

GOD'S LINK

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Having completed this badge the Adventurers/Sunbeams will be able to:

- explain that prayer is talking to God and forming a link between Him and them;
- explain the **P**raise, **S**orry, **P**lease model of prayer;
- create their own prayers.

BADGE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Explain to your leader what is meant by 'praying to God'.
2. Pray at least one **P**raise prayer.
3. Explain how a prayer saying 'sorry God ...' also asks Him to forgive us for what we have done wrong.
4. Pray a 'please help ...' prayer.
5. Learn and repeat the Lord's Prayer
(7–8s recognize the different types of prayer in The Lord's Prayer.)
(9–10s learn and repeat it to the leader.)
6. Work with your group and put together a **P**raise, **S**orry, **P**lease prayer using different forms of prayer.

The requirements for this badge are best assessed through group participation.

ADVENTURERS
SUNBEAMS

God's
link



CATEGORY

Jesus and Me

TIME FRAME

Three weeks

AIM

To help the Adventurers/Sunbeams know how to talk with God about anything at any time and any place.



THE SALVATION ARMY



YOUTH & CHILDREN'S
MINISTRIES



Teaching ideas

Key to symbol: ☺

This symbol indicates that this is the suggested assessment method to use with the children for that particular badge requirement.

You may well decide to use some of these ideas as your devotional segment.

☺ 1. Explain to your leader what is meant by 'praying to God'

Ask your group the following questions.

- Who do you talk to when something really good happens? Why?
- What else do you discuss with your friends?
- Why? (*They are interested, they understand, they care.*)
- Have you ever talked with God about these kinds of things? Did you know that He really enjoys listening to us talking about the things that have happened to us – both good and bad?
- What is the word we used to describe talking with God? (*Prayer/ Praying.*)

Discussion

Discuss the following questions, asking first for the children's answers, then helping them reach the following conclusions.

- Can anyone pray? (*Anyone who believes in God can talk to Him.*)
- Does it have to be at a certain time? (*No – God is always listening.*)
- Do you have to be in a special place? (*No – God sees and hears us wherever we are.*)
- What do you think God wants to hear about? (*Everything that concerns us.*)

☺ Give an example or tell a story about how you talk to God in prayer.

☺ 2. Pray at least one 'praise' prayer

Give each child a piece of paper. Instruct the members to write their name on their paper. Then each paper is passed around the group and each member writes one good thing about the person whose page it is. The activity finishes when each member has their own paper back.

Explain that thinking about the good qualities and abilities of others help us to praise. We praise people when we speak highly of them, e.g. Andrew Johns is an awesome footballer; Guy Sebastian is a great singer; Mr Jones is a very generous man.

God is good and great and we should praise Him. Ask the group to think of how to praise God. Write their ideas onto a board or chart.

'Thank you God'

Part of praising God is thanking Him for all He's done and given to us.

Ask: 'What could we say thank you to God for?'

Let children give several answers, then ask: Why do you think we say thank you to God for these kinds of things?

Teaching ideas

Explain, using the children's examples, that everything good comes from God. He gives them to us and He wants us to remember to thank Him especially for the things we enjoy.

Brainstorming: Have a large tree drawn on a board or chart. Call it *The Thanksgiving Tree*.

Give to each group about 12 leaf or fruit shapes and allow 60 - 90 seconds for them to write down one thing on each leaf or fruit that they want to thank God for. Then have each child bring out one leaf/fruit to pin onto the tree after they have said, 'I would like to thank God for ____.' The other members of the group can indicate if they agree that it is a something that they want to remember to say thanks for.

Other ways we say 'Thank You God': Explain that from the beginning of time, people have always had reasons to say 'Thank you' to God.

The children may be able to tell you a grace that is said or prayed before a meal in their home/school. Talk about why we say a thank you prayer before we eat and take the time to teach a simple grace to your group.

Ask the children to sit quietly and thank God for one thing, you have talked about in this session that they have never thought of thanking God for – telling Him why they appreciate it.

Conclude the prayer time with a summary prayer. For example, 'God, you have given us so many good things. Thank you for all of them. Amen.'

