

## TO PRAY IS TO HONOR GOD

All Activity Sheets

### KEY WORDS

PRAY

HONOR

EARTH

KINGDOM

TEMPTATION

HEAVEN

HALLOW

DAILY BREAD

DEBTS

EVIL ONE

### BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Matthew 5-7

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children know how to honor God when they pray.

### MEMORY VERSE

"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one'" (Matthew 6:9-13, NIV\*).

### PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of the gospel of Mathew record the well-known "Sermon on the mount," because Jesus preached/taught this while on a hill close to Capernaum. This paragraph is also found in Luke 6:20-49, with some differences made by God in the revelation to each writer.

Matthew wrote about the Lord's Prayer in the Sermon on the Mount. It appears that the audience was a mixed group of listeners. The first words of Jesus were addressed to the apostles; but there was a crowd listening to him. This sermon is one of the five biggest recorded in the gospel of Mathew, summarizing many days of preaching.

Jesus defines his attitude towards the law, challenges the pride and the hypocrisy of the leaders, and moves the attention towards the most important in the kingdom of God.

This sermon reflects the humble and sincere condition of the people, such as the prophets in the Old Testament had done, (Isaiah 57:15, 61:1-2; Psalm 51:10,16,17; 41:1), and describe the ideals in order to live a life that pleases God. Everything in the Sermon on the Mount needs to be analyzed from the declaration of Jesus when he says, "The Kingdom of God is starting."

While the sermon has teachings about a variety of subjects, we will focus on the teachings of Jesus about prayer. Jesus clearly condemns the practice of the hypocrites, who loved to show their spirituality. He also warns them about “vain repetitions” (Mathew 6:7-9).

In Jesus’ example of prayer when he addresses God as “Father,” he shows us that we can get close to him and that we can experience intimate relationship with God.

The phrase “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name” indicates that God, besides being almighty, holy and majestic, is also loving protector; and he is close to those who seek to honor the name of God. Treating it with respect and reverence to his holiness is a way of honoring God. If we treat his name lightly in our prayers, without recognizing these attributes, we are not giving him the recognition of holy and God.

“Your kingdom come.” This request was a plea for God to establish his government, his spiritual kingdom. In Jeremiah 30:3-8, God promised that restoration. The Jews prayed this way confidently, because they already knew the power of God to set them free from other kingdoms and slavery.

In Jesus’ time, they were conquered by Rome, so they prayed for that. However, when Christians prayed that way, they were saying, we want the perfect kingdom of God to come, for the salvation of our souls.

“Your will be done.” Jesus repeated this request in the Mount of Olives in Gethsemane (Luke 22:42). It is a trusting declaration that God’s will be done in this world as it is in heaven. There is not a better prayer to be offered. We should take this as our personal prayer: may your will be done in my heart first as it is in heaven. Then may it will be done everywhere on the earth.

Most of the children know that prayer is one way to communicate with God to tell him whatever we want. Some people think that repeating prayers by heart pleases God. Others learn that praying is a way to ask for material items or other needs. The importance of this session is the truth that true prayer is more than asking for material objects, wishes or repeating phrases.

The child could ask himself, am I doing all right by repeating my praises or requests to God? Of course not. It is not bad to come to the Lord with the same request. Jesus encourages us to persist in our prayers, but he does not like vain repetitions of an insincere heart. This prayer that Jesus taught us could be an example for our own prayers. We must praise God in our prayers, pray for his kingdom in the world, for our needs and for his help in our problems and conflicts.

What might happen if a child has never known his father or if the father he mistreats him? How can this child see his father without experiencing fear or anger against his father? In some places many families do not follow the pattern of “dad,” “mom” and “children”. Family disintegration and child abuse and exploitation are happening around the world. How can you show God the Father to them? By teaching them the promises of comfort, mercy, satisfaction and peace that this passage mentions.

Talk about the kind of love they experience from their parents; or think about the love you have for them as your group. In this messy world where there is often no protection, security or love, God shows himself as a father. The only thing he expects from us is obedience and praises to his holy name, and he wants us to be part of his kingdom.

## INTRODUCE THE LESSON

### Activity: An important part of life

Have the group find this activity in Student Activity Sheet #292-A. Give them time to study the album pictures. Then ask them the questions from the right side of the page while you guide them through the story. Highlight how good it is to have someone come in prayer to give thanks and ask for help.

Ask, what is happening in each picture? (Let the children identify them based on their own experiences.) What do these pictures have in common? (There is a person praying in each picture.) Why do you think these people are doing that? (Listen to their explanations about prayer.) Emphasize how important prayer is in our lives.

## TEACH THE LESSON

Explain briefly the meaning of “The Sermon on the Mount” and note the vocabulary words you will need. Write them on the board or on pieces of paper:

Abolish: Get rid of something.

Pharisee: a Jewish leader who gave high importance to law enforcement.

Hypocrite: Someone who claims to love God and follow him, but does not do it. Someone who tries to show that something is true that is not true, or vice versa. They do this to impress someone else.

Hallowed: Keep something holy, set apart for God.

### Jesus teaches us to pray

Dramatize this dialogue with your group, and then talk about it.

“Look back!” said one of the disciples to another one. “The crowd following Jesus is huge.” “Yes, the people have followed us everywhere we’ve been,” said the other one. Jesus wanted to get to a place where everybody would be able to hear his teachings, so he went up to the mountain and he sat and started to teach them. He loved to explain about God’s Kingdom to people. He told them who would be blessed.

Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”

“The Pharisees would be glad to hear that,” thought the disciples. But Jesus had not finished. “For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Some of the people from the crowd were jabbing each other and raising their eyebrows. “How is that possible?” they asked themselves. “Pharisees keep more rules than everyone else!”

Jesus explained how love fulfills the law. Somebody who joined the crowd asked, “What did I miss?” “Jesus told us about everything,” he was told, “murders, disagreements, about loving your enemies and helping the poor.”

“When you pray, do not be as the hypocrites are,” Jesus said, “for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, to be seen by others. If showing off is everything they want, truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. You do not have to worry about long and elaborate prayers. God does not get impressed by many words. After all, your Father knows what things you need, before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray. ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Amen.’” (Mathew 6:9-13)

## CONNECT THE LESSON

### Review

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #292-B and 3292-C to review the lesson. Get a good start on your prayers.

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #292-D and work with the students who have a hard time answering the questions.

Encourage the group to take home their activities and share the lesson with their families and friends.

## PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Read the Lord’s Prayer directly from the Bible. When you read it from the Bible make sure to stick on the board a picture that represents each phrase. For example, when you say, “Our Father in heaven,” stick the picture of the clouds. “Hallowed be your name” - a Bible with the word “God” or “Father”; “your kingdom come” - a crown; “your will be done, on earth” - children praying; “as it is in heaven” - an angel between clouds. Keep doing that with the rest of the verse: “Give us today our daily bread” ... “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” ... “And lead us not into temptation” ... “but deliver us from the evil one” ... Repeat as many times as you consider enough. Then take the words out and repeat it using only the pictures.

## WRAP-UP

### Pray

At the end of the session, pray with the group. Remind them not to pray to God to impress other people or use big impressive words.

**Encourage**

Thank your students for their attendance and encourage them not to forget what they learned.

**Invite**

Announce something about the next session to increase the group's interest. Ask them to invite friends.