



Use Week of:

Unit 23 • Session 3

Jesus Taught About Prayer

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Luke 11; 18

STORY POINT:

Jesus taught people how to pray.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 14:26

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom.

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LEADER Bible Study

Prayer is personal communication with God. Many people aren't sure how to pray or feel uncomfortable praying. To pray effectively, then, we must be taught how to pray. This is why Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them to pray.

Jesus began with the Lord's Prayer, not to establish the words we should use but to show how we should pray and what we should pray about. Through prayer, we demonstrate our dependence on and faith in the Lord. We should approach God as a Father and pray for His kingdom first and then for ourselves and others.

Then Jesus told a story about a man who went to his friend in the middle of the night to ask for food for a visitor. The friend did not want to be bothered but because the man did not give up, the friend finally gave him what he needed. God is not a sleepy neighbor. If a grumpy friend will reward persistence, how much more so will God! He cares about His children and is happy to give us what we need when we ask.

In a similar way, a human father who loves his child would not give him a snake if he asked for a fish. Will God give us everything we ask for? No, but when we are persistent with our prayers, we can trust Him to answer according to His glory and our good.

Jesus used another parable in Luke 18: A judge was unwilling to grant a widow's plea for justice, but the woman did not give up. So the judge gave her justice. We should not give up praying if we have not received an answer from God. God is not like a wicked judge. When we pray consistently, God will give us justice and He will act quickly.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Taught About Prayer

Luke 11; 18

One of Jesus' disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray." So Jesus told the disciples, "Pray like this: Father, Your name be honored as holy. We pray that Your kingdom will come. Give us the food we need every day. Forgive our sins like we forgive people who have done wrong to us. And do not let us be tempted."

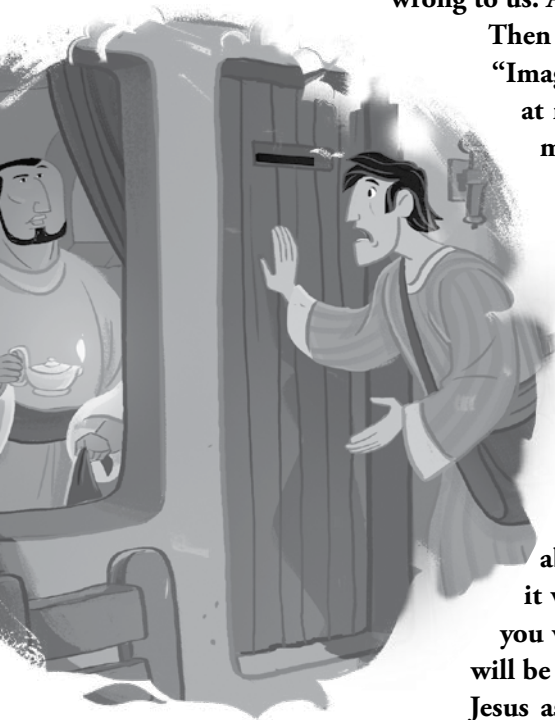
Then Jesus told the disciples a story.

"Imagine one of you goes to a friend at midnight and says, 'Friend, let me borrow some bread. A friend came to visit me, and I don't have anything to offer him.' The friend shouts, 'Go away! My family is in bed. I do not want to get up.' Even though the man does not want to help his friend, he will get up and give his friend bread because he asked boldly."

Jesus told this story to teach about prayer. He said, "Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you."

Jesus asked, "When a son asks for a fish, does his father give him a snake instead? Or if the son asks for an egg, does the father give him a scorpion?" Earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to their children. God is an even greater Father! He gives His Spirit to those who ask.

Jesus told another story to teach the disciples to pray without giving



up. "In a town was a judge who did not care about God or people. A widow went to the judge again and again, asking him to protect her from being mistreated. The judge did not want to help, but he said, 'I will give this widow what she wants so she will stop bothering me.'"

Jesus pointed out that the unjust judge did what was right because the widow did not give up. Jesus asked, "When people cry out to God day and night, will He ignore them? No! He will quickly make things right." Jesus wanted His followers to have faith that doesn't give up.

