

Junior Soldiers

Unit 8 : Lesson 2



Pray like Jesus!

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand the prayer that Jesus gave us and how each section can impact how we pray.

‘When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the side of a mountain and sat down. Jesus’ disciples gathered around him, and he taught them.’

Matthew 5:1-2

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Matthew 6:9–13

Luke 11:1–4

Matthew 5:1–2

The Lord’s prayer is found in two places in the Bible. The longer version in Matthew 6:9–13 is part of Jesus’ ‘sermon on the mount’. The shorter version in Luke 11:2–4 is Jesus’ response to his follower’s request, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’

In Luke, when Jesus gave his disciples a new prayer, they were curious about prayer—like we are—and they wanted to know:

- Because God is so important, should we only talk to him in emergencies or at special times or for special things, or can we ‘bother’ God anytime?
- Will he be offended if we talk only about things that are important to us?

Jesus’ answer to their question was what is known as ‘the Lord’s prayer’. What Jesus was really giving his disciples was a list of topics to include in prayer:

- how great God is;
- how we’d like to behave;
- who we should forgive;
- what we are sorry for, and
- how much we believe in God’s desire and ability to hear it all!

By giving this ‘default’ prayer, Jesus was indicating the sorts of things we should pray for. However, we need to be wary that we don’t just turn the prayer into something like a ‘magical spell’ that we learn by rote and just repeat whenever we want, assuming things will happen. Beyond words, God wants our heart to be in our prayers. So while we encourage children to learn this prayer, we also need to encourage them to pray other prayers with other words, as their heart leads them.

NOTE: The memorisation task for the Silver Award is the Lord’s prayer. It will be helpful for your whole group to attempt this even if they are not yet at Silver level. If you have children working towards Gold and Crest they may already be able to do this, or it may be a great refresher!

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Bibles

For 'The Main Thing'

- *Matthew* DVD (Bible Society, also available from Koorong). On the DVD, search by 'Event' for 'The Lord's Prayer'. If you don't have this DVD at your corps consider purchasing it, as it is a good resource.
- Bibles
- Eight pieces of paper—A3 sheets or large pieces of butchers paper would work well.
- Coloured textas
- Orange food for a snack, e.g. fruit, carrot sticks, juice, orange lollies or cakes etc.
- Song suggestion: 'Let your Kingdom Come' from Sovereign Grace Music, or something similar. (http://sovereigngracemusic.org/Songs/Let_Your_Kingdom_Come/13)
- Set up something that is out of place and that children will easily identify when asked, e.g. the song books are on the floor instead of where they should be, the resources are out of the cupboard or the outdoor rubbish bin is inside.

For 'Tying In'

- The eight posters from 'The Main Thing'.

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.
- Print the Lord's prayer on the back of the Home & Beyond cards or you might like to make the children a bookmark with the Lord's prayer.

Connecting In

Teach Us...

For this activity, if you are able you might like to go outside and use a different space. During this activity it would be good to choose a game that they know and teach them some different rules that you are going to play today, e.g. you might like to play 'scarecrow tiggly' or 'stuck in the mud' but change the rules so that those that are caught stand differently and then those that can free them do it in a different way (e.g. everyone needs to sit down cross-legged with their eyes closed, other people can free them by tapping them on the shoulders three times etc.). The important thing is that you need to 'teach' them the new rules. Alternately, you could teach them a new game that no-one knows.

Link...

'Today we have taught you a new game or a new way to play an old game. I hope you have had fun learning something new. We are now going to sit in a circle together and learn about something that for most of you will not be new but maybe we can look at it in a new way and explore what it means to you. When Jesus was teaching his disciples he would sit closely with them and talk about things that were important. In our group today we are going to explore prayer and how Jesus helped us to know and understand prayer.'

- Can you tell me what you have been praying for over the last week?
- Sometimes we don't know what to pray for; even grown-ups can struggle to know how and what to pray for. There was a time that Jesus' disciples asked him for help.
- Read Luke 11:1–4
- What did the disciples ask Jesus? (verse 1)
- What did Jesus answer? (in verse 2)
- You might have heard of the Lord's prayer before and we are going to explore this today.



The Main Thing

Exploring what the Bible says...

