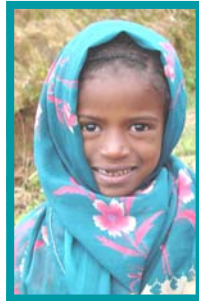


CHILDREN AND PRAYER



**Written & Compiled by Sandy Harris
Designed by Norma Hays**

This book is dedicated to all God's precious children that pray and believe.



**"Because of their pure faith and trust in Jesus...
they pray EXPECTING God to answer!"**

Sandy Harris

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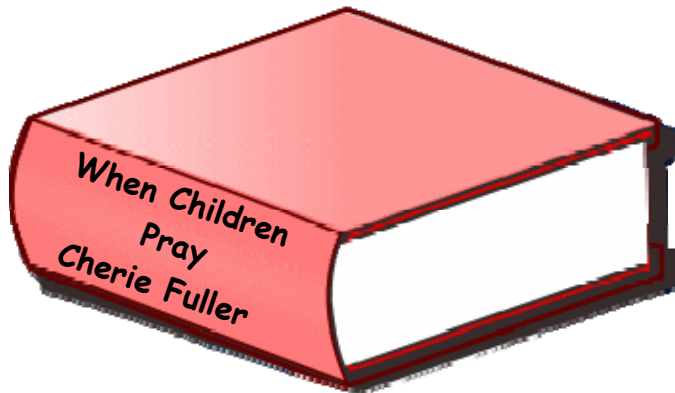
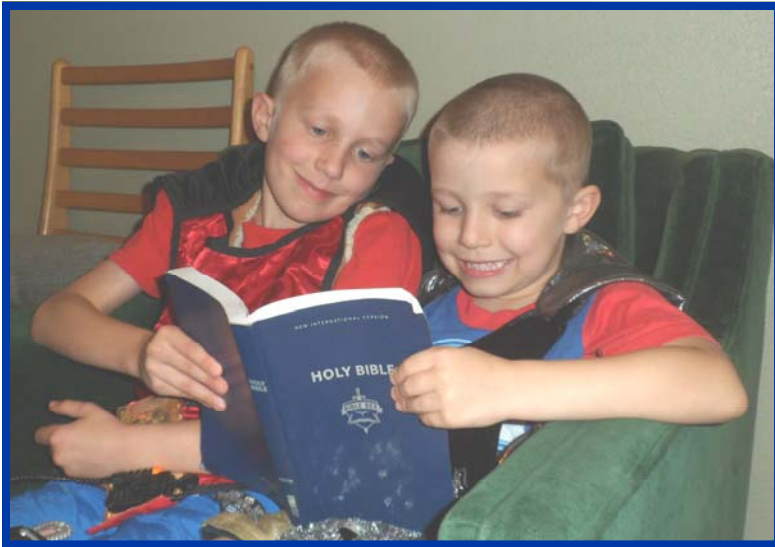
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A SPECIAL BOOK AND PRAYER

One little \$5 book revolutionized the way I taught children about prayer!

Our Sunday School class went on a retreat to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, and while there, I wanted to stop at the discount Christian bookstore and buy some books for my third graders to read. As I went down the aisles, a book, **WHEN CHILDREN PRAY**, by Cherie Fuller, caught my eye. I glanced at the contents, but then decided that because it wasn't a children's book and I had a very limited amount of money to spend, I would put it back. As I lifted the book back to the top shelf, I felt God wanting me to keep it. All I can say is, that little book changed my life and the way I would teach for the rest of my career.

In the book were a number of stories about the amazing answers to prayers by children. I read several of these stories to my class, and then I told them, "You can do this! You are God's special warriors in His army." (They all remembered singing "I'm in the Lord's Army" when they were younger.) "You can pray for people who have many kinds of needs," I continued. "God has chosen you for this special work!"



