

Pray Kids!

ADVENTURES WITH JESUS IN PRAYER

The Word On...

Boldness

Every time you pray, you come into the presence of a King. And not just any old king—this is the one and only mighty King of the whole universe!

How should you approach such a King? Should you shuffle in with fear, not sure if He will like or accept you?

NOOOOO! Your King and your God loves you so much already that He sent His Son to die for you. He gave you Jesus so you can “approach God with freedom and confidence” (Ephesians 3:12).

That means you can walk (or run!) **boldly** into God’s presence, with arms outstretched and eyes smiling into His—even shouting “Yippee!” if you want to! ★

No ID?
No Bath?
No Problem!

By Kim Butts

If you wanted to meet with the president of the United States, do you think you could just walk **boldly** into his office? That’s definitely *not* how it works! First, you would need special permission. Then your whole life would be checked very carefully to make sure you had never done anything against the law.

When you got to the White House, you would have to do several things just to be in the same room with
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the president. You'd have to show your picture identification. Your name would be checked on a list. You would go through an x-ray machine. Secret Service people would watch everything you'd do. And, if you wanted to meet with the president another time, you would have to go through the whole process again!

Now, think about what it takes to meet with your mom or dad. You can walk **boldly** into whatever room they're in and talk to them. Or you can call them on the phone. Even in the middle of the night, if you have a bad dream, your parents are there to help you. Compared to seeing the president, that's a piece of cake, isn't it?

Back in the days of Moses, the Israelites were afraid of God. They even thought they might die if they just walked into God's presence. So the Lord gave Moses instructions on how to build a Tabernacle where God could meet with the Israelites. You can read about the Tabernacle in Exodus 25:8-27:21.

The Tabernacle was divided into two parts: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. They were separated by a special curtain (Exodus 26:31-33). Only priests were allowed into the Holy Place. And only the high priest could go into the Most Holy Place, because that was where the presence of God would meet him.

The high priests had to go through a lot to be in the presence of God—even more than you would have to go through to be in the presence of the president! First, the high priest was only allowed to enter the Most Holy Place

Before and After

Before Jesus Died for Our Sins

Only one high priest could be in God's presence.

The high priest only could be in God's presence once a year.

The high priest only could be in God's presence in the Most Holy Place.

Lots of sacrifices had to be made, and lots of rules had to be followed.

After Jesus Died for Our Sins

ANYONE can be in God's presence.

You can be in God's presence ANYTIME!

You can be in God's presence ANYWHERE!

No more sacrifices are needed. The only rule is that you love Jesus your Savior!

once a year on a special day. Before that, the priest had to take a bath and put on linen clothing instead of his priestly robes. He also had to do many other rituals, like sacrificing animals. If the high priest did anything wrong, he could die instantly! You can read the complete set of instructions in Leviticus 16:3-34.

Aren't you glad you don't have to do that kind of stuff anymore to approach God? Do you know why? Because when Jesus died on the cross for our sins, an amazing thing happened. The special curtain that separated the people from the presence of God was torn in two (Matthew 27:50-51)! That was God's way of telling us that we would never again have to do a bunch of rituals to meet with Him.

Because Jesus' sacrifice was bigger and better than any other kind of sacrifice, you can walk **boldly** into God's presence. You don't need a priest to go for you. You don't need a picture ID or special clothes. You don't even need to take a bath first! You can talk to God whenever and wherever you want to. ★

Kim Butts is author of *The Praying Family: Creative Ways to Pray Together* (Moody Publishers, © 2003).

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Mission Statement

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

Grown-ups!

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A free monthly newsletter including timely PrayKids! articles you may have missed, exclusive subscriber-only offers, and updates on newly released resources and tools. Perfect for Sunday school teachers, children's workers, Christian school teachers, homeschool parents, and anyone else who has a heart to encourage kids in growing their prayer lives! Just go to www.praymag.com, look at the lower left-side under the newsletter sign-up section, check the box next to PrayKids! Online Newsletter, and click the SIGN-UP button!

