

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 14:25-26

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit ministrygrid.com/gospelproject.

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

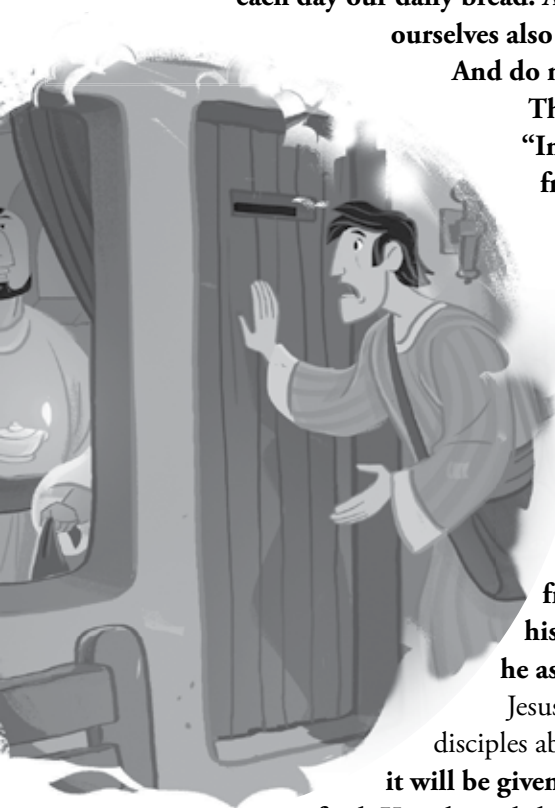
Luke 11; 18

Jesus had just finished praying when one of His disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray.” So Jesus told them, “When you pray, say, ‘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.’”

Then Jesus told them a story. “Imagine one of you goes to a friend at midnight and says, ‘Friend, let me borrow three loaves of bread because a friend of mine has traveled to visit me, and I don’t have anything to offer him.’ The friend shouts from inside his house, ‘Go away! My family is in bed. I don’t want to get up to help you.’ **Even though the man does not want to help his friend, he will get up and give his friend what he needs because he asked boldly.**”

Jesus told this story to teach the disciples 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, “Does any father, when his son asks for a fish, give him a snake instead? Or if the son asks for an egg, does the father give him a scorpion?” **Jesus said that fathers who are sinners know how to**



give good gifts to their children. God is an even greater Father! He gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask.

Jesus told another story—a parable—to teach the disciples to pray without giving up. “In a town was a judge who did not care about God or people. Over and over, a widow went to the judge and asked him to protect her from wrongdoing. The judge did not want to help, but after awhile he said, ‘I will give this widow what she wants so she does not keep bothering me.’”

Jesus pointed out that the unjust judge did what was right because the widow did not give up. “When people cry out to God day and night, will He ignore them?” Jesus asked. “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 to God as a Father and ask for what we need. We can trust that God is good and loving, and we can count on Him to do what is right.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use props:** Hold up props at appropriate times during the story (bread, an egg, a fish, and so on).
- **Move around:** Move to a different spot in the room to help distinguish between each of Jesus’ stories.

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. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share their favorite person to talk to. What makes that person easy to talk to?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Making Connections” activity page.
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Making Connections” on the activity page. Guide kids to number the ways to communicate in order from oldest to newest.

SAY • Which of these ways to communicate do you think has been around the longest? [*Allow kids to respond.*] Anyone can talk to God through prayer. Today we will learn what Jesus taught about prayer.

LOW PREP

- index cards
- pencils or pens

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: What do you want?

Guide kids to sit in a circle. Give each kid a pencil and index cards equaling the number of players. (For eight players, give each kid eight index cards.) Instruct kids to number their cards starting with 1.

Then tell kids to draw on the first card something they

would like to have. Then tell them to pass their entire stack of cards to the person on their left. Each player will look at the picture on 1, put that card at the back of the stack, and write on the 2 card words to describe what he thinks the drawing represents. Kids will pass the stacks to the left, read the words on the 2 card, move that card to the back, and draw on the 3 card a picture representing the words.

Continue around the circle, alternating between writing and drawing, until each kid is holding her original stack. Choose volunteers to share their sequence of pictures.

SAY • Did what you got at the end match what you wanted?

In the story we will hear today, Jesus pointed out that if a child asks for a fish, his father will not give him a snake. Let's find out what Jesus was talking about!

OPTION 2: Cookie face race

Choose several kids to compete in a cookie face race.