Christ Connection: Jesus taught us to pray. Because of Jesus, we can pray and ask God for everything we need. God is good and loving, and we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right.

Bible Storytelling Tips

• Fold your hands:

Invite the children to fold their hands and bow their heads every time you say the words *pray* or *prayer*.

• Use sock or paper bag puppets:

Make sock or paper bag puppets to use during Jesus' stories about the friend asking for help at midnight and the widow begging the judge to protect her.

INTRODUCE the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom.

Welcome time

- "Just As I Am" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Good Gifts" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Help children study the pattern in each row and circle what comes next in each one.

SAY • Good job deciding which answer was best! You don't normally see snakes and fish together or scorpions and eggs. But in our Bible story today, Jesus talked about these things to teach something else about God and His kingdom. ***What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom.*** Listen closely to find out what we can learn about God from these pairs!

LOW PREP

Play out day and night

Ask preschoolers what they do when they wake up in the morning and invite them to play it out. Pretend to brush teeth, get dressed, eat breakfast, and so forth. Continue with other segments of the day, finishing with bedtime routines.

Pretend to go to sleep, then awake children by knocking on a door or table.

SAY • Has anyone ever had a friend come to visit in the middle of the night? That would be strange. Nighttime is for sleeping! People don't usually wake up their friends in the middle of the night unless they really need help. But a good friend is willing to help, even at night. Jesus taught that we can ask God for help in that way. He is always willing to help us! Listen to today's Bible story to find out more.

Sort foods

Set out toy foods and toy reptiles or insects on the floor. Provide a gift box on one side of the pile and a plastic bin on the other side. Tell preschoolers to pretend the items are real. Instruct preschoolers to sort the foods into the gift box and the reptiles or insects into the plastic bin.

- toy foods
- toy reptiles or insects
- gift box
- plastic bin

SAY • Yummy foods are good gifts, but scary creatures are not! I love to eat fish, but I do not eat snakes. If I asked my dad for fish for supper and he gave me a snake, that would be mean! But he wouldn't do that because he loves me. God loves us even more! He gives us good things when we ask for them.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite children to knock on a door before going to Bible study or prompt children to ask "May I go to Bible study?" before sending them.

- countdown video (optional)

TEACH the Story



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Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at Luke 11 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • The Bible is God's word to us, but it also tells us how to talk to God! Today's true Bible story is from the Book of Luke in the New Testament part of the Bible. Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Jesus Taught About Prayer" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • Jesus taught people how to pray. If Jesus had not told us to, it would not seem right to keep asking God for the same thing over and over again. But that's what Jesus taught through His stories! Jesus wanted His followers to have faith that doesn't give up. Because of Jesus, we can pray and ask God for everything we need. God is good and loving, and we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right.

Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at John 14:26. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Invite children to repeat after you as you say the verse in a silly voice. Tell them, “say it like this,” and continue with various voices as desired.

- Bible
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- “The Holy Spirit (John 14:26)” song
- “Just As I Am” song

SAY • Jesus told the disciples how to pray and gave them words to use when talking to God. Repeating after a teacher is a great way to remember, but even if you forget our game, the Holy Spirit will teach you and remind you of Jesus’ words!

Sing the key passage song, “The Holy Spirit,” and the theme song, “Just As I Am.”

Learn the big picture question

SAY • The reason that **Jesus taught people how to pray** is so we would learn to trust God and seek His kingdom. ***What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom.*** God is good and loving, and we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right.

- Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

SAY • **Jesus taught people how to pray** so they would understand that they can talk to God about anything! When we pray, we can ask God to help missionaries. Let’s listen for some ways that we can pray for Kesavan and his work in Canada.

Show the video, pausing the video as directed for a brief prayer.

- “How to Pray for Kesavan” video

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE the Story



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LOW PREP

Sing a song

Sing the following lyrics to the tune of “Mulberry Bush.” If you are unfamiliar with the tune, look it up online before the session.

“Ask, and it will be given to you.

Given to you, given to you.

Ask, and it will be given to you.

God will answer your prayers!

“Seek after God, and you will find.

You will find, you will find.

Seek after God, and you will find

God will answer your prayers!

“Knock, and the door will be opened to you.

Opened to you, opened to you.

Knock, and the door will be opened to you.

God will answer your prayers!”

SAY • Jesus said, “Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you.” **Jesus taught people how to pray.** Because of Jesus, we can pray and ask God for everything we need. God is good and loving, and we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right.

Play catch

Form a circle. Toss a ball to a child and encourage her to catch it. Then invite her to toss it to another child to catch. Praise all attempts and encourage children to keep trying even if they don't catch the ball. Emphasize not giving up.

SAY • Good job practicing catch without giving up! **Jesus taught people how to pray** without giving up. He said that even people who do not care about God or others will respond when someone keeps asking. But God is good and loving, so we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right! Because of Jesus, we can pray and ask God for everything we need.

**LOW
PREP**

• foam ball

Make a prayer chart

Draw lines to divide a large piece of paper into quadrants. In the first quadrant, write a large *A* as you explain that the first thing we do in prayer is adore God. Ask children what is awesome about God (He is holy, He is good, and so forth) and write down their answers under the *A*. In the second quadrant, write a large *C* as you explain that the next thing we do in prayer is confess sin. Ask children if they've made any wrong choices they need to ask forgiveness for and write down their answers under the *C*. Next, write a *T* for thanksgiving and ask children what they would like to thank God for. Finally, write a *S* for seek. Remind children that if we seek our needs from God, we will find what we need. Ask children what they need God's help with and write down their answers. Then pray, modeling gospel-centered prayer. Invite preschoolers to pray as desired.

SAY • Jesus taught people how to pray. He taught us to adore God, confess sin, thank God, and seek what we need from Him. Because of Jesus, we can pray and

**LOW
PREP**

• large piece of paper
• marker

Tip: While talking about confession, redirect children who point out other's sin back to themselves. Offer examples of ways preschoolers may be tempted to sin. Confess your own sins in an age-appropriate way to model confession for preschoolers.

ask God for everything we need. God is good and loving, and we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right. We may not always get the answer we want, but God always gives us what we need.

Open locks

- lock-and-latch boards
- locks and keys

Provide lock-and-latch boards or a variety of locks and keys for children to practice opening. For older preschoolers, hold onto the keys or hide them at first. Encourage children to ask for the keys or “seek” them before attempting the locks. Give the keys quickly when requested.

SAY • Those locks were tricky to open! Sometimes we think prayer is tricky. We worry about using the right words or if God will answer. But **Jesus taught people how to pray.** He said, “Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you.” Because of Jesus, we can pray and ask God for everything we need. God is good and loving, and we can trust Him to care for us and to do what is right.



Trace letters

- “God in Tamil” printable
- crayons
- wax or tracing paper

Give each preschooler a copy of “God in Tamil.” Show a preschooler how to lay a sheet of wax paper over the Tamil letters and trace the letters with a crayon.

SAY • These letters look different to us because they are in another language. Kesavan and Viji were born in a country called Sri Lanka. One of the languages spoken in there is Tamil (ta-mel). These letters spell God in Tamil. When Kesavan moved to Canada as a young boy, he learned English. Now he can tell people about Jesus in two languages!

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Serve fish-shaped crackers for snack. Talk about how fish are yummy, but snakes are scary! Even though we are not perfect, we know how to give good gifts when people ask. God is perfectly good and loving, so we can trust Him to give us good gifts when we ask. **Jesus taught people how to pray.** Because of Jesus, we can pray and ask God for everything we need.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. What did the disciples ask Jesus to teach them?
(**Jesus taught people how to pray.**)
2. Can we call God our Father? (*yes*)
3. Is it OK to ask God for what we need? (*Yes, we can ask God for everything we need.*)
4. Will God ignore us or give bad gifts? (*No, He will always do what is right.*)
5. ***What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- fish-shaped crackers (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "The Holy Spirit (John 14:26)" song
- "Just As I Am" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers