

Jesus, Teach Me How to Pray

A Year in The Lord's Prayer and other Bible Basics



Unit 1: Our Father Who Art in Heaven

Week 1: A Father Who Wants to Talk To Us

Lesson Overview

Today we'll begin learning the Lord's Prayer. You will have this opportunity to introduce the prayer to the group, and for the first time have them repeat it line by line after you, so they can begin to memorize it.

In this first unit the children will learn about their Father in heaven. It's our job as adult leaders to help them understand that we are not just "repeating words," we are talking to our Dad. The Lord's Prayer is a conversation between God and us. Whenever you have an opportunity, reiterate the key phrase, so that every child will go home repeating, "God wants to talk to me, and He wants me to talk to Him."

KEY PHRASE: God Wants to Talk To Us, and He Wants Us to Talk to Him

SETTING UP THE LESSON

5-10 Minutes

Introduction: It's hard to communicate without words
(You can also use the Illustration, Video, Song, Skit, etc. for the set up)

PRESENTING THE LESSON

10-15 Minutes

Scripture Basis: Luke 11:1-4 (also found in Matthew 6:9-13)

MAKING IT REAL TO KIDS TODAY

(Choose as many as you have time for)

Game: Charades or Win, Lose or Draw

5-10 Minutes

Supplies: Slips of paper with common sports, activities, movies, or actions (at least one for each child). Examples: *Baseball bat—School Bus—Mickey Mouse—Happy Meal—Bedtime—Tooth Fairy—Hot Dogs—Cat—Dance*

Craft: Prayer Boxes

10-15 Minutes

Supplies: Small boxes (jewelry style gift boxes), slips of paper (about 2.5"x4"), markers, jewels, sequins, ribbons, foam shapes, scissors, glue

Video: Finding Nemo Clip

8-10 Minutes

Supplies: Video clips or DVD from *Finding Nemo*

Song: New verse to "Jesus Loves Me"

3-5 Minutes

WRAPPING IT UP—SENDING IT HOME

5-7 Minutes

Clean Up & Prayer Time

KEY PHRASE: God Wants to Talk To Us, and He Wants Us To Talk to Him

SETTING IT UP

5-10 Minutes

Introduction: It's hard to communicate without words

As you begin today, don't use any words. Get the kids attention by waving or banging on the table. Make them figure out what you are saying. You might make signs to indicate we aren't going to talk right now. Try getting the children to follow you around in a "Follow the Leader" type game without talking. Gently drag one child out behind you and indicate they should follow, but no talking. After you walk around a time or two with that child add another until all or most have figured it out. If you have another adult helper, ask him or her to be prepared to act like they have figured it out so they can follow too and demonstrate what to do.

After a time or two around the room (or into a hall if there's one nearby that won't bother anyone) with all the children following, motion for everyone to stop and sit back down. Say "Whew, we made it! Now we can talk (if they all begin to talk at once you might say, "OH Wait a minute, I meant I could talk").

Ask the kids:

How difficult was it for you to understand me when I was only motioning?

Do you like being quiet and not talking?

What does it make you feel like if someone won't talk to you, even by accident?

Someone will probably relate to being ignored by a friend or even a parent. It makes us feel terrible. Say: Yes, we feel bad when our friends or family ignore us or are mad at us. How do you think God feels when we go a whole day without even saying a word to Him?

(Allow for discussion). God wants to communicate with us so badly that He sent Jesus to get to know us, and then Jesus told us the best way to talk to His Father. That's what we're going to talk about not only this week, but most of the next year. Your Father up in heaven (God) wants to talk to you.

PRESENTING THE STORY

10-15 Minutes

Scripture Basis: Luke 11:1-13 (also found in Matthew 6:9-13)

You do not have to read this directly from the Bible—use the story form below or reword it to fit your personality

One day when Jesus and the twelve guys He hung out with all the time were by themselves . . . Wait a minute, do you know what we call those twelve guys? (Wait for responses) Yes, Jesus hung out with the twelve apostles (or disciples). One day when Jesus and His twelve disciples were hanging out by themselves, Jesus was praying. When He got done, His twelve friends asked Him to teach them how to pray. So Jesus taught them a simple prayer they could use to remind them of the things that were important to talk to God about when they pray.

