



Family Lesson 58

Principle: How and what to pray.

Bible Character(s): Jesus

Scripture Reference: Matthew 6:5-15

1. Worship - Gather your family and play the [worship video](#) found on the curriculum resource page. Have fun, sing loudly, and follow along with the motions!

2. Skit Video - Watch the [skit video](#) with your family to hear a special message about what you will be learning this weekend.

3. Bible Lesson - Read through the lesson with your family. The bold font is meant to be read aloud along with the Scripture references.

Bible Lesson

In our last lesson, we learned about the Beatitudes. Can anyone remember what beatitude means? (Allow responses.) Beatitude means having contentment and joy all of the time, even when things are hard or sad. We learned about the character traits that God calls us to have. What do these character traits reveal in us? (They reveal a heart that is filled with a love for God, and they are a result of our relationship with Jesus.)

Today we are going to study prayer. We will examine what Jesus said about prayer and see how he taught us to pray. Prayer is more than just giving God a list of things we want.

When do you think we should pray? Should we pray at a certain time of day? There is not a specific place or a specific time to pray. God wants us to pray all the time, anywhere. Do you enjoy talking to your friends and family? (Allow responses.) Praying is talking to God. This is how we communicate with God. We cannot have a relationship with God without talking to him. Prayer is both a gift and a task. It is amazing that we can actually talk to the Creator of all things. It is also important to talk to God so that he can

continue to change us into who he created us to be. God is interested in having a relationship with us and desires to communicate directly with us. We do this through prayer.

Let's begin reading the Bible in Matthew 6 [NLT] to see what Jesus says about prayer when his disciples ask him how to pray.

Matthew 6:5-6

⁵ "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

How does the passage begin? (Allow responses.) It begins with the word "when." Jesus does not say "if" you pray, he says "when." Praying is important! We do not pray so that others will think we are good. We pray to talk to God out of obedience to him.

Do we have to pray in our room? (Allow responses.) When Jesus says, "go into your room," he is saying that we should spend time praying by ourselves. We need to spend time with God without others around.

In verse 6, Jesus says that God "will reward you." In our last lesson about the Beatitudes and character traits God calls us to have, we talked about different rewards that God has promised his followers. Do you remember what some of these rewards were? (Allow responses. Some responses might be, comfort, mercy, to see God, to be satisfied in Christ, inherit the earth, be called children of God.)

Our ideas of rewards can be very different from the rewards that God wants to give us. God's

rewards are so much better than anything else we could ever get! When we spend time talking to God in prayer, our relationship with him will grow. We will experience his blessings more and more. There is no better reward than that!

Let's continue reading the Bible in Matthew 6.

Matthew 6:7-8

⁷ "When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

We do not have to say a lot, use big words, or repeat ourselves over and over when we pray. What matters is that we want to talk to God and spend time with him. God already knows what we are thinking, so he does not need us to use big words or pray a really long prayer. He wants to spend time with us as we pray so that we learn to trust him more.

How do we talk to God, who created all things and is all-powerful? The next few verses give us an example of how we can pray. Listen as I read the Bible.

Matthew 6:9-13

⁹ Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,
¹² and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin
against us.

¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one.

This is called the Lord's Prayer. It is much more than just a list of our wants and needs. There are a number of things that Jesus teaches us through the many different parts of this prayer. Jesus uses this prayer to show us how to pray.

Prayer

Give your child a bookmark. Use the guide below and talk through each section to help your child understand how God wants us to pray.

Activity

Prayer Bookmark

The purpose is to examine the different parts of prayer.

Supplies:

Prayer bookmark (found on the [Kids Resource Page](#))

Give your child a bookmark. Use the guide below and talk through each section to help your child understand how God wants us to pray.

Prayer

Prayer is all about you and God. Jesus taught us to pray about everything, to never give up praying for things we feel are important, and to always have faith when we pray. God hears our prayers.

Praise

The first element of prayer is praise. God is holy, loving, and our personal heavenly Father. We need to praise him for who he is and what he has done for us. Matthew 6:9

Hope

We need to pray that God's plans are accomplished here on earth and that we can be a part of his plan. Matthew 6:10

Depend

Jesus wants us to depend on God for our needs everyday. He is our provider. He knows what we need for today. We can pray for the things we need and trust that God will give us what we need. Matthew 6:11

Forgive

If you believe and trust in Jesus, God has forgiven you of your sins. This is not something you deserve, but we have a gracious, loving God. Because God

has forgiven you, you can freely forgive others. God wants us to continually repent of our sin and ask forgiveness. Matthew 6:12

Obey

We need to pray for God's help to do what is right. When we are tempted to choose to do what is wrong, we need to pray that God will give us the strength to do what he wants us to do. Matthew 6:13.

Each time we pray, our prayers will look different. Sometimes we might be praising God for who he is—other times we might be sad and spend time telling God how we are feeling. You do not have to always include every part of this model in your prayer. We need to spend time praying in all of these ways, but we do not have to cover all five parts each time we pray. You might walk outside one day and see a beautiful sunset. You can praise God for creating something so beautiful. You can ask God to help you on your test right before you take it. Your prayers will look different each time you pray. The most important thing is that we choose to spend time with God in prayer and pray with a heart that is focused on him. God knows what is in our heart, and he knows when we are praying from a sincere heart.

God created us to be in community with one another. He designed community and fellowship so that we can learn more about him from one another, encourage and love one another, and be united in God's Kingdom. Part of what that looks like is spending time in prayer for others. We can love others by praying for them and the specific things going on in their lives. One way to remember to pray for others is to make a list of things that others have either asked you to pray for, or you can list how you feel God is leading you to pray for them. You do not have to keep a list, but it is a helpful way in reminding you of others' needs.

Prayer

Consider opening up prayer time to your children. Have them list their prayer requests on the Prayer Request bookmark (found on [Kids Resource Page](#)). Model simple prayers and allow them to follow.

It is important to spend time praying with others as well as time praying by yourself. Matthew 18:20 says, "For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." God hears our prayers and will draw near to us. Let's spend these last few minutes in prayer with one another.

