

PrayKids!

ADVENTURES WITH JESUS IN PRAYER



Tuning Up!

By Quin Sherrex

The Word on...

Agreement

When you get to the end of a prayer, what do you usually say? If you're like most people, you say, "amen." Have you ever thought about what "amen" really means? Is it just a period (.) or an exclamation mark (!) at the end of your sentence? Is it a word to let God know that you're done praying?

Actually, "amen" is a word that means you **agree** with what has been prayed. It means "so be it" or "truth." If you are praying by yourself and you say "amen," it's like saying, "I really mean this!" If you are praying in a group and you say "amen"—especially after someone else has just prayed out loud—it means, "Jesus, I **agree**! This is my prayer, too!" ★

A few weeks ago, a bunch of kids got together at my house. Each kid played a musical instrument: piano, tambourine, triangle,

horn, and wooden instrument. With their instruments, they played along with the songs on their favorite CD. And they sounded great! Even though each instrument had a special sound, it kept in tune and in time with the song on the CD player. The sound blended into a wonderful harmony.

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The word **agree** means “to come into harmony.” The kids at my house “**agreed**” as they played their instruments. It is the same way with an orchestra. When each instrument follows the conductor and the sheet music, they make beautiful music together. That’s a good way to picture what it means to pray “in **agreement.**” Our styles of praying and words may be different, but our prayers are led by the Holy Spirit (our conductor) and follow God’s Word (the music). And guess what? It sounds beautiful to God!

Jesus said that “If two of you on earth **agree** about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them” (Matthew 18:19-20). God loves it when He hears His children **agreeing** with each other about things He wants, because it is harmony. Hearing harmony in

His children’s prayers makes God so happy that He wants to be right there and to release His power for them. So if you and a friend get together and ask God to do something that matches up with who He is and what the Bible says, He goes into action! Your prayers of **agreement** touch heaven and have an impact on earth—in your school, home, community, or nation. That’s the power of **agreement!**

Now, praying in **agreement** doesn’t mean praying exactly alike. You have your own “style” when you talk to people, and different things you’re interested in. Your friends will too. So you may talk to God in one way, and your friend may talk to Him in another. And the two of you may pray about different parts of the same thing and still be in **agreement.** As long as you don’t go against what the Bible says and are led by the Holy Spirit as you ask for the same thing, that’s **agreement.** And here’s some great news: when you **agree** in prayer like that, “it will be done for you by my Father in heaven”! ★

Quin Sherrer has authored or co-authored 22 books, primarily on prayer. Her most recent book is *Prayers from a Grandma’s Heart* (Zondervan, September 2002).

1, 2, 3 Agree!

Suppose you just heard that your best friend might move away.

You pray, “Oh God, don’t let it happen!” Your friend also prays, “That’s right, Lord, please let me stay!” Did you just pray in **agreement?**

The answer is . . . no! To pray in **agreement** you need to **agree** with your prayer partner AND with God. You don’t know if it’s God’s will for your friend to move or stay. But you *can* be sure about some things from what it says in the Bible—and you can pray for those: wisdom for her family’s decision making; peace about the future; for God to work His best for you and your friend.

So when you try **agreeing** in prayer, make sure you’re **agreeing** with God as well as your partner!

Dear Readers,

My two children don’t **agree** on very much. One likes chocolate, the other likes vanilla. One likes cats, the other likes dogs. That’s ok! God made each person different. And when it comes to prayer, it’s easy to be different and still **agree** on things. Whether you get together with other kids or with adults, everyone can **agree** on praying for things like God’s protection or for Him to work in someone’s life. So go on . . . get together and pray! Who knows . . . you may find you **agree** on lots of other things too!

Keep Praying!
Nancy Sutton
editor of
PrayKids!



PrayKids![®]

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Mission Statement

The mission of *PrayKids!* is to teach, encourage, and equip children (ages 8–12) as they develop a deepening relationship with Christ through prayer, so that they might become more effective prayer warriors.

FIRE!

By Bill Walton

Have you ever wondered whether the miracles that happened in the Bible still happen today? Well, the answer is most definitely yes!

Hebrews 13:8 says that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. That means that Jesus' miraculous power is still the same. That's what is so exciting about the story I'm about to tell.

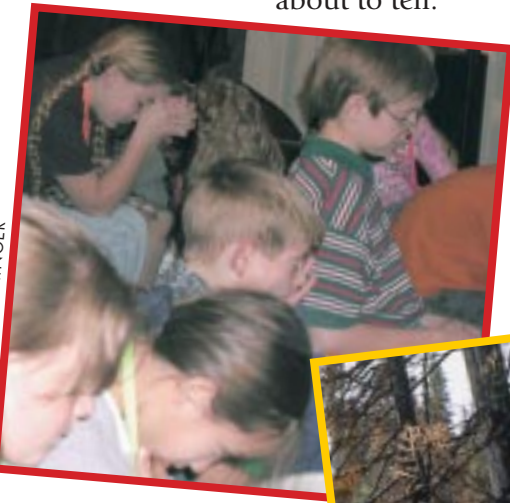


PHOTO BY CHERI STEININGER

Last summer, a friend noticed that a forest fire had started on the mountain ridge above our home. I called 911 and was told it was under control.