A Walking Miracle

Beth Pederson was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 1990. She had a lot of physical problems and often used a wheelchair or walker when the symptoms got bad. She started a prayer team (called Pray Kids) at our church in 2002.

I joined the prayer team right at the beginning because it sounded interesting, and I wanted to learn more about prayer. The only problem was that I was the only boy. I prayed for another boy to come, and after a couple of weeks my friend Dan joined the group.

Each week we had a short lesson, taught by Mrs. Pederson or one of the other adult leaders. We shared from our journals, where we had written requests and answers to prayer during the week at home. We also prayerwalked around our church. For example, we went to the nursery and prayed for the babies, and to other Sunday school classes and prayed outside their rooms. Then we went to the Intercessors Prayer Ministry room and prayed with the adults who met and prayed during all the services.

On the first Sunday of each month, our prayer team always took time to pray for each other's personal requests. The first Sunday in December of 2002, I asked Mrs. Pederson how we could pray for her. She was in her wheelchair then. Since she had been going through tests for MS at the Mayo Clinic, she said, "Total and complete healing would be great." So I prayed right then, *Lord, please give Mrs. Pederson complete and total healing of her MS.* Others prayed also. We kept praying, at home and with our prayer team, whenever we would think of it, that Mrs. Pederson would be totally healed—fast.

Mrs. Pederson started to feel better. In February of 2003, she told us that the doctors at Mayo Clinic had announced that they were 99 percent sure she no longer had MS. I was happy and thankful. I told my parents, and soon everyone was finding out about it. We all thanked the Lord.

The doctors put Mrs. Pederson through a lot of physical therapy to strengthen the muscles in her right leg, which had been in a brace for 12 years. Soon she was able to walk without a walker, and she didn't get as tired.

I learned that I should never give up on praying, because God answers prayer—about little things *and* big things. ★



By Tommy McMillan, age 12

Earth-Shaking Prayers

When Jesus went back to heaven, He left His disciples in charge on earth. Two of them, Peter and John, knew they had to get the word out about Jesus. So what did they do? They asked God to help them to speak His Word "with great **boldness**" (Acts 4:29). Then they prayed an even **bolder** prayer: "Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus" (Acts 4:30).