Here's the prayer He taught them. Why don't you repeat each line after me? Let's bow our heads and fold our hands. (Pause at each * so the kids can repeat. If you have a helper, let him or her lead in the "repeat")

Our Father which art in Heaven * Hallowed be Thy Name * Thy Kingdom Come * Thy will be done *

On earth as it is in Heaven * Give us this day our daily bread *

And forgive us our debts * As we forgive our debtors *

Lead us not into temptation * But Deliver us from evil *

For Thine is the Kingdom the power and the glory forever * Amen

That was great! That is the prayer Jesus taught His disciples. He wanted them to know how important it is to talk to God, because just like God is Jesus' Father, God was the disciples' Father. And you know what? He's our Father, too.

God is our Father and He wants us to talk to Him every day.

How would you feel if you went to school and your friend didn't talk to you? (Allow for response) It makes God just as sad when we don't talk to Him everyday.

KEY PHRASE: God Wants to Talk To Us, and He Wants Us To Talk to Him

Ask some questions about talking to God—use these as starters or come up with some of your own:

- How often do you talk to God?
- When do you talk to God?
- What are some things you say to God when you talk to him?
- Why should we pray? (*Because God is our Father and He wants us to talk to Him*)

MAKING IT REAL TO KIDS TODAY

Game: Charades or Win, Lose & Draw

10-15 Minutes

Supplies: Slips of paper with common sports, activities, movies, or actions (at least one for each child).

Examples: *Baseball bat—School Bus—Mickey Mouse—Happy Meal—Bedtime—Tooth Fairy—Hot Dogs—Cat—Dance*

Prior to your meeting prepare slips of paper with phrases or words that the kids will be familiar with. This can be anything, because the point of the game is to discover how difficult it is to communicate without talking. Be sure to have at least one slip for each child. Gather the children into a circle or semi-circle. Allow each to have a turn acting out or drawing clues to get the group to guess the phrase or thing that they draw. The child who guesses can be the next artist/actor—if that child has already had a turn allow them to choose the next artist/actor. Be sure to emphasize they aren't allowed to talk or make noises.

The Teaching Moment: After everyone has had a turn (or you need to quit because of time) talk to the kids about how hard it was to figure things out or make others understand without talking. Remind them that God is our Father and He wants us to talk to Him because He loves us and wants to know what we're doing.

Video: *Finding Nemo* "First Day of School"

8-10 Minutes

Supplies: Video clips or DVD from *Finding Nemo*

This clip is from the beginning of the Movie. If you don't have a copy, you might borrow it from someone at your church, rent it at a video store or borrow it from the local library. At the main menu pick "Scene Selections," choose "First Day of School" Nemo is excited about school and doesn't want to take time to listen to his dad. He's in a hurry to have fun. The clip ends just as Nemo gets taken by the diver. To shorten it a bit, or if you don't have access to the DVD, you could play two clips back to back:

Nemo's First Day at School: <https://vimeo.com/271168976>

Nemo Gets Taken By the Diver: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTHXFzB4mU8>

The Teaching Moment: Ask the kids: Do you sometimes get in a hurry and forget to listen to your parents? What happens when you do that? (*Allow for answers.*) A lot of times we get in trouble, or we might even miss out on fun things. When we learn to pray, we'll find out that God wants to talk to us too. And the same thing happens when we don't listen to our heavenly Father. Even adults get in trouble when they forget to listen. What can we do to make sure that we take time to pray everyday and listen to God in case He has something important to tell us? (*Allow for answers.*)

KEY PHRASE: God Wants to Talk To Us, and He Wants Us To Talk to Him

Craft: Prayer Boxes

10-15 Minutes

Supplies: Small boxes (jewelry style gift boxes), slips of paper (about 2.5"x4"), markers, jewels, sequins, ribbons, foam shapes, scissors, glue

You may want to put a hole in the top of the box prior to meeting with the children.

Give each child a small box and decorating elements. On the top of the box have all the children write "his/her name's Prayer Box." Allow them to decorate the box any way they'd like.

