

DAN SEABORN

30 DAYS
OF PRAYING
For your teen



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This prayer guide is a companion to Dan's book, *Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics that Confuse Kids and Scare Parents*. Learn how you can get a copy at the end of this guide.

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Introduction

Our teens are growing up in a world that is complicated and that is hurting. As they gain new freedom and responsibilities, they need support and guidance from the adults in their lives. They might not seek this support and guidance out, and they may even resist it. But whether we're parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, or mentors, we need to be in prayer for the teens in our lives.

This 30-day prayer guide is a tool designed to help you focus on a number of the specific challenges and needs that teens are facing. I'd invite you to spend some time each day in prayer for your teen(s) and to turn your hopes, dreams, worries, and anxieties over to God as you do!

Dan Seaborn

1 Pray that your teen grows to love and follow God.

Helping our kids to know and love God is the ultimate goal of a Christian parent. We can do our best to teach them faithfully, but they will ultimately need to make their faith their own. Spend some time in prayer that your teen will be open to God's work in their lives and that He will continue to reveal Himself to them.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

2 Pray that your teen navigates their newfound freedoms responsibly.

Part of growth and maturity means that your teens will continue to gain new freedoms and new responsibilities. They may be dating or driving or using their new device. Whatever new freedoms they have, there will be the potential for them to misuse them. Pray that they will make wise and responsible decisions.

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;
teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.

PROVERBS 9:9

3 Pray that your teen learns how to identify and manage their emotions.

In the church, we have often made emotions seem like they are in opposition to faith, but that is not accurate. There's a difference between making decisions based on emotion and learning to identify and manage our emotions. Help your teens learn to name their feeling as falling into one of these categories: "glad", "sad", "mad", or "scared." Pray that they will learn to navigate their emotional world in a healthy way.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

GALATIANS 5:22-23

4 Pray that your teen learns from their missteps.

The reality is that your teen will not make it through this phase of life without making any mistakes. They're at a time in life where a lot of things are changing, and they will inevitably act in some unhealthy ways. Pray that the consequences won't be major and that they will learn and grow from these poor choices.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:11

5 Pray that your teen knows that your relationship will always go beyond agreement or disagreement.

Our teens are growing up in a world where what they often see called “dialogue” or “disagreement” ends up with both parties taking extreme stances and all but guaranteeing that they’ll never speak again. We want our homes to be as far from that experience as possible—especially when we don’t agree. Pray that your teens know that disagreements will not and cannot sever your relationship.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3

6 Pray that your teen knows they can talk to you about anything.

Your teen will need wisdom and guidance from you during many of the challenging situations that they will face. Do your best to look calm and steady on the outside (even if you're freaking out inside!) no matter what your teens talk to you about. Pray that your teens will always know that they are not going through things alone because they can talk to you about anything.

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus

ROMANS 15:5

7 Pray that your teen will know how much God loves them.

There are a lot of voices competing for your teen's attention, and there are a lot of activities competing for their energy. In the midst of that, it can be easy for God to become an afterthought for them. Pray that your teen will never lose sight of just how much God loves them!

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 8:38-39

8 Pray that your teen will know how much you love them.

“Disagreement” and “dislike” seem to be used almost interchangeably these days. Continually remind your kids that you love them when you have a difference of opinion. Remind them that you love them when you enforce rules or punishments. Remind them that disagreements are part of any close relationship, and they actually often happen because of the deep love that exists. Pray that your kids always know how much you love them.

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,
the fruit of the womb a reward.

PSALM 127:3

9 Pray that your teen will develop a love for Scripture.

Help your kids see God's Word as God reaching out to create connection with us. Try to communicate that the Bible is more of a love letter than a constitution. Teach them that Scripture speaks to moments in life when we're celebrating, when we're mourning, and when we're anywhere in between. Pray that your teen develops a love for God's Word.

Oh how I love your law!
It is my meditation all the day.