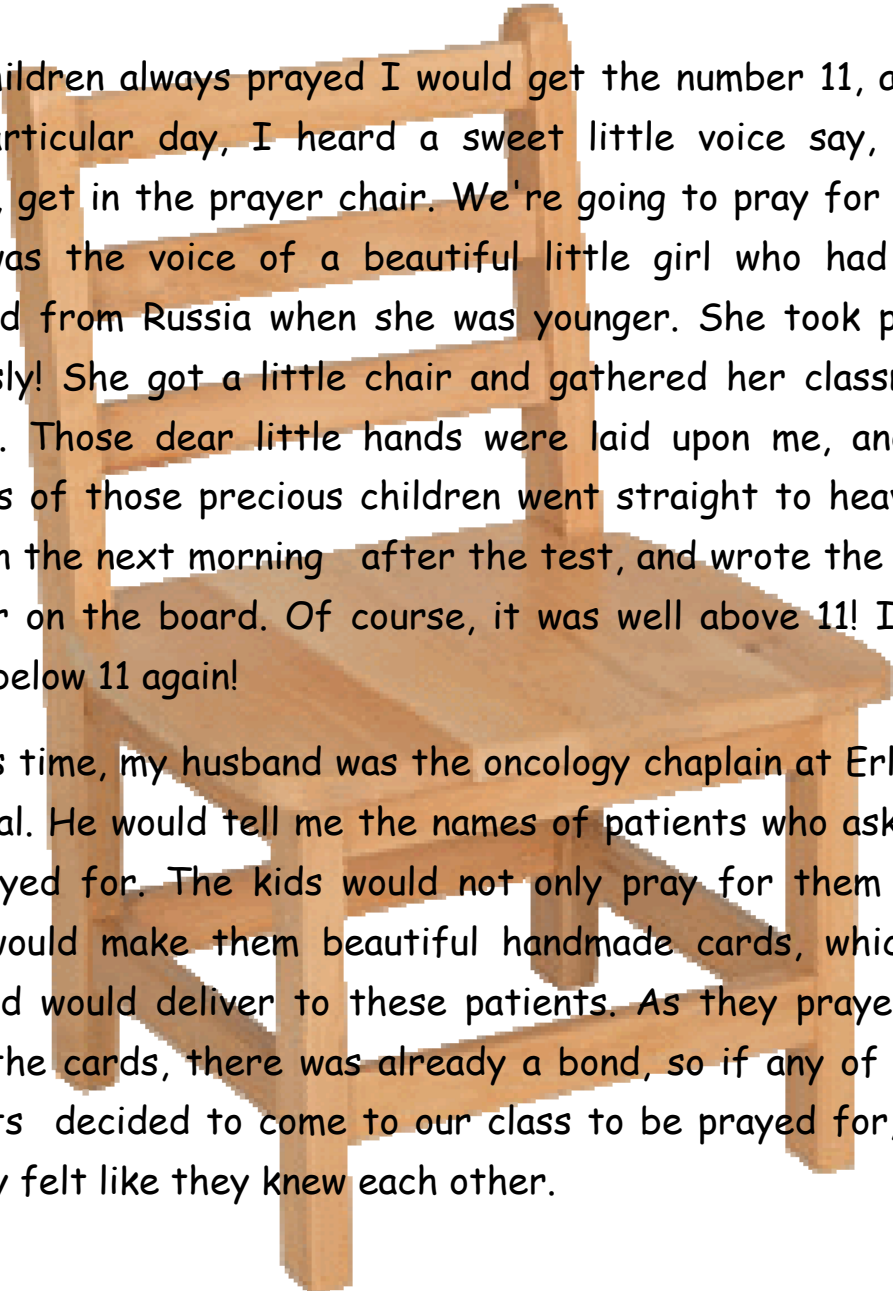
**"Mighty hero, the Lord is with you."
Judges 6:12b NLT**

MY 3RD GRADE CLASS AND PRAYER

One thing I noticed right away. Up until this time, there were always a few children who would not pray out loud in front of other people. They would pray silently "in their heads," as they called it. I never asked them to pray aloud.

