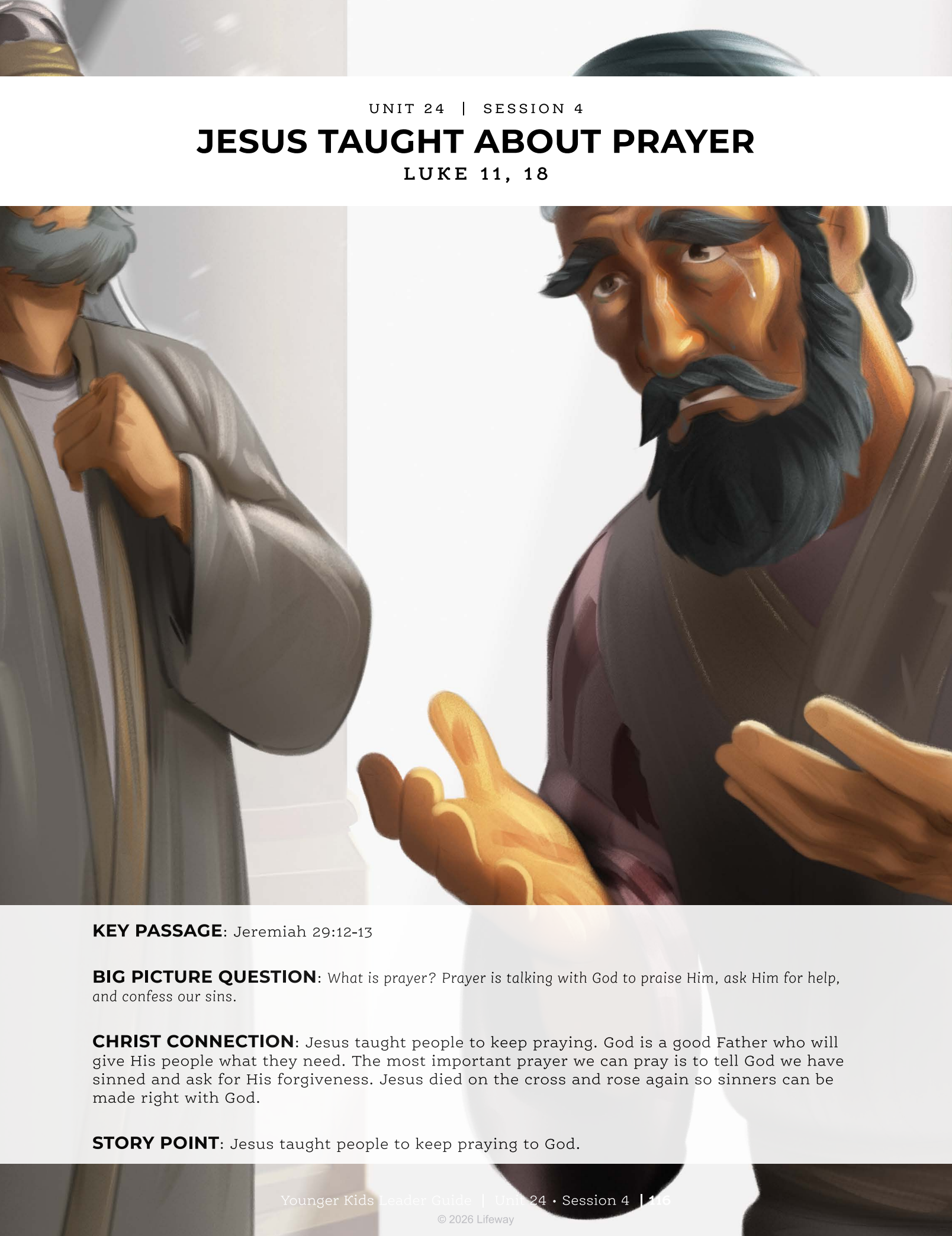




UNIT 24 | SESSION 4

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT PRAYER

LUKE 11, 18

KEY PASSAGE: Jeremiah 29:12-13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is prayer? Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus taught people to keep praying. God is a good Father who will give His people what they need. The most important prayer we can pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so sinners can be made right with God.

STORY POINT: Jesus taught people to keep praying to God.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The disciples often witnessed Jesus communing with His Father in prayer. They recognized this spiritual discipline as one He committed much time to when He drew away from the crowds. Jesus' followers became curious about this practice and desired to better understand it.

One disciple stepped up and boldly asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Rather than lecturing them on the insufficiencies of their own prayer lives or directing them to make long, wordy recitations, Jesus taught them how to commune with God using a simple but profound framework now commonly known as the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus modeled a style of prayer that addressed God as "Father"—not as a distant, unloving, unknowable, or far-off figure. He also prayed in the second person ("Our Father," "give us," "as we forgive"), reminding the disciples that faith is lived out in community. Jesus engaged in a communal prayer that asked for God's power, provision, forgiveness, mercy, and spiritual protection.

He then told a parable about opening the door to a friend who inconveniences you, revealing to us the boldness and passionate persistence we should employ in prayer. He shared another story about an apathetic judge intervening for justice, and how much more God compassionately desires to intervene in our lives. Through it all, Jesus taught them not to simply beg God for what He can give us, but to leverage prayer as a reminder of God's presence and sovereign control over our lives.

As you reflect on the prayer Christ modeled to His earliest followers, remember that the nature of prayer hasn't changed in the thousands of years since the Lord's Prayer was first uttered. Lead boys and girls to see that God desires to hear from them, save them from their sins, and provide for their needs. Lead them to see that God hears the prayers of those who seek Him and that He stands ready to provide them with their greatest need: salvation from sin. Pray they would come to understand the nearness of God through prayer.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Connect It" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ "Persistence Puzzle" printable

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ inflated balloons
- ☐ music



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ brown bulletin board paper
- ☐ construction paper

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ construction paper

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Taught about Prayer" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ props (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 24, Session 4" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "Ball Toss Game" printable
- ☐ paper cups
- ☐ large craft sticks
- ☐ string
- ☐ wooden beads

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "With All Your Heart (Jeremiah 29:12-13)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Have you had to keep asking for something or trying something until you reached your goal? Did you ever feel like giving up?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Connect It” activity page.

SAY “Today we will learn how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD**. God is a good Father who will give His people what they need. I am looking forward to sharing today’s story with you.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: PERSISTENCE PUZZLE

Prior to the session, print out a copy of the “Persistence Puzzle” and the corresponding game pieces for every two or three kids. Cut out the game pieces and keep in sets. Form kids into groups of two or three and invite them to sit around with a copy of the puzzle and the game pieces. Challenge kids to work together as a group to arrange the pieces to fill their puzzle. Demonstrate how the different shaped pieces fit together to fill the rectangle. For an added challenge, encourage teams to race against each other. The first team to complete their puzzle wins.

SAY “This puzzle took time and persistence to put together. Persistence means continuing despite a challenge. Sometimes, prayer requires persistence, because we have to keep praying about something for a long time. Today we will see how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD**.”

☐ OPTION 2: PRAYER TOSS



Before this activity, write out questions about prayer on inflated balloons. Some suggested questions are: What is something you can ask God to help you with? What is something you can thank God for? When is a good time to pray? Lead kids to spread out around the room. Toss the balloons in the air and play music while the kids work to keep the balloons in the air. When you stop the music, kids will catch the balloon nearest to them. If a kid is holding a balloon, have them read the question and share their answer. Play several more rounds, allowing different kids to answer different questions.

SAY “Prayer is important in the life of every believer. In today’s story we will see what Jesus taught about prayer. I am looking forward to sharing it with you!”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome, kids. I am so glad you are here. My name is [your name], and today I get to share a story from the Bible with you. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? **[Distribute Bibles to kids who do not have one.]** Today we will see how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD**. The Bible is God’s Word, and everything in it is true. That is why it is so important to listen and do what God says in His Word. Let’s prepare our hearts to hear from the Lord today. ‘Lord, thank You for Your Word. Help us hear what You want to teach us today. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “When we study the Bible together, we like to think about a big picture question and answer that helps us focus on a specific truth from God’s Word. Do you remember our big picture question? **[Allow responses.]** Our big picture question is: **What is prayer?** Do you remember the answer to this question? **[Allow responses.]** **Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins.** The most important prayer we can pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Jesus is the promised Messiah who healed the sick, performed miracles, and shared the good news of the kingdom of God. He reminded John the Baptist of this truth when John was in prison. We also learned how Jesus raised the widow’s son from the dead and forgave a woman’s sins, proving again that He is the Messiah. Today we will see how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD.** ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 11, 18. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Taught about Prayer.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT PRAYER

