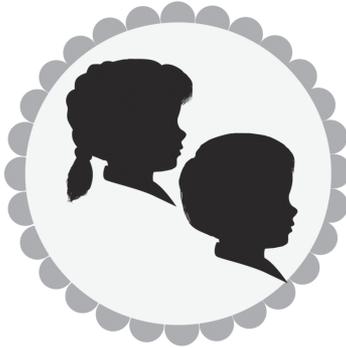


My
Grandmother
is...



praying for
me

*daily prayers
and proverbs
for character
development
in grandchildren*

Kathryn March Pamela Ferriss Susan Kelton

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For all our grandchildren

*May the Lord richly bless you
through the faithful prayers
of your parents and grandparents.*

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Foreword

Standard wisdom for families on road trips has been that the wife had better pack a map, because no self-respecting man would ever stop and ask directions. However lost he may become, whatever hours are added to the trip trying to weave his way back onto the right route, a true man's man is simply not interested in anyone's imposition of directions.

All this changed with the advent of the GPS. This is not merely because maps are becoming obsolete with the dawn of this new technology, but simply because men love consumer electronics! Now, men are more than willing to confess their directional ineptitude, if only *she* will permit him to go to the electronics store and buy a GPS.

Truth is, we are all directionally challenged. Sin clouds our vision, and our idolatrous hearts want to carve out paths of our own choosing. Yet God is faithful. He has not left us without a map, the lines of which trace the trajectory of redemption from a dignified beginning in a paradisiacal garden, to the fallout of the Fall, to a cross and a tomb—neither of which could hold down the Redeeming Mapmaker—all the way to a consummate beginning in a new heaven and earth. And right in the middle of that story, a trove of wisdom for the journey for those of us who live amidst the fallout of that Fall, between redemption and consummation.

Wisdom has been a hot commodity in various cultures throughout human history. One need not search far to find

collections of wise maxims tuned for keeping one from folly. A quick web search turns up Irish proverbs, English proverbs, Chinese proverbs, African proverbs... a proverbial cornucopia of wise words. And there is much wisdom to be mined in many of these sources. God, in His common grace to human beings created in His image, has allowed the discovery of certain truths, even among those who do not acknowledge the source of truth. The assumption, whatever the culture, whatever the epoch in human history, is that the wise person will take the wisdom and run with it—live it out.

Something more is needed...some *One* more is needed. This is why the biblical proverbs cannot be summarily tossed onto the generic pile of wisdom this world has to offer. To think of the biblical Proverbs as mere good advice, is like calling a Stradivarius a fiddle. Indeed, Proverbs in the Bible is not given so we can hear wise advice and run with it, but ultimately that we might *run to and with* the source of wisdom, Christ Jesus, who has become for us “wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1Corinthians 1:30, NKJB).

So, when we call our loved ones, our brothers and sisters in Christ, our children and grandchildren, and ourselves to live out the wisdom of Proverbs, we are doing more than suggesting moralistic, outward conformity. We are calling them to lean into Christ, who has become for us wisdom, because we are bereft of it in and of ourselves. Let us remind our grandchildren that it is not wise living that merits God’s saving grace, but rather that living wisely is the joyful response to God’s saving grace at work in our lives. And when they act foolishly, when they fail to live with integrity, generosity, etc., they shall not despair, for they have One who has become wisdom from God, *and righteousness and sanctification and redemption*, and so

they may cling to Him in their weakness. We must teach our grandchildren that the pursuit of wisdom and integrity is a hopeful process even when they stumble, because they are united to Christ. Wisdom is not some thing way out there, foreign, hard to access, impossible to imitate. Wisdom is theirs as they learn of, live for, and love the Lord Jesus. Calling them to wisdom is simply calling them to be disciples (which word in the Greek means *learners*) of Christ.

To pray for our grandchildren's growth in character development is a uniquely Christ-like thing to do. Jesus prays similarly for believers in his High Priestly prayer, when he asks His Father, "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:7). You see, to pray that our grandchildren will live according to Proverbs or any other part of that toolbox of sanctification that is the Bible, is to pray for their growth in holiness and conformity to Christ (see Romans 8:28-29). Sanctification is a certainty (see Romans 8:30), for the God who causes our salvation, carries our salvation and completes our salvation, as Paul says, "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).

Though your prayers be weak and inconsistent at times, though your own pursuit of wisdom may not always be exemplary, though your grandchildren ebb and flow in their interest in being wise, take great comfort in knowing that no one, not even you, is more committed to the sanctification of covenant children than God Himself. So, teach them wisdom, pray for them, and remind them that they and you, empowered by Christ (see Colossians 1:29), "can do all things through Him who strengthens [you]" (Philippians 4:13).

Pray with the aid of this little book that these three

grandmothers have written. Think of it as a GPS unit of sorts—a “Grandparents’ Prayer System”—as you seek to love and lead your little ones in biblical wisdom. For to pray for our grandchildren that they would learn and live out the principles of the Book of Proverbs is itself an act of obedience to Scripture: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given him” (James 1:5).