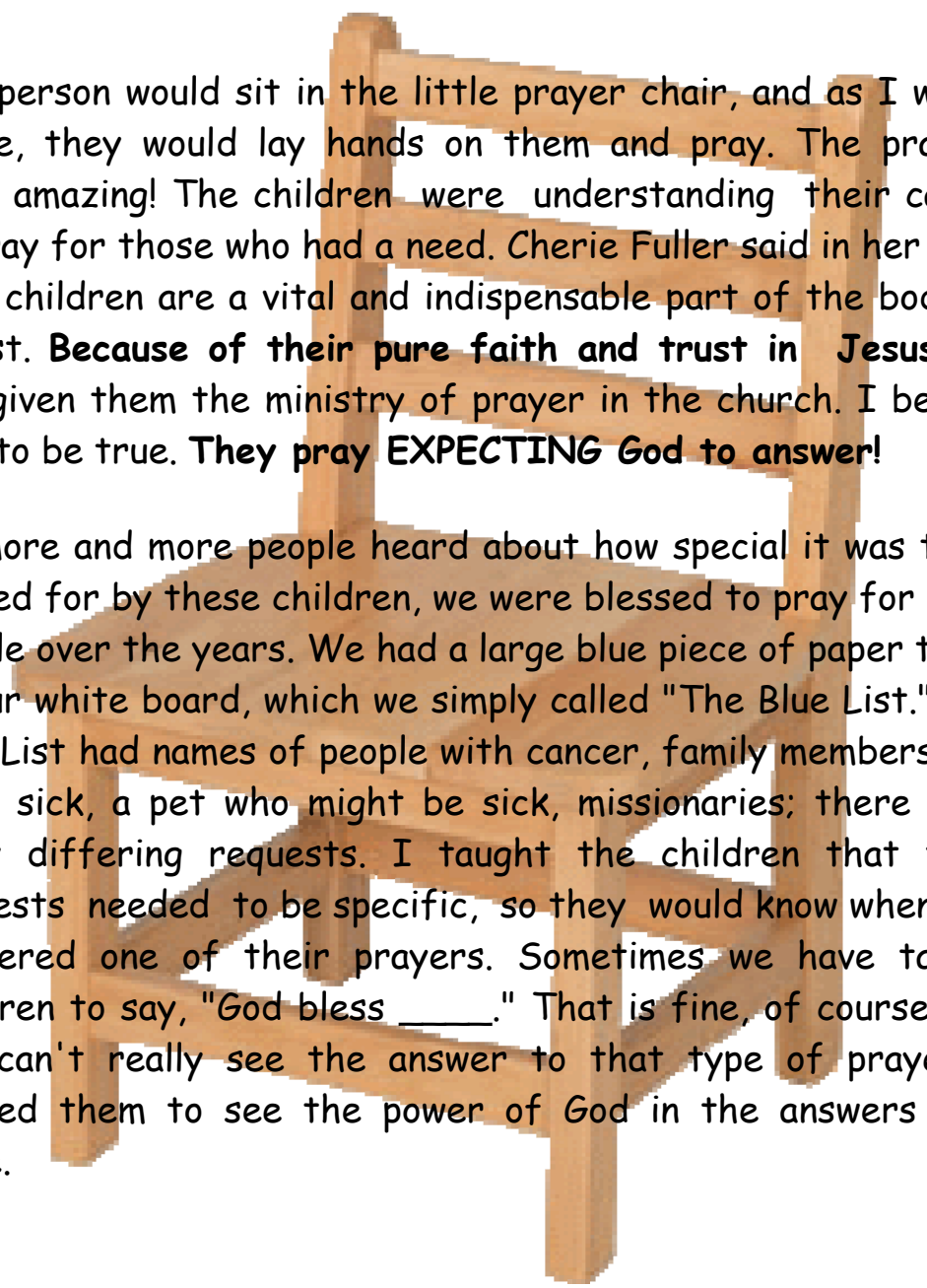
Adults would come in our class, and if they wanted prayer, we would put them in the "prayer chair." It was one of their small chairs that we would set in the front of the room. The person would sit in the chair, and the children would come around them and lay their hands on the person we were going to pray for. As we began praying, I noticed that EVERY child was praying aloud EVERY time! I had not asked them. God had moved on their precious hearts!