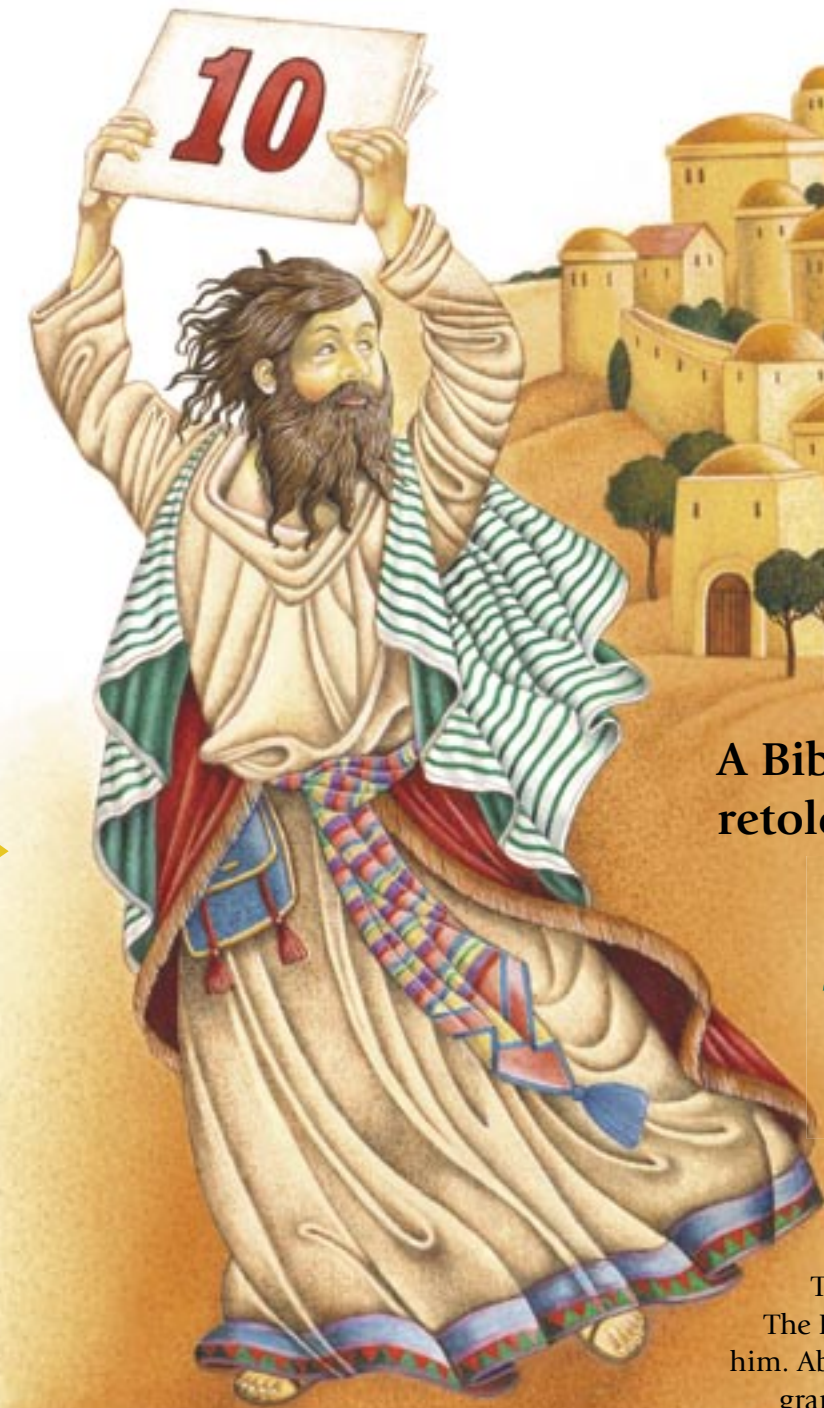
Do you know what God did? He answered by shaking the room and filling them with the Holy Spirit. They were able to go out and speak the news about Jesus **boldly** (Acts 4:31). God also performed many miraculous signs and wonders through them (Acts 5:12).

God can give you **boldness**, too. Just ask Him! Here's an example from His Word: "God, please make me **bold** and stouthearted when I call to You, so my prayers will make a difference for Your kingdom" (see Psalm 138:3).

Try praying **bold** prayers from these Scriptures too: Jeremiah 33:3; Luke 11:5-10; Psalm 71:16; James 1:5. ★

—By Kim Butts

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A Bible story from Genesis 18, retold by Joyce K. Ellis

The sad look on Jehovah's face worried Abraham. The Lord, and two of his angels disguised as men, had visited Abraham at his tent, not far from the city of Sodom. As Abraham walked his guests on toward Sodom, the Lord asked the angels, "Shall I tell him?" *Tell him what?* Abraham wondered.

This sounded serious!

The Lord answered His own question. "Yes, I'll tell him. Abraham is the one I've chosen to be the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of my people. He will show them how to honor Me."

The Lord stopped and put His hand on Abraham's shoulder while the angels continued down the road.

"Abraham, the people of Sodom have become so wicked that I have to destroy the whole town," He said.

Abraham's heart beat fast. He knew how sinful



Pushing the Limit

the people of Sodom were, but he also knew his nephew Lot lived in Sodom. "Not everyone there is wicked!" Abraham cried. "Will you really kill those who obey Your laws along with those who don't? What if you can find 50 people in Sodom who aren't wicked?"

The Lord nodded slowly. "If I can find 50, I'll spare the whole city," He promised.

Abraham took a deep breath. "I know I'm only a man, Lord, and it was kind of **bold** of me to ask what I just did. But You are God, and You always do what's right. What if you can only find 45? Will you kill them just because there aren't 50?"