Conclusion

God wants to hear about the things we enjoy and appreciate. When we tell friends about these sorts of things, we usually just talk. And you can do exactly the same with God, because He wants to be your friend.

Game

Adapt the 'I went shopping game' to list things to thank God for. A child begins: 'We can thank God for water.' Each subsequent child repeats what has already been listed and adds another item: 'We can thank God for water and holidays ...' 'We can thank God for water, holidays and grandparents ...'.



Write a letter or poem and/or draw a picture that praises or gives thanks to God.



TEACHING
IDEAS



Teaching ideas

- ☺ 3. Explain how a prayer saying 'sorry God...' also asks him to forgive us for what we have done wrong

Jesus' story

When Jesus lived on earth, He wanted to teach the people about God and about how to talk with God. He told them a story that showed that God wants us to have the right attitude when we talk to Him. It is a story about two men. One was a religious leader, called a Pharisee, who loved to have people praise him because he was so good. The other was a man who worked as a tax collector, which meant that he was very unpopular. This was because the people thought that all tax collectors were cheats who took more money from the people than they should. Read/listen to the story and decide which man talked to God in the right way.

Ask the children to find and silently read Luke 18: 9 - 14. You may need to help them find the page or read the story to the children from the Bible passage.

Discussion

- Who did the Pharisee talk about when he prayed? (*Himself.*)
- What did he tell God about? (*How good he was.*)
- How did he look when he prayed? (*He stood on his own, probably in a place where everyone would see him.*)
- Where did the tax collector stand? (*At a distance, in the background where he wouldn't be noticed.*)
- What did he do? (*Beat his chest [which was a sign of great sorrow in those days] and hung his head – he wouldn't look up.*)
- Why? (*He was sad because he had made mistakes and failed.*)
- Which man had the right attitude towards God? (*The tax collector.*)
- In what way was the Pharisee wrong? (*He was proud of his own goodness and so he didn't respect God or admit he had made mistakes.*)
- Which one do you think God listened to and forgave? (*The tax collector.*)
- Why? (*He was really sorry.*)

saying 'sorry'

(You may find it helpful to ask the children to close their eyes as you continue.)

Think of the last time you did something wrong, made a mistake, caused an accident or got someone else into trouble. Do you remember how you felt? Silently tell God what happened – He will understand.

If you feel sad about what happened, and you know what you did was wrong, tell God that you are sorry and ask Him to forgive you.

Ask the children to listen as you read 1 John 1:9. This is God's promise to us.

When God forgives us, He wants to help us start again. Sometimes that means we have to do something to put right the things we have done wrong. What could you do to put things right? (You can apologise to the person you hurt.)

Conclude with a prayer

'Dear God, thank you that You always love us and listen to us, even when we don't deserve it. Please help us talk with you more often. Amen.'

Teaching ideas



4. Pray a 'please help ...' prayer

Talking about problems

There are millions of people all over the world – children, teenagers, adults and grandparents – who talk to God about their problems.

Share with the children an example from your own life (e.g. sickness, loneliness, fear, something lost) of a time when you talked to God about a problem and received His help or comfort (not necessarily a 'miracle').

When Jesus lived on earth He taught that we should never be afraid to say 'Please' to God.

We can talk to Him about anything. We can tell Him how we are feeling and we can say 'Please help'. What are some examples of times when children may want to say 'Please help'?

Encourage a variety of answers, such as:

- when someone is sick
- when school work is hard
- when someone dies
- when something is lost
- when there are problems at home
- when feeling afraid
- when feeling lonely
- when something is needed
- when parents separate or divorce.

God wants us to know that it is safe to talk to Him about all these things. He wants to know how we feel – and He wants to help us understand that difficult things happen to people but God will be there to help us in these times.

God's help

Jesus taught that God will do two things when we say, 'Please help'.

(1) He will send the Holy Spirit to us in a special way to help us on the inside. He will be near us, or the person who needs help, and help us to feel safe.