Did you catch that? Yes, it is God who gives wisdom. But are you ready to believe in His generosity in giving? Are you ready to believe that He does not reproach you for your own lack of wisdom or your grandchildren for their occasional forays into folly? He will, with integrity and perfect timing, supply your needs and theirs. So, go on, ask in faith and don’t doubt (James 1:6). As John Newton has taught us to sing:

*Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring;
For his grace and power are such
None can ever ask too much.*

—David Owen Filson, Teaching Pastor
Christ Presbyterian Church
Nashville, Tennessee
(For an expanded treatment by Pastor Filson
of Proverbs, please see our website,
www.mygrandmotheris.com)

Acknowledgments

We are most grateful to the Lord for leading and guiding us throughout the completion of this devotional book. Each time we met, we were humbled that He might allow the three of us to help impact the next generation through prayer.

We also thank our husbands who encouraged and supported us throughout the writing of this book. They never stopped believing in us and sharing our desire to shape the character development of grandchildren through prayer.

Our editor, Anne Severance, was invaluable when it came to reading and correcting our script. She carefully considered the verses chosen from Proverbs and aligned our prayers and applications to those verses. Don and Chris Wise joyfully struggled through the design process with us. They listened to our ideas, reactions, and individual tastes and used their combined talents to create a lovely format for our manuscript. Don blessed us with his vision of how our prayers could impact not only our community, but also the world. We appreciated the theological oversight provided by Pastor David Owen Filson. His explanation of the Proverbs as part of God's revelation of creation, covenant and Christ helped us to better understand how to create prayers from the Scriptures. Ginny Elder, Robin Flis, Valeria MacPhail, and Linda Nelson each added keen observations about the artistic design for the book and helped us develop its cover. A special thanks to Wes Yoder for counsel and encouragement.

There were many other friends and acquaintances who encouraged us along the way. Each time someone asked, "How

is the book coming?” we were heartened and bolstered by their interest. It has been a privilege to see God’s miraculous hand guiding the process of writing this book. We ask for ourselves and our readers that the Lord will allow us to leave a legacy of faith as we boldly approach His throne with prayers for the coming generations.

Introduction

If you are reading this book, you are most likely a grandmother. Or maybe you know a grandmother, are married to one, or fondly remember your own. Whatever the case, we invite you to join us in getting involved in the lives of grandchildren. God has placed in our hearts the passion to pray for the next generation to become men and women of strong character and great faith.

Over a year ago, the three of us—Kathy, Pam, and Susan—sat down together to consider how God could use us in the lives of our grandchildren. We were all relatively new at grandmothing, but each had the same vision—to pass on a legacy of genuine faith, much like the description in 2 Timothy 1:5: “I have been reminded of your sincere faith which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice.”

Like so many grandparents today, we don’t live near most of our grandchildren, so interacting with them frequently isn’t possible. Yet we all desired to have a daily influence on these young ones who are so dear to our hearts. We decided this could be accomplished through intentional prayer. Thus, the idea of a daily devotional prayer book specifically for grandmothers was birthed.

The story of this book actually began earlier when the Lord led one of the authors to pray through the book of Proverbs for the character development of her grandchildren. As the three of us discussed this practice and studied this great book of wisdom, we realized that while the verses contain directives by which to live, these alone cannot produce godly

character. It is ultimately the quickening of God’s Spirit and the inner working of His grace which cause a person to be conformed to His image. With this as our foundation, we spent time individually and together identifying those character traits we most longed for the Lord to develop in our grandchildren. After compiling a list of traits and grouping them into twelve categories—one for each month—we asked the Lord to guide and direct our prayers.

It was exciting, yet sobering, to realize that if we prayed “effective and fervent prayers” on behalf of our grandchildren, our sovereign and good God promises to hear those prayers and answer them. As the Lord gave form to our prayers, He also impressed upon us the importance of reinforcing the development of the character traits through applications. Thus, on each day’s entry, we have included a verse from Proverbs, a prayer specific to that verse, and an activity that allows grandmother and grandchild to interact in a practical application of the truth.

We know there are limitations to the prayers and activities as written. For example, we found that it proved too awkward to write each prayer for both grandsons and granddaughters, and so we alternated. One day, our prayers utilize the feminine pronouns for our grandchildren and the next day, the male pronouns. The prayers, however, are designed for both boys and girls. We encourage the reader to pray the prayer on behalf of a grandchild, perhaps inserting the name.

We also realize that in our variety of applications, some may be more appropriate for younger children and others for those who are older. Each application is meant to jumpstart the reader’s own creativity. We acknowledge and delight in the diversity of our readers, and encourage them to adapt the application section to their unique needs, locations, and resources.

