

A Mom's Prayers *for* Her Son

Praying for
Every Part
of His Life

Rob and Joanna Teigen



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*To our sons,
Joshua and Mason.
You are loved.*

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A *Word* from *Joanna*

The writing of this book finds me in a strange season of life. On the one hand, my oldest son is in college and has in large part “left the nest.” I see his character, his hopes for the future, and his love for the Lord, and it brings me great joy.

At the same time there is a little boy in my home whom I desperately want to call my own. He came to us as a foster baby and we’re struggling through a long, stressful adoption process. As of this writing, I’m still unsure what the final outcome will be.

As I look at both of my boys, I see with absolute certainty that every good thing in their lives and their hearts has come from God. No matter how much I care for and love them, I can’t make them who I want them to be. I can’t keep them safe. I can’t control their future or their choices. I can’t be the perfect mother I tell myself they need. I look at them and at myself and realize that without God, we are lost.

As that truth has taken deeper root in my heart and mind, it has pushed me to pray like never before. For many of my parenting years, I took a “my work PLUS prayer will get it done” approach. And while I am devoted to all five of my children, I now see that in the end my efforts will fade away compared to what the Lord brings about in their lives.

There is freedom found in placing my children in God’s hands. When I release them to him I am set free from worry.

When I trust him to work out his salvation in their lives, I don't have to be their conscience and their judge. When I meditate on his constant love and mercy toward them, I can let go of resentment and anger over their weaknesses. When I believe in a Holy Spirit who is a counselor and guide, I don't have to be an all-knowing fountain of wisdom for every situation. When I pray and let God be God to them, I am free to just be me.

And so I pray. I pray with tears, pleading like everything depends on it. I pray over and over for the same things, and then pray for them again. And God gathers up my prayers and says, *Little one, you can rest. I hear you. I love you. I love your child. I am here, and I will always be. Be still and wait because I am going to do more than you can imagine.* And I dry my tears and take a deep breath, and I have peace.

Joanna

A *Word* from *Rob*

My wife is amazing! I know I don't tell her that enough, but I am amazed at all of the tasks she juggles in a day. I read our family calendar on the wall with all its doctor and dentist appointments, kids' choir rehearsals, foster parent meetings, drop-offs and pick-ups, and it makes me want to go take a nap. Of course, while I'm napping Joanna is usually cooking dinner. Out of all the things my wife does for our family, the greatest are her prayers for us every day. It's a tremendous way that she demonstrates love for her family.

There is something special about a mother's heart (especially toward her boys) that can see the spiritual and emotional needs of her children. I wish she could bottle up some of that motherly intuition for me! Our oldest son will celebrate his twentieth birthday soon, and I know he'd agree that his mom has done a wonderful job of loving and caring for him. I asked him recently what it meant to him to know that his mom has prayed for him over the years. He said that it has helped him to see the importance of his relationship with God, especially now that he's grown. It showed him how much his mom cared for his needs, both physical and spiritual. He believes her prayers protected him from a lot of things that he wasn't spiritually mature enough to handle along the way. And her prayers taught him how important prayer was in his own life with God.

Through Joanna's prayers, I can see that she has released our sons to God and trusts him to care for them. She knows that God can take our boys' struggles and failures and bring good from them. He can take their accomplishments and strengths and make them even greater when he's in control. He is willing and able to respond to any concerns or issues with our sons. She has taken to heart the truth that she can "approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

Another element of my wife's prayers is that they're faithful and persistent. She knows that we trust in a God who hears us when we cry out to him. Jesus taught his disciples that "they should always pray and not give up," and "will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly" (Luke 18:1, 7-8). Don't lose heart, mom! Keep on lifting up your son's concerns and needs to our loving Father every day. He will hear and answer your prayers. It may not be in your timing or in exactly the way you have in mind, but it will be in a way that brings glory to God and the very best for your child.

It's my hope that this book will encourage you to pray and believe in the God who is in control of everything. I pray it will bring you hope when your son has lost his way and your mother's heart is breaking. I pray it will lead you to praise God for his power and limitless love for you and your son. Whether you pray straight through the book or pick it up when a certain issue is on your heart, expect the Lord to meet you right where you are. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). God bless you, mom.