Because I have a rare autoimmune blood disease, I had to have my blood tested weekly. I had to have an 11 on my hemoglobin reading, or I would have to go on a 6 month high dose of prednisone. Like my doctor said, "Prednisone is like the atomic bomb; it does what it's supposed to, but it leaves destruction in its path." Before this time, I had to go on it for two different times, and there were terrible side effects.



The children always prayed I would get the number 11, and on one particular day, I heard a sweet little voice say, "Mrs. Harris, get in the prayer chair. We're going to pray for you." This was the voice of a beautiful little girl who had been adopted from Russia when she was younger. She took prayer seriously! She got a little chair and gathered her classmates around. Those dear little hands were laid upon me, and the prayers of those precious children went straight to heaven! I came in the next morning after the test, and wrote the magic number on the board. Of course, it was well above 11! It was never below 11 again!

At this time, my husband was the oncology chaplain at Erlanger Hospital. He would tell me the names of patients who asked to be prayed for. The kids would not only pray for them daily; they would make them beautiful handmade cards, which my husband would deliver to these patients. As they prayed and made the cards, there was already a bond, so if any of these patients decided to come to our class to be prayed for, they already felt like they knew each other.



The person would sit in the little prayer chair, and as I wrote above, they would lay hands on them and pray. The prayers were amazing! The children were understanding their calling to pray for those who had a need. Cherie Fuller said in her book that children are a vital and indispensable part of the body of Christ. **Because of their pure faith and trust in Jesus, He** has given them the ministry of prayer in the church. I believe this to be true. **They pray EXPECTING God to answer!**

As more and more people heard about how special it was to be prayed for by these children, we were blessed to pray for many people over the years. We had a large blue piece of paper taped to our white board, which we simply called "The Blue List." The Blue List had names of people with cancer, family members who were sick, a pet who might be sick, missionaries; there were many differing requests. I taught the children that their requests needed to be specific, so they would know when God answered one of their prayers. Sometimes we have taught children to say, "God bless ____." That is fine, of course, but you can't really see the answer to that type of prayer. I wanted them to see the power of God in the answers that came.

I taught them that God has 3 answers: "Yes," "Wait," and instead of "No," I told them that what seemed like a "no" was like God saying, "I have a better plan." Even though most of our cancer patients went into remission after chemo, for which we rejoiced, one very special lady in our church and a dear friend who had visited our class, went to live with Jesus. I told the class that for Miss Teri, God had a better plan. Her body was tired and weak, and He invited her home to heaven. This way, they knew God had indeed answered their prayers of healing for their friend, Miss Teri!

One class prayed for a World War II and Korean War veteran, whose medicine for his cancer was going to run over \$4,000 a month! Mr. Hatcher couldn't afford that, but I got the prayer warriors to pray every day about this dilemma. One little boy wanted to take up an offering for Mr. Hatcher, which touched him deeply. The kids made him cards and prayed fervently. A few weeks later, the answer to their prayers amazed us all. Mr. Hatcher had received two purple hearts, one in World War II and one in the Korean War. He found out that for all purple heart recipients, ANY medicine they needed from the Veteran's Administration Hospital where he lived would cost \$7 a month!! The children jumped up and down and rejoiced as

only kids can! We celebrated big for that answer, which came so quickly!

The first class that prayed for a baby being adopted from Russia received a wonderful surprise! My dear friend in Birmingham was adopting a sweet baby boy, and the class prayed daily for him. A few days after they got little Sam home (he was about 14 months), his mom brought him to our class. Sam loved the kids and enjoyed being the center of attention as we sat in a circle on the floor and watched the fulfillment to answered prayer! Sam is now 19 years old, loves the Lord, and became the big brother to two younger sisters.

