

Dear Nova Kids,

Have you have been keeping up with the devotional reading throughout July and August? I hope that you have learned a lot about how to pray.

The theme of September's devotional is Spiritual Preparation. We want to be in healthy relationship to God and others. We want God to change us in the inside, healing our hearts and making us more like him. And we also want all our new heart and our relationship with God to show in our lives each day.

Here is my prayer for you, for us as a church, Ephesians 3:14-21: When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth, I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Amy Martin  
Open Campaign Prayer Chair

## *What if I don't know what to say when I pray?*

When we pray, we thank God for his blessings; we ask for things we or others need; we tell him the things that are on our minds; we ask for forgiveness. I want to share with you a few ways that you can pray--some ways that use words, and some that don't!

**Silence.** It's hard to pray and read the Bible when we are distracted, so it's helpful to start out by quieting down your heart, mind, body and environment. If you are praying before you go to sleep at night, try tightening up the muscles in your body, one by one, and letting them relax. Squeeze tight the muscles in your face for 5 seconds, and then let them relax. Do the same with your neck, and then your shoulders, and on down through all the parts of your body until you squeeze and relax your toes. Now that your body is quiet, ask God to help you feel His love and peace in your body. When you feel it (perhaps in your chest or in your head), ask him to make it grow and spread to all the parts of your body. You can lay there and feel his love, peace and presence, keeping your heart open and your mind focused on him. This is prayer without words.

**Lectio Divina.** This is a Latin phrase that means sacred reading. When we read the Bible, we need to learn what the verses mean. But God also wants to speak specially and directly to our hearts through the words we read. So instead of just asking 'What does this verse mean?,' we can also ask, 'God, what do you want to say to me through your Word?' Begin by reading the verses out loud. What word or phrase stands out most to you? Focus on those words as you reread the Bible passage. Spend some time memorizing the verse, or at least the part that you are focusing on. Talk to God (and your parents if they are close by) about what you think God is saying to you. Read the verse one more time, and then sit silently, letting the words sink deep into your heart. End your prayer time by thanking God.

**Visio Divina.** This is another Latin phrase that means sacred looking.

God makes beautiful things, and so do people. A great way to connect with God is by looking at something beautiful: a picture, a lighted candle, the ocean, a bee busy at work. Quiet down and open up your heart to God, asking him, 'What do you want to say to me today?' He might bring to mind a verse you have memorized; or he might tell you he loves you; he might encourage you as he brings to mind something you need to do; he might just fill your heart with peace as you know he is there looking at that beautiful thing with you. You can spend time quietly with God without the pressure to say or do anything at all.

**Examen.** This is the practice of reviewing the day you just lived. You can start by asking God to shine his light onto the past 24 hours and walk with you as you think about all that happened. As you walk back through your day, what are the things that you can say that you and God did together (*We* woke up and ate breakfast; *We* helped mom and dad clean the house); which things did you do without God (*I* made fun of a boy at school; *I* disobeyed my parents)? Thank God for all the ways you noticed him with you during your day, and ask him to forgive you for all the ways you acted without him. You might also want to share some things with your family. Each of you can answer some questions like: *What was today's high point?/ What was today's low point? When was I the most loving today?/ When was I the least loving? When did I feel like I belonged with God and other people?/ When did I feel like I didn't belong?*

As you thought about your day, what are the feelings that came up? Which is the biggest feeling you had today? Whether it's joy, fear, sadness, anger, or anything else, bring that feeling to Jesus and talk to him about it. Then either ask him to make that feeling grow inside you, or ask him to take it away and give you a new feeling. Finally, think about what tomorrow will be like. Talk to God about how you feel about the things that will happen tomorrow and the people you will see. Ask him to walk with you tomorrow and help you.

September 4



**Psalm 32:8. The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."**

Memorize this verse today.

Memorizing God's promises that we find in his Word is one of the best ways we can get to know his Voice. If we know his Word, then when we hear him speak to us in our hearts, we recognize him.

When we face difficult or discouraging situations, the Holy

Spirit will remind us of the promises God has given us, and we can speak God's promises to ourselves to give us hope and courage and comfort.

Look at this picture of father and son walking together. This is how your Father God wants to walk with you each day, talking with you deep within your heart.