But later that day I sensed the Holy Spirit telling me to evacuate our home. I told my wife what I had heard, and she knew in her heart that this was what we needed to do. I phoned some friends and family to come help, and within hours our home was empty. During all this time, the fire and sheriff's departments were telling us that there was no threat to our home; but in our hearts we knew differently. By nightfall, the flames had come to our side of the ridge.



PHOTO BY COLEEN GRUBBS

The following morning was Sunday. I called one of the other children's pastors to tell him we would not be at church because of the fire. I asked him to pray. He prayed, and also asked the Sunday school children to pray for us. Many kids came forward and **agreed** in prayer that the fire would not touch our home.

That day the fire burned very quickly, traveling down the canyon toward our home at speeds of up to 50 miles per hour. It came all the way to our house, with temperatures nearing 2,000 degrees. It blew out our propane tank and burned right up to within four feet of our house on all sides. But it went around the house, and continued burning, leaving the house unharmed.

There is no other explanation for what happened to our home (or rather, what *didn't* happen!) than the miraculous power of God. It was the same kind of miraculous power that rescued three Hebrew children from a fire in Daniel 3:26-27. And it happened because kids were praying! So no matter what you may be facing—even if it's something huge and scary—don't forget to pray. Then stand back and watch what incredible miracles God will do.★

Bill Walton is a children's pastor to the 5th and 6th graders at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Just Pray
"Yes!"

Guess what? Your parents need prayer. It might seem like they don't because they're the ones always telling everyone else what to do. But that's exactly why they do need prayer! They have lots of decisions to make. If they are wrong, it's on their shoulders. They need someone to say "yes" to what they are asking God to do.

How about it? Ask if you can pray with them about their needs. They might not be able to give you all the details, because some problems are very complicated. But you can pray Scripture for them and know that you are in **agreement. If your parents are worried about money, for instance, you could read **Philippians 4:19** with them and pray together, "Dear God, please meet all our needs with all your riches. Amen."**

Here are some other Scriptures you can turn into prayers to use in **agreement with your parents: need wisdom (James 1:5-6); feeling discouraged (Psalm 42:11); trouble of any kind (Psalm 138:7).**

So, surprise your parents—just pray "yes!"

A JOURNEY Through The

DA

A fictional story based upon Ezra 8:21-32

The camp was filled with excitement. Forty-six thousand Israelites were gathered by the Ahava Canal in Babylon,

preparing to make a journey. The journey would take them hundreds of miles across nothing but desert—and

enemy territory. After 70 years as captives, the Israelites had been given permission to go back to Jerusalem. But it would be a dangerous trip.

Z

4



ANGER ZONE

BY JON GRAF



Asher and Jezreel stood together that morning, three days

before they were to leave.

"My dad says Jerusalem is home, even though most of us have never seen it," said Asher.

"My grandmother lived there once," replied Jezreel. "But she says she was only a little girl. She doesn't remember much."

"Are you scared, Jezreel?" asked Asher.

"Kind of," he said, looking at his feet. "My dad thinks our leader Ezra is crazy for not asking the king to protect us."

"I heard my parents talking the other night," said Asher. "They hope Ezra knows what he's doing. We'll be carrying lots of gold and other valuables. We'll be easy targets for our enemies out in that desert."

Just then the horn sounded in the camp as Ezra signaled everyone to gather.

"I know some of you think we should have asked the king's soldiers for protection," Ezra said. "But our God is stronger and more faithful than any army. He will protect us."

The people mumbled to each other as Ezra continued. "We don't need to be afraid. God will fight for Israel if we cry out to Him."

"I ask you to join me. Fast and **agree** with me in prayer these next three days," Ezra went on. "We

told the king that the hand of our God is on everyone who seeks Him, but His anger is against all who turn away from Him. So we will look to Him together. God will show Himself strong—to us, to Babylon, and to our enemies."

For the next three days no one ate any food. All 46,000 Israelites prayed in **agreement** for one thing: protection! They prayed and waited. Asher and Jezreel had never been so hungry—or prayed so much.

On the third day, it was time to leave. Asher and Jezreel were amazed to see that the fear had left the faces of their families and friends. So they set out, without a single soldier to protect them.

Four months later, Asher and Jezreel stood on a hill and looked down for the very first time on the city of their forefathers. Forty-six thousand Israelites had journeyed on foot through the desert for four months—and no harm had come to them.