One year there was a life and death emergency in the hospital for a young child in our church. My husband let me know, and I took my class to the sanctuary to pray. We got up on the stage, and I asked them to get on their knees and silently pray for this little boy. I don't know how long we were there, but it was quite some time. I closed in prayer, we left the sanctuary, and we headed back to our room. When we got to the door, there was a note attached from the school secretary. She had gotten a call from my husband, saying that miraculously the crisis had passed, and that the little boy would live! Oh, the rejoicing in our classroom that day!



Other classes prayed for additional international adoptions, after the first one, which was years before. We would put their pictures up on our bulletin board, and see their little faces daily. Most were from China or Russia, and at times there were hold ups in the paperwork. The kids would pray, and God would answer! They loved praying for the babies and children to come home to their forever families!

Right after school started one year, a call came from my husband about two 16 year old girls, who were in a terrible car accident on Monteagle Mountain. Sadly, one girl died, and the second girl came to Erlanger's trauma center. The children that year prayed for her every day and even made her cards. This precious girl survived, but had brain damage. She later left Erlanger and went to the Shepherd's Center in Atlanta for rehab. On the next to the last week of school after praying for the entire school year, one of my students asked about this young girl. Since she had been in Atlanta and didn't even live in Chattanooga, I had no way of knowing.



That week, my husband and I went to the grocery store on a Friday, after we had gone out to dinner. We never went to the grocery store then, but since we were already out, we decided to go. A woman came up to my husband and said, " I remember you. You were at the hospital and prayed for my daughter when she had her car accident." It was the girl's mom and dad!

They had brought their daughter to Chattanooga after the Atlanta rehab so that she could go to Siskin Rehab, closer to their home in Monteagle. They had rented a temporary apartment in our little suburb of Hixson, and had come to the grocery store at the very same moment we were there! Coincidence? Oh, no! It was totally God! I was able to tell the mom and dad that my class had prayed for their daughter the entire school year! They were astounded, and told of their daughter's miracle with rehab: their daughter had learned to walk, talk, feed herself again, and had gained up to a 9th grade level of ability with her learning! She was in 11th grade, so she didn't have much further to go!



The mom asked me if my class would like to meet their daughter so she could thank them for all their prayers. Early the next week, into our class came our miracle girl! The kids were ecstatic as she walked across the front of the classroom, and thanked them for their year's worth of prayers! The kids sat there staring in disbelief at this beautiful miracle that had walked through their door!

As she sat in the prayer chair before she left, for one last time these third graders lifted up their voices in prayer as they laid their precious hands on her and prayed. The next week, school would be over. There would have never been another time this could have happened. God honored the prayers of 8 and 9 year old children, and then allowed them to see the answer to their prayers. God's perfect timing!

One year, missionary friends of mine came to speak to my class about their work in missions. They asked the class to pray for The B____ people in a Communist nation. They were an



unreached people group and had zero believers in Jesus. The missionaries were taking little solar devices to them, which had the New Testament and the plan of salvation on them. These people were illiterate and worked in the fields, and so these devices were perfect for them to hear the Gospel in their own language! The government officials would not worry that they would become believers because they could neither read or write.

The classes each year from that point on, prayed for this people group. Because the missionaries were overseas, I was not able to ask them about this group for a number of years. When they came back to the States for a visit, I finally got to tell them that a number of my classes had prayed for this unreached people, and I was wondering if they had ever heard about how they were doing.



"Oh, yes!" exclaimed my friend. "There are at least 80 believers now!" I had already retired from teaching by this time, so I couldn't tell my former students this great news, but someday in heaven there will be people who will come up to them and thank them for the prayers they had offered in faith to our great God! **Children love to pray because they have faith and do not doubt that God has the power to answer their prayers.** Each year, my students made a prayer chain of the answers to their prayers. Because I asked them for prayer requests that would have a specific answer, we would put these requests on our Blue List on the board. When an answer came, or when they had a praise report about anything in their life they wanted to share with the class, the child who requested the prayer or had a praise would get a piece of card stock about an inch wide and six inches long. On it, they would put their name, the answer to the prayer or praise and the date.



