

The Blessing Challenge

Every single day we may find ourselves doing a lot for our kids, loving and caring for them, nurturing, teaching, training, helping, leading, equipping, encouraging, protecting, and so much more. We spend precious hours just living out life, helping with homework, and driving them to activities. We spend money on sports, lessons, and various classes to help them grow and become all they can be, providing opportunities for them to do what they most love in this world.

But in the midst of busy, full lives, we have to ask ourselves: Are we praying? I mean, *really* praying specific, powerful, promise-filled, hope-inspired prayers. Are we praying God's powerful Word and promises over their lives?

God has given parents the privilege and power to speak blessings upon their children. Speaking a blessing over your children nurtures security, confidence, and hope for the future in their young hearts and minds.

As parents, we can profoundly influence the direction of our children's lives by the words we say to them. Yet many parents fail to do so. "Oh, my kids know that I love them," a lot of parents say. "They know that I pray for them." Maybe so, but your children need to hear those words of blessings, approval, acceptance, and encouragement in their lives. Kids today thirst for parental acceptance – they long for their mother and father to reinforce their worth.

Here's a simple example...as you drop off your child for school say, "You are blessed today. You have the favor of God." How great to start the day that way? Or at bedtime to say "You are a child of God. God has good things in store for you." What a great thing to replay in their minds as they drift off to sleep!

Get your family on board with this challenge. Tell your kids how you are going to pray blessings over them and how these blessings will cover them with God's love, protection, and blessings in their lives. Soon they will be begging you to bless them!

So, here's how the Blessing Challenge works:

- Sign up by emailing children@calvaryop.org to be put on our 'BLESSINGS TEXT.' I will text a blessing to you weekly. Some will be scriptural blessings while others will just be uplifting words/blessings on your children.

SIDE NOTES:

- You cannot respond to the group text.
 - I am limited on the amount of characters in a text so you may receive more than one text.
 - You can opt out at any time but, please note, once you opt out once, you remove yourself from any texts from this group in the future.
- Speak the blessings often...focus on one for the whole week or as your blessing texts grow, mix them up throughout the week.
 - As you bless, always see that your demeanor conveys the spirit and heart of our loving, living God. He not only wants to bless that child, but He also has called you to accept the responsibility for directly *inviting* that blessing.

- Lay your hands on their head or shoulder or hug them and speak or whisper the words with the quiet confidence that you are privileged by God to declare this blessing.
- The blessings texts are suggestions for blessing your children. Don't be afraid to speak your own words of blessing over your children. Speak specifically to each child's uniqueness even!

As you start this Blessing Challenge, use this prayer of dedication as you bless and minister to your children:

"Father, I am astounded that You would confer upon me the overwhelming privilege of being Your representative in both announcing and pronouncing Your blessing upon my children. As I receive this truth, I make this declaration:

'You are my God, and it is Your almighty throne I honor in this action of blessing my children. I denounce any notion that my words are the source of the power in this blessing, but I also deny any idea that suggest my words are unimportant in this dramatic transaction. The fact that You make me Your middle person, reaching to heaven—to Your throne and then to my children, who are Your created wonder and given to me to love and serve—is an awesome wonder in my sight. And so, I ask You to help me minister blessings always with the wisdom, faith and gentle grace that will cause the children in my life to know by that blessing how beloved they are by You and by me.' Amen."

Some 'words of wisdom' above cited by Jack Hayford, Debbie McDaniel, and *The Love Dare for Parents*