

LESSON 1

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6

GOD'S BIG STORY: As part of His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches His followers how to pray by giving them a model to follow—what we often call “The Lord’s Prayer.”

WORD OF WONDER: But God has surely listened. He has heard my prayer. Give praise to God. He has accepted my prayer. He has not held back his love from me. —Psalm 66:19–20

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: Who are the people you talk with the most?
- Curiosity Questions
- SMALL GROUP
- Declaring God’s Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship
- God’s Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Responding in Worship
- Blessing Your Kids



INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 66:19–20

Take a moment to read Matthew 6:5–13.

It's clear that the disciples knew about prayer. As Jewish men, they prayed often. Prayer was woven into their daily lives. But Jesus taught them to pray differently. He prayed with intimacy and confidence.

Jesus' prayers went way beyond rote repetition of familiar phrases. It was as though Jesus was talking with God, not at Him, and the disciples sensed the love that fueled Jesus' prayers.

That is what they wanted in their prayers. Not duty, but devotion. Not performance, but passion.

We still need Jesus to teach us to pray. If you're unsure that's true, ask yourself this: If someone was eavesdropping while you pray, how would they describe your relationship with whoever's on the other end of your words? Do you sound as though you're speaking with someone you know? Someone you love? Are you reciting or communicating?

I ask not to shame you (or myself—we're in this together!) but because in this lesson you have a choice: You can present the Lord's Prayer as a formula for prayer or as an invitation to intimacy with God.

Doing the first gives kids useful, straight-from-Jesus information—and that's great. But also doing the second gives them permission to open their hearts to God.

And that's when prayer really begins.

—**Mikal Keefer**

Children's Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Matthew is the first of the Gospels in the New Testament. While Mark emphasizes Jesus' miracles and Luke highlights Jesus' care for the poor and oppressed, Matthew focuses most on Jesus' practical teaching ministry.

WHAT?

Matthew 6 is part of Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7), one of the five major speeches that Jesus gives in this Gospel. In this speech, Jesus helps His disciples understand what true fulfillment of God's law looks like.

WHERE?

Matthew's Gospel does not tell us exactly what "mountain" Jesus gave the sermon on. An elevated location was ideal for giving speeches to large crowds, as it allowed everyone to see Jesus and hear Him speak.

WHEN?

The Gospel of Matthew places the Sermon on the Mount immediately after describing Jesus' miraculous ministry in Galilee (Matthew 4:23–25).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Matthew's Gospel portrays Jesus as the prophet like Moses who was promised in Deuteronomy: "He will be one of their own people. I will put my words in his mouth" (18:18). Like Moses, Jesus instructs God's people on how to obey God and communicate with Him (Matthew 5–7).

Large Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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As kids arrive...

Around 20 minutes before service begins, display series theme loopPlay high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Be sure to move to their level and introduce yourself to any new friends. Welcome kids by name and greet them with enthusiasm. Be extra intentional about hearing and responding to what they say.

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

Welcome Question

Consider using a **30 or 2:00 Countdown** to let leaders and kids know it's almost time to begin!

At Your Start Time...

SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At your start time ...

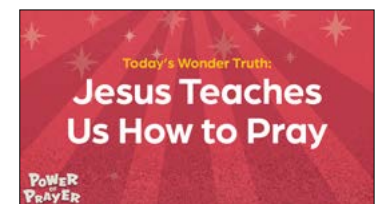
At your service start time, call attention to the Welcome Question on the screen and invite Small Group Leaders to begin:

Who are the people you talk with the most?

"Today we're going to learn what Jesus taught us about how to talk with God Himself—what we call "prayer."

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

"Today's Wonder Truth is **JESUS TEACHES US HOW TO PRAY**. We're going to be talking about prayer this whole month and I can't wait to get started by learning about what Jesus says about prayer! But first, it's time for small group!"



Small Group

While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! I have a little game for us first today!

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

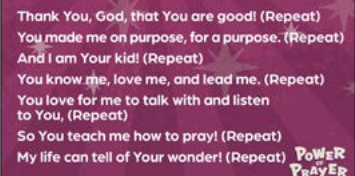
You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You love for me to talk with and listen to You, (Kids repeat.) **So You teach me how to pray!** (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Thank You, God, that You are good! (Repeat)
You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Repeat)
And I am Your kid! (Repeat)
You know me, love me, and lead me. (Repeat)
You love for me to talk with and listen to You. (Repeat)
So You teach me how to pray! (Repeat)
My life can tell of Your wonder! (Repeat) **POWER PRAYER**

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words, with these as a guide if needed: **"Our Father in heaven, we are ready to hear Your Word. Let Your Holy Spirit guide us to listen and learn as Jesus teaches us how to pray today. In Jesus' name, Amen."**

Worship

****NEW SONGS!** Consider sharing some about the songs you are going to sing. What they mean, why we sing them, why they are meaningful and important to you!

"We're going to stand and sing together! One way that we show love to God is to worship through song! So stand up, sing loud, and join in the motions with us. God loves to hear us sing praises to Him! In this first song we sing about praising God no matter what we are feeling or going through. We always have a reason to praise! Sing with me!"

WORSHIP VIDEOS: PRAISE, ALIVE WITH YOU

God's Big Story

SLIDE: TITLE SLIDE

Tell the kids that today they're going to listen to part of a message that Jesus gave His followers called the "Sermon on the Mount." where Jesus taught His followers to pray with a prayer we call "The Lord's Prayer."

"Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will experience more of the story!"

VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY



LESSON 1 THE LORD'S PRAYER

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: podium, small table, or music stand; cardstock; buzzer or call bell; scissors (prep only); blazer (optional); mic prop (optional)

RESOURCES: Question Cards, Gameshow Theme Sound Effects (slide in ProP), Ding Sound (slide in ProP) Effect, *The Lord's Prayer Experience It! Script* (1–2 copies)

Ahead of time, print the Question Cards back-to-back on cardstock, cut apart the cards, and stack them in order. Invite a youth or adult volunteer to be the gameshow contestant. Provide him with a copy of *The Lord's Prayer Experience It! Script*, and encourage him to become familiar with it before kids arrive.

You will be telling today's portion of God's big story through a gameshow-style script. Be ready to speak with gameshow-host-like enthusiasm, and consider wearing a blazer and holding a mic (real or fake). Make sure your tech person is ready to read the script along with you and play the sounds/advance the slides.

Play the Gameshow Theme Sound Effect.

SLIDE: Game Show Slide 1.

"Welcome, everyone, to our gameshow called "Pray Like What?" Our contestant will try to figure out exactly what prayer is and how Jesus teaches us to do it. Without further ado, let's welcome our contestant!"

Call the pre-selected leader up on stage. Have him stand behind a podium, small table, or music stand. Set the buzzer or call bell where he can easily reach it.

What's your name? Allow contestant to answer. **Welcome to the show,** (contestant's name). **I'll ask you a series of questions and give you two possible answers to choose from. If at any point you don't know what to do, hit this buzzer ... Hit the buzzer ... and you'll get an "Audience Assist!"** Audience members, when our contestant hits the buzzer, you'll quietly stand up and move to the side of the room that matches the answer you think is correct! Let's practice. Jesus performed many miracles during His time on earth, like calming the storm, healing the sick, and raising dead people back to life. What else did Jesus come to earth to do?

SLIDE: 2.

Raise Question Cards and read the first question:

Jesus came to earth to ... teach about life with God or show us the best dance moves.

Contestant acts confused, then hits the buzzer, allowing the kids to get up and move. Encourage kids to move to the side of the room that represents the answer they think is correct.



Make It Inclusive!:

If there are kids in your group who are particularly sensitive to sensory stimuli, print or draw a picture of a buzzer and set it on the table. Encourage the contestant to make his own sound effect when he hits it.

Point to the side of the room that aligns with the answer “teach about life with God” on the slide.

Everyone on this side of the room is correct!

Play Ding Sound Effect.

SLIDE: 3

Jesus came to teach us about who God is and what He is like. You can return to your seats!

Next question: Sometimes Jesus’ teachings are surprising because they don’t match the way the world tells us we should live. One of the things that Jesus talks about in a surprising way is prayer. Hold Question Cards up and read question 2: What is prayer?

SLIDE: 4

Prayer is ... closing our eyes and bowing our heads or talking with and listening to God.

Contestant acts confused, then hits the buzzer, allowing the kids to get up and move.

This one was a little tougher. The correct answer is ... talking with and listening to God!

SLIDE: 5

Point to the side of the room that aligns with the answer “talking with and listening to God” on the slide.

Everyone on this side of the room is correct!

Play Ding Sound Effect. You can return to your seats.

While many people do close their eyes and bow their heads, that’s just one way to move our bodies while we pray. Prayer is talking with and listening to God, and we can do that standing, sitting, laying down, or spinning in circles! We can do it out loud or silently; we can even pray through writing, dancing, or music.

Next question! When Jesus lived on earth as a man, some people used prayer to make themselves look better than others. They would pray in public places like street corners to get attention from others and show people how important and holy they were. Raise Question Cards and read question 3: What did Jesus say about this way of praying?

SLIDE: 6

Jesus said ... this isn’t a good way to pray or we should totally pray this way.

Contestant acts confused, then hits the buzzer, allowing the kids to get up and move.

Remember—Jesus’ teachings don’t match the way the world tells us we should live. So if some people thought praying loudly on street corners was the best way to pray, then Jesus said ... this isn’t a good way to pray.

SLIDE: 7

Point to the side of the room that aligns with the answer “this isn’t a good way to pray” on the slide.

Everyone on this side of the room is correct!

Play Ding Sound Effect. You can all return to your seats.

Instead of being showy and focusing on ourselves, Jesus encourages us to pray in a way that doesn’t draw attention to us. Instead, we should pray somewhere we can focus entirely on God ... like in our rooms with the door shut. Of course, we can pray with other people, as long as the focus is on God and not on our performance. When we pray this way, God sees us and hears our prayers.

Next question! God not only cares about where we pray, but also how we pray! Some people believe prayer is like magic—we can make God do things for us by saying lots of words in just the

right order. If we do it just right, we can control God and get Him to do what we want.

SLIDE: 8

Raise Question Cards up and read question 4: **Jesus said prayer ... makes God do what we want or helps us know God's heart.**

Contestant acts confused, then hits the buzzer, allowing the kids to get up and move.

This is a tough one too! The correct answer is ... helps us know God's heart!

SLIDE: 9

Point to the side of the room that aligns with the answer "helps us know God's heart" on the slide. **Everyone on this side of the room is correct!**

Play Ding Sound Effect. You can return to your seats. Jesus says that we cannot make God do anything—God knows what we need even before we ask. Instead, Jesus teaches us to pray in a way that helps us know God better—and see God's work in our lives. **Next question! Raise Question Cards up eyes and read question 5: Jesus teaches us a prayer to help us talk with God. True or False?**

SLIDE: 10

Contestant acts confused, then hits the buzzer, allowing the kids to get up and move.

The correct answer is ... True!

SLIDE: 11

Point to the side of the room that aligns with the answer "True" on the slide. **Jesus DOES teach us a way to talk with God! Everyone on this side of the room is correct!**

Play Ding Sound Effect. You can return to your seats. In this prayer—often called the Lord's Prayer—Jesus encourages us to call God our "Father in heaven," because God loves us and wants what is best for us, like a perfect, loving dad (Matthew 6:9). Next, Jesus teaches us that God and everything about Him is holy—set apart and deserving of honor and praise. We are to pray for God's kingdom to come so that what God wants to happen is done on earth just as it's done in heaven. When we pray this way, we are asking God to help us want to do things His way. This prayer helps us know God's heart! **Last question:**

SLIDE: 12

Raise Question Cards up and read question 6: **We should pray for ourselves. True or False?**

Contestant acts confused, then hits the buzzer, allowing the kids to get up and move.

The correct answer is ... True!

Advance to slide 13.

Point to the side of the room that aligns with the answer "True" on the slide. **Everyone on this side of the room is correct!**

Play Ding Sound Effect. You can have a seat.

God wants to hear about our needs and desires ... He loves us! But Jesus reminds us to focus on the things that truly matter to God's heart. Instead of fame, wealth, the nicest clothes, or the best video games, we pray that God would give us food to eat, forgiveness for when we sin—or do wrong things—and strength to avoid doing wrong things in the future. We can understand more about God's heart and know how to speak with Him because Jesus teaches us how to pray.

SLIDE: GAME SHOW 1.

Play Game Show Theme Sound Effect.

Thanks for joining us today on our gameshow, "Pray Like What?" Hopefully you've learned a little more about prayer and how Jesus teaches us how to pray. See you next time!" Thank the contestant and dismiss him.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

"Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS TEACHES US HOW TO PRAY.**

Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

Long before Jesus lived on earth, God promised His people that He would send a prophet like Moses, who led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt: "He will be one of their own people. I will put my words in his mouth" (Deuteronomy 18:18). The Gospel of Matthew shows us that Jesus is that prophet! Like Moses, Jesus instructs God's people on how to obey God and communicate with Him. (Of course, Jesus is more than just a prophet, or a person who speaks God's message to others. He is also the Son of God and Savior of the world!)"



Leader Tip: Help kids understand that prayer is more than just talking to God. Prayer is communicating and connecting with God through talking and listening to Him.

Leader Tip: Jesus teaches us to pray, "May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Some kids may not be familiar with what heaven is. Help them understand that heaven is God's space where He exercises complete authority, where He is in all and over all.

Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. There are no motions to this video. Kids should still stand and leaders should model worship like they would in adult service. Please refer to the Worship Posture Tutorial on the resource page before leading.



WORSHIP VIDEO: FAMOUS FOR

Blessing Your Kids

Speak a blessing over your kids before dismissing Large Group. Speak a blessing from your own heart, using the words below as a guide if needed.

Blessing: May God help you love the things He loves. May He provide for your needs each day. May you forgive others and be forgiven. May He give you the strength to do what is right as you learn from Jesus how to pray.