PSALM 119:97

10 Pray that your teen will submit their sexuality to Jesus' lordship.

With hormones coursing through their veins, teenagers aren't known for their wise decision making when it comes to sex. Help them see that God is calling them to a life where serving Him and surrendering to Him is the ultimate good—not temporary pleasure and brief physical connection with others. Pray that your teen will find deeper fulfillment than just lust-driven pleasure.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

HEBREWS 13:4

11 Pray that your teen will treat people with love.

Jesus told His disciples that everyone would know they were His disciples by the way they loved one another. Help your teens learn that following Jesus means loving and serving people. Show them the huge number of opportunities they have to practice this on a daily basis. Pray that your teens will love others like Jesus did.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

JOHN 13:34-35

12 Pray that your teen will be connected with godly adults who will help mentor them.

This will require some planning and intentionality on your part, too. Help your teen identify somebody who they admire and who is faithfully following after God. Having a godly mentor will be hugely beneficial in the moments when your teens may not want to hear what you have to say about a specific situation. Pray that God would lead your teen to a godly mentor.

and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

2 TIMOTHY 2:2

13 Pray that your teen will grow to no longer rely on you.

As painful as it is to imagine, our goal as parents is to work ourselves (mostly) out of a job! We teach our teens about hard work, discipline, responsibility, love, and a whole lot of other stuff so that they will be able to establish their own lives without being dependent upon us. Pray that your teen will gain independence and be prepared to move into young adulthood.

You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands;
you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you.

PSALM 128:2

14 Pray that your teen finds their identity in Christ.

There are so many places that people look to find their identity—their careers, their accomplishments, their finances, their abilities, their social group. But teach your teen that all of those identities will ultimately be unfulfilling. Pray that they find their true identity in Christ.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

EPHESIANS 2:10

15 Pray that your teen will develop strong friendship with like-minded people who can encourage them in their walk with Christ

“Peer pressure” isn’t really a term that we hear talked about anymore, but that’s not because its effects have lessened! Our teens need connections with other young people who are walking with God. Youth groups and small groups are hugely beneficial for our kids to see other people their own age who are letting their faith shape how they live their lives. Pray that your teen finds friends who are seeking after God.

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

HEBREWS 10:24-25

16 Pray that your teen will know their purpose on the earth.

There are so many options for what each of us can pursue in life. Many of those things aren't bad, but they're not where our kids will find their true purpose. Teach your kids that knowing, loving, and serving God is the only way to live into their true purpose. Pray that your teens will know and pursue this purpose.

And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

MATTHEW 22:35-40

17 Pray that you can be there for your teen and understand their world as well as their fears and anxieties.

Instead of minimizing issues your teen is facing that aren't going to be a huge issue for them when they get older, work to understand that the problems they're facing right now are legitimate problems. They can't fast-forward through life and gain long-term perspective; they need you to be there for them. Pray that you'll have the willingness to be there for them in this way.

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

GALATIANS 6:2

18 Pray that your teen understands that their citizenship ultimately lies in Heaven.

As Christians, we believe that we belong to God and are part of His Kingdom. That allegiance runs far deeper than allegiance to any country, state, team, or anything else. Pray that your teen will know they are part of God's Kingdom.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

PHILIPPIANS 3:20

19 Pray that your teen will use technology to build up rather than to tear down.

Inevitably, your teen will run into some kind of disagreement or challenging social situation online or in a conversation that takes place over text or a messaging app. They will probably be tempted to behave in the negative and angry way that is normalized in online communication. Pray that they will deal with conflict responsibly and in healthy ways.

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

ROMANS 12:10

20 Pray that you will be a faithful example of following Christ for your teen to follow.

Living out your own faith on a day-to-day basis is the best example you can set for your teen. When they see you working to grow, being quick to apologize and change, and surrendering your desires when they aren't in alignment with God's, they will have a great example of what it looks like to live a life devoted to God. Pray that you will set a godly example for your teen.

Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

PHILIPPIANS 3:17

21 Pray that your teen feels free to live into their own personality rather than feeling pressured or molded in a different direction.

Pressure to act a certain way or to value certain things can come from many different directions. It might be friends or societal pressure. But it could also be pressure you're putting on them, maybe without even realizing it. Pray that your kids will feel free to be who God created them to be rather than feeling pushed or pulled into different directions, even by people with good intentions.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
 my soul knows it very well.
My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
 intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
 the days that were formed for me,
 when as yet there was none of them.

PSALM 139:14-16

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

EPHESIANS 2:10

22 Pray that your teen has good support systems for their mental health.

Anxiety and depression are the two most common mental health issues that teens are facing. And being surrounded by supportive people can make a huge difference for those who are struggling. Pray that your teen will be surrounded by people who will work to come alongside them and lessen their mental load.

