must be partners with God in the work of the gospel of Christ.

### **Lives in confidence before the Lord and the world**

*The church that is girded up has Christians who are partners with the Lord and she is a Body of Christ that lives in confidence before the Lord and the world. 2 Timothy 3:14-15 says, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:14-15)*

Pray that our children and grand-children will become convinced that what they have learned is true because they have seen the lives of those they have learned it from. The Christian life they have been exposed to will produce fruit that is pleasing to God. They will be made wise and live a life that expresses the salvation of Christ within them.

### **Powerful thirst and hunger for the Word of God**

*The church that is girded up has Christians who are convinced of Biblical truth and are made wise in the living out their faith in Christ. She also has Christians who have a powerful thirst and hunger for the Word of God. Psalm 119:1 says, "Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart." (Psalm 119:1)*

Christians can literally ask the Lord to give their offspring a hunger and thirst for the Word of God and that they will seek Him with all their mind, heart and strength. That they will seek to learn the Word of God and will desire in their hearts to obey and live what the Bible tells them to do. Jesus said, "...It is written: `Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' " (Matthew 4:4)

### **Christians who hate evil**

*The church that is girded up has Christians who are joyfully into the Word of God and she has Christians who hate evil.* Psalm 97:10 says, "Let those who love the LORD hate evil, for He guards the lives of His faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked." (Psalm 97:10)

Christians can ask the Lord to fill their children and grand-children with the Holy Spirit so they will not find delight in any kind of evil. The word "hate" (*sane*) can mean to be unwilling to be exposed to or apart of something. They will have the heart of the Psalmist who wrote, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23-24) They would look at the Word of God as a mirror and the key source to determine what He calls sin.

Just a few months ago I had the privilege to visit with a young man who had parents who prayed often for the Lord to do this very thing. This young man told me that he was exposed to a situation that was not holy and pleasing to God and he said, "All I wanted to do was just get away from that place and go home."

### **Get victory over their anger**

*The church that is girded up has Christians who find no delight is that which would break the heart of God and she has Christians who trust in the Lord to help them get victory in their anger.* Ephesians 4:26 says, "In your anger do not sin" (Ephesians 4:26) Pray and ask the Lord to enable our children and grand-children not to sin when they become angry and they will surrender everything over to the Lord, literally letting Him fight all battles they face.

### **Christians that express Holy Spirit fruit**

*The church that is girded up has Christians who let the Lord fight their battles and she has Christians that express Holy Spirit fruit.* Galatians 5:22-23 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23) It is imperative that our children and grandchildren will feed their spiritual hearts the Word of God and be led of the Holy Spirit so they may produce the fruit that should be seen in a Christian's life.

My boys know that there are certain boys they are not to run with and others they can because of the fruit those boys express in their lives. It is not I but God's Word that says, "Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right." (Proverbs 20:11) The greatest hindrance or help to a youth ministry is the fruit that is expressed from the lives of the youth who are leaders in the youth group.

### **Walk in a life of obedience**

*The church that is girded up has Christians that produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit and she has children and grandchildren who walk in a life of obedience.* Colossians 3:20 says, "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord." (Colossians 3:20) God's wisdom offers this advice, "Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck." (Proverbs 1:8-9) Pray that our children and grand-children will obey their parents in the Lord and they will be eager to get direction from their godly parents so that it will go well for them and their children.

### **Christians who do not despise the Lord's discipline**

*The church that is girded up has obedient children and she has Christians who do not despise the Lord's discipline.* Proverbs 3:11-12 says, "My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent His rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in." (Proverbs 3:11-12) "Do not withhold discipline from a child, if you punish him with the rod, he will not die." (Proverbs 23:13) Pray that our children and grandchildren will accept the Lord's disciplines and they will not be blind to His correction. That we as Christian parents will have the courage to apply disciplines that are guided by the Lord and will cause our children to look to Jesus Christ for help to overcome all sin that longs to destroy their relationship with Him.

### **Parents and grandparents who live in a way that encourages their offspring to trust in Christ**

*The church that is properly girded up has children and grandchildren who do not despise the Lord's disciplines and she needs parents and grandparents who live in a way that encourages their offspring to trust in Christ.* Jesus said, "Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:15-16)

**Pray That:** We as parents and grandparents may live in such a way that causes our children and grandchildren to praise God for the work He has done in our lives. That our lives would give our children and grand-children a hope that inspires them to look to and put their trust in Jesus Christ as they face the temptations of the flesh and the world and combat the lies of the devil.

### **Christian friends who will build them in the Lord**

*The church that is girded up has parents who live out their Christian beliefs and she needs children and grandchildren who have Christian friends who will build them in the Lord.* Ecclesiastes 4:10 says, “If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!” (Ecclesiastes 4:10) **Pray That:** The Lord would raise up good solid Christian friends that will build and challenge our children and grand-children in the Lord Jesus Christ and that they will mature in the Lord so they can be true Godly friends to their friends.”

### **Christians who are not influenced by people who have ungodly character**

*The church that is girded up has children and grandchildren who have Christian friends and she needs Christians who are not influenced by people who have ungodly character.* Proverbs 1:10 says, “My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.” (Proverbs 1:10) All of our children need Holy Spirit illumination of what is written in 1 Corinthians 15:33, “Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’” (1 Corinthians 15:33) **Pray That:** The Lord would send the Holy Spirit to remind our children and grand-children of these two passages of Scripture so they can be successful in living for Christ. Our children and grand-children will not be influenced by anyone who could cause them to fall into sin and hurt the Lord.

### **Christians who have Biblical convictions**

*The church that is girded up has Christian offspring who avoid the influence of bad company and she has Christians who have Biblical convictions.* Jesus said, “Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:12-13) The Apostle Paul gave this exhortation, “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.” (1 Corinthians 16:13) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will be able to stand firm in their Biblical convictions so they will be able to live forever with Christ and be true salt and light in a sin cursed world.

### **Proper stewardship on their Holy Spirit given gifts**

*The church that is girded up has Christians with Biblical convictions and she has Christians who put proper stewardship on their Holy Spirit given gifts so as to be a blessing to others. Philipians 2:4 says "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philipians 2:4) According to the Apostle Paul the church that is girded up has Christians who exercise their Spiritual gifts out of sacrificial love. (1 Corinthians 12-14)*

**Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will exercise their Spiritual gifts for the good of others, not only for their own good and they would do nothing out of selfish ambition and consider others better than themselves.

### **Avoid addictions and they know the dangers of abuse of alcohol and drugs**

*Christians who gird up the local church exercise their Spiritual gifts out of sacrificial love, their people avoid addictions and they know the dangers of abuse of alcohol and drugs. Proverbs 20:1 says, "Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise." (Proverbs 20:1) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will fear the dangers that can come with partaking in alcohol and drugs and other addictions that would cause them to find pleasure and delight in anything but accomplishing God's will for them.*

### **Christians with marriages that honor God**

*The church that is girded up has Christians who avoid possible addiction that could put their relationship with Christ in danger and she has Christians with marriages that honor God. Colossians 3:19 says, "Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them." (Colossians 3:19) Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church." (Ephesians 5:25) The Holy Spirit inspired writers of the New Testament say a lot about how husbands act in their marriages because it affects the effectiveness of their prayers for the church and family. 1 Peter 3:7 says, "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." (1 Peter 3:7) Christian wives are told to "...submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." (Colossians 3:18) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will have spouses that were raised in true Christian homes and they will bring great joy to each other. They will have marriages that bring glory and honor to the Lord.*

### **Children who consider the Lord's ways over their own way of thinking**

*Healthy Christian marriages gird up the Lord's church and so do children who consider the Lord's ways over their own way of thinking. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6)*  
**Pray That:** Our children and grandchildren will overcome the world's view on living and have an understanding of what it really means to trust in the Lord. That they will acknowledge Him as they live down here on this earth so they can enjoy the path of life that He has chosen for them and they will be able to discern what doors He has opened for them.

### **Christians who prove faithful**

*The Church that is girded up has Christians who have a Christ disciplined life that lives according to God's direction and she has Christians who prove faithful. The Bible says, "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:2) It also says, "He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God." (1 Corinthians 4:5)*  
**Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will prove faithful to everything the Lord has entrusted to them.

### **The Holy Spirit of Christ call is for conversions of spiritual hearts**

*The church that is girded up for the Lord's work has God's vision for their children and grandchildren. It is much greater than counting numbers in the youth group, having fun and games, sending out pictures of group hugs. The Holy Spirit of Christ call is for conversions of spiritual hearts. Conversion is the great work of God where repentant sinners pledge loving loyalty and undivided allegiance to the Christ who died for their sins. The church that has girded up their children by prayer has children who are used mightily by God.*

More than anyone else Christian parents can have the most influence on their children, because when Christ died upon the Cross the veil was ripped open so they could enter into the presence of God who sits on the Throne of Grace. The call to pray is from God's Word and we are given a sure promise, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." (James 5:16b)

One mother who knew this truth was Monica Augustine, the mother of St. Augustine who after a long struggle was converted to Christianity. St. Augustine was born in North Africa (Tagaste, Numidia) to a Christian mother and his father was a pagan until very late in life.

Augustine's childhood was marred by stealing pears and his ability to learn led him to one humanistic philosophy after another. He even had an obsession with the occult for a season in his life. During his period of exploration he lived a life of excessive fleshly desires causing him to become the father of a child by a mistress.

After his conversion to Christ Augustine became the author of many great works writing about the "...City of God," "On the Trinity," "On Faith," "Hope," "Love" and "Christian Doctrine." Augustine's most widely read book is "The Confessions" which are several books that record how he felt about the Lord and his prayers to God.

Studying Augustine's life during that period of living in selfish sin shows that the Christian living he saw in his mother and the Christian teaching he received was not a waste of time. Thirteen years before his conversion he was moved in his prayers to return to God (Confessions #3:4) but he could not make himself do so.

One year before his conversion Augustine was influenced by a man (Ambrose) who he knew was presenting "healthy teaching on salvation," yet he could not return to the teaching and lifestyle he saw in his mother because of self-living.

Listen to these confessions of Augustine while he struggled with sin and surrendering to Christ. "I was storm tossed and you [God] held the tiller." "I was swept away by your beauty [Lord] and then I was torn away from you by my own weight [of sin] and fell back groaning toward these [lesser] thing [in life]." While being exposed for nearly a year to "healthy teachings of salvation" he wrote, "But salvation is far from sinners of the kind that I was then." When Augustine was being moved to prayer to return to God he writes, "[I was] on fire to leave earthly things behind and fly back" [to God].

But there was an obstacle that kept Augustine from reaching God, he writes, "The Name of Christ was not there..." Augustine writes about how the Name of Jesus Christ was his mother's milk and His Name touched his heart tenderly, but the fruit of his life was surrendered to self-will and not God's will.

Finally in early August 386 Augustine abandoned his teaching career and his proposed marriage and went off with some friends to live a life of contemplation. One day he heard how some men had moved to give their whole heart and life to serve the Lord. Augustine was suddenly confronted with his sin of self-living. He rushed out into the garden and flung himself under the fig tree and wept bitterly, crying out to God, "How long, how long, why should not this hour be an end to my baseness?"

From a neighboring yard he heard the voice of a child say, "Take and read!" Augustine went over to a bench where laid a copy of the Apostle Paul's Epistle and he read Romans 13:13-14, "Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature." (Romans 13:13-14) At that moment Augustine put on Christ, took on the Name that was missing, the only key person missing in his life that would enable him to live for God.

Long before we even came into this world the grace of God confronted Augustine as dramatically as God's grace did the Apostle Paul. At age 31 Augustine's struggle came to an end and through him came teachings and service that laid the foundation of Western theology. Augustine has often been call "Bishop of Hippo" and "Doctor of the Church." The opening prayer of Augustine's "Confessions" sums up his whole experience in life. He writes, "Our hearts are restless until they can find peace with you [Lord Jesus]."

Augustine and one of his friends put on Christ and they went and told Monica his mother. Fredrick S. Leahy wrote about this time in Christian history, "Over the years she had prayed for her wayward son with tears. Now her prayers were answered yes to and her heart's wishes granted."

The Holy Spirits call us to pray! Be a powerful influence on the next generation. The Altar is open!!!!

Let us pray! Visit our Free Website [www.standatthecrossroads.com](http://www.standatthecrossroads.com)