

# PRAYING WITH YOUR FAMILY

*By Dr. Randy L. Carlson*

Back to school naturally lends itself to a more structured environment for many families. Putting a time of family prayer into your schedule is vital this school year. I am convinced that your family will enjoy more closeness in your relationships when you are intentional about your prayer life.

God created you as a physical, mental and spiritual person. When you pray regularly, you stimulate the spiritual part of your being that all too often rests dormant, unused, ignored or neglected.

Prayer helps you become more whole and more complete in Him!

Here is a trio of ways to help you become intentional about praying with your family.

## **1. Pray with each other as a family group.**

Family prayer builds a sense of spiritual community in your home. It truly helps everyone in your family realize that you are one as a family and that you serve the same God.

In my family, we would regularly get together for devotions and prayer, usually around the dinner table. I didn't always do the praying; my wife Donna, or one of our children would pray as well. I discovered that praying for each other as a family connected us.

There's nothing more intimate than praying with a person that you love, and when you do that as a family, it's powerful.

## **2. Pray for each other individually.**

In my personal life, I've noticed that when I'm praying for someone in my family, it's easier to love them. You'll become a little more patient with them and will begin to see your family members from a positive, healthier perspective.

Another great benefit of talking with God about your loved ones is that it forces you to find out exactly what's going on in their lives. When I pray for Donna, I know her needs – emotionally, physically and spiritually – so I can speak to God about them.

## **3. Pray with your spouse.**

This is one of the most important activities you can do with your spouse. Talking with God together as husband and wife will help you keep the vows you made to each other on your wedding day. You are acknowledging to the Lord that He is in charge of your marriage and that you are committed to staying together and making your marriage work, regardless of the challenges you may face.

If you do not pray daily with your spouse, I want to challenge you to add this one ingredient into your marriage. I guarantee you that it will make your marriage stronger!

A quote, attributed to an unknown Christian, reads: “When we pray, God hears more than we say, answers more than we ask, gives more than we imagine, but in His own time and in His own way. So, keep faith.”