

HOW TO PRAY

Lesson Guide Sample (Lesson 1)

DiscipleTown is the Kids Church curriculum from **DiscipleLand** and Karl Bastian, the Kidologist! This customizable, teacher-driven curriculum provides everything you need to essential skills for victorious Christian living!

This sample includes the first thirteen pages of Lesson 1. The full *How to Pray* download includes additional pages and higher image resolution, plus three more lessons of material. Find a complete list of product components at DiscipleLand.com.





How to Pray

Lesson 1—Prayer Means Praising

Unit Summary

Prayer is a familiar topic to children—but do we truly teach children how to pray? For too many Christians (of any age), prayer is reserved for times of trouble or cursory meal blessings, but prayer is so much more. It connects us with our Creator and deepens our walk with God. Teach prayer as a skill so that children can discover firsthand how it enriches their lives. Teach children to pray, and there become many things you will not have to teach them—the Holy Spirit will do it for you! In order to give children a simple mental framework, break down the many aspects of prayer into four areas, each starting with a letter of the word “PRAY”—Praising, Repenting, Asking, and Yielding. While there is certainly more to prayer than can be captured in four simple words, each lesson will expand on the broader aspects to show kids that they will enjoy a lifetime exploring the power and the joy of connecting with God!

Lesson Summary

In its simplest definition, prayer is talking with God. Therefore, prayer should begin with worship—an acknowledgement of who God is. Too often, Christians come to prayer only in times of need and begin by asking for things. God is a loving Father who delights in giving to His children (as we will learn in lesson three) but when we approach the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, prayer should commence with submission and awe and reverent respect. This lesson will give children tools to use prayer first as a means to deepen their friendship with God through praise.



DISCIPLE TARGETS

In this lesson, your children will...

KNOW

- God is worthy of praise and worship.

FEEL

- Awed that the Creator of the universe wants to listen to them.

DO

- Determine to spend more time in personal prayer.

Paul’s Power Principle: Praising God shows that we know who He is!

SUPPLIES ✓

General Supplies

Bibles, puppets, video projection (optional)
Pencils, pens, paper

Spark Interest

WELCOME!: markers, posterboard (optional)
LET'S PLAY!: pizza box, eggs, masking tape
CONNECT WITH YOUR KIDS: none

Explore Scripture

KEYVERSE: none

Inspire Action

DRAMATIZE THE POINT: gadget prop

PowerPoint Presentation

As you plan your lesson, select PowerPoint slides that correspond to the lesson elements you choose. In the "Slide Sorter" View, you can rearrange and/or delete the slides as necessary. For descriptions of the included slides and tips on their use, see the notes accompanying each slide.



SPARK INTEREST

Choose from the following activities and ideas to engage kids and grab their attention.



Welcome!—Praise Wall

As children arrive for each lesson of this unit, invite them to engage on the topic of prayer and the lesson's focus by writing on a Prayer Wall. Your room and facilities will determine whether you are able to use an actual wall or one of the options listed below, but help children begin to focus on prayer as soon as they enter the room. For this first week, in very large letters above the wall, write: PRAISE WALL (or "Praise Poster" or "Praise Board"—whatever fits your situation). As the children arrive, invite them to write words or phrases that describe God on the PRAISE WALL. If they get stumped, encourage them to think through the letters of the alphabet and write words describing God that start with each letter. Tell the children you want to "fill the wall with praise." Encourage them to continue writing until it is time to begin your service.

The Wall: If possible, choose an actual wall kids can write on. Paint over the wall each week with fresh white paint. This will be both novel and memorable to the children. You could also acquire "chalkboard paint" so that you could erase their writing each week. Otherwise, put up large sheets of paper for the children to write on, poster board, or simply set out white boards or chalkboards. The advantage here is the ability to save the "walls" each week and display them all at the end of the unit, perhaps in a hallway.





Let's Meet-n-Greet!

