

Children Church 5/24/20

Elementary Sunday School Lesson: What Is Prayer?

Travel Itinerary

God desires to have a relationship with each of us, and an important part of any relationship is communication. God has established prayer as a means for us to communicate with him. Through prayer, we can praise God, ask for forgiveness, thank God for all he's done, and let our requests be made known to him. Prayer allows us to open our hearts to God and let him know our innermost thoughts and desires.

Children are eager to communicate with anyone who will listen to them, but they often feel adults don't care about their thoughts, concerns, and opinions. Use this lesson to teach your children that God wants us to talk to him and gives us many examples of prayer in the Bible. Celebrate with them the joy of communicating with God.

Pathway Point:

God wants us to talk to him.

In-Focus Verse:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6).

Departure Prayer (up to 5 minutes)

How can we teach children about prayer without actually taking time to pray? If you don't have enough time to pray, you don't have enough time to teach! Fight the temptation to dive into the lesson without asking God for his wisdom. Spending a few minutes in prayer can make the difference between wasting your time and watching it produce much fruit. God will give you the wisdom to teach as you ask him for it (James 1:5).

Before you pray remind the children that they can talk to God as they would their best friends. God wants to hear what each person has to say. Invite each child to thank God for one good thing that happened in the past week.

Then pray: Dear Lord, thank you for loving us and hearing us when we pray. Help us to learn to talk to you every day, in every situation. Thank you for answering our prayers and helping us to please you. We love you and praise you for all you've done. Amen.

1st Stop Discovery (15 minutes)

An Invitation

This activity emphasizes God's love for each child and his desire to communicate with us.

Items to Pack

construction paper,

crayons or markers,

bright and colorful stickers

Borrow a book of sample invitations from a stationery shop. Let children look at all the fancy and expensive invitations for inspiration as they make their own.

Ask:

- **When have you been invited to something fun, like a birthday party, wedding, or another special event?**
- **How did you know you were invited?**
- **What do invitations look like? What do they say?**

Say: **God has invited each of us to spend time with him and talk to him. God wants us to talk to him! When we talk to God, it's called prayer. Let's make invitations from God, inviting us to talk to him.**

The Activity

Set out the construction paper, markers or crayons, and colorful stickers. Then have each child make an invitation to give to a different child in the class. Let children draw names so they'll each know who to make an invitation for. The invitation should be from God, inviting the child to come and talk to God. Let kids fill in the remaining information as follows:

Time: any time!

Place: any place!

Date: any day!

Remind kids that this is God's personal invitation for a special visit, so they should work to make the invitation as nice as possible. Then when the invitations are finished, have children deliver them to each other.

Activity Debrief

Ask:

- **When you have something important or exciting that you want to share with a friend, how do you usually communicate with him or her?**
- **Do you need to send a special invitation to talk with your friend?**
- **How would you feel if every time you had something to talk about with your friend you had to make an appointment or send an invitation?**

Say: **We don't need an invitation to talk to God. God wants us to talk to him. When we talk to God, it's called prayer, and today we're going to be learning more about what prayer is.**

Story Excursion (15 minutes)

ABCs of Prayer

Children will consider reasons people prayed in the Bible, and reasons why we pray today.

Items to Pack

- [Bibles](#),
- marker,
- a large sheet of newsprint or a white board

Preparation

Boldly print the letters of the alphabet down the left margin of the newsprint or whiteboard, and place it where children can easily see it.

Open your Bible to [Luke 11](#) and read [verse 1](#) aloud.

Ask:

- **Why did the disciples need to be taught how to pray?**
- **Do we need to be taught how to pray? Why or why not?**
- **What do you think prayer is?**

God's Listening Ears (5 minutes)

Children will use a rhyme with hand motions to remind them that they can always talk to God.

Say: **In [Isaiah 30:19b](#), the Bible says, "How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you." God wants us to talk to him. He's ready to hear our every word. Let's learn a poem to remind us that we can pray any time and God will hear us.**

Lead the kids in the following rhyme, doing the hand motions and letting children repeat the words and motions.

God is always ready to hear (cup hands to your ears)

Words we speak that are sincere. (Put hand over your heart.)

He will listen to every prayer (fold hands as in prayer)

Any time and anywhere. (Spread arms to indicate large area.)

God pays attention to every word (cup hand to ear again);

Nothing we say will go unheard. (Shake head from side to side.)

So talk to God both night and day (cup hands around mouth)

And close beside him you will stay. (Wrap arms around self as if in a hug.)

Dear God, thank you so much for loving us and for listening to our prayers. We're glad that you want us to talk to you. Help us to talk to you every day this week, no matter what's going on in our lives. Amen.