The Teaching Moment: As they decorate, ask them what kind of things they say to God when they talk to Him. Help them write these things on the slips of paper and let them put them in the box. Ask each child to have at least one slip that is a praise to God and another that has the name of someone in this group. Remind them when we talk to God, we need to praise Him and thank Him for our friends as well as pray for them. Encourage them to take their boxes home and use them each day as they pray. Tell them they can take out the slips. If they see one that God has answered, say a prayer of thanks. If God hasn't answered yet, pray for it again. They can add slips to it each day. Remind them to add words of praise to the box also.

Song: "Jesus Loves Me"

3-5 Minutes

Use the tune of "Jesus Loves Me" with these words—sing it through a few times so they'll get the words.

Use the signs to help them remember.

- **Jesus Loves Me when I pray**
(SIGNS— **Jesus:** Point to the center of each hand, **Loves:** Cross arms over chest, **Me:** point to self, **Pray:** fold hands like praying)
- **He wants to hear me every day**
(SIGNS—**He:** point heavenward, **Hear:** hand near ear, **Me:** Point to self, **Everyday:** Put right elbow in left hand with arm straight up then move right hand down into left elbow like the sun is setting)
- **Morning, noon and nighttime, too**
(SIGNS—**Morning:** Put left hand inside right elbow with arm straight out then lift arm toward body, **Noon:** Keep right elbow in left hand and hold right arm straight up on top of left hand, **Nighttime:** Keep right elbow in left hand and drop right hand in front of left elbow)
- **Every moment all day through.**
(SIGNS- **Every Moment:** Wave both hands from center out, **All day through:** Start like "noon" above and then put right hand down into left elbow like the sun is setting)
- **Yes, Jesus Loves Me (3x)**
(SIGNS- **Yes:** make fist with right hand and then hold it up and nod it up and down (like nodding your head yes), **Jesus:** Touch the center of your left then right palm, **Loves:** Cross arms over chest, **Me:** Point to chest)
- **The Bible Tells me So**
(SIGNS- **The Bible:** Touch center of palms like you did for "Jesus" then make your hands into a book (Jesus' Book), **Tells:** index finger—or three fingers— start at chin and move away **Me:** Point to chest, **So:** Make a big sweeping motion with index finger from forehead pointing forward then toward floor)

KEY PHRASE: God Wants to Talk To Us, and He Wants Us To Talk to Him

WRAPPING IT UP—SENDING IT HOME

5-10 Minutes

Cleaning Up

We want the children to learn to be responsible, so be sure they help with the clean up, but remind them not to go anywhere, the group is going to talk to their Father together one more time.

Closing Worship and Prayer

Either gather the children in a circle holding hands or allow them to sit down to pray. If you choose to join hands, remember that it's OK if some children prefer not to join the circle. Explain they should be respectful of others as they pray and not make any noise. You can help them get quiet by singing the new verse to "Jesus Loves Me" found earlier in the lesson (even if you used it before).

As you close, ask the children if there's anything that they would like you to pray about for them. No prayer is too small, however, children will tend to keep going and be "inspired" by other prayer requests, so feel free to stop taking requests and tell them they can say anything that didn't get said out loud quietly to God themselves while you're praying. You may close with your own prayer or use the one below for help. End with "we pray as Jesus taught us to pray" and the Lord's prayer. For these first few weeks allow the kids to repeat after you. If you have a helper, encourage them to pray with the kids.

If you need some guidance for your prayer, you can use this:

Father in Heaven (*you may want to allow kids to repeat after each phrase*). I'm so glad you want me to talk to you. Help me to remember to talk to you everyday. Please bless all of these things the kids have asked prayer for today (*or you can mention them individually*) as we pray the way you taught your disciples to pray: (*end with the Lord's Prayer one line at a time*).

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

Jesus Loves Me

Piano

Je - sus Loves Me This I know. For the Bi - ble tells me so. Lit - tle ones

Him be-long. They are weak but He is strong. Yes, Je - sus loves me. Yes, Je - sus

loves me Yes, Je - sus loves me the Bi - ble tells me