In categorizing the character traits, we recognized that often there was overlap of two or three characteristics contained in a single verse. The reader may think that a verse categorized under the trait “Graciousness” might be more appropriate under “Wisdom.” We wrestled with this dilemma, prayed through the verses, and made the best decisions we could. We are well aware, however, that others might have chosen differently.

We are three very ordinary women, three grandmothers who believe in the faithfulness of God. Our hearts’ desire is simply and profoundly to implore the Lord to equip the next generations to stand strong in their faith. While we want our grandchildren to know that we are praying for them—regularly, specifically, fervently—we are even more concerned that they know our God and His promise to hear and answer those who call on Him. It is our earnest prayer that, early in life, our grandchildren will come to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, which will equip them to be godly men and women, able to influence the world with the gospel.

For you, dear reader, we pray a sense of God’s presence and leading as these prayers are uttered on behalf of this next generation. We pray that your own faith will be strengthened and that you will experience God’s blessings. Finally, we pray that God would enable us all to leave a legacy of faith so that He might be honored and glorified. May we proclaim together Psalm 89:1-2: “I will sing of the Lord’s great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.”

As you read these Scriptures and pray these prayers, we want you to know that we are praying for *you*.

MAY MY GRANDCHILD DEMONSTRATE...

FAITHFULNESS



JANUARY



January 1

“Like the cold of snow in time of harvest
is a faithful messenger to those
who send him, for he refreshes
the soul of his masters.”

— PROVERBS 25:13 (NKJV)

*Lord, I pray that my grandchild's faithfulness
will be an encouragement to everyone she meets.
May she know that You are pleased when she seeks You
and that her faith can be a refreshment to others.
May she be known as a steadfast messenger
of Your Word and a dependable friend to all.*



Application: Enjoy a cup of hot chocolate with your grandchild on a cold winter's day. Discuss how God's Word tells us that our faith can be just like a refreshing treat when we share it with others.



January 2

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”

—PROVERBS 3:5-6

Father, it is tempting for Your children to take detours that lead them astray. But I pray that my grandchild will trust You to keep his feet on a straight path. Thank You for giving him this Bible promise—that as he acknowledges You in everything he does, You will guide him to safety.



Application: Take a walk in your neighborhood and discuss the best path to take to arrive at your destination. Reassure your grandchild that no matter what difficulties he may face in life, God will be there to walk with him.



January 3

“He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress,
and for his children it will be a refuge.”

—PROVERBS 14: 26

*Lord, You are our refuge, and we thank You
for Your protection. May my grandchild
embrace You in faith at an early age and learn to trust
You. Help her to understand that Your promises are like
a strong fortress, providing safety and security for Your
children in an ever-changing world.*



Application: Build a fortress together out of materials you may have at home—Legos, building blocks, popsicle sticks, etc.—and discuss how a fortress provides protection.



January 4

“Like a bad tooth or a lame foot
is reliance on the unfaithful
in times of trouble.”

—PROVERBS 25:19

*Lord, I pray that my grandchild will learn that,
even though his friends may let him down, You are the
ultimate example of faithfulness in times of trouble.
I pray that You will also send him faithful friends who
would lead him to a deeper walk with You.
Help him to be trustworthy, one who can be counted
among the faithful when troubles arise.*



Application: Play a game of hopscotch with your grandchild. Talk about how hard it would be to play this game if he had a sore foot and how much more stable he is when he uses both feet. Discuss the importance of stability and reliability in times of trouble.



January 5

“The fear of the LORD
is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One
is understanding.”

—PROVERBS 9:10

*Lord, please help my grandchild to understand
fear of You—a balance of awe and reverence with
approachability. Help her to respect You as the
Creator and Sustainer of the universe and the ultimate
Judge of all mankind. Yet at the same time, let her know
that she can call, “Abba-Papa!” and You will answer.
Help her, Lord, to be faithful in her pursuit of You.*



Application: Read Psalm 100 with your grandchild so that you can rejoice in the Lord. For an extra challenge, memorize this psalm together.



January 6

“A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
but a trustworthy envoy brings healing.”

—PROVERBS 13:17

Lord, I pray that You would allow my grandchild to faithfully deliver Your words of encouragement to those around him. Help him to see how speaking truth can heal a heavy heart and mind. It is sobering to realize that not speaking truth can lead us into trouble, and I pray that my grandchild will not have to experience that reality.



Application: Talk about the many ways we can bring healing to others—counseling, friendship, encouraging words—and how speaking the truth in love is always the best way to communicate.



January 7

“For he guards the course of the just
and protects the way of his faithful ones.
Then you will understand what is right
and just and fair – every good path.”

– PROVERBS 2:8-9

*Lord, I thank You that You are our Guardian.
I pray that my grandchild would faithfully trust Your
guardianship in every area of her life. Help her to know
that You are also her Protector. May she desire at an
early age to follow the path You lay out for her and to
understand what is right, just, and fair.*



Application: Memorize with your grandchild Romans 16:19b: “I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.”