Rob

— 1 —

When He Needs God's Salvation

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 11:25–26

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 3:16–17

What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

Matthew 18:12–14

Lord,

Thank you for the gift of my son. He has been created by you, and his life has been planned before the beginning of time. Your love for him is greater than I can comprehend. I know it is your desire that he come to a full knowledge of you.

I praise you for all the ways you have revealed yourself to him in his young life.

I pray that you would complete your work of salvation in my son. Open his eyes fully to the truth of Christ—his perfect life, his complete atonement for our sins on the cross, and his resurrection that gives us the hope of life forever with you. Give him reassurance when he's doubting your Word. Rescue him from any temptation that might lead him away from following you. Provide wise teachers to instruct him in your ways. Fill him with your Spirit so he may know your voice and power in his life.

Thank you for all of your promises for my son. Let him experience your faithfulness—that no matter how far he may wander, you will seek him and bring him home. Show that you can be everything to him as his savior, helper, counselor, father, and friend.

Encourage me as his mother when my trust in you is shaken. Let me see my son through your eyes, no matter what sins or spiritual confusion he may wrestle with in his life. Never let me give up hope that he is in your hands.

Let me delight in the knowledge of you so my son can see joy and peace in me. Use me as an example of obedience and faith. Make my words full of praise and prayers, declaring your goodness in every situation we find ourselves in. Use me to lead him closer to you each day.

Thank you for holding my son so closely. Claim him as your own. May he live in you forever. Amen.

— 2 —

When He Feels Inferior

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. 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 139:13–16 ESV

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17–19

Lord,

My son looks at everyone around him and feels that he doesn't measure up. He doesn't feel strong, smart, or talented. He doesn't feel valued or appreciated. He doesn't believe he has much to offer or that anyone would miss him if he wasn't around.

My son has forgotten who you say he is. Your Word says he is made in your image, and that what you made is very good (Gen. 1:27, 31). He needs assurance that his life is not merely an accident, but lovingly planned and created by you in every detail. Give him the power to trust in your incredible love for him that is beyond our understanding.

Thank you for the qualities that make my son who he is. As his mother, I cherish his personality, his smile, and his unique outlook on the world. I see abilities and talents taking shape in his life. He is a gift to our family and has the potential to make the world a better place.

Help my son to find his worth in your eyes instead of comparing himself to those around him. Let him believe that you are working in him, molding him into the valuable person you've always planned for him to be.

Guard my son's mind from dwelling so much on his own defeat and insecurities that he forgets how awesome you are. Let him find peace and total satisfaction in you and you alone. Let him "taste and see" that you are good, and realize that you are the source of every wonderful gift in his life (Ps. 34:8; James 1:17).

Use me to build up my son. Show me how to encourage him when he's feeling down. Open my eyes to his strengths so I can affirm him. Give me wisdom for how to guide him in overcoming his weaknesses and insecurities.

Thank you for creating my son and allowing me to share in his life. You are everything he needs—let him find his strength and joy in you. Amen.

— 3 —

When He Covets More

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

James 4:1–3 ESV

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

1 John 2:15–17

Father God,

You know the deep selfishness in our hearts that craves our own way. We want to make our own rules, come in first place, receive praise and attention, and gratify whatever desire we feel at the moment. We believe the lie that a material possession or fun experience will bring happiness and satisfy our hearts.

Protect my son from loving the blessings you've given more than he loves you. Give him gratitude for all you've provided so that everything he has can be a symbol of your kindness and generosity. May he find his greatest delight and satisfaction in his relationship with you and the people you've placed in his life.

Help my son to understand that the money, fame, or exciting experiences he may obtain in this life will only pass away. Set him free to pursue “a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Luke 12:33–34).

Open his eyes to see any areas where he's coveting the things of the world. Fill him with a greater love for his siblings and friends so he can be generous and take turns. Give him gratitude for what he has instead of begging for more and more when we're shopping. Set him free from a complaining spirit that always wants more fun, less work, and preferential treatment.

Teach my son to go to you for everything he desires. Change his heart through prayer to want what *you* want for him. May your Spirit move powerfully in his heart to create gratitude, patience, and love for others. Give him your joy that is greater than any happiness this world could offer.

Thank you for loving my son and offering the hope of complete fulfillment in you. Amen.