

Junior Soldiers

Preparation Lesson 3



Bible & Prayer

PURPOSE : For children to understand that reading the Bible and praying are the key ways of staying connected to God. The children will be given the opportunity to explore a variety of ways to engage with the Bible and prayer.

‘I PROMISE TO PRAY, TO READ MY BIBLE AND TO LEAD A LIFE THAT IS CLEAN IN THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED.’

(Promise Focus)

Consider & Prepare

Reading the Bible and prayer are the key spiritual disciplines that keep us connected with God and that are highlighted in the Junior Soldier promise. This session is really important in helping kids understand the importance of these disciplines in our faith journey. If we don't use them, we won't stay connected and in tune with God. It is also important for kids to be able to explore the variety of ways that we can use these tools to communicate and hear from God. There are such a multitude of ways that we can engage with the Bible and prayer, and no particular way is better than the other—we are individuals and will find some methods more beneficial than others. We need to encourage our kids to try a variety of ways so that they can identify what suits them. Having said this, it is also important that they do not then 'lock' themselves into that particular way. It is a great opportunity to share with the kids how you engage with scripture and the ways in which you like to pray.

- Prepare challenge sheet for the 'Who has?' challenge.
- Items for the communication stations, e.g. tins and strings, range of telephones, etc.
- Journals.
- A range of Bibles, enough for each of the children as well as a good cross-section of different versions and styles.
- Whiteboard or butchers paper.
- I pray DVD (www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTW5zrYapCM)
- Organise the kids to bring an old decorated shoe box or gift box for the prayer box activity.
- Decide and organise which items you will have for the kids to choose from for their prayer boxes.
- Collect all the items that you will need for the prayer stations you are going to set up.

Connecting In

'Who has?' challenge...

- 'What is a friend? How do we get to know a friend?' (Spend time with them, find out things that they like, don't like, etc.)
- 'We are going to have a challenge that will help us to learn some things about each other.'
- You can use the template attached or you might like to use it as a guide and edit it to add your own categories.



The sheet has nine sections and you will need to get someone to sign their name in each of the boxes. Depending on the number of kids you have, you can make the rule that only one person can sign each box or if there are only a small number you can see how many boxes you can fill with someone else's name. Some other category suggestions might be:

- Someone who has two middle names
- Someone who has been overseas
- Someone who can say hello in another language

Again, depending on the size of your group, the winner will be the first one to get all the boxes signed with a different person's signature or the person who can fill the most boxes with someone else's signature.

Communication stations...

- How do we stay connected with people? How do we communicate with others?
- Set up stations where the kids can explore, for a specified time, a variety of ways that people use to communicate and stay in touch with each other, including things that we use in our current day and those from other times.
 - Station 1 – two tins connected by a string
 - Station 2 – Morse code
 - Station 3 – Sign language
 - Station 4 – Computers – MSM, Facebook, Twitter, Skype
 - Station 5 – Mime
 - Station 6 – Pictures, images or symbols
 - Station 7 – Variety of phones



All About Me...

In the journal, there is a page titled 'All About Me'; get the kids to fill it out and then share two points from the page with someone else in the group—one thing that they don't think anyone else will know about them and one thing that they think is really cool.

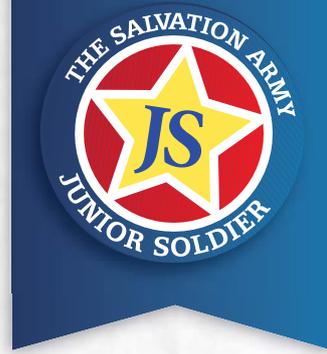
(Leaders – photocopy this page to keep for yourself as a record of 'who' the children are as well as for the Big Bud who will support the children)

- **Link:** All the above activities are about getting to know people and ways of communicating. They show ways of staying connected.
- How do we stay connected with God? (Prayer, reading His word, spending time with Him, etc.)
- 'Today we are going to explore a variety of ways that we can use the Bible and prayer to stay connected with God, how He will use these things to communicate with us, and how we can use them to communicate with Him.'

The Main Thing

Staying connected to God

- What are the ways that you stay connected with your friends and develop your relationship with them?
- Make a list of what that might look like. (Spending time together, talking with each other, phone, email, text, movies, etc.)
- 'In the Junior Soldier promise, it talks about committing to reading the Bible and praying—these are two of the things that will keep us connected to God... let's explore these together.'



BIBLE: (encyclopedia – road map – instruction manual)

- What is the Bible? (Get the kids to make suggestions, you might like to write these up on a whiteboard or a big sheet of butchers paper – explore and fill out for the kids.)
- How do we read it?
- What does it look like? (Bring a few different versions/designs of the Bible for the kids to see, touch and explore.)
- Use the part in your journal for exploring God's book
 - Old/New Testaments
 - Index
 - What do these numbers mean?
 - Can you find Mark 1:9-13
 - Find these passages – Bible 'looking up' race – practice.
 - Ephesians 3:17-19 – 2 Samuel 22:31 – Luke 7:29 – Luke 11:28 – Psalm 18:30 – Deuteronomy 6:6-9 Joshua 1:9 – John 3:16 – Luke 11:1 – Psalm 119: 105
 - (Above is a range of references for the kids to look up, give prizes for those who find the passage and read it out first. You might like to add some to the above list.)

PRAYER

- What is prayer? (Again, get the kids to make suggestions, you might like to write these up on a whiteboard or a big sheet of butchers paper; explore and fill out for the kids.)
- Types of communication: 'We looked at a range of ways to communicate at the start of today, have you used some of them before?'
- 'Can you add any to the list?' (letters, phone, SMS, Facebook, etc.)
- How do you like to communicate with your friends?
- How do we communicate with God? (prayer)
- How does he communicate with us? (Bible, other people, prayer)
- (You might like to share with the kids a time when you have felt God communicating with you).
- 'We are going to have a look now at some kids and what they pray for.' Play "I Pray" DVD for the kids – www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTW5zrYapCM
- 'If you were in that DVD, what would you say that you pray for?'

Prayer boxes

- Arrange the kids to bring an old decorated shoebox or a gift box that they can use for this activity. Provide a range of items from the list below for the kids to include in their box. This is a useful tool to use when praying at home with items that can help to give us a focus and theme when we are praying. Talk through how the kids might be able to use these items when they pray and encourage them to add some of their own and share these with others in the group.

- Things to include in the prayer boxes might be: playdough (make people that are important to you and pray for them), a band-aid (hurting people, e.g. those who are sick and hurting), rubber band (things that are stretching/challenging for us), newspaper (current issues, you could cut out a small part of the newspaper or a particular article), funky glasses (helping us to see things through others' eyes or through God's eyes), all the letters from the alphabet (choose one letter and pray for something beginning with it), paper and envelope (write a letter to someone and post it). Think of some other options; encourage the children to give you some suggestions as well.



Prayer Stations

Set up a few prayer stations where kids can engage with different forms of praying. Choose from the list below or create some of your own.

- A table for individual prayer. You might have some items on the table to help those who are praying, e.g. books, images, music, etc.
- Small group prayer. Encourage those at the table to pray together for a particular issue. You could have three or four issues written out on some paper on the table.
- A prayer wall. You could have a large sheet of butchers paper and bright textas for the kids to write prayers on or you could have some bright coloured sticky-notes that they could write prayers on and then stick it onto the large sheet.
- Nature table. Find something inside or outside and hold it while you pray; you could also use some pictures to stimulate prayers for God's creation.
- One word prayers. This can be incorporated into the prayer wall or a separate table when the kids can use one word to communicate a prayer. You might like to have a table covered with butchers paper and then some sticky letters and get the kids to make words using these.
- Draw a picture (as above).
- A music station: set up a table/space with an iPod or CD player and a range of CD's or playlists. The children can then choose what they listen to as a form of prayer.
- Using scripture to pray. Write or type out some key verses (perhaps the ones that they used in the challenge earlier) and place them on a table or wall and the kids can use this as a form of prayer.
- I am sure that there are plenty more ideas that you can come up with to help kids see the variety of ways that we can communicate with God and that no one way is best.



Tying In

Matthew 6:9-13

- Find the scripture above – The Lord’s Prayer – first one to find it gets a prize.
- Read it together.
- What are the parts that stand out for you? What parts do you like? What parts are helpful?
- How would you put this into words or pictures to communicate to someone else?
- Write/draw your own prayer in the space provided in your journal.



Home & Beyond

The ‘Home and Beyond’ section will be outlined in the journal for the kids but it is important that we make them aware of it, what it means and even challenge them about what they will do in response to this section.

- Have a race with Mum or Dad to find one of your Bible reading passages from the journal.
- Read it out aloud.
- What stands out to you from this passage?
- What stands out for Mum/Dad?
- I wonder why God included this passage in the Bible.



My Favourite Food
is bananas...



I have been to
the movies in the last
7 days...



My Birthday is in
May...



I have been
seasick...



I have a wii...

I like going to the
dentist...



I have been on an
airplane...

I have broken a
bone
in
my
body...



I have had dancing
lessons...



I have a pet fish...