

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT PRAYER

Luke 11; 18



One day, Jesus' disciples saw that He was praying. When Jesus finished, one of His disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray." Jesus said, "Whenever you pray, say this: 'Father, Your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone in debt to us. And do not bring us into temptation.'"

Jesus also said to them, "Imagine if you were to go to one of your friends at midnight and say, 'Friend, loan me three loaves of bread.' That man would answer from inside and say, 'Don't bother me! It's too late. I've already gone to bed.'"

"Yet in boldness, if you were to keep knocking on the door, the man would eventually get up and give you what you were asking for! So I say to you: ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened." Jesus also said, "If a son asks for a fish, would a good father give him a snake? If a son asks for an egg, will a good father give him a scorpion? How much more will our heavenly Father give us the Holy Spirit when we ask."

Sometime later, Jesus told them a parable about praying and not giving up. He said, "There once was an unkind judge, and a

widow kept coming to him over and over, saying, 'Give me justice! Do what is right!' Eventually, that judge gave in and did what the widow was asking for, because she wore him down by asking over and over. "If this evil judge will finally do what is right, how much more will God grant justice to His people when they cry out to Him day and night!"

Jesus also told another parable about prayer: "Two men went up to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee was standing and praying like this: 'God, I thank You that I'm not like greedy and sinful people like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I give money to God.' "But the tax collector just kept saying, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner!' "I tell you," said Jesus, "only the tax collector went to his house justified. Everyone who lifts himself up will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be lifted up."

Christ Connection: Jesus taught people to keep praying. God is a good Father who will give His people what they need. The most important prayer we can pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so sinners can be made right with God.



1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

•**Have you had a big goal? What was it? Did you ever feel like giving up?**

2 SESSION STARTER

☐ OPTION 1: PRAYER WORD WEB



Before this activity, make a list of several Scripture verses about prayer. Gather kids in one large group. Write the word PRAYER in the center of the teaching board or a poster. Challenge kids to think about prayer and shout out what they think of when they hear the word prayer. Write the responses around the word on the board. Then, ask for several kids to volunteer to use a concordance to look up Scripture verses about prayer to see what the Bible says on the subject. Add a short summary of each verse on the board next to the kids' responses.

SAY “ Today we will learn how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD.** God is a good Father who hears His children when they pray. ”

☐ OPTION 2: PRAYER TABLE TENNIS

Before this activity set up your own table tennis table using a portable net on a long table. Place a table tennis paddle at each end of the table and a table tennis ball on one side. Direct kids to stand around the table in a circle. Call the first two kids to play each other. If a kid misses the ball or hits the ball off the table, they are out and should leave the circle. At that point, the next kid will step in to play the winner of that round. Continue playing until there is only one kid is left.

SAY “ Today we will hear that **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD.** Prayer is the way we get to communicate with God and He responds, like the way you hit the ball over the table, and someone responded by hitting it back. Prayer is a conversation with God; it goes back and forth, and we can have faith that He will respond. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear about when Jesus taught about prayer. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read from Luke 11; 18.

•What does this story teach us about God?

Jesus taught people to keep praying. **God is a good Father who will give His people what they need.** The most important prayer we can pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so sinners can be made right with God.

•What did Jesus want the disciples to learn about prayer?

Jesus showed the disciples the importance of persistence in prayer—to pray and not give up. The man who asked for the bread kept asking until he received the bread. In the same way, **God wants us to keep on praying for our requests.**

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

2 MISSIONS MOMENT

Explain that in 2007, in a little coffee shop in Pullman, Washington, five people gathering to talk about Jesus grew to 50 people. At the end of each gathering, someone would say: “If what we’re talking about resonates with you, please stick around.” More and more students were beginning to hear about Jesus, and the community began to grow and continues to grow. God has moved in the hearts of college students to be followers of Jesus who then invite others to learn more about Jesus.

From one site in 2007 to 16 different sites across seven states of the Pacific Northwest and Canada, Resonate is a family of churches committed to college campuses. God has worked in the hearts of families and students to grow closer to Him and live for Him. They believe God is moving among the next generation, and they want to be involved in telling people the good news about Jesus.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

The most important prayer we will ever pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask Him to save us. If you would like to know more about trusting Jesus as your Savior, your parents or one of the church leaders would like to share more with you.

4 PRAY

Thank You, Lord, that we can talk with You through prayer. Thank You for being a good Father who meets all our needs. Help us be faithful in prayer. In Jesus' name, amen.

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

				
GOD RULES	WE SINNED	GOD PROVIDED	JESUS GIVES	WE RESPOND
Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.	Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.	Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.	Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.	Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- Is it OK to pray and ask God for the things you want to happen?
- Why is prayer important?

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Guide preteens to open their Bibles to Luke 11. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 11:13. Explain that Jesus used the parable of parents giving their children good gifts to show that we can trust God to answer our prayers in ways that are good. If humans, who are sinful, know how to love and care for their children and give them good gifts, how much more will God love and care for His children? God promises to hear and answer His children when we pray, but we must remember that God may answer in a different way than we want or expect. When we trust Him with our desires through prayer, we can also trust that His answers to our prayers are the best because He loves and cares for His children. Choose another volunteer to read aloud Luke 11:13 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. Why should we keep praying, even when we don't see an answer?

We should keep praying, most importantly, because Jesus told us to. When we give up praying, we are assuming that God is not listening or will not answer. God often has a different timeline and different answer than we had planned, but His plan is always the best. When we persist in prayer, God changes our hearts to become more like His. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.)

2. What kind of things should we pray about?

Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask for help, and confess our sins. Jesus' model prayer in today's story showed that we should pray for God to meet daily needs, for forgiveness of our sins, and for protection from temptation to sin. We can trust God with anything through prayer. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Philippians 4:6-7.)

3. Why is it important to pray with humility?

We should have the right attitude when we pray, remembering that we are sinful, God is holy, and we need His mercy. We should also realize that even when God's answer to our prayer is different than we had hoped or planned, it is the best answer because God is a good Father and knows what is best for us. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Jeremiah 29:11.)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What is prayer?

Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins.



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Jeremiah 29:12-13. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together. Before this activity, write the words of the key passage on sticky notes and hide them around the room. Make a separate set in a different color for each team. Form kids into teams of three or four. Assign each team a color of sticky notes to look for. Challenge them to find all their team's sticky notes and arrange them in the correct order of the verse. The first team to complete the key passage wins.

2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking God that He hears us when we pray and cares for us.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

PRAYER POSTERS

Form kids into groups of two or three and invite them to sit around tables. Distribute a poster board to each group. Place markers, crayons, and colored pencils in the center of each table. Challenge kids to work together to create a poster about prayer. Encourage kids to highlight how and why we pray through their words and illustrations. Consider providing an example poster to help kids get started. Once groups have finished their posters, invite each group to share with the rest of the kids. Display posters in your classroom or somewhere else in your church.

Remind preteens that today we learned how Jesus taught people to keep praying to God. Prayer is how we talk with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins.