

Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15)

1. Children's Prayers:

Here are a couple cute prayers by kids*...

- Here's what one parent said: "I had been teaching my three-year old daughter the Lord's Prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, she would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: 'Lead us not in to temptation,' she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail. Amen""
- Another kids prayed: "Our father, who does art in heaven, Howard is his name...."

** copied from "Religios Jokes: Children's Prayers" section from www.qjokes.com.*

2. How NOT to pray:

Today, we are continuing to look at the sermon on the mount. Today we're going to look at Jesus' teaching on prayer...

Read Matthew 6:5-8 (while youth follow along)

Ask: First of all, Jesus told His disciples how not to pray. What did Jesus say we shouldn't do?
(Don't pray for people to see you – so people think you're great. Don't just babble on and on, just hoping God will hear you because of talking a lot.)

3. Who We Pray To:

Instead, just talk to God!

Read Matthew 6:9-15 (while youth follow along)

Realize who you're talking to. It says we are talking to "Our Father in Heaven" who's name should be hallowed – treated with respect and honor

- As Christians, God's our Father.
- And, He's the God of the universe.
- And He is perfectly pure and holy.

If I asked you guys "what's prayer?" a lot of you might say "talking to God," like it's not that big a deal...

But prayer is talking to GOD!

The creator and sustainer of the universe. Who is all powerful and is perfectly holy. That ought to give awe...

Read Isaiah 6:1-5 (While youth follow along in their Bibles.)

Ask: What was his reaction to being in God's presence?
(Make sure kids see that he felt overwhelmed and felt his sinfulness in comparison with God's holiness.)

Peter told Jesus "Go away from me; I am a sinful man" when he saw His power. (*Luke 5:8, NIV*)
(Jesus had told him to cast nets on the other side of the boat and then the nets were filled)

But now, Jesus' death for our sin has made it possible for us as Christians to be able to go right into God's presence without fear. (At His death the curtain dividing the holy of holies was torn in two.)

Ask: Prayer is talking to God. How should that affect how we pray?

Explain:

- If you are talking with God, you're not just talking to a void or to yourself.
- You're not just talking to a cosmic force.
- Or someone who just hopefully might be able to do something.
- You're talking to God.
- As Christians, your talking to your Dad who's the king of everything - you're talking to your loving Father who's the most powerful Person in the universe.

4. **How to Pray:**

This is how we should pray...

Read Matthew 6:9-15 again, and after each part you read, ask "What does that mean?"

Here are a couple helpful notes to help answer for a couple sections:

- "Hallowed be Your Name" basically this means let your Name – who You are – be treated as holy.¹
- "Give us today our daily bread" basically means to give us what we need each day.

Ask: How is the prayer Jesus told His disciples a good outline for us to use when we pray?

5. **Listening!**

One other important thing to think about when we talk to God, is to listen...

There's a song that says to God: "What are my words compared to Yours?"

Think about the power of God's words: He created the universe with His words. Jesus spoke and calmed a storm – immediately. God's words are powerful. The Bible says God's words will not return void – they accomplish His purpose (Isaiah 55:11).

So, what does that mean?... It means we need to listen!

We should be sure to give some silent time for Him to speak to us when we pray.

(Let Him impress stuff in your mind and heart.)

And, very importantly, listen to Him by reading His Word.

And be sure you realize God won't tell you to do something when you pray that goes against His Word!

6. **Prayer Time:**

- Have youth spend a couple or so minutes to talk to God. Remind them that if they are Christians, they are talking to their "King of everything Dad." They should use the Lord's Prayer as an outline as they pray for what is going on in their lives, their needs, etc (have them look at the verses to guide them as they pray). Tell them that if they are not Christians, they should also use the time to talk to God about helping them know Him!
- Close today by giving kids an opportunity to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. Tell them, if they believe they are sinful and they believe Jesus died on the cross for their sins and rose again, to quietly repeat a prayer to ask Jesus to forgive them of their sin and be the master of their life. (After you pray, tell kids to talk to you after class if they accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord for the first time today!)

This lesson copied or adapted from YouthBibleLessons.org. See YouthBibleLessons.org Lessons page for copying/adapting terms.

¹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, The Bible Speaks Today series (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 147.