Have the children turn and greet each other and give three people around them a compliment. Explain that when we compliment someone, we say something nice about him or her—something we like about the person, or something he or she is good at. When we praise God, we are complimenting Him—telling God something we like about Him, or that He is good at. **Let's take some time to worship in praise right now.**

Leaders, be sure to stop whatever you are doing to move through the audience and greet the children, especially those you do not recognize. Announce any birthdays for the week. (See the **How to Use DiscipleTown** guide for quick and easy ways to acknowledge visitors and birthdays.)



Let's Worship!

As you shift to worship, open in short prayer and be sure to focus on praise, saying something like, **God we want to praise You because we love You and because of how awesome and wonderful You are.** It doesn't need to be long or deep or profound, but focus on praise and model it for the children.



Recommended Song: *Praise Him* or *Let the Praise Ring* from *God's Kids Worship—Modern Worship Spring, March DVD*, available at Kidology.org



Puppet Intro

Leader & puppet introduce today's lesson. You will find a scripted version of this intro at the end of the lesson. **Supplies:** puppet

The Puppet* comes out and asks the leader if he is aware that it is Puppet Appreciation Sunday. Leader says he isn't and he's sorry because if he had known, he would have brought a gift or something for Puppet. Puppet says it's okay, he didn't expect him to know, because he just made it up. Leader is a little surprised but feels better. Puppet then says that he is here to help and has a list of things for the leader to read to the kids about just how awesome the puppet is. Plus, he bought a really nice present for himself that the leader can give him. The leader says that's kind of odd, and Puppet says, "And I spared no expense." Leader says, "You mean it's expensive?" Puppet says, "Yes, and no." Leader asks what that means. Puppet says, "Well, it is expensive, but it didn't cost *me* anything, because I used your credit card—I know you love me and wouldn't mind. Now, please give me the gift and hurry up and read the list of 'Awesome Stuff About Me.'" Leader says, "Wait a minute, I'm not sure I want to do that." Puppet says, "Why not? It's Puppet Appreciation Sunday!" Leader says, "Well, I think maybe we should consider a Leader Appreciation Sunday." Puppet says, "Oh, that's next year, I think." Leader gasps, "Next year?!" Puppet says, "Yeah, I was thinking of changing this to 'Puppet Appreciation YEAR' instead of Sunday." Leader says, "Hold on a second, buddy, this is getting a little out of hand here. First you tell me to read a list about how awesome you are, then you want me to give you stuff—you are making this all about you... what about me? Have you forgotten about me here?" Puppet pauses and says, "No, I just was thinking, that's probably how God feels sometimes." Leader shakes his head and does a double take. "Huh!?" Puppet says, "I'm just kidding about the Puppet Appreciation Sunday—I was just trying to make a point." Leader laughs, "I see. And I think I got it. You had me going. Good job! You're right. The way you acted is the way a lot of people come to God—they make it all about themselves and forget that it should be all about God." Puppet says, "Yeah, I wonder sometimes if God ever wonders, 'Hey, remember Me? What about Me?'" Leader says, "Good point, [puppet name]. We are starting a unit on how to pray, and today we'll learn about how we need to start with praise. We start prayer by submitting to God and putting HIM first." Puppet says, "I know sometimes I make

the mistake of thinking about how awesome I am, instead of how awesome God is." Leader says, "When we take the time to tell God how awesome HE is, that's called praise!" Puppet says, "Well, give me that list back. I think I'm gonna go rewrite it and make it a list of how awesome God is!" Leader says, "That would be a great idea for anyone to do!"

***PUPPET:** Develop a puppet character to use regularly. The children will get to know the personality and enjoy these regular visits. Dee, Cy, and Paul puppets are available at *DiscipleLand.com*



Let's Play!—Pray It 'n' Play It—Egg Roll

Supplies: one medium pizza box, two raw eggs, masking tape



During this unit, hold a game show called **PRAY IT 'n' PLAY IT: One Minute Challenges!** It is based on a television show* that features challenges that contestants must complete in sixty seconds to win. Use the suggestions provided here, or visit the show's website and watch the videos there and try some of the games they use. The games appear simple but are difficult to accomplish in only sixty seconds!