*Father, thank you for your promise to guide me, advise me, and watch over me. I choose to receive and believe this promise and anything else you spoke specially to my heart as I meditated on your word today.*

*--Amy Martin*

September 5

**John 15:4-5. Live in me and I in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself: it must live on the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you live in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man lives in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit: apart from me you can do nothing.**

Jesus says to all of us that He is the vine and we are the branches. Therefore we must stay connected to Him.

Have you ever picked flowers? What eventually happened to the flowers? They lived only a short time. Why? Because they were no longer connected to the plant and roots. In the same way the flowers died, we are commanded to not go off on our own way because we will not survive spiritually. If we are not connected to God we will die spiritually. We must love Him completely through staying in relationship with him by reading His word and praying daily.

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*Thank you for always pursuing us. You are with us wherever we go. You are the vine that we the branches are connected to. Please continue to keep me growing and producing righteous fruit as I trust you completely and always stay connected to you. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.*

*--Rebecca Hester*

September 6

**Psalm 147:3. He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.**

One of my elementary school teachers gave me the nickname “walking wounded” - I was always cut, up, scraped up, covered in Band-Aids or even worse, in a cast! I’m pretty sure the nurse had a special seat for me with my name on it.

Now that I’m older, I still get hurt, but it is usually more emotional pain than physical cuts and scrapes. I have lost friends, argued with people I love, and messed up in some big ways. My version of “walking wounded” has changed from the outside of my body to the inside, where people can’t easily see that I’m hurting. But the thing is that God sees my hurting heart, and because I trust him, God heals my deep wounds.

Just because someone doesn’t have physical cuts and scrapes covered by Band-Aids doesn’t mean that they are okay. Almost everyone has something hard to deal with in their life, and we may not be able to tell from the outside. The great thing is that the Lord knows your heart and can help heal you - through his Holy Spirit he can help make you better.

Because we know that only God can help heal the “invisible hurts” of the “walking wounded,” shouldn’t we want to help our friends who don’t know God find the way to get better?

*Lord, help us to see the walking wounded in our lives. Help us to care about those who do not know you so that we can help point them to you, the one who can heal their broken hearts.*

*-- Courtney Tibbils*

September 7

**Psalm 139:23-24. Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.**

A lot of times when we say or do bad things, we just want to hide them so nobody will ever find out. But in this verse, King David does the exact opposite! He prays that God would search his heart and know every part of him, the good *and* the bad. Why do you think King David wants God to know the good and the bad things about him?

King David knows that God loves Him so much, and that God's ways are the best ways to live. Therefore David prays that God would see the bad things that he says and does so that God would lovingly correct him and so David could grow closer to God.

*God thank you for loving me. I know that your ways are best and that I should obey you, but sometimes I mess up and sin. I pray that you would show me the wrong things I do sometimes so that I can grow closer and closer to you. Amen.*

--Garrett Koch

September 8

**Luke 6:43-45. A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs are never gathered from thorn bushes, and grapes are not picked from bramble bushes. A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.**

Years ago, we played in the shade of the beautiful apricot tree in the backyard. The kids enjoyed the big swing, but, most of all, we loved the wonderful fruit that filled the summer with sweetness! Many summers came and went till, one summer, there were just a few apricots. The tree looked fine, but the fruit in the years that followed was so bad, even the birds wouldn't eat it! We didn't need a doctor to tell us something was wrong. The fruit told the story: The heart of the tree was rotten, so nothing good could come from it. We needed to cut it down and plant a healthy young apricot tree if we wanted to find sweet fruit again. And that's what we did!

Is your heart healthy, producing sweet fruit when you speak and share life with others? Or are you constantly complaining, blaming others, or saying mean things? Jesus is telling us to search our hearts by looking closely at what we say and how we say it. He is the Great Physician and will heal your heart, but only with your permission.

*Jesus, touch my heart so my words bless others with the sweet fruit of your Holy Spirit.*

--Rick D'Amico



September 11

**Romans 12:1-2. So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.**

Have you ever worn a Halloween costume and mask? Its purpose is to display to others some character that's different from who you are. That's okay for Halloween, but not okay in living for Jesus. The urgent message of Romans 12:1-2 is this: 'Don't act like those who don't love Jesus, but act in a way that shows that you are a Jesus person; that you love Him.' These two verses tell us that this is really, really important.

*Dear Jesus, it's so hard to stand up for you when I am at school or with many of my friends. I love You Jesus and don't want to appear that I am ashamed of you. I want to always show that I am a Jesus person wherever I am. Help me, Jesus, to be real in living for You.*

--Ron Graff

September 12

**1 Peter 2:9. But you are chosen people. You are the King's priests. You are a holy nation. You are a nation that belongs to God alone. God chose you to tell about the wonderful things he has done. He called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

How would you answer the questions, "Who are you?" "Tell me about yourself." "How would you describe yourself?"

In 1 Peter 2:9, God describes us. He gives us our identity. He tells us all about ourselves. What do you think about how God describes us? How do you think God feels about us?

*God, thank you for creating me and making me who I am. Please help me to grow closer to you and share the good news of Jesus with others.*

--Dean Mayeda

September 13

**Colossians 3:1-5. Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.**

Many of us don't think much about heaven, or we don't understand what it's like. But the Bible says that heaven is our true home, our real country. Our homes in this earthly life are just temporary, but someday we'll live with God forever. So, Paul tells us to think often about heaven. It's a place where we can love God and others, and feel their love for us, without any sin or evil to mess things up. And the more we think about heaven, the more we will act like citizen of heaven here on earth.

*Jesus, help me to view myself as a citizen of heaven and to long for the day when I can be with you in a place of perfect love and joy, completely free of sin and temptation. Help me to desire the joy of eternal life with you, far more than earthly sins.*

--Dave Martin

September 14

**2 Thessalonians 1:11-12. So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.**

How do you know you're called by God? Earlier in this passage Paul says it is because you believed what you were told about Jesus. It's that simple. You were told, you believed, and now you're part of the people of God, chosen to tell others so that they can also believe. So you go to school, play your sports, hang out with your friends, and spend time with your family, while all along you embody the Hope of the World. It's like you're Clark Kent, but you don't need to rush to a phone booth to change outfits before performing heroic feats. God gives you the power to help him save souls and change lives while you go about your normal day. What good things is your faith prompting you to do? Do you make it your goal to honor the name of Jesus as you interact with your friends and classmates and family members? Do you act the way you act because you're a Christian and you want to please Christ?

*Jesus, give me power today to be a blessing to others and honor your name at all times. Remind me that I have Hope that others need and that nothing is as important as sharing that hope with the people around me.*

--Amy Martin

September 15

**Psalm 39:4. Show me, Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is.**

When I read these words at age 15, I thought, "No, thanks. I'm not going to think about dying *now*. Too depressing!" That summer, my friend died. I had never seen death up close before. I was shocked and scared and in pain. It seemed so wrong! Only old people should die - not my friend! We tried not to think about it because it hurt so much. My friends and I never talked about it. I actually pushed away the thought that I would grow old and die! Now, *50 years later*, I begin the day with this prayer and often add the words of Psalm 90: "So, teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom." What causes me to love these words I once rejected? Just this: Over time, death has come for many in my circle of family and friends. I have leaned in closer to God when my heart is broken. Quietly, God has used my pain to change me, teaching me to cherish each moment with family and friends. These verses tell us to look at life and death honestly. God reminds us that *all* our days come to us as a gifts to be treasured! You can relax with God and unwrap this day expecting Him to lead you, to use you, and be at your side through whatever may come.

Let's make the most of the time God's gifted us by living each day on purpose.

*Lord, I thank you for this life, this day. Open my eyes to Your plans, I pray.*

--Rick D'Amico

September 18

**1 Kings 18:41-45.** And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.” So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees. “Go and look toward the sea,” he told his servant. And he went up and looked. “There is nothing there,” he said. Seven times Elijah said, “Go back.” The seventh time the servant reported, “A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.” So Elijah said, “Go and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’” Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the winds rose, a heavy rain came on and Ahab rode off to Jezreel.