"No," the Lord answered.

Abraham took another breath. "What about 40?" he asked.

"I won't destroy Sodom if there are 40 righteous people," God replied.

Abraham knew he was pushing it—but he couldn't quit. Feeling even **bolder**, he decreased the numbers again and again. Finally he said, "Please don't be angry, Lord. But if there are only 10, will you destroy *them* along with the wicked?"

"If I can find 10," the Lord promised, "for their sake, I will spare the city."

That day, God looked and looked, but He couldn't find even 10 righteous people in Sodom. He knew He had to destroy the city, but Abraham's **boldness** touched God's heart. So that evening, God sent angels into Sodom to help Lot and his family escape.

The next morning, Abraham stood where he had talked with the Lord the day

before. Peering down into the valley, he shook his head sadly. During the night, God had sent fire from heaven and burned the city to the ground, leaving nothing but ashes and smoke.

Although God couldn't find even 10 people in Sodom who followed Him, He honored Abraham's request. He spared Lot and everyone in his family who obeyed God. All because Abraham was **bold** enough to push the limit. ★

Joyce K. Ellis is an author, speaker, and writer. She created the book, *One-Minute Bible Devotions for Kids*.



Praying Boldly, Badly

One time Jesus told a story about what it *really* means to be **bold** in prayer. The story went like this:

*A very religious Pharisee and a tax man (who was known for cheating his clients) went to the temple to pray. The Pharisee **boldly** prayed: "Lord, I thank You that I am not like other people—crooks and cheats—or even like that tax collector over there. I give what I'm supposed to. I do what I'm supposed to. I never sin."*

But the tax man couldn't even look up. He was so ashamed. "Forgive me, Lord. I'm a sinner," he said (see Luke 18:9-14).

Guess whose prayer God answered? Jesus said God answered *only* the tax collector's prayer. Why? Because the tax man knew he didn't deserve God's mercy, but he had the **boldness** to ask for it anyway. The Pharisee was full of pride. He was **bold** only because he thought he deserved God's attention. He prayed **boldly**, but badly. ★



Let's Pray for the Environment

Have you ever eaten a good piece of fruit, drunk a bottle of water, or sat in front of a warm fire? If you have, then you have enjoyed the environment. We live in the environment, and we depend on it for food, water, shelter, and fun. Your house is probably made of wood taken from the trees of the environment. When you go skiing in the mountains or swimming at the beach, you are enjoying the beauty of the environment. When you pet a dog or cat, you are petting a part of the environment.

God made everything in the earth, and the earth's environment affects our daily lives. So it's important to pray for the environment.

You probably know about recycling and conservation. So you could pray about the



Prayer prompt: Pray for the environment whenever you help with recycling

environment each time you put a newspaper or aluminum can in the recycling bin. Or you can pray each time you drink a glass of clean water or take a shower.

Governments make lots of laws about the environment. These laws are about things like water, trees, and animal rights, and they affect the lives of kids like you. So pray that the government will make good laws about these issues.

Sometimes, people get confused about the purpose of the environment. They believe that the earth is a goddess. They might even believe that things like animals and trees are more important than human lives and souls! Pray for these people, that they will see and worship the God who made the earth, and not the earth itself.

God gave us the job of being caretakers of the earth. That means we should protect and appreciate the earth and the environment, but we should not worship it. We should worship God alone. So worship Him, thank Him for the environment, and ask Him how you can be a good caretaker of it. ★

By Cara Taylor, Monument, Colorado



SIX

LOVER THE GLOBE

Prayers for the Environment

1. Father, thank You for all those You have put in authority. Help government officials to make good and righteous laws about the environment (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

2. Lord of all things, help us to be good caretakers of the earth, water, animals, and natural resources You have given us. Help us to remember to recycle and conserve resources so that the earth will stay healthy and beautiful as You intended (Genesis 1:28-31).

