



## I Pray for Children

By Rebecca Davis

I pray for children who greet me with sticky kisses and sweaty hugs.  
I pray for children who never have treats or are not permitted to play.

I pray for children who seldom pick up their rooms and have an overabundance of "things."

I pray for children who live in dark crowded rooms, sleep on pallets and have no possessions.

I pray for children who are picky eaters and seem to have hollow legs.  
I pray for children who will eat anything and never have enough.

I pray for children who are held, caressed, hugged and rocked in a loved one's arms.

I pray for children who are beaten, mistreated and never touched except in hate or lust.

I pray for children who squeal with delighted horror when watching monster movies.

I pray for children whose monsters are real and look like ordinary people.

I pray for children who daydream of the future and the endless possibilities of who they may become.

I pray for children who dare not dream of the future because it's a continuation of the horrible present.

I pray for children who sleep peacefully in safety knowing they are protected by a loving family.

I pray for children who cry themselves to sleep because their family has abandoned them.

I pray for children who awake from bad dreams to have a calming voice telling them, "It's OK, I'm here."

I pray for children whose nightmares come in the daytime and who have no escape or refuge.

I pray for children who will never know want or hunger or have to fear for their lives.

I pray for children who live daily with nothing, who want and hunger and fear.

I pray for children whose tears can make me laugh and whose sweetness can bring me to tears.

I pray for children who seldom know laughter and whose tears are ignored.

I pray for children who look at life through eyes shining with health and curiosity.

I pray for children who look at life through eyes dull with disappointment and hopelessness.

I pray for children who act like children in their silliness and excitement.

I pray for children who have aged beyond their years.

Lord Jesus, remind us of what we can do for these children. Keep us ever mindful of your love for us and for them. Show us ways to prevent the abuse and trafficking of these children who are precious in your sight. Let us remember your words when you said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." May we do everything possible to keep all your children safe, well-fed and loved. Amen.

*Rebecca Davis is from South Roxana, Ill. She is a national leader with American Baptist Women's Ministries, coordinating resource development. AB Women's Ministries is engaged in making a difference for children who are being trafficked in the worldwide sex trade.*

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