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.

PSALM 34:18

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

GALATIANS 6:2

23 Pray that your teen will make responsible choices with how they use technology.

There are lots of irresponsible ways to use the amazing tools that technology opens up for us—sexting, bullying, creating or accessing inappropriate content, etc. Pray that your teen makes mature and responsible choices when they use these powerful tools.

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

COLOSSIANS 1:9-10

24 Pray that your teen will live into their Christian sexual ethics.

God created us with sexual drives, and sex is beautiful and meaningful when practiced within a marriage. But our teens are receiving messages about that being an old fashioned, out-of-date idea. Pray that your teen surrenders their sexuality to God and obeys Him in how they act.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God;

1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-5

25 Pray that your teen will see their connection with God as a relationship, not an obligation.

It's important that you help your teen see that God doesn't have standards because He's interested in being a cosmic killjoy, but because He knows the best way for us to live. And He's constantly inviting people to draw close to Him. Pray that your teen will not see faith as a list of rules, but as an opportunity to develop intimacy with our Creator!

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

GALATIANS 4:6-7

26 Pray that your teen will turn to God in times of both joy and crisis.

Turning to God in times of crisis is natural. When we don't know what else to do, it's easy to call on Him. Help your kids see that their relationship with God is not a "break glass in case of emergency" kind of thing, but an ongoing opportunity to lean on Him during the ups and the downs. Pray that your kids will learn to turn to God in any circumstances.

Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.

PSALM 62:8

27 Pray that you will find other parents to share your journey with.

Having other parents to share ideas with can be hugely helpful in your parenting journey. You can get different perspectives on things, and the parents you connect with might help you understand your own kids on a deeper level. Pray that you'll find other godly parents to plan with, pray with, and bounce ideas off of.

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

PHILIPPIANS 2:4

28 Pray that your teen will have engaged and connected grandparents.

Just like you learned from some of the parenting mistakes your own parents made with you, the truth is that they probably did too! Your teen's grandparents will likely enforce rules or teach discipline with your kids much differently than they did with you. Pray that your teen's grandparents will be involved and will help in the mentoring process.

I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

2 TIMOTHY 1:5

29 Pray that your teen will be compassionate and empathetic.

Compassion is feeling for somebody else and empathy is feeling with somebody else. Both are key in helping our teens develop emotional intelligence and in them learning how to love other people well. Pray that your teen will learn to be compassionate and empathetic.

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

1 PETER 3:8

30 Pray that your teen knows that home is a place of peace.

We all need a safe place to let our guard down and to be ourselves. It's tempting to think that's only true for adults, because we're the ones juggling so many responsibilities and busy schedules. But it's not just true for adults—everybody needs a place to do that. Pray that your home will be a place of peace for your teen!

My people will abide in a peaceful habitation,
in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

ISAIAH 32:18

About the Book

Your home should be a place of victory for your family. But all too often, it feels like it's not.

Parents today are raising kids in a culture that not only disagrees with their Christian faith—it strongly opposes it at every turn. We know our faith must inform every aspect of our parenting, but the Bible doesn't always offer cut-and-dried answers on subjects like parenting a child with mental health problems, helping your kids develop good interpersonal skills and boundaries, understanding sexual identity, or successfully parenting adult children. Nor does the Church always address them—and for that reason, they can be both messy and frightening.

In *Winning at Home*, Dan Seaborn teams up with several of the credentialed members of his ministry's staff to dive into the mess and help parents seeking a faith-based perspective on some of our culture's most complex topics find firm footing.

So bring your questions with you into these pages, where you'll discover a wealth of wisdom and resources to help you navigate the challenges of twenty-first-century parenting. It's time to turn your losses around and start winning at home.



About the Author

In addition to being an international speaker and president of *Winning At Home*—a nonprofit based in Michigan that seeks to support marriages and families through speaking, counseling, and coaching services, community events, and media resources—Dan Seaborn leads the Marriage and Family Division of the American Association of Christian Counselors. He has authored thirteen books about marriage and family, and his advice is broadcast over 350 radio stations across the United States. He has written hundreds of articles related to marriage and family and is frequently asked to speak on the topic. He holds a master's degree in Christian Ministries from Indiana Wesleyan University.

Dan and his wife, Jane, have been married for forty years and are the parents of four and grandparents of seven.