

BY JUSTIN WHITMEL EARLEY, AUTHOR OF

HABITS OF THE HOUSEHOLD

PRACTICING THE STORY OF GOD IN EVERYDAY FAMILY RHYTHMS

BEDTIME LITURGY

A BEDTIME BLESSING OF GOSPEL LOVE

Said perhaps with a hand on your child's face or head.

Parent: Do you see my eyes?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Can you see that I see your eyes?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Do you know that I love you?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Do you know that I love you no matter what bad things you do?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Do you know that I love you no matter what good things you do?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Who else loves you like that?

Child: God does.

Parent: Even more than me?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Rest in that love.



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BEDTIME LITURGY

A TICKLE BLESSING

Suddenly, and with lots of squirming:

Parent: Dear Lord, may this child find much joy and laughter, all of his/her days.

Child: *Uncontrollable laughter, until they can barely breathe*

Parent: Amen.

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A BOUNCY BLESSING

While bouncing the bed around the child, and trying to get as much giggling and flopping as possible:

Parent: Dear Lord, may this child bounce from blessing to blessing, all of his/her days.

Child: *Bouncing and laughing*

Parent: Amen.

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A SQUEEZE BLESSING

During a really big, really tight hug:

Parent: Dear Lord, may this child feel your love wrap around them, all of his/her days.

Child: *Struggles to break free and hopefully laughs*

Parent: Amen.

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BEDTIME LITURGY

A BLESSING FOR THE BODY OF A CHILD WHILE LYING IN BED

As prayer progresses, move hands to touch each part of the body:

Jesus, bless their feet, may they bring good news.

Bless their legs, may they carry on in times of suffering.

Bless their backs, may they be strong enough to bear the burdens of others.

Bless their arms to hold the lonely, **and their hands** to do good work.

Bless their necks, may they turn their heads toward the poor.

Bless their ears to discern truth, **their eyes** to see beauty, and **their mouths** to speak encouragement.

Bless their minds, may they grow wise.

And finally, bless their hearts, may they grow to love you—and all that you have made—in the right order.

Amen.



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BEDTIME LITURGY

A SHORT BLESSING FOR LITTLES WHEN YOU ARE FRUSTRATED

Parent: God loves you. Jesus died for you. And the Holy Spirit is with you. Goodnight.

Pause for a deep breath, and a gentle touch.

Parent: So I too will love you. I too will sacrifice for you. And I too will never leave you.