“One day, **Jesus’ disciples saw that He was praying. When Jesus finished, one of His disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Jesus said, “Whenever you pray, say this:**

“Father, Your name be honored as holy.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves also forgive everyone in debt to us.

And do not bring us into temptation.”

Jesus also said to them, “Imagine if you were to go to one of your friends at midnight and say, ‘Friend, loan me three loaves of bread.’ That man would answer from inside and say, ‘Don’t bother me! It’s too late. I’ve already gone to bed.’

“Yet in boldness, if you were to keep knocking on the door, the man would eventually get up and give you what you were asking for! So I say to you: ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened.”

Jesus also said, “If a son asks for a fish, would a good father give him a snake? If a son asks for an egg, will a good father give him a scorpion? How much more will our heavenly Father give us the Holy Spirit when we ask.”

Sometime later, **Jesus told them a parable about praying and not giving up.** He said, “There once was an unkind judge, and a widow kept coming to him over and over, saying, ‘Give me justice! Do what is right!’ Eventually, that judge gave in and did what the widow was asking for, because she wore him down by asking over and over.

“If this evil judge will finally do what is right, how much more will God grant justice to His people when they cry out to Him day and night!”

Jesus also told another parable about prayer: “Two men went up to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee was standing and praying like this: ‘God, I thank You that I’m not like greedy and sinful people like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I give money to God.’

“But the tax collector just kept saying, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner!’

STORYTELLING TIPS

Props: Display props or pictures around the room that have to do with today’s story and the parables Jesus told to teach about prayer such as bread, a rubber snake, a fake scorpion, a picture of a fish, a judge’s gavel, and coins.

Expression: Use an expressive voice and eye contact as you tell the story to make sure kids remain engaged.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

“I tell you,” said Jesus, “only the tax collector went to his house justified. **Everyone who lifts himself up will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be lifted up.**”

Christ Connection: Jesus taught people to keep praying. God is a good Father who will give His people what they need. The most important prayer we can pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so sinners can be made right with God. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Jesus’ disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. He told a parable, or a story, to help the disciples understand an important truth about prayer. He told the story of a person asking his friend for bread. What was the lesson Jesus wanted the disciples to learn about prayer? [Allow responses.] Jesus showed the disciples the importance of persistence in prayer—to pray and not give up. The man who asked for the bread kept asking until he received the bread. In the same way, we must keep on praying until we receive an answer to our prayer.

Jesus used another parable to teach how we should pray. He told the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector praying in the temple. What did the Pharisee pray? [Allow responses.] The Pharisee prayed thanking God that he was not as sinful as other people. On the other hand, how did the tax collector pray? [Allow responses.] The tax collector knew he was a sinner and was deeply troubled by his sins. He humbly prayed for God to have mercy on him. Jesus told His disciples that we should pray like the tax collector—repenting of our sins and asking for God’s mercy.

Jesus taught people to keep praying. God is a good Father who will give His people what they need. The most important prayer we can pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so that those who believe in Him can be made right with God. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ The most important prayer we will ever pray is to tell God we have sinned and ask Him to save us. If you would like to know more about trusting Jesus as your Savior, your parents or one of your church leaders would love to talk more with you about this decision. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 24, Session 4” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Is it OK to pray and ask God for the things you want to happen?
2. Why is prayer important?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Explain that in 2007, in a little coffee shop in Pullman, Washington, five people gathered to talk about Jesus grew to 50 people. At the end of each gathering, someone would say: “If what we’re talking about resonates with you, please stick around.” More and more students were beginning to hear about Jesus, and the community began to grow and continues to grow. God has moved in the hearts of college students to be followers of Jesus who then invite others to learn more about Jesus.

