
Becoming a House of Prayer

1 The Big Idea

- Prayer is the simple act of talking to God. It includes both listening and speaking elements.
- The following provides a simple framework for the practice of prayer in our lives as well as a way to model and teach our children how to pray with us and for others.

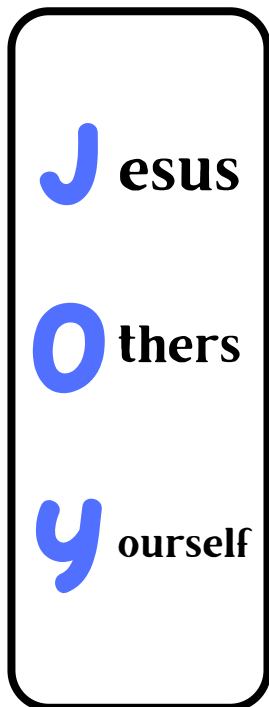
"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." (John 16:24)

2 Activity

What you'll need:

- Strips of cardstock cut to your desired size
- Felt Markers / Colored Pencils / Paint
- Sticker
- Anything else you want for decorating your bookmark

Instructions:



On one side of the bookmark, write the acronym J.O.Y and the words that make up the acronym according to this image.

Use your creativity and decorate this side of the bookmark however you like



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On the other side of the bookmark, write the acronym B.L.E.S.S and the words that make up the acronym according to this image.

Use your creativity and decorate this side of the bookmark however you like



Body

Labor

Emotion

Social

Spiritual

3 How to use the Bookmark

J.O.Y provides the **framework** for prayer.

J We start with Jesus first, recognizing and praising Him.

“Jesus, I thank you for _____”

O Proceed to pray for "Others"

“Jesus, I bless _____ with _____”

y End by praying for "Yourself"

“Jesus, I need _____”

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B.L.E.S.S provides the **content** of your prayers.

B ody	health, sickness, healing
L abor	work, school work, activities
E motional	feelings, joy, fear, sadness
S ocial	friends, neighbors, community
S piritual	faith, knowing Jesus, peace, love

- Each B.L.E.S.S category can be used in each J.O.Y category
- You can pray the entire J.O.Y framework or the individual categories on their own depending on the situation
- Incorporate a listening posture. “Who is God putting on your heart to pray for?” “What blessing does God want me to speak?”

Examples:

J - Jesus, I thank you for my friends (Social)

O - In the name of Jesus, I bless John with peace for his school test (emotional)

Y - Jesus, I need a new friend for my new school (social)



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4 How to Become a House of Prayer

How is God leading you and your family to establish prayer habits in your daily life (use the J.O.Y and B.L.E.S.S prayer tools)?

- Take time to ask God and listen.
- Brainstorm some ideas. Include your children.
- Try one or two of the ideas for 3 months.
- After 3 months, re-evaluate and adjust.

Some examples (**You can reference your bookmark for your prayer habit!**):

- Use the J.O.Y framework for your daily/weekly family prayer time. Encourage children to speak simple prayers using JOY and BLESS framework during prayer times.
- Spend 5-10 minutes a week as a family praying B.L.E.S.S prayers for others - friends, family, and neighbors. Ask your children who they know that we can pray for.
- Perform a prayer walk through your neighborhood, praying blessings over what you observe using B.L.E.S.S as a guide. If you encounter people, offer to pray for them using B.L.E.S.S as a guide.

5 Encouragements / Tips

Short and simple is good - there's no need to overcomplicate prayers and language. Spending 5 minutes a week as a family praying for neighbors can be used by God. A simple, short one-line prayer is something your children can imitate.

Consistent, not perfect - consistency is more important than "perfection". Kids may not appear to be paying attention or they may not participate initially or all the time. Your consistency in the habit/practice of prayer before them is more important.

Model what you hope to see - faith is caught more than taught. We model obedience to Jesus before our kids and include them. They need to see that following Jesus in obedience is a non-negotiable for you.
