

Meeting

1 Teach Me to Pray

Bible Verse:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Extra Bible Verse:

Psalm 118:1

Provide:

- 2 paper cups for each child
- String or yarn
- A small nail
- Scissors
- Marker
- 4 pieces of poster board

To Do:

- Prepare a cup for each child by punching a small hole in the bottom with the nail.
- Cut 12-foot lengths of string or yarn, 1 length per every 2 cups.
- Write the following on each poster:
 - *(Verses 16 and 17)*
 - *(The first phrase of verse 18)*
 - *(The second phrase of verse 18)*
 - *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Purpose:

This meeting can help children understand Christian prayer, how to pray, when and where they can pray, and the kinds of prayer.

Bible Material:

Prayer Time by the River (Acts 16:11-15)

Warm-up

Get-involved Activity
(10 minutes)

As the children arrive, give every two children a pair of prepared paper cups and a piece of string. Show them how to thread one end of the string through the cup from the bottom. Repeat with the other end of the string and the other cup. Then tie large knots in each end of the string and gently stretch the cups apart until the string is tight.

Play a game by giving half the children messages to send to their partners. Use the three phrases from the memory verse, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Show half the children the posters of the first two phrases. Say *go* and let them rush to their cups and whisper the phrase through the string to their partners. The first partner to shout out the correct phrase wins. Then repeat the process, beginning with the other half of the children. Repeat using the two remaining phrases. After this activity, lean the poster boards against the front wall of your meeting room so the children can easily see and read the memory verse. (Each child may want her own string telephone. You may want to provide additional cups and string so each child can make a set of cup telephones to take home.)

Workout

Group Study
(30 minutes)

1. Learn five kinds of prayers. Call attention to the large hand cut-out posted on the wall. Ask the children to hold up one of their hands like the cut-out. Say: “Today we are going to talk about prayer. What is prayer? (*talking to God*) Let’s learn about five kinds of prayers.”

Hold up your hand like the cut-out. Point to your thumb. Say, “The first kind of prayer is when you *praise* God.” Put the praise sentence strip on the thumb of the hand cut-out. Read it aloud. Ask, “What is an example of a praise prayer?” After the children respond, hold up your hand and point to your thumb and encourage the children to do the same. Ask, “What is the first kind of prayer?” (*praise prayer*)

Hold up your hand and extend your thumb and index finger. Say: “The first kind of prayer is praise prayer. The second kind of prayer is asking God to help you personally. The actual word is *petition*. Petition is a request for help. When I pray a *petition* prayer, I ask God to help me.” Put the “God, help me . . .” sentence on the index finger of the hand cut-out. Ask, “What is an example of a petition prayer?” After children respond, show your hand and point to your thumb, encouraging children to do the same. Ask: “What kind of prayer is represented by the thumb? (*praise prayer*) What kind of prayer is represented by the index finger?” (*petition prayer*)

Put the “God, I am sorry for . . .” sentence on the middle finger of the cut-out hand. Say: “The next prayer has another important word for the title. It is called *confession*. Confession means to admit a fault or wrong doing. You should confess your sins to God in your prayers. Read the sentence strip aloud and place it on the middle finger. Ask, “What is an example of a confession prayer?”

Direct the children to hold up their hands again. Point to the thumb and ask, “What is the first kind of prayer?” (*praise prayer*) Point to your index finger and ask, “What is the next kind of prayer?” (*petition prayer*) Point to your middle finger and ask, “What is the next kind of prayer?” (*confession prayer*)

Put the next sentence strip on the ring finger of the hand cut-out. Read the strip aloud. Say, “The next kind of prayer is *thanksgiving* prayer. Thanksgiving Day is not the only day to thank God for what He has done for you. For people who love God, every day is a day for thanksgiving prayers.” Ask, “What is an example of a thanksgiving prayer?”

Review the list again, one finger at a time as before. Be sure the children use their own hands, so this becomes a readily available memory tool.

Provide:

- Large sheet of art paper
- Five sentence strips
- Marker
- Tape
- Scissors

To Do:

- Cut out a large hand shape with distinct fingers from the large sheet of art paper. Mount the cut out hand on the wall with the thumb pointing up and all fingers pointing to your right as you face the cut-out.
- Write the following statements on the sentence strips:
God I love You because . . .
God help me . . .
God, I am sorry for . . .
Thank You, God, for . . .
God, please help . . .

Finally, place the last sentence strip on the little finger of the hand cut-out. Read it aloud. Say: “The fifth kind of prayer is the kind of prayer when you ask God to help others. We call this type of prayer *intercession*.” Point to the fingers as you ask, “What is the difference between petition prayers and intercession prayer? (*Petition prayer is for self; intercession prayer is for others.*) Say: “When you ask God to help others, you are praying intercession prayers. Intercession means asking for help for someone else. What is an example of an intercession prayer?”

Review the five kinds of prayer again in the same manner, using hands and fingers. Ask the children if they can say the five kinds of prayers from memory. Take down the cut-out and let volunteers attempt to name the five kinds of prayers. Ask the children to point to their hands and fingers as a volunteer recites the kinds of prayers. Allow other children to try this if you have extra time.