Instruct the players to sit in chairs at the front of the room. Give each player a cookie. The player should tilt her head back and position the cookie on her forehead. When you say "go," players should try moving their facial muscles to move the cookie to their mouths. Players may not touch the cookies with their hands. Set a timer and announce how much time has passed (30 seconds, 60 seconds, and so on) but allow kids to continue until they are successful.

SAY • Some of you were really persistent! Did you ever feel like you wanted to give up? Why or why not?

In today's Bible story, Jesus taught about the importance of not giving up when it comes to prayer. We'll find out more about what Jesus said.

• Allergy Alert
• sandwich cookies
• stopwatch or timer

Option: Play additional rounds with new volunteers.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH 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. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

Countdown

· countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

· leader attire

· Bible

· miniature orange cones

[Leader enters wearing business casual attire or a T-shirt for a local school with jeans. He or she also carries a Bible and some miniature orange cones.]

LEADER • Hello, everyone! My name is [Mr./Mrs.] [your name]. Welcome to my classroom! *[Begin setting the cones across the front of the room.]* I've brought some orange cones to try to solve a problem I had in my class last year. I noticed my students would be working on an assignment, and they'd get frustrated and sit at their desks looking grumpy and sad. They didn't realize that if they had a question or needed help, they could just raise their hands and ask me!

Kids started raising their hands a lot more often. But to help them keep working efficiently, I'm going to try out these orange cones. When a student has a question, he can put the orange cone on the corner of his desk. Then, if I'm helping someone else,

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

he can keep working on other problems until I have a chance to come help him.

When you need help at school, do you ask your teacher? What about in life? If you feel frustrated or grumpy or sad, where do you turn? [*Allow kids to respond.*] Turning to a friend or family member can be great, but they don't always have the answers. [*Hold up a Bible.*] Today, I want to share a story with you about how we can always turn to God for help—through prayer.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • We've been learning about Jesus as a teacher. Jesus spent a lot of His ministry teaching people. Say our big picture question and answer with me: ***What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.***

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. - Giant Timeline

LEADER • The first story we heard about Jesus as a teacher was called “The Sermon on the Mount.” Jesus spoke to a large crowd of people. **Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom.**

Last time, we heard about an important truth Jesus wanted His followers to understand: **Following Jesus is not easy, but He is worth it.**

Today's Bible story is called “Jesus Taught about Prayer.” Listen to this.

- Bibles
- “Jesus Taught About Prayer” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 11; 18. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Taught About Prayer.”

LEADER • Jesus taught people how to pray. Jesus shared the words known as “The Model Prayer” or “The Lord’s Prayer.” Was Jesus saying that when we pray, we should say those exact words? [*Invite kids to share their thoughts.*] No, Jesus was giving an example. We can also find this prayer in Matthew 6.

How did Jesus address God in His prayer? Look at Luke 11:2. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*]

Jesus prayed to God as “Father.” That’s the kind of relationship we can have with God—like a relationship between a child and a father. We can pray boldly and tell God exactly what we need. This is what Jesus taught with the story of the man going to his friend to borrow bread in the middle of the night. The man was not afraid to ask his friend for what he needed, and the friend—even though he didn’t really want to get out of bed—gave the man what he asked for. God is better than a sleepy friend! He is happy to answer our prayers.

Jesus also told a story about a widow and a judge. How did the widow approach the judge? Look at Luke 18:2-5. [*Allow kids to read the verses and respond.*] The woman was persistent; she did not give up. Jesus taught us to be persistent in prayer, asking God without giving up.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus taught us to pray. Because of Jesus, we can

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 115 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

pray to the Father and ask for what we need. We can trust that God is good and loving, and we can count on Him to do what is right.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 23, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how we should pray. Guide them to discuss whether or not there is a right way to pray.

• “Unit 23, Session 3” questions from kids video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

LEADER • Jesus taught people how to pray. He wanted them to understand how important it is.

One way we can support missionaries is by praying for them. No matter where we are, we can pray for Christian workers all over the world. Let’s listen for some ways to pray for Kesavan and his ministry in Canada.

• “How to Pray for Kesavan” missions video

Play the missions video, pausing the video as directed for prayer. Ask for volunteers to pray aloud for each request.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 14:25-26.

• Key Passage Poster
• “I Have Spoken (John 14:25-26)” song

LEADER • Jesus knew He would be on earth for a short time. He came to earth to do God’s plan by dying on the cross and rising again. Then Jesus returned to heaven, but He promised something wonderful: God would send His Spirit. The Holy Spirit reminds us of everything Jesus has taught us. Did you know the Holy Spirit also helps us pray? Romans 8:26 says the Holy Spirit even speaks to God for us! Let’s sing.