3. Oh Maker of heaven and earth, help the people who worship the environment to worship You instead. Let them see Your truth so they will praise You as the creator of the earth forever (Psalm 146:6; Romans 1:25).

4. Heavenly Father, You are the sole provider. Keep our rivers filled with water and prepare our lands for harvest. Provide the poor and needy people of the world with enough food and clean water (Psalm 65:9; Psalm 136:25; Isaiah 41:17-20).

5. Lord, all parts of the earth belong to You. The highest mountains, the deepest seas, and all the lands are Yours. Help us to care for and protect everything under the sky so that the environment will stay safe, healthy, and clean like You made it (Psalm 24:1-2; Psalm 95:4-5; Job 41:11). ★

—By Cara Taylor, Monument, Colorado

Stretching Exercises

If you're not used to praying **bold** prayers, you may feel uncertain—or maybe even silly—about trying it. But it's good to try new things. And praying with **boldness** can be a lot of fun.

Here is a list of ways you can pray **boldly**. Try doing a different prayer idea every day for a week.

1. Pray over your lunch at school. Don't worry if other kids stare at you. Who knows? Someone may even want to join you sometime.
2. Invite a group of friends to pray with you, and ask them to hold hands while you pray.



3. Pray for something that you think is completely impossible.
4. Prayerwalk your neighborhood. As you walk, look around at the houses you see and the people you pass. Pray for the people in your neighborhood.
5. Pray aloud during Sunday school or in a big group setting.
6. Try a new prayer posture. If you usually sit when praying, try kneeling. If you usually kneel, try standing and raising your hands.
7. Share a song, a story, or a joke with God as you pray. Or draw a prayer for God and color it beautifully! ★



By Cara Taylor, Monument, Colorado

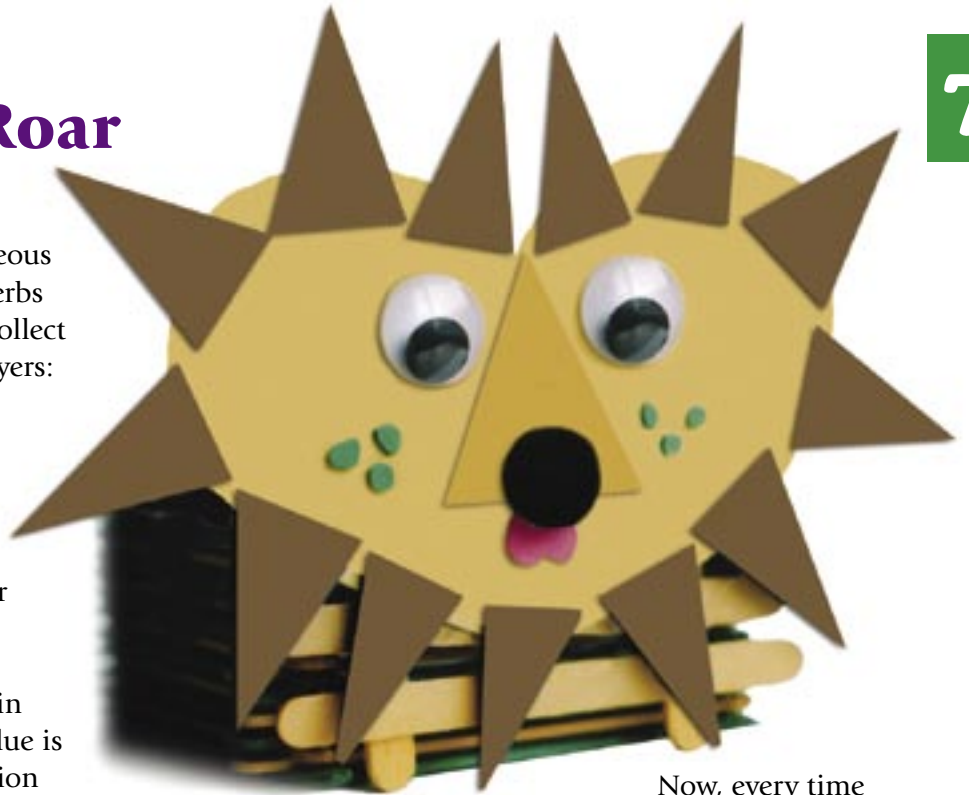
Prayers that Roar

The Bible says that “the righteous are as **bold** as a lion” (Proverbs 28:1)! Here's a fun way to collect and remember your bold prayers: Make a lion basket!

Here's what you will need:

- Craft (Popsicle) sticks and glue
- Craft foam or construction paper
- Google eyes and a pom pom

First, glue the craft sticks, log cabin style, to form a cube. While the glue is drying, cut the foam or construction paper into a heart shape for the lion's face. Glue it onto one side of the cube. Cut out 12 or 13 triangles for the mane, six small circles for the cheeks, and one larger circle for the mouth. Glue to lion's face. Add the google eyes and a pom pom nose.



Now, every time you pray a **bold** prayer, write it on a slip of paper and tuck it in your basket. Add new ones every day. And listen for God's answers to your prayers, because **bold** prayers roar like a lion! ★

By Jane Cline Rubicini, Kitchener, Ontario

Becoming Bolder: A Family Bible Study

By Cynthia Hyle Bezek



Praying with **boldness** can take many forms. It may affect what we ask, when we pray, the words we choose, the posture we assume, even the decibel level we use. The following Bible study is designed for you and your family to do together. It will help you learn about **boldness** from some of the great prayers of the Bible.

Read Mark 10:13-16

- Why did the parents want their children to meet Jesus?
- What did the disciples do when they came?
- How do you think the disciples made the children feel?
- What was Jesus' response to what the disciples said?
- How does this make you feel about going to Jesus?

Read Exodus 33:12-23

- List the things Moses requests of God. Which ones seem **bold** to you? Why?
- Look carefully at the words Moses chooses when he prays. How is his praying different from or similar to the kinds of praying you are used to?
- What risk does Moses take when he prays? What does this show about his confidence in God?
- How did God answer Moses' prayer?

- What can you learn about **bold** praying from Moses?

Read Matthew 15:21-28

- What did the woman want from Jesus in this story?
- In verse 23, how did Jesus respond to the woman? How did the disciples respond? Do you think the woman felt encouraged to keep asking? Why or why not?
- At first, Jesus seemed to respond to the woman negatively (see verses 24 and 26). How would you have felt about pursuing your request if Jesus said these things to you?
- Notice the woman's posture in verse 25. Why did she assume this posture?
- What did Jesus think of the **bold** answers the woman gave in verses 25 and 27?
- What did you learn about **bold** praying from this woman's example?

Read Job 13:3,15-16,20-28

Note: You may need to provide your children with some background on Job's story before trying to answer these questions.

- How does Job feel about the treatment he is receiving from God?
- In his prayer, how does Job show
 - a) honesty? b) respect for God?
 - c) **boldness**? d) faith?

- Read Job 42:7-12 and James 5:11. How do you know that God accepted Job's prayer?
- What difficult thing do you or your family face right now? What have you learned from Job that will help you to pray boldly and acceptably to God for that situation?

Read Luke 18:35-43

- How do you think people usually treated the beggar in this story?
- What kind of treatment do you think the beggar expected from Jesus? Why?
- What did the beggar do when the people told him to be quiet? Did he get quiet?
- Do you think Jesus liked the man's **boldness**? Why or why not?
- What do you learn about **bold** praying from this man's story? ★

MEMORY VERSE

*"So let us come **boldly** to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it."*

Hebrews 4:16,
New Living Translation

Free LEADER'S GUIDE for Teachers and Parents

Did you know we have a **free** leader's guide with extra activities, questions, and prayer points to go along with each article in *PrayKids!*? Go to www.praykids.com and select "Parents and Teachers." Then select which issue you want and click on the article title. Download what you need so you can use *PrayKids!* with your child, or with a group of kids.

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