**James 5:17-18.** Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain...

Elijah was a regular human just like us. He didn’t have superpowers. He relied on God by praying. Imagine how he felt as he prayed for rain on the top of the mountain. It hadn’t rained for three and a half years, and there wasn’t a cloud in the sky. As he prayed, he kept asking his servant to check the sky for clouds, but nothing appeared. Elijah must have been tempted to give up. Thankfully, he trusted God’s promise and kept praying until the rain came. What has God put on your heart to pray for? Keep praying and checking for his answer until it comes. Even if God’s answer seems small at first, keep trusting Him and don’t give up.

*Jesus, help me to remember that Elijah was a normal human like me, and to pray like he did, trusting that you hear me and you will keep your promises.*

-- Dave Martin

September 19

**Psalm 73:21-26. Then I realized that my heart was bitter, and I was all torn up inside. I was so foolish and ignorant—I must have seemed like a senseless animal to you. Yet I still belong to you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.**

In the story *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak, Max dresses up in his wolf suit and acts like a wild thing. When his mom sends him to his room, he imagines himself taking a journey to the land of the Wild Things and becoming their king. But wild things don't really feel or express love, and it can get lonely. And so Max returns home to where someone loves him best and finds that his mom has even left his dinner there in his room, warm and ready for him to eat.

Asaph, the writer of Psalm 73, used his imagination sort of like Max did. He spoke to God and said, 'When I let my heart become bitter against you, it's like I turn into a Wild Thing--a beast who can't give or receive love. But then I remember, God, that you're my Home and you give me love and comfort, and I let myself be tamed by you.'

God gave each of us an imagination, and that is where he meets us. Whenever you find your heart is bitter, or sad, or even happy, you can imagine meeting with Jesus. Imagine yourself in a safe, warm place with him, or out in a boat on an adventure. What will you do with Jesus today?

*Jesus, thank you that I belong to you. Thank you for holding my hand as you guide me, leading me on a glorious adventure. I desire you more than anything on earth. I might become bitter or sad, but you remain the strength of my heart; you are my Home forever. Amen.*

--Amy Martin

September 20

**2 Corinthians 4:6-7. For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.**

Did you know as human beings, we are weak and capable of making mistakes? That's why the author, the apostle Paul describes our bodies as "fragile clay jars". He does not want us to focus on our fragile clay jars, but on its priceless contents, the treasure inside us: God's power (light) living in us. Remember, God is our power source and we should always be 'plugged into' him; then everyone will see Jesus through us!

*Thank you Lord for being my power source. Help me to stay plugged into you so I can shine your light for people to see Jesus through me.*

*--Lauri Chipeco*



September 21

**1 Corinthians 10:31-33. So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Don't give offense to Jews or Gentiles or the church of God. I, too, try to please everyone in everything I do. I don't just do what is best for me; I do what is best for others so that many may be saved.**

When you are eating your food or taking a drink of water, do you think of thanking God and giving him the glory for what you have? Remember, God has provided everything you have whether it's food, or where you live, and even the people in your life. Paul is telling us to honor God before we think of anything else, and we can do so by thanking him for the all he provides and being caring and loving towards all the people in your lives (friends, family, teachers) and all the people you interact with, just like Jesus did while he was on Earth. Glorifying God is giving him thanks and praise for everything and everyone.

*Father, I thank you for providing everything we need. I pray that I will remember to honor you in whatever I do, and never stop praising you.*

--Butch Paredes

September 22

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

When everything's going great, you can forget to spend time praying. Why would you? You're happy, everyone likes you, and life couldn't be better! The trouble is that you start thinking that you are pretty awesome, and that people are lucky to be around you! That feeling is nice, of course, but it's a fantasy. Suddenly, life changes for the worse. Tough times come. You feel crushed by disappointment. You can't handle any more bad news, so you get mad and complain about the way things are. Where is God in all this trouble? Instead of loudly protesting the unfairness of it all, we need to be still and listen.

Jesus says, 'I am here. I have always been here. Thank Me for the hard times that force you to be still. Your many troubles give you a good reason to latch onto Me and trust Me. The more you trust Me to care for you, the more I can train you to depend on Me! That trust will help you sense that I am with you. I will lead you through these difficult times. I want you to seek and find My way each moment of the day. I know the plans I have for you. Because you know you are weak, you should rejoice! Why? My Power is made perfect in weakness!'