Lead kids in singing “I Have Spoken (John 14:25-26).”

- “Just As I Am” song
- Bible

Sing (4 minutes)

Open your Bible and read aloud Psalm 65:1-2.

LEADER • Jesus taught people how to pray. Because of Jesus, we can pray to the Father and ask for what we need. We can trust that God is good and loving, and we can count on Him to do what is right.

Sing together “Just As I Am.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father God, when we pray, we know You hear us. Thank You for speaking to us through Your Word. We can tell You exactly how we feel and exactly what we need. You are a good Father. We pray that everyone would come to know and trust in Jesus, and that the nations would call out to You and be saved for Your glory. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY 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. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster

Show the key passage poster and invite kids to read it aloud together two or three times. Then cover or remove the poster. Begin saying the key passage, one or two words at a time, and then pause.

Prompt kids to supply the next word. Then say the next one or two words. Pause again for kids to say the next word. Continue through the entire key passage. Invite volunteers to recite John 14:25-26.

SAY • Great job, everyone. Memorizing God's Word helps us remember what is true about Him and about ourselves. Keep working on memorizing our key passage this week.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid
• Story Point Poster

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Luke 11. Explain Jesus often went places where He could be alone to pray. Sometimes His disciples went with Him. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 11:9-10.

SAY • Like the man went to his neighbor for what he needed, God wants us ask Him for exactly what we need. He tells us to ask, seek, and knock.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Will God always give us what we ask for when we pray? *Lead kids to recognize that the Bible says God gives us what we ask for when we ask according to His will, or His plan. Sometimes God does not give us what we ask for because we ask for wrong things or for wrong reasons, or because He has a better plan for us. We can trust that God is good and loving, and we can count on Him to do what is right.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 5:14.)

2. Why do we pray? *Remind kids that prayer is how we talk to God. We can praise Him, confess our sins, thank Him, and ask for help. Prayer shows our dependence on God and our trust in Him.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Heb. 4:16.)

3. What can you do when you aren't sure what to pray? *Encourage kids to think of prayer like having a conversation with a friend at the lunch table. We can share our feelings and our thoughts. God knows our hearts and is happy to hear from us. Our prayers don't need to be long or eloquent. Remind kids that the Holy Spirit helps us when we pray.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 34:17.)

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Planting a church

SAY • Some missionaries are called “church planters” because they start churches from the very beginning. They don’t actually “plant” anything, but they begin to worship with a few people and invite others to come.

They don’t even have to have a building that says

**LOW
PREP**

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

“church” outside. Kesavan’s church meets in a high school gym! Let’s act out how a small group of people can become a church.

Assign one kid to be the church planter and stand in the center of the room. Read the following statements, asking other kids to join the gathering in the center.

Continue adding kids until everyone is standing in the center, representing a new church. Encourage the kids to act out the statements as you read:

- *A church planter prays and asks God to help build a church.*
- *A few friends join the church planter to pray and worship. They usually start meeting in someone’s home.*
- *They invite more friends to come and hear about Jesus. They sing, pray, and fellowship together. They hear stories from the Bible.*
- *As people become Christians, they invite more and more people to come. They baptize new believers and more people start coming to find out about Jesus. Sometimes the group gets so big that they have to move to another building.*

Close in prayer for Kesavan’s church plant, Fellowship Church Rouge Park.

OPTION 2: Prayer key ring

Before the session, prepare a key ring as an example. Give each kid a key ring and a piece of cord. Demonstrate how to fold the cord in half. Slip the loop of the cord through the key ring and tie with a lark’s head knot.

Instruct kids to use masking tape to tape the key ring securely to the table. Invite kids to select several pony beads in different colors, each bead representing someone or some

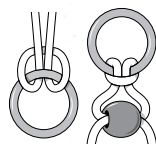
- key rings, 1 per kid
- pony beads
- 16-inch lengths of colored cord, 1 per kid
- masking tape
- scissors

situation they would like to pray about.

Show kids how to thread the beads one at a time onto the cord by crossing the cord through the holes. As kids work, open your Bible and read aloud 1 John 5:14-15.

SAY • Jesus taught people how to pray. Because of Jesus, we can pray to God as a Father and ask for what we need. We can trust that God is good and loving, and we can count on Him to do what is right.

Help kids tie knots at the end of their key rings and trim any excess cord. Encourage kids to use their key rings as a reminder to pray.



Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for teaching us to pray. Thank Him for being a good Father to whom we can go with every trouble, praise, and need.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Prayer Time" on the activity page. Kids should use the outline to organize their prayers.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Prayer Time" activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.