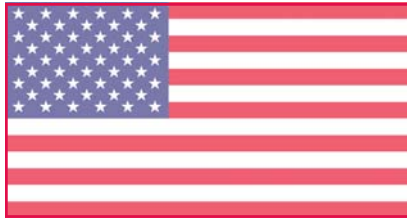
Then we would staple these circles together to make an old fashioned paper chain like they used to put on Christmas trees years ago. We would then hang them across the ceiling tiles and it would grow during the year. There were hundreds and hundreds of these every single year! Every day when we came in the classroom from lunch, recess, etc., the children could look up at the ceiling, see the beautiful chain and know that their God answers prayer! It was a visual reminder every single day! On the next to the last day of school, the class would sit on the floor, and I would take the prayer chain, pull out the staples and read each one with the child's name on it. I had given the children a brown paper lunch bag, and the child would place all their answered prayers and praises in their sack to take home. I told them they might want to hang them in a vertical line in one corner of their bedroom and then add to it. As we sat there in that circle, and as each answer was read with the child's name, the class once again rejoiced at what God had done in our class during their third grade year! One



little girl had prayed for the salvation of her grandfather, and others in the class had joined by praying for him too. He had come to the Lord that year! Best answer ever!

One day a friend in my Sunday School class told me about a mission trip that some in our church were making to Zambia. I took the kids outside on the parking lot and drew an outline map of Zambia with chalk. Then we prayer walked around the outline and prayed for those going to Zambia and the people they would minister to while there.

For the National Day of Prayer in May of each year, we would go on a prayer walk around our school. We would stop at various places, and I would ask for a volunteer to pray over each part. We stood in front of a classroom and prayed for our students and teachers. We stood in front of the window of our



principal and Head of School's offices and prayed for them. We stood in front of our flag pole and prayed for our country, and finally we stood in front of the preschool playground and prayed for the teachers and children in our church's preschool. This was always a special day of prayer for our students as they knew people all over the country were praying that day, just like them!

Several times I tried "Korean-style praying" that was mentioned in the book, *WHEN CHILDREN PRAY*. The children were sitting at their desks and were told to pray aloud for anything they wanted to pray for, as well as to pray for everything on the Blue List. I was a little hesitant to try this since it was such a different way to pray, but I told them to pray loud enough for God to hear, but softly enough so that it would not disturb their neighbors. I was not prepared for the blessing to follow!



As the children began to pray, their voices together sounded like singing in perfect harmony! It continued for several minutes and to be truthful, I did not want it to end. Almost simultaneously, the voices faded away, and the children sat there perfectly still. It felt as if the Holy Spirit had placed a warm, cozy blanket over the whole classroom. One of the children asked if we could do that again sometime, and we did, with the same result! It must have happened near the end of the school year, and it may have been that this occurred with my last class, because these were the only two times that we prayed "Korean style." My daughter-in-law's mother who grew up in Korea, said that many Korean Christians go to their churches very early each morning while it is still dark and pray for quite a long while. They are known for their commitment to intercede on behalf of others, and God honors these faithful believers!



Every time we would hear a police siren or a fire truck, our class would stop and pray for the first responders and for those that needed help. Just today (3-19-21), I got this message from one of my precious former students. It read in part: "I was telling her (her mom) about how I was stuck in traffic for an hour going to work last week and ambulances were going, and it ended up being a really terrible accident. And it always made me think about how you taught me that any time you hear a siren or see an ambulance to stop and pray for that person, because you don't know what is happening to them. And ever since then (third grade), I always try to stop and pray for others when I hear a siren. I just thought you should know that always stuck with me."



Author's Notes

I wish I had written down all that I experienced with third graders and prayer during my 10 years of teaching at Silverdale Baptist Academy, but sadly, I did not. Looking at this 11 years after retirement, many things have been forgotten, but one thing I am sure of: teach children to pray, and you will see the power of God! I read once where someone said that as a child becomes a teen or college student, they might be able to be talked out of what they've been taught about God, but no one will be able to talk them out of what they've personally experienced with God. That is just one reason to invest your time in teaching your children to pray. May God richly bless your ministry to the children He has entrusted into your care!

Postscript:

These 3 stories were not related to my third grade classes but are beautiful.

Story # 1

When we adopted our 4 month old daughter from Japan, she got viral pneumonia from the air on the 23 hour plane trip. Five days after we got her, she was severely ill in PICU. Since viral pneumonia is not treatable with antibiotics, it was a wait and see situation about her very life. At the time, we lived in Virginia, and I was teaching 4 year old preschool. One of the moms came to sit with me at the hospital one evening. That night when her husband was putting their girls to bed, the 5 year old looked at her dad and said, "Daddy, Jesus just talked to me!" "What did Jesus tell you?" he asked. She answered, "Jesus said Mrs. Harris' baby is going to be just fine!" When the mom called me the next morning to tell me what her daughter had told her daddy, I was astounded, because that very morning our sweet little baby had turned the corner, and we knew that she would live! She's now a young mom with daughters of her own, and I love to hear their sweet prayers!



**My son-in-law and
my two granddaughters
and my daughter**



Story # 2

This story is about our oldest granddaughter, who was 4 at the time. A couple in our Sunday School class had a daughter who had just delivered a very premature baby. There were many prayers lifted up for this child, but at her crisis moment, I happened to be babysitting my granddaughter that day. I asked her to pray for this tiny girl, who might not live. What a sweet prayer I was blessed to hear! Soon after the crisis was over, and this little one survived. My granddaughter got to meet her after she came home from several months in the hospital and see the miracle right in front of her! Today, that sweet baby we prayed for is a happy and very healthy 7 year old!



Story # 3

This last story is about a group of second graders at Silverdale Baptist Academy. After I had been retired for about 4 years, our (Norma's and mine) beautiful granddaughter was born with two holes in her heart, one small and one large. Ms. Williams' second graders prayed for the healing of this dear little heart. First, the small hole closed on its own, and we rejoiced. The children kept praying daily, and became her prayer warriors for this final request: that God would heal the large hole without surgery. They prayed and prayed and never gave up! Finally, the cardiologist gave the long awaited news: the large hole had closed without surgery! God had given both our granddaughter and Ms. Williams' class a beautiful miracle! Today this beautiful little girl is a happy, healthy first grader!

References - Children and Prayer

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Title page - Photo of boy praying by J. Wilson.

Page 2 - Teacher in Zambia - Photo by T. Lund.

Page 4 - Boys reading Bible - Photo by B. Sanders; Book Icon - MediaWiki Virtual Library - Author - Varnent - CCASA 3.0 UL. FTS.

Page 6 - Photo of boy dressed up as courageous warrior by S. Kibble.

Pages - 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 25, 26, and 27. Picture of angel from painting. Walters Art Museum - PD.

Page 18 - Classroom in Zambia. Photo by T. Lund.

Page 19 - American Flag. PD.

Page 21 - Police car - Photo by T. Hisgett CCA 2.0 GL; Fire truck - Syced - CCO 1.0 UPD; Ambulance - Photo by E. Tullos - CCA 2.0 GL.

Page 22 - (2 pics) - Children singing. Photos by Grace.

Page 25 - Photo of family by S. Harris.

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H & H Children's Ministry

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How to be saved:

1. Confess your sin.

"All have sinned." Romans 3:23 NKJV

2. Ask Jesus to save you.

"Whoever will call on the name of the LORD
will be saved." Romans 10:13 NASB

3. Pray like this:

Dear Jesus: "Please forgive me of my sins
and come into my life.

Thank you Jesus, for saving me."

Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth,
and the life; no one comes to the Father,
but through me. John 14:6 NASB

Today on _____(date)

_____ (name)

accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

CHILDREN AND PRAYER



**"Children love to pray because they have
faith and do not doubt
that God has the power to answer their prayers."
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