2. Tell the Bible story. Turn on the CD player and softly play the water sounds. Open your Bible and tell the following story.

Provide:

- CD of water sounds
- CD player

Prayer Time by the River

Paul, Timothy, Silas, and Luke were traveling on a mission trip. They went from city to city telling others about Jesus. Soon they arrived in the city of Philippi in the region called Macedonia. They stayed in the city for several days.

When the day for worship came that week, the men wanted to worship, but there was no church or synagogue in Philippi. There was a place by the river where Jewish people gathered for prayer. They decided to go there. When they arrived, they found a group of women already gathered there for worship and prayer.

One of the women was a businesswoman named Lydia. Her business was selling a special, beautiful purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God, but she had never heard about Jesus. When she met Paul, she listened to his story about Jesus. God helped her understand and believe Paul’s story. Lydia became a Christian! When her whole family heard about Jesus, they believed, too. They were all baptized.

Lydia was changed when she became a Christian. She wanted to do something for Paul and the other missionaries traveling with him. She invited them to stay in her home while they witnessed and preached in Philippi. She was very persuasive, and the men agreed to accept her invitation. The missionaries stayed in Lydia’s home.

—based on Acts 16:11-15

3. Review the Bible story. Ask the children the following questions about the story.

- Where did the people in the story pray?
- Where can you pray?
- When did the people in the story pray?
- When can you pray?
- Do you think they stood or sat as they prayed?
- What position can you be in to pray?
- What kinds of things do you think the people in the story prayed about?
- What kinds of things can you pray about?

Be sure to help the children learn that prayer is appropriate at all times, in any place, about any subject, and in any position. Remind the children that you do not have to fold your hands and close your eyes, but these things may help you concentrate on talking to God and remind you that prayer is special.

4. Learn a memory verse. Show the box on which you have printed 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Turn the box, showing the various phrases in correct order. Lead the children in reading the verses as you turn the box. Let several team members take the box and lead the children in reading the verses. Finally show the side of the box which says “From Memory.” See who can say the verses from memory. Then lead all the boys and girls in quoting the verse from memory. Ask: “What do these verses teach you about prayer?” (*to be joyful, to pray all the time and to thank God even when things are not going well*)

5. Experience prayer. Guide the kids to form five teams. Place a coach or another adult with each team. Give each team a large sheet of paper and a marker. Assign each team one of the kinds of prayers (*praise, petition, confession, thanksgiving, intercession*) discussed earlier. Ask each team to write a prayer based on their assigned kind of prayer.

When the teams finish their prayers, tape them to the front wall. Ask a volunteer from each team to come forward to lead in prayer. Direct all of the children to bow their heads. Ask each volunteer to read their team’s prayer aloud as a prayer to God. After the last prayer, close the prayer by thanking God for giving us a way to talk to Him about everything that matters to us.

6. Prepare for STRETCHING. Explain that it is time for the children to go to their STRETCHING groups. Ask the children to stand up when they can name a kind of prayer. Let each child name a kind of prayer and then dismiss them one at a time to their groups.

Provide:

- A small box
- Colorful paper
- Marker
- Tape

To Do:

- Cover the box with colorful paper.
- On each side print a phrase:
 - *the words of verse 16;*
 - *the words of verse 17;*
 - *the first phrase of verse 18;*
 - *the second phrase of verse 18.*
 - *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.*
 - *From Memory.*

Provide:

- 5 markers
- 5 large sheets of paper
- Tape

To Do:

- Enlist coaches or other adults to lead teams.
- Give each team a marker and a large sheet of paper.

Stretching

Activity Page Time
(20 minutes)

Answers for the activity pages are found on the last page of this meeting. You may choose to provide photocopies of this page to the STRETCHING coaches.

The Tournament

Games and Activities
(20 minutes)

Blow the whistle to begin THE TOURNAMENT time. Choose from the following games and activities.

Elephant

The group stands in a circle. One person is *It*. *It* points to someone and says “Elephant” and counts to 10 quickly. The person pointed to puts both fists on his nose to make a trunk of an elephant. The persons on each side of him use one hand to make an ear of the elephant by holding their hands up next to the elephant’s head. If someone makes a mistake, or if *It* counts to 10 before someone has his part in place, that player becomes the new *It*. After the group gets good at making elephants, begin calling other options such as:

- Kangaroo—The person in the middle makes a pouch with two hands. Those on each side jump up and down.
- Palm Tree—The person in the middle must clasp hands and stretch his arms over his head. The players on either side hold their outer arms up and out to be leaves for the palm tree.

Say: “In this game, you learned that you can do lots of things with your hands. This week, use your hands to help you remember that you can pray. Look at your hands and say the kinds of prayer with me now.”

Fat Bat

Divide the group into two equal teams. Arrange home plate and the two bases to form a small triangle. Make the foul lines 180 degrees from home plate. Shorter base paths are best (35 feet). (See the illustration on the next page.) The pitcher pitches the ball as in softball. The Pitcher must be a member of the batting team. (He may not interfere with fielders.) Each player bats one or two times an inning (or an equal number of players bat if teams are large). Each player must hit the ball; there are no strikeouts. The number of outs per inning is not important. All batting players must stay behind the foul line. The fielding team may throw the ball at a player to get him out between bases.

Provide:

- A whistle

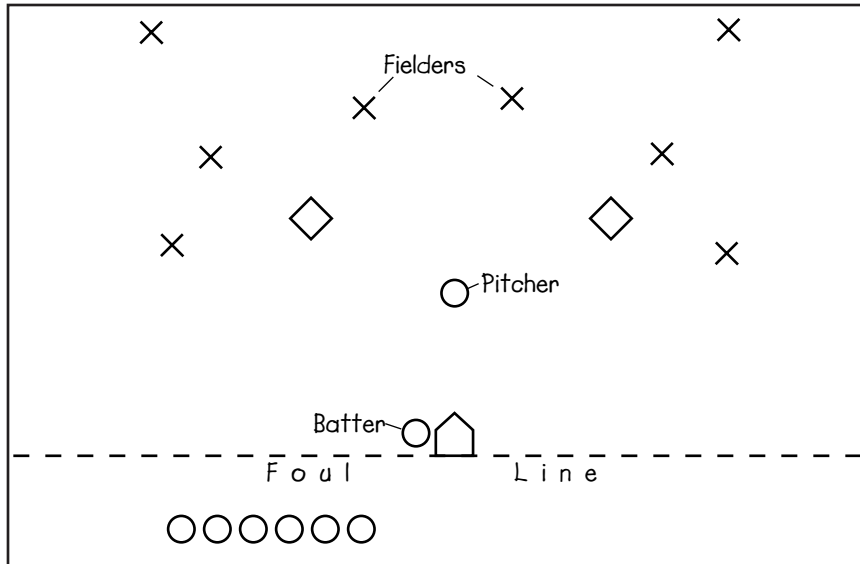
Provide:

- Foam ball
- Fat plastic bat
- Three bases
- Tape

To Do:

- Place the bases and tape off a foul line.

Play until the children are tired. Then ask the children to each find a partner and pray a prayer of thanksgiving for each other.



Farmers Hoe!

Group the children into five teams. If you have more than 25 players, prepare two game areas. Line up the teams at one end of the playing area. Place the baby pool at the opposite end of the playing area.

On your signal, the first player runs to the baby pool and uses his hands as a hoe to dig up a colored block. When he finds a block, he runs back to his team and places the block on the ground in front of the next player in line. That player looks at the color of the block, runs to the baby pool, and digs up a block of a different color. She runs back to the starting line, places her block on the ground, and the next player repeats the process. When a team finds five blocks of five different colors, they arrange the blocks in order according to the hand model taught in WORKOUT and say the types of prayer aloud.

Cool Down

Refreshments and Conclusion
(10 minutes)

Serve graham crackers, apple slices, and fruit juice from the picnic baskets.

Before the children eat, ask: “When is a good time to say a prayer of thanksgiving? (*before you eat*) Why do you thank God for the food He has given you?” (*Expressing thanks to God helps you remember that God gives you everything you have.*) Remind the children that when you eat, the food becomes energy in your body. Ask: “When you pray, how should you ask God to help you use the energy He has given you?” (*being kind to others, telling*

Provide:

- Baby swimming pool
- Shredded paper or foam peanuts
- Wooden blocks
- Construction paper in 5 colors
- Marker
- Masking tape
- Scissors

To Do:

- Cut each color of construction paper into five 1-by-3-inch strips.
- Write the following words on the designated colors of construction paper

<i>praise</i>	red
<i>petition</i>	green
<i>confession</i>	blue
<i>thanksgiving</i>	yellow
<i>intercession</i>	orange
- Fill the pool with shredded paper or foam peanuts.
- Tape the word strips onto the wooden blocks and hide them in the pool.

Provide:

- Blankets and quilts
- Picnic baskets
- Paper plates, cups, napkins
- Graham crackers
- Apple slices
- Fruit juices
- CD of water sounds
- CD player

To Do:

- Create a picnic scene by spreading quilts and blankets on the floor and playing a CD of water sounds.

others about Jesus) Ask the children to say prayers of thanksgiving before they eat.

As the children eat, encourage them to be joyful, pray continually, and give thanks about everything this week because God wants them to talk to Him.

Meeting 1: Answers to Activity Pages

Grades 1–3

Match Kinds of Prayer

Praise	God, You are . . .
Petition	Help me to . . .
Confession	I am sorry I . . .
Thanksgiving	Thank You, God, for . . .
Intercession	Help our president . . .

Bible-Verse Mini Maze

Be joyful, pray, give thanks

Grades 4–6

One Place of Prayer

Paul and the other missionaries with him stopped in a city called PHILIPPI. On the SABBATH Day, they went to a place by the river where a group of WOMEN were meeting to pray. One of the women was named LYDIA. The Lord opened her HEART to the message Paul preached. Then, she and the other members of her household were BAPTIZED.

Kinds of Prayer

- 1 John 1:9—Confession
- Psalm 150—Praise
- Psalm 22:11—Petition
- Acts 12:5—Intercession
- Psalm 95:2—Thanksgiving