I want you to picture this scene. Large crowds followed Jesus one day. When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the side of a mountain and sat down. The disciples gathered around him (just like we did after our game today) and he taught them (Matthew 5:1–2)

Open your Bibles to Matthew 5:1–2 and read these verses together. If we keep reading this chapter in Matthew, we will see that Jesus teaches his disciples and the bigger crowd about all sorts of important things: anger, marriage, divorce, revenge and love. This is called ‘the sermon on the mount’. Look through the following passages and the headings of some of the areas that Jesus covered.

For the next section you will need your eight sheets of paper (A3 or butchers paper depending on the size of your group). The Lord’s prayer will be divided now into eight sections—you will need one sheet of paper to use as you explore each section. You might like to use just one colour of texta per section.

‘Jesus certainly taught the disciples and the crowd about a lot of things that day. In chapter six, from verse nine, Jesus taught them about prayer and says “You should pray like this...”’

- If you have the *Matthew* DVD (Bible Society), search ‘Event’ for ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ and show it.

‘To help us understand the prayer that Jesus gave us, we are going to divide it into eight parts. As we read through each section of the passage we call “the Lord’s prayer” we would like you to write or draw something that will help you to remember what this part of the prayer means. I am going to read out the part of the Lord’s prayer and then say some more about it. While I’m talking, and in the quiet part after that, you can write or draw something on the sheet of paper that will help you to remember this part of the Lord’s prayer or what it means to you.’ *(Make sure everyone has an opportunity to contribute. Have some ideas ready in case some children need help to get started. You will need to keep these eight sections/sheets to use next week. If you work as a group, put them on the wall when completed.)*

1. ‘Our Father in heaven’ – use green, representing being a child of God and growing like God’s son Jesus.

Jesus tells us to call God, ‘Father’. The actual word he would have used was ‘Abba’ which we can best translate as ‘Daddy’.

Prayer is about building a personal relationship with God. Jesus compared it to a relationship between a child and a loving parent. As we pray, we should feel comfortable about talking to God just as we feel comfortable talking to our own mum or dad. God made us, so he is like a father to us: we are God’s children.

This statement also reminds us that God is in heaven. He is a spiritual being. He is not like a rock or a chair or a cloud or a dream or a rainbow, he is something entirely different.

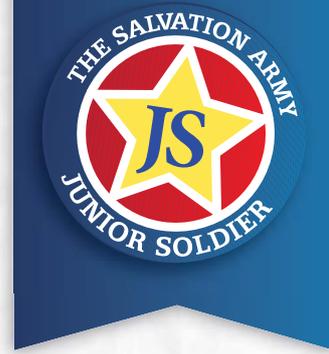
On the first sheet, write or draw something that will remind you that you are a child of God. *(Now give the children some time for them to draw or write their response, then move on to the next part.)*

2. ‘Hallowed be your name’ – use blue, representing the holiness of God.

Another way of saying it is, ‘May your name always be kept holy’. This is about acknowledging and thanking God for who he is. Yes, God wants us to come to him as a child approaches his parents, but we must never forget who God is—the creator and king of the entire universe, so he is pretty special and deserves praise from us.

How do we keep God’s name holy? By living in a way that pleases God and gives him glory and honour. We seek to live a holy life that reflects God’s holiness.

On the second sheet, write or draw something that will remind you to live in a God-pleasing way. *(Again, give the children two minutes of silence to draw or write, then move on to the next part.)*



3. 'Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven' – use purple (the royal colour) representing Jesus as king.

Ask the children to identify/find something in the room (or in another room) that is not quite right. Ask a child to go and make it right.

God's kingdom is any place where God is in charge, just like a king is in charge of his country. God is in charge of everything, but some people don't know this. So in the prayer we are asking: 'God come and rule over everyone; let everyone do what pleases you.'

This is about ensuring our priorities are in line with God's. Prayer shouldn't be about getting what we want to happen—it should be about getting what God wants to happen. It's important that we discover what God wants for us, by reading the Bible and through the prompting of his Holy Spirit—this will help us pray for the things God wants us to pray for.

On the third sheet, write or draw something to remind you that God always wants what is best for us. *(Now play the song 'Let your Kingdom Come' as the children draw or write.)*

4. 'Give us today our daily bread' – use orange, representing the food we need each day.

God wants us to ask him for things that we need, just like a child would ask a parent for things. But notice how Jesus uses food (most versions say 'bread') as the example: something that is essential. When we pray and ask God for things, are we asking him for things we need or just the things we want?

We can pray for things like food, clothes, homes, money, family, friends, good weather, health and medical help.

