

# 31 WAYS

## to Pray for Your Teen

By Bob Hostetler

He had been raised in a Christian home and had come to faith in Jesus Christ at an early age. He was baptized at a church camp, and had even survived being a preacher's kid. But early in his high school years, my wife and I could sense him slipping away—from us and from God.

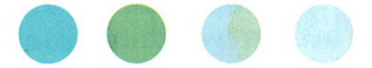
We did our best, of course, to steer him away from dangerous friendships. We watched him struggle with depression. We tried to love and encourage him as much as we could. But every effort failed—and sometimes seemed to make matters worse.

So after a couple years of proving our inadequacy as parents, we stopped trying. Instead, we focused our best efforts on praying. I scheduled a weekend prayer retreat at a retreat center about an hour from home. I took with me only my

Bible and one other resource: a 31-day prayer calendar I had devised years ago and had used since my children were small.

For three days I focused my prayers on my son. I prayed as I knelt in the spartan room provided for me. I prayed as I lay prostrate in the prayer chapel on the retreat center grounds. I prayed as I walked wooded paths, ate simple vegetarian meals, and rocked in a chair on the porch. By the end of the weekend, I had prayed my way through many Bible verses and had compiled a brand-new list, tailored to the needs of my teenage son.

I have since realized that many parents of teenagers—even those not in the desperate straits I felt myself in—might profit from a 31-day prayer plan for their teenagers. I hope the following 31 ways to pray will help you in that holy task:



### Focus Your Best Parenting Efforts on Prayer

- 1 Salvation**  
First and foremost, Lord, let my children know and experience that salvation that comes by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8).
- 2 Self-control**  
God, help my children to “think clearly and exercise self-control” in all they do (1 Peter 1:13, NLT).
- 3 Protection from peer pressure**  
Lord, strengthen my children against peer pressure, that they may always stand strong against enticements to do wrong (Prov. 1:10).
- 4 Constructive friendships**  
Father, lead my children into constructive friendships; lead them away from “bad company” (1 Cor. 15:33).
- 5 Honesty and integrity**  
God, help my children walk blamelessly, do what is right, and speak truth in their hearts (Ps. 15:2-5).