The Challenge: Contestant must roll two eggs across the stage into a square (marked with masking tape) by fanning a pizza box in less than sixty seconds.

NOTE: Pre-play this challenge to determine an appropriate distance for your kids.

The Point: **These challenges are hard to do in only sixty seconds! With more time they would be much easier. The same is true in our relationship with God. We need more than one-minute spurts of prayer to truly connect with God.** Talk to the children about how many people never pray for more than one minute and then wonder why they find their lives so challenging. If they spent more time in prayer, they'd find the closeness to God that makes challenges easier to overcome.

**Minute to Win It* on NBC



Connect with Your Kids

When you share abstract concepts with children, you need ways to make them real and tangible. One way is to connect with kids relationally. When you personally relate the content by passing it through the grid of your life experience, especially your childhood, you no longer seem like “just another adult” to the kids. You earn the right to be an influencer in their lives. These small segments can make the difference between transmitting content and touching kids’ hearts. Don’t underestimate the power of this segment. It has the potential to transform you from a talker to a teacher.

NOTE: Don’t “introduce” this segment—just do it.

As you talk about how praise is telling God something that you like about Him or think is amazing or awesome about Him, start to talk about something that you personally are in awe about when it comes to God. If you were a Christian as a child, talk about it in that context—if not, then relate what you praise God for now. When I teach on this, I talk about my first visit to Yosemite National Park as a young boy and how I was so awestruck by the height of the sheer cliffs and the thunder of the tallest waterfalls in America. It was there and then that I knew there was a God, and I had this profound feeling of being so incredibly small. Yosemite became a very special place for me—a place I can actually feel the presence of God. I now go there every year, taking with me a group of children’s pastors so they too can be struck by the awe and majesty of God that can be found only there. I’d show the children one of the videos I’ve made (you can find them at www.yosemitesummit.org) and tell them how God has allowed me to photograph a bear every year there, sometimes from only a few feet away. I tell about being struck by lightning there and how that experience impacted my impression of the *power* of God! When children hear me talk about Yosemite, they get a firsthand feel for what I feel about praising God. What is your story? How do *you* praise God? It isn’t real to kids unless you *make* it real with your story.



DiscipleTown Visitor

Usually we have a fictitious character drop by **DiscipleTown**, but for this first lesson, we suggest you have the worship pastor of your church come by, or someone who leads worship or participates up front in the worship at your church leading corporate praise. It would be fantastic for the children to hear from these people why they do what they do, how they enjoy it, and what it means to them to participate in praise and worship. If it is the worship pastor, you can rearrange the order of your children’s service to accommodate him or her to be able to drop by and participate. You’ll also help the children get to know and recognize their church staff.



EXPLORE SCRIPTURE

Seize on the children's interest and direct them into God's Word.



Let's Search!—Bible Dash

Supplies: Bibles



Ask all kids with Bibles to participate, or invite a few volunteers to come to the front. As children hold Bibles closed with hands on covers, state the Bible reference twice, then on the command "SEARCH!" have the students race to locate the verse. Once they have a finger on the verse, they can stand and call out, "FOUND IT!" Have the first child read the verse aloud while you project the verse on a screen via PowerPoint. See suggestions below for comments on each verse. Keep your comments brief and to the point of the lesson.

- *Hebrews 13:15*
- *Isaiah 25:1*
- *Psalms 135:3*
- *James 5:13*
- *Psalms 42:11*
- *Psalms 100:4*
- *Psalms 63:4*

We should continually offer praise to God.

We praise God for things He has done.

Singing is one way that we can praise the Lord.

When you are happy, praise the Lord!

When you are sad or down, praise the Lord, too.

Come into church praising God.

We should praise God for our entire life!



Paul's Power Principle: Praising God shows that we know who He is!