*Lord, Jesus, use my trials to draw me close to You. As I walk beside You, may Your Life be my strength and bring You glory.*

--Rick D'Amico

September 25

**2 Timothy 2:20-21. In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.**

"Please take your dirty dishes to the kitchen!" "Please put your dirty clothes in the laundry hamper!" How many times have you heard these words from your parents? They are telling you these things so that those dirty items can be washed clean and be used again. In this Bible passage, Paul is telling Timothy that God uses cleansed people for His noblest purposes. Do you want to be clean, used for honoring God, or will you be dirty, used for dishonor? The choice is yours to let God refine you each and every day.

*Dear Jesus, help me to be clean in your sight, made holy, so that you can use me to do any good works you have prepared for me. Also, help me to be involved with Nova and with all the new and exciting plans you have for our church.*

--Lauri Chipeco

September 26

**Hebrews 12:1-2. “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”**

Have you ever tried to run a race with some big, heavy boots on? Well, you could try--but not if you want to win! Just like the runners in the Olympics, you try to get as light as possible and wear the best running shoes you can find. Hebrews 12:1-2 talks about running a different kind of race. It's about running the race of living a life for Jesus that really pleases Him. In order to be a winner in that race, a necessary thing you have to do is deal with your sin (the times you mess up in not obeying God). It's like wearing heavy boots in a race. You have to get rid of it if you want to bring a smile on Jesus' face. You do that by asking His forgiveness and help. The other thing that you have to do is keep your focus--keep your eyes on Jesus. Keep your focus by obeying his Word instead of following what your friends say and do. Check out Hebrews 11 to read about heroes of faith.

*Help me Jesus. It's easy to get distracted and influenced by other things that take my focus off of You. I ask You to take over my life. Forgive me for (list it) \_\_\_\_\_. Help me to keep my focus on You and follow the path You want me to follow. I love You Jesus and want to put a smile on Your face.*

--Ron Graff

September 27

**1 Corinthians 4:3-5. As for me, it matters very little how I might be evaluated by you or by any human authority. I don't even trust my own judgment on this point. My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is the Lord himself who will examine me and decide. So don't make judgments about anyone ahead of time—before the Lord returns. For he will bring our darkest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. Then God will give to each one whatever praise is due.**

Have you ever hurt a friend or sibling, maybe by stealing from them or saying something mean to them? Sometimes your mom or dad will find out and make you apologize. In that moment, you might realize that apologizing is good, but other times you are too angry to say sorry and really mean it. You might have said sorry, but still not felt bad about hurting your friend. While our parents and friends only see what we do and say, God knows how we feel on the inside. God really wants us to *want* to do and say the right thing, not just to do it. But this can be hard, so we ask for God's help in giving us a good heart and desires like his so that we can have good motives behind what we do.

*Lord, help give me a heart like yours so that I want to do what is right and good.*

--Thomas Whiteside

September 28

**Ephesians 4:1-6. Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.**

For anyone who wants to grow more loving and less sinful, Paul's letters are full of helpful lists. These verses help us to think about whether we are being loving and kind to the people we go to church with. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be honest with yourself and God as you answer these questions:

Am I humble? Do I think about others more than I think about myself?

Am I gentle? Do I care about other people's feelings?

Am I patient? Do I take time to really see and hear other people?

Am I kind when other people make mistakes? Do I forgive them when their mistakes hurt me?

Am I trying hard to make friends with other kids at Nova?

*Holy Spirit, be my mirror. Help me to want to be loving and friendly to other people at Nova. Forgive me for the ways I am being unloving and sinful, and give me wisdom about how I can grow.*

--Amy Martin

September 29

**Ephesians 3:20-21. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.**

What was the last super awesome gift your mom or dad gave you? Was it something you asked for, or was it something they gave you without you asking about it? Jesus says that God is our Father who wants to give us good gifts. A loving parent will sometimes give us what we want, but they will always desire to give us exactly what we really need!

In Ephesians 3, Paul says that not only is God loving towards us, but he is able to do things that we can't even dream of! God is so big and so loving that we can trust him to provide things we don't even know to ask for. God desires that we would pray even for things that seem impossible. He desires that we would ask him for things that bring him honor and are pleasing to him.

*God, I know that you are able to do greater things than I can imagine. Please make my desires more like your desires. Help me to pray big, even for things that seem impossible.*

--Andrew Pitman