

TO PRAY IS TO PRESENT OUR NEEDS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

TRUST PRAY ANSWER NEEDS FATHER IN HEAVEN

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Matthew 6:11; 14:6-21

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children trust that God will answer their needs 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

As we pray we are actively engaged in the world. Abraham and Moses are models of exemplary prayer. As Abraham walked in the presence of God, he demonstrated ideal prayer both in listening to God and obeying God. However, for Abraham, prayer was a struggle of faith that led him to believe in the faithfulness of God even at the time of testing (Genesis 15). On the other hand, Moses experienced prayer as intimacy with God, face to face as one speaks to a friend (Exodus 33:11). Moses persistently interceded for the Israelites as they journeyed to the Promised Land. The prayers of Moses anticipate the role of intercession by the one Mediator, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5).

In Matthew 14:6-12 we find four characters to study about.

The first one is Herod, who was the governor or king of Galilee, and he was celebrating his birthday. He was having an eastern party where only men were invited, and women were hired only to dance.

The second one is Herodias, the wife of Herod's step-brother. She lived with the king, and committed adultery.

The third one is John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin, who condemned Herodias of adultery. She was very upset with John the Baptist

because of this. She made her daughter Salome ask for John's head when Herod let her ask for a request as a reward for dancing at his birthday party. The king accepted her request because he said that he would please her with anything she would ask for, including half of his kingdom. So he sent someone to behead John.

The fourth character is Jesus, who showed his humanity experiencing sadness because of what happened to John the Baptist. Many other times he was sad and cried, but this time he felt the need to be alone. In the Bible we see that he went away alone in a boat. When people could not find Jesus, they started to search for him, because they already knew that he was the one who could meet their needs.

Tell your children that Jesus knows a lot about being sad (Matthew 14:13, John 11:35). Encourage them to seek Jesus as soon as they have a need in their hearts. God, who sees and knows everything, loves it when we trust in his love and power to solve any problem or need we have. He likes it when we pray to him. Remind them that Jesus is always ready to listen to us.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Introduction

Ask your children, "Have you called God 'Father' in your prayers? How do you feel when you do that?" Ask volunteers to give a short testimony about what God means to them. Invite one of the children to pray for the lesson. Tell them that the prayer must be sincere and respectful to honor God the Father.

Start with a drama about the Bible story (see: Matthew 14:12-21). Prior to the session prepare several to participate. One child will be Jesus, two children will be his disciples, and at least three more children will be the sick people presented to Jesus. Choose a boy or girl to bring the bread and fish.

Jesus: (He is sitting and swaying back and forth, pretending to be in a boat on the ocean. He gets off the boat and gets close to the sick people.)

Sick people: (One could have chicken pox. Paint spots on his/ her face with lipstick or face-paint. Another could have a toothache: wrap his/her head with a cloth. Another could have a broken leg or arm, get a walking stick or wrap his/ her arm in a sling. They come close to Jesus and he heals them by touching them and they take off what makes them look sick.)

Disciples: (They go to Jesus and tell him) It is getting dark, so you should tell them to go back home to eat.

Jesus: You give them food to eat.

Disciples: We only have five loaves of bread and two fish.

Jesus: (While Jesus is blessing the bread and fish, and everybody else is praying, another child adds more bread so everybody can eat.)

Thank the actors for their participation with applause. Help the children understand that Jesus attended to at least two different kinds of needs. The first one was health - he healed them because he had compassion for them. The second one was a basic need - food. Now, let us see what steps had been taken:

1. People went to Jesus because they needed healing and food.
2. They came to Jesus with their needs, and Jesus answered their needs with compassion.

The Bible does not mention that he did not heal some of them, so we assume that Jesus healed everyone who came to him. Then he saw that they were hungry, so he provided food for them. People satisfied their hunger and there were leftovers afterwards.

Everyone - men, women, children and young people who came to Jesus got what they needed. After acting out the story, ask the children to follow the Bible story in their worksheets as you read it aloud, to reinforce the message.

TEACH THE LESSON

Jesus feeds 5000 people

"Have you heard the terrible news about John the Baptist?" asked one of the disciples with sadness on his face.

"Yes, we just heard about it," answered another disciple with a low voice.

"The dearest friend and cousin of Jesus, dead! I can hardly believe it!"

"What did Jesus do when he heard the news?" asked another disciple.

"He went away in a boat." "Did anybody go with him?"

"No, he wanted to find a quiet place where he could be alone. However, after a little while people started looking for Jesus. They wanted to bring their sick relatives and friends to Jesus to be healed and to hear his teachings."

"Do you know where Jesus is? My brother is very sick!" cried a man.

"He is there! Over in that boat!"

Jesus came to the shore and stopped his boat on the beach. When he got out of his boat, he saw a huge crowd. He had compassion for them and healed those who were sick.

"I know that you can help me!" cried a woman. "

Jesus, come over here! Help me! Only you can do this," cried out another one. The crowd surrounded Jesus. As soon as he touched someone, somebody else would call out his name.

"Please, Jesus! Help me!"

About dinnertime, the disciples went to Jesus to tell him, "This place is deserted and it is getting late. Tell the people to go and look for food in the closest towns. They must be getting hungry."

"They do not need to go," Jesus said to his disciples. "You give them food."

The disciple could not believe what they were hearing. "How are we going to feed a huge crowd? There are at least five thousand men, plus women and children. We do not have enough money to buy food for all of them. And we only have two loaves of bread and five fish."

"Bring those to me," Jesus said. The disciple gave Jesus the bread and the fish. Jesus told everybody to sit on the grass. Then he took the bread and fish, and raising his eyes to the heavens, he thanked God for the food. Then he divided the food into pieces, telling his disciples to start passing it out to the people.

Everybody ate, and afterwards they picked up twelve full baskets of leftovers.

CONNECT THE LESSON

My prayers

Help the children to focus their attention in this activity with prayer for:

- For someone they love who is sick
- For money
- For a friend who needs help
- For a problem at school
- For the church
- For missionaries
- For family.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

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Read the verse several times. To make it fun, first read it aloud all together, then only girls and after that only boys. Finally, read all together again.

You could write phrases of the verse on each slice of bread (in the Bible story). Have them cut out the phrases and stick them on the wall or on the white-board/ chalkboard. To finish the lesson, please take time to pray with them; you can always ask

volunteers to pray.

Who cares?

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #293-A. Ask, "What problems or needs do children of your age have?" Tell them to write their answer on the packages in the basket and exchange their basket with someone else. Challenge the children to pray for those needs they have in the basket.

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #293-B and #293-C. Remind the group that in the Lord's Prayer, we are taught to pray for our daily bread (Matthew 6:11). Ask: "What would be the other needs?"

Use Student Activity Sheet #293-D to help the group think about how they pray. Encourage them to take home their activity sheets and share the lesson with their families and friends.

WRAP-UP

Pray

At the end of the session, pray with the children.

Encourage

Thank your children for their attendance and ask them not to forget what they learned.

Invite

Announce something about the next session to increase the children's interest. Remind them to welcome visitors.