Let's Learn!—Prayer Starts with Praise *Matthew 6:5-9*

Supplies: Bibles, red telephone



Who is the most important person you have ever talked to? Allow the children to share. Have a red telephone on display in the center of the stage. (You can spray-paint an old phone) If you have it there from the beginning of the service, you'll get the children's curiosity going. Put a label on the front of the phone that says, "HOTLINE TO:" and have several different additional labels that say: PRINCIPAL, PRESIDENT, SENIOR PASTOR, and HEAVEN. Start with PRINCIPAL. Ask the children if they could call directly to the principal of their school, and ask for anything, what would they ask for? What improvements would they request at the school? Less homework? Better food? Longer recess? Etc. Encourage the children to make suggestions. Then switch the sign to SENIOR PASTOR and ask about what they would suggest if they had a direct line to the head of the church. You may get some humorous suggestions, but keep the discussion respectful. Next, put up the sign that says "HOTLINE TO THE PRESIDENT" Ask the children what they would change if they had direct access to the president (or leader) of their country! What power that would be! Perhaps they would have some suggestions for ways things could be better. Finally, put up the HOTLINE TO HEAVEN! **What if you could have a direct line to heaven and talk to the Creator of the universe?! What if God would actually listen to you? What if you could actually enter the Throne Room of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and present your needs to Him, and He would take the time to listen to you and respond to you? Wouldn't that be awesome? What if there were a phone that could do that? What would it be called?** Ideally the children will say, "Prayer!" If not, say, **Boys and girls, we do have a HOTLINE TO HEAVEN—something that enables us to talk to God. What's it called?** They will answer prayer once you spell it out clearly for them.

Pick up the red phone like you are going to talk into it and say, **Children, for the next four weeks we'll learn about this HOTLINE TO HEAVEN called PRAYER. A lot of people talk about prayer, but few people truly understand *how* to pray. If you aren't sure how to pray, don't feel bad. Even Jesus' disciples weren't sure—in Luke 11:1, they asked Him, "Teach us how to pray."**

Let's spell the word "pray" together: P-R-A-Y. If you can spell the word "pray," you can remember the four things we'll learn about praying in the coming weeks.



- The "P" reminds us that prayer starts with Praise. We'll talk about that now.
- The "R" reminds us that we need to Repent—when we pray, we need to examine our lives and allow God to show us where we have sin and how we can change to be more like Him.
- The "A" reminds us that we can Ask for things because God is our heavenly Father and He delights in giving to His children.
- The "Y" reminds us that prayer helps us Yield to God so that we can see His will unfold in our lives.

By Praising, Repenting, Asking, and Yielding, we have a DIRECT LINE to God, who is eager to listen and help us!

Let's read how Jesus answered when the disciples asked Him, "Teach us to pray." The longest record of this answer is found in Matthew 6, and it is called the Lord's Prayer because it is a model of how we should pray.

Read Matthew 6:5-13 to give a general overview of the entire passage. Challenge the children, especially the older kids, to memorize the entire passage. Consider giving some reward or honor to those who memorize it (such as their name on a plaque or banner in the church or a ribbon that will be presented in "Big Church" by the senior pastor on the final week).

Now focus in on Matthew 6:5-9. **There are three things we can learn from this passage:**