(2) He will do what is best. Jesus told the people who followed Him what God will do when we ask for help: In Luke 2 Jesus says: 'Some of you are fathers. If your children asked you for bread, would you give them a stone? No! If they asked you for a fish, would you give them a snake? No! If you are good fathers, you know how to give good things to your children.' God is a perfect heavenly Father – He will give you whatever is best for you when you say 'please help'.

Help the children find Matthew 7:11 and Philippians 4:6 - 7 and read it out.

Asking for help

Ask the children to think about anything they want to say 'Please help' to God about. Assure them that God knows is best for them.

Conclude this time with a short prayer

'Dear God, every one of us has problems and hard times. We need you to help us. Thank you that you listen and understand, even when we are confused. Thank you that we can trust you to do what is best. Amen.'



TEACHING
IDEAS



Teaching ideas



5. Learn and repeat the Lord's prayer

Use Matthew 6:6 - 16 to describe how Jesus taught His disciples a way to pray. This is known as 'The Lord's Prayer'.

Use a modern translation such as the Good News Bible or Contemporary English Version or a children's Bible story book.

Children aged 9 and 10 can learn this prayer from verses 9-13.

You may like to use Handout 1.



(7-8s) Find and highlight/underline the praise, sorry and please parts of the Lord's prayer.



(9-10s) Do the same and then read and learn the Lord's Prayer, to repeat it to the leader.



6. Work with your group and put together a praise, sorry, please prayer using different forms of prayer

This is an opportunity to use creative forms of prayer. This could include music, paint, dance, play dough, etc.. The group should create a prayer or, prayers using the **P**raise, **S**orry, **P**lease model explained in this badge. The work could be displayed or presented to the rest of the corps during a Church Parade.



(Taking part in a prayer activity such as a 24/7 event would earn this point.)

Extra resources for the god's link badge

Web resources:

- www.kidology.org – become a volunteer member to gain access to the various resources
- [sermons4kids](http://sermons4kids.com)
- talks2children.itsforministry.org
- 24/7prayer.com

HANDOUT 1

Adventurers/Sunbeams

Point 5

God's Link

Find Matthew 6:9-13. Fill in the missing words.

Underline any words you don't understand and ask your leader to explain what they mean. In a different colour, underline or highlight the parts of the prayer that praise God, say sorry, and ask for God's help.

The Lord's Prayer

our _____ in heaven,

May your holy _____

by honoured;

may your Kingdom come;

may your Will be done on

earth as it is in

_____ .

Give us today the food
we need.

_____ us the wrongs we

have done,

as we forgive the

that others have done to us.

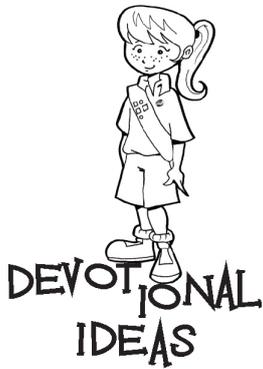
Do not bring us to hard

testing,

but _____

safe from the Evil one.





DEVOTIONAL IDEAS



1. **Title:** Stay in contact with God
Bible: 1 Timothy 2:1-2
Thought: We can talk to God any time, any place and about anything
Supplies: Mobile phone

Make a few short phone calls and talk about any appropriate subject (e.g. spouse to tell him/her what time you expect to be home; CO to ask about badge coupons; one of the SAGALA members to talk about the night's program. You should contact your people before the meeting to ensure they will be available). As you make the calls, walk around the room to show how mobile phones don't restrict your conversation.

Show the children your phone; explain some of the functions; listen to the ring tones.

Talk with the children about mobile phones:

- Does someone in your home have one?
- Who do they talk to?
- What do they talk about?

Mobile phones are great to help us stay in contact with our friends and other important people, especially in an emergency. We can use them to talk to anyone who has a phone; we can use them to talk about anything we like – 'Mum can you please pick me up from school?', 'G'day, just phoning to talk about Legion tomorrow night', 'Hi. Sorry to hear that you're not well'. Mobile phones are great because we can use them anywhere – we're not tied to one place.