From one site in 2007 to 16 different sites across seven states of the Pacific Northwest and Canada, Resonate is a family of churches committed to college campuses. God has worked in the hearts of families and students to grow closer to Him and live for Him. They believe God is moving among the next generation, and they want to be involved in telling people the good news about Jesus.

Distribute the “Ball Toss Game” printable, paper cups, large craft sticks, 36-inch length of string, and wooden beads. Assist as needed while kids create their ball toss games as reminders to pray. Pray that more students will want to be involved in Resonate Church on the college campus in Salt Lake City, Utah. Pray for the church leaders as they begin ministries to reach the students. Thank God for providing ways through Resonate Church to reach students in Salt Lake City.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Jeremiah 29:12-13 together.

SAY “ I hope you will continue working on memorizing our key passage that reminds us of the importance of prayer in every believer’s life. ”

Form kids into groups of three or four kids. Challenge them to work together to come up with motions that go along with the words of the key passage. For example, kids could place their hand like a phone to their ears for the word *call* and put their hands together for the word *pray*. After the groups have finished, invite them to come to the front and share their motions with the entire group.

Lead kids to sing “With All Your Heart (Jeremiah 29:12-13).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, that we can talk with You through prayer. Thank You for being a good Father who meets all our needs. Help us to be faithful in prayer. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 11. Explain the Bible is divided into two sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament records creation and the history of God's people. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection and the spread of the gospel.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem [H5] on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 11:13 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Jesus used the parable of parents giving their children good gifts to show that we can trust God to answer our prayers in ways that are right and good. If humans, who are sinful, know how to love and care for their children and give them good gifts, how much more will God love and care for His children? God promises to hear and answer His children when we pray, but we must remember God may answer in a different way than we want or expect. His plans are always best. When we trust Him with our desires through prayer, we can also trust that His answers to our prayers are the best because He loves and cares for His children. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What kinds of things should we pray about? ”

Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask for help, confess our sins, and listen to Him. Jesus' example prayer in today's story shows that we should pray for God to meet daily needs, for forgiveness of our sins, and for protection from temptation to sin. We can trust God with anything through prayer. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matthew 6:9-13.)

SAY “ How can you show a humble heart when you pray? ”

We can show a humble heart by first being sorry for our sins and asking God for forgiveness. We can also realize that God's answers to our prayers are better than any plan we could make for ourselves. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Micah 6:8.)

SAY “ What does it show us about God that He hears us when we pray? ”

God is a good Father who loves and cares for His children. He hears our praises, our concerns, our needs, and our cries for help when we talk to Him through prayer. He is not too busy or too important to provide for His children and talk with His children through prayer. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Hebrews 4:16.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: PRAYER TREE

Before this activity, use brown bulletin board paper to create a large tree trunk on a wall in your room and use a different color paper to cut out large leaves to attach to your tree. Gather kids in one group. Invite kids to share prayer requests or praises with the group. As they share, write each prayer or praise on a leaf and attach it to the prayer tree. Continue checking in from week to week with the kids about the prayer requests they share and adding more prayers and praises. As prayers are answered, move the leaves to the ground around the bottom of the tree.

SAY “ Today we learned how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO KEEP PRAYING TO GOD**. Prayer is how we talk with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins. ”

☐ OPTION 2: PRAYING HANDS



Distribute a piece of construction paper and a pencil to each kid. Place scissors in the center of each table. Show kids how to lay one of their hands on the paper and trace around it with a pencil. Then, direct kids to use scissors to cut out their traced hands. Write the words Praise, Thanks, Confess, Help for Self, Help for Others on the board. Encourage kids to write one of these words or phrases on each of the fingers of their hand cut-out. Then, invite kids to glue their hand cut-out to another sheet of paper and decorate it with colored pencils or markers.

SAY “ Prayer is how we talk with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins. I hope you will make prayer a regular part of your life, if you haven’t already. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.