Jezreel caught sight of his father coming up the hill. "We see it, Papa," Jezreel cried. "It's Jerusalem!"

As the rest of the people came to the crest of the hill, many wept for joy. Some danced, some laughed and shouted. Together, they began to repeat over and over, "Give thanks to the Lord, for His love endures forever."

"Hey, Jezreel," Asher called over the sound of their voices. "God heard us when we **agreed** and prayed together. He's brought us home!" ★

Jon Graf is editor of *Pray!* His daughter Amy helped him write this story.





Let's Pray for Hindus

The Hindu religion comes from the country of India, and it is followed by most of the people there. Hindus believe in thousands and thousands of gods. In fact, some Hindus say that there are millions of gods—far more than a person can count. If you visit India, you see Hindu statues and idols everywhere.

Most Hindu families make small sacrifices to these gods every day. When you walk down a street in India you see these offerings—little candles and piles of fruit near pathways. Families usually have statues of a god (or many gods) in their home. Hindus celebrate festivals in honor of these gods. Everyone in the village is encouraged to join in the party. Really dedicated Hindus travel long distances to visit certain places and pray to a specific god. This is called a pilgrimage.

One of the big differences between the Hindu religion and Christianity is this: Hindus believe that when a person dies, he or she is “reincarnated” (comes back to life) as a different person or an ani-

mal. Many Hindus worry that they will be reincarnated into an unhappy person or a miserable animal. But the Bible teaches the truth that when Christians die, they go to heaven with Jesus for all eternity.

“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11-12). These verses can help us pray for Hindu children who have so much fear in their hearts. They are afraid of the many idol gods, many of whom look like fierce, angry monsters. The Bible teaches that these gods are not really gods at all, but that they are actually demons. The Hindus are afraid that if they don't constantly keep these gods happy, something bad will happen in this lifetime, or in the next “reincarnated” life. ★

Dave DeGroot works with Mission India, www.missionindia.org. Photos courtesy of Mission India.

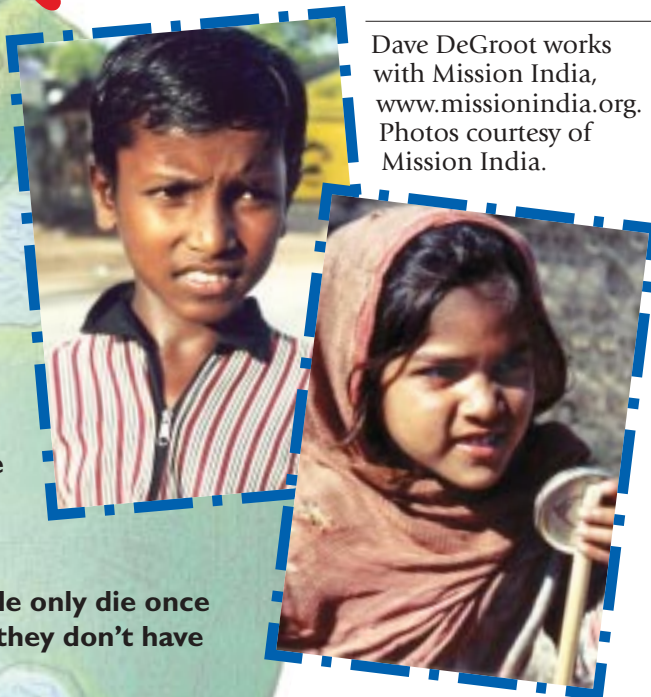


SIX

COVER THE GLOBE

How to pray for Hindu children:

1. “Father, I pray that the Hindus would turn away from their many gods and serve You, the one true God” (1 Timothy 2:5).
2. “Jesus, let the Hindus understand how wide and long and high and deep Your love really is” (Ephesians 3:18).
3. “Heavenly Father, I pray that Hindus would put their trust in You so that they don't have to be afraid of making one of their gods angry” (Isaiah 41:10).
4. “Lord, help the Hindus understand that people only die once and that You came to take away their sins so they don't have to pay for them again and again” (Hebrews 9:27,28).





Agree to Agree

Need a kick-start to get you going? Here are some tips on how to pray in **agreement**:

- Ask God to help you choose just the right prayer partner or partners. You may feel it would be best to pray with some kids at church, or Christian friends at school, or even family members.
- When you have chosen a prayer partner, decide on details like how often you will pray and where you will meet. If you're having a hard time getting together, try doing your prayer time on the phone or by email.
- Choose one topic for your prayer time. Let everyone know the topic and stick to it. Try not to wander off the topic.



- Listen carefully as each person prays. Don't think ahead to what you will pray next. If you **agree** that what was prayed is God's will, make it your own prayer in your heart.

- Don't be afraid of silence. Don't feel like you have to jump in and pray something just because no one else is praying. Use those quiet moments to listen. See if God tells you to pray something else on the same topic.

- Let the Holy Spirit guide you. You don't have to spend a lot of time sharing prayer requests. Just start praying and see what He puts on your heart. ★

WORD

See if you can find people who **agreed** in prayer in the word puzzle below. Use the Bible references to find out what or why they prayed.

Israelites
(Judges 6:7)

David
(1 Chronicles 16:7-36)

Solomon
(2 Chronicles 6:40)

Ezra
(Ezra 8:21-23)

Disciples
(Acts 1:13-14)

Peter / John
(Acts 4:23-31)

Church
(Acts 12:5)

SEARCH

L	E	S	O	L	O	M	O	N	R
O	D	O	N	C	A	S	C	H	E
I	A	I	L	Z	H	J	U	O	Z
S	V	D	S	O	S	U	N	J	I
R	I	A	M	C	A	S	R	O	N
L	D	K	Y	U	I	R	C	C	L
F	A	R	E	T	E	P	I	T	H
P	E	H	Z	V	S	O	L	M	C
Y	R	E	R	N	H	J	I	E	P
I	S	R	A	E	L	I	T	E	S



In the Rhythm of Life

After reading this issue, you may be convinced that **agreeing** together in prayer is a good and wise thing to do. But let's face it—even we adults struggle with actually doing it. It's easier to say a quick prayer by yourself than to get together with others and pray for one topic.

I *want* my family to spend time praying in **agreement**; but finding time to do it is difficult. As I tried to figure out where in our overloaded schedule I could find time for praying together, it dawned on me that every Thursday morning we were already spending time **agreeing** in prayer.

Every Thursday I drive my son to school. As soon as we get in the car, I ask him what things he thinks he might need prayer for during the school day. He lists things that are on his mind such as fears, hopes,

or tough subjects. My son begins the prayer time, followed by my younger daughter. Then I close. That five-minute drive is spent **agreeing** together about what David needs for his school day. On the way home we talk about the day and how God worked out what we had prayed about that morning.

Think about what opportunities you may have in your own family to pray in **agreement**. Finding the time isn't impossible, but it may take some juggling of schedules or saying "no" to an activity. It may be as simple as setting alarms five minutes earlier so you can pray together at breakfast. Or focus your prayers together on whatever activity you're headed toward in the car. When you take the time to **agree** in prayer as a family, you will see the spiritual benefits. Who knows—your family's prayers could even impact your community, state, or the world.★

Nancy Sutton is editor of *PrayKids!*.

Prayer Ideas

Is someone sick? Before praying, talk about all the things the sick person might need right now such as healing, good attitude, strength, hope, good doctors, transportation to the doctor, etc. After talking about these various needs, decide which ones you as a family can **agree** on as God's will for that person, and then let each family member take an aspect of that request and pray it.

Do you have a family crisis or major decision coming up? Help the children understand the problem by explaining the appropriate details. This gives your child specific ideas of what to pray during your prayer time together.

Is your child hurting or carrying a burden? Sometimes we don't realize our children are facing something difficult or that God is speaking to them about something. Allow your child to pray first. You often will learn what he or she is thinking about or feeling concerned with. Then follow up with a prayer that reflects what your child has prayed.

Keep in Mind...

1. Encourage your child to pray in **agreement**, whether it is with you or a prayer partner. Remind your child and the prayer partner that **agreement** prayers are led by the Holy Spirit and never contradict God's Word.

2. Your child might want to pray with a special Christian friend, a grandparent or other relative, or an intercessor from church who is looking for someone to mentor in prayer.


3. Be supportive. If your child wants extra prayer time with someone else, you may need to drive him or her to the meeting place. Or consider making a batch of cookies and inviting some of your child's friends over for a time of prayer.

FREE Leader's Guide for Teachers/Parents: We want you to be able to use *PrayKids!* with a group of kids. On our website you'll find **group discussion questions and activities for each article**. Download and copy the information from www.praykids.com.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE HELP ON TEACHING YOUR KIDS TO PRAY:

www.praykids.com • www.cherifuller.com • www.harvestprayer.com
www.childrensprayernet.org • www.cgpm.org

Back issues of *PrayKids!* are available in packs of 10 for \$6.99. To order, call (800) 366-7788 or (719) 548-9222. Code #6258



Encourage Your Kids

If your child has a story of an answered prayer, how his/her life was impacted by prayer, or how his/her class prayed and something special happened, please send it to:

PrayKids!
P. O. Box 35004
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80935-3504
Email:
praykids@navpress.com

While we cannot publish everything that is sent in, we will put some additional stories up on our website:
www.praykids.com