On the fourth sheet, write or draw something to remind you to pray for things we need. *(Provide a snack in this section with your orange food.)*

5. 'Forgive us our sins' – use red, representing the blood of Christ on the cross.

When we pray, we should confess our sins to God, asking for and receiving his forgiveness.

When we sin, we distance ourselves from God. It's not that he stops loving us, but he is disappointed by our behaviour. Just like when we do something naughty at home, mum and dad don't stop loving us, but they are disappointed by what we have chosen to do.

Rather than us being punished, Jesus took the punishment we deserve when he died on the cross; but then he rose from the dead again to show that he'd conquered death and sin, and to make us right with God. We need to ask God to forgive our sins. God wants us to tell him we are sorry when we do wrong, then he will forgive us and help us do right next time. That's why we pray, 'forgive us our sins'.

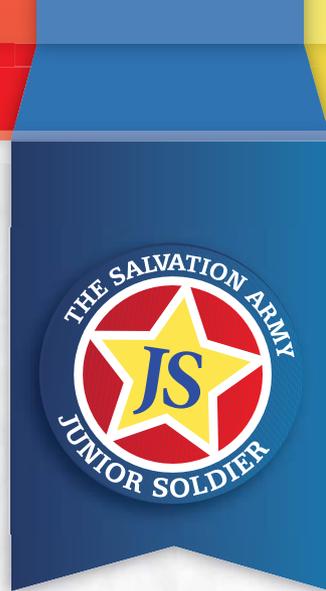
On the fifth sheet, write or draw something to remind you of what Jesus has done for us by dying on the cross. *(Give the children two minutes of silence to draw or write, then move on to the next part.)*

6. 'As we forgive those who sin against us' – use all different colours (like a rainbow) representing God's promise of forgiveness.

Notice that prayer isn't just about God doing things, we have to do things as well. God forgives us, so he also expects us to forgive others.

We are God's children and seek to live in a way pleasing to him. When people do things that hurt us: if they seek forgiveness we should forgive them and be kind to them. Sometimes it's not easy to do this, that's why we pray 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us'.

On the sixth sheet, write or draw something to remind you to forgive others. *(Now give the children two minutes of silence to draw or write, then move on to the next part.)*



7. 'Lead us not into temptation' – use yellow, representing the power (fire) of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives

What is temptation? Temptation is being encouraged to sin. God doesn't want us to sin.

When we pray 'lead us not into temptation', we are praying: 'God, please don't let me be tricked into doing something that displeases you, or doing terrible things that hurt me or others or you.'

Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, we still sin! We need to ask God to help us to stop doing wrong. God wants us to talk to him when we're tempted to sin, and to call on his help when it seems too difficult for us alone.

On the seventh sheet, write or draw something to remind you that the Holy Spirit helps us when we are tempted. *(Now give the children two minutes of silence to draw or write, then move on to the next part.)*



8. 'Deliver us from evil' – use grey, representing how temptation is not always obvious or easy to see.

In this prayer we are asking: 'Father, keep us safe from danger, from anything that harms us, and from Satan, who wants to keep us from you.'

God rules, but Satan is at work trying to influence us. God is more powerful than Satan; therefore it makes sense to ask for his protection. Prayer prepares us for the battles we face day-by-day.

What is 'evil'? Evil is anything that could hurt our mind, body or soul. In this prayer we are asking, 'Father save us from every kind of evil'.

On the eighth sheet, write or draw something that reminds you to pray for God's protection. *(Now give the children two minutes of silence to draw or write, then move on to the next part.)*

Tying In

As a group, look at the eight sections of the prayer you have worked on.

- I wonder why you think Jesus taught this prayer to his disciples.
- How does the Lord's prayer help you to understand prayer/talking to God?
- I wonder if there was anything new that you thought about while drawing or writing today.
- Is there something you saw someone else draw or write that helped you think about God and talking to him in a new way?
- Look up the Lord's prayer again in your Bible.
- Read and pray the Lord's prayer together.

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Jesus' prayer...

- Using your Bible (Matthew 6:9–13) or the pictures/words that you drew, pray the Lord's prayer at home throughout the week.
- With your family, you might like to put this prayer into your own words, display it and read it together throughout the week.
- Your Big Bud might like to support you and pray the Lord's prayer this week as well.

NOTE: If any of your children are working on their Silver Award passport, they can memorise the Lord's prayer as part of the prayer section within their passport.

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