Prayer is our mobile phone to God. We can pray at any time, and from any place and we can talk to God about anything from 'Thank You, God, for this good food' to 'Dear God, I feel really sick' and 'Please help me with this test, God', and 'I'm sorry God'.

We don't need special words, or special places or special times to talk with God. We can use our 'mobile phone' – prayer – any time, any place to talk with God about anything. Prayer can be short sentences – 'Thank You God for ...', or simple phrases 'I love You God', and learnt prayers like The Lord's Prayer. God hears every prayer. Read together 1 Timothy 2:1-2 from a modern translation. It suggests that we can and should talk to God about all sorts of things, and because God is everywhere, we can talk to Him at any time and in any place.

Allow time for the children to pray. Encourage all to pray but don't pressure them. Give them options e.g. sentence prayers, finish this sentence 'Thank You, God for _____' and allow the children to call out words.

Have a minute of silence for the children to talk with God quietly.

DEVOTIONAL IDEAS



- 2. Title:** God hears our prayers – big or small
Bible: Luke 1:37
Thought: No prayer is too big or too small (i.e. unimportant) for God to hear and answer
Supplies: Bubble blowers of varying sizes, bubble blowing solution, water and containers

Bring along bubble-blowing equipment, detergent and water. Distribute the bubble blower and allow children to blow bubbles. Point out to the children that some bubbles are big and others small. Explain that the bubbles are like our prayers to God. Some things we ask Him or talk with Him about are very important (big) things, and others aren't as big but still important.

Ask the children to stop blowing bubbles, but tell them that there will be time to blow some more later. Ask them to think about some big, important things they might talk with God about, or ask of Him. You could list these on a board or chart, or create bubble shapes from paper or cardboard and write prayers on.

Having allowed the Adventurers/Sunbeams to share their thoughts, ask them to think about the little things they might talk about to God. These might include things to be thankful for, telling God how great He is – none of these things is unimportant but perhaps have a smaller 'value' in the minds of Adventurers/Sunbeams.

Read Luke 1:37. This great verse tells us that there is nothing too big for God to handle and nothing too small that He isn't interested in or cares about. Ask them what things they could pray about that they have never thought to talk to God about. Be sure to affirm their responses.

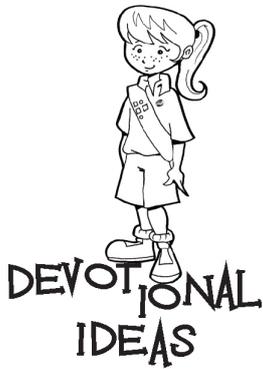
When the children have shared their ideas tell them they can blow bubbles again. This time, for every bubble they blow, they must say a prayer about one of the things we have just talked about. It can just be a thought because God knows our thoughts.

Be careful not to allow the bubble blowing to get out of control – help the Adventurers/Sunbeams to remember that even whilst doing this fun activity they are to pray a prayer after each bubble blown.

When you feel sufficient time has passed, say a short prayer to finish. Collect the bubble blowers and soap containers, unless you plan to allow the children to take them home.



DEVOTIONAL
IDEAS



DEVOTIONAL IDEAS



3. **Title:** Colour your prayers
Bible: Philippians 4:6
Thought: To review the three types of prayer learnt by creating a prayer chain
Supplies: Paper, 3 different colours pens or pencils, glue, sticky tape or stapler

Preparation: Choose paper in three different colours. Each colour will be used for the three kinds of prayer e.g. green for 'praise'; white for 'sorry', blue for 'please'. Cut the coloured paper into strips about 4cm wide.

Explain to the children what kinds of prayers may be written on each colour. Encourage the children to write prayers on strips of paper according to the colour. The prayers may be single words, phrases or sentences; or even pictures. Children do not have to write prayers of every kind and they may write more than one of any kind. Ask the children to pray each prayer quietly as they complete a strip. Then have them bring the strip to you to link it to the chain that you will make. The prayers could be linked according to colour, or in no particular order.

When completed group the children in a circle and each child holds part of the chain. Say a short prayer to close, e.g. Dear Jesus, please hear and answer our prayers. Amen.

The chain could be strung in the room.