- 1) Pray in Secret** (v. 5-6) **Have you ever seen someone make a big show of how they pray? Perhaps you have a story you can share about that. That may impress people, but it doesn't impress God. What we do in secret counts to God, because it is sincere. That is why God rewards what we do in secret, because He knows we really mean it.**
- 2) Pray Simply** (v. 7-8) **We don't need to try and sound religious and fancy in our prayers. We can simply talk to God like we are talking to a friend. After all, Jesus called us His friends (John 15:15). Just express your thoughts, your fears, your concerns, and your needs to Him just like you would talking to a friend. You should be respectful and honest—but you do not need to try and impress God with super-spiritual "churchy" talk. Just talk to Him. This verse ends by saying God knows what you need already, so it is not the words you use that are important, it is the fact that you take the time to talk with Him that counts.**
- 3) Pray Praise** (v. 9) **"Hallowed" is a big fancy word that means "lifted up," "honored," or "praised." What does it mean to "praise"? That's a word you hear at church a lot, but it's not just a church word—you can praise people, or restaurants, or food, or a video game! It means to express love, devotion, or admiration for something. But remember, *if you just think it, it's not praise*. Once you say it, write it, or sing it, it becomes praise. If I like a pizza, that's fine. But once I say, "I love this pizza!" I have praised it! If I go to a movie and think it is great, that is one thing. But if I say to my friends, "That movie was the greatest movie I've ever seen!" I have praised the movie. If I say to my wife, "You are the most beautiful woman in the entire world!"—that is praise. If I just think it and never tell her, I have failed to praise her. There are Christians who think God is awesome, they believe**

Jesus is wonderful, but they never say it—they never express it. They forget to *praise Him!* Praise is only praise when we express it!

As Jesus showed us, we start prayer with praise. Many people start praying by asking for things. That is not a bad thing—our third lesson will be about how to ask for things in prayer. But imagine if you had a friend who only ever asked you for money and candy and favors? You would soon weary of that friendship and wonder if the person really cared about you. A friend is someone who wants to spend time with you, not just ask you for things. If all you ever do is ask God for things, what kind of friend are you? What kind of Friend are you allowing God to be? He wants to spend time with you and wants you to spend time with Him. Praise is a way of telling God you value Him and honor him for who He is, not just for the things He does for you or gives you.



Suggested Bible Narrative

Jesus Takes Time to Pray—Mark 1:35

Jesus was a busy man! He was out teaching and doing miracles and serving God, and yet, even HE knew that He needed to spend time with His heavenly Father. He “got up”—sometimes we just have to get out of bed, a task that can be difficult at times! He got up early, before others could bother Him and the demands of the day started. He went off to a solitary place—He got off alone. If we want to really spend time with God in prayer, we need to have the discipline to a) Get Up b) Get Away c) Get Alone.



Dee's Disciple Tip: Here is a helpful guide you can use for specific prayer steps:

H = Honor God with Praise

E = Examine your life

A = Ask for personal needs

R = Request help for others

T = Thank God for blessing you

Because you spent time reviewing the P-R-A-Y lesson overview, do not spend too much time on each letter of H-E-A-R-T acrostic—you don't want to overwhelm or confuse the children. Instead, focus on “Honor God with Praise” and give a quick overview of the other letters. Each week will focus on a different aspect of the H-E-A-R-T acrostic.

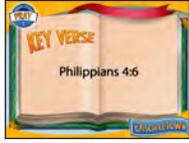
OPTIONAL: Give the children a H-E-A-R-T bookmark to take home (found in the Lesson One folder).



KeyVerse

Topic: Pray about Everything!

Reference: *Philippians 4:6*



There is an old popular song called “Don’t Worry, Be Happy.” It has a catchy tune, but its advice is pretty empty. When you are going through a tough time, being told “be happy” isn’t a lot of help! *Philippians 4:6* has much better advice: “Don’t Worry, Be Prayerful!” Ask the kids what kinds of things they worry about. Write them on a board. Then explain that “anxious” means to worry. This verse says “in everything.” Circle everything you wrote on the board, one by one. Is this included in everything? Let the kids say “yes” to each and every one. End by praying for the kids and mentioning the things listed on the board.

Memorization Activity: Read the verse together several times and then introduce the following hand motions:

Do not be
anxious about
anything
but in everything
by prayer
and petition
with thanksgiving
present your
requests
to God

wag pointer finger of one hand in the air motioning “no”
wring hands together
point around the room
arms extended as in a big hug
hands together in flat prayer pose
interlock fingers in prayer pose
right hand flat against face and then extend down, palm up
both hands palms up toward heaven
one hand writing on other like a pad of paper
“pen” hand goes up into a point toward heaven



INSPIRE ACTION

Encourage kids to apply the Bible truth to their lives.



Dramatize the Point—The Prayer Reader 4000

Act this out or read as a story. **Supplies:** four actors, gadget prop for the Prayer Reader 4000



This drama continues each week with four different actors (or puppets). The idea is that the leader has a device (The Prayer Reader 4000) that enables him or her to read the minds of four churchgoers as they pray. It is best to pre-record the prayers and play them through the sound system and have the actors only act out the prayers by moving their mouths and folding their hands, being dramatic to match the prayers, etc. If that isn't possible, have them put a script on their laps and pass a microphone or have them speak loudly. The leader goes behind them holding the Prayer Reader 4000 over their heads as they "pray." After all four pray, the leader asks the audience, "Which prayer pleased God the most?" and then "Why?" Discuss the other prayers and what was right and wrong with them.

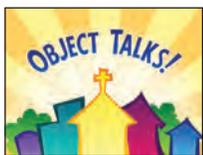
Actor 1: *Dear God, thanks for making me so awesome. I mean, You really made a masterpiece when You made me. You must have thrown out the cookie cutter because I have yet to meet another person as cool as me. I just rock, and I owe it all to You. Just wanted to say thanks, Dude.*

Actor 2: *Dear God, You sure are lucky I'm a Christian aren't You? I mean, with all my talent on Your team? Just imagine if I were on the other team. Whoa. The mere thought of it is just kinda scary. I know my talents are from You and all, but still. Amen.*

Actor 3: *Dear God, You are such an amazing God. When I think about all the incredible things You've made, and all the places I've been, and I've hardly been to that many yet. I can't wait to see more. And then, You died for me, so now I'll have all of eternity to praise You. I just can't get over You. Not sure why You love me, but I'm glad You do. Sorry I let You down today—I'll try harder tomorrow.*

Actor 4: *Dear God, that is, if You are even there. No so sure about that, I mean I keep asking You for stuff and You haven't delivered, but I guess I'll keep asking and maybe one day it will pay off and I'll finally cash in and get lucky and get some of the stuff I keep praying for. Not sure what the deal is. Come on, gimme the goods.*

Which prayer pleased God the most? Which prayer was real praise? Which prayer came from a humble heart that was submitted to God?



Object Talks—The Giant Pen and Glasses

Supplies: video projection

The video clip for this lesson features Karl, the Kidologist, doing a short object lesson featuring a giant pen and a pair of sunglasses caught up praising God because of how wonderful He is. Use this short teaching video to show the kids or to train a leader to do the talk "live." *Featured verses:* Psalm 145:3, Psalm 104:1



Let's Talk!—Small Group Discussion

Divide the children into groups of five or six. For each group, provide each child with a piece of paper and a pen. Have kids write their own names on their papers. Pass the papers to the left, and have each child write a compliment about the person whose name is on the paper. Pass around until everyone has had a chance to encourage everyone else. Return the papers to their owners and allow them to read their lists. Next, pass a paper around that has “God” written on the top. Have the children do the same exercise with God.

Use the following questions to help children process what they’ve learned:

- 1) How did you feel after receiving compliments, or praise?
- 2) Does praise, or compliments, focus on the positive or the negative in other people?
- 3) How do you feel when you honestly compliment or encourage someone?
- 4) How do you think God feels when we praise Him?
- 5) What happens in our hearts when we focus on the good things about God?
- 6) Why is praise a good place to start when we want to pray?
- 7) Is thankfulness a way to praise God?



DiscipleTown Super Citizen

Choose a child who demonstrated a heart of genuine worship and praise during the service, and present him or her with the Super Citizen certificate.

Let's Pray!



Dear God, we are so honored to be able to praise You. You are such an awesome and amazing God worthy of our praise and worship. Help us to not be anxious about anything, but in everything to simply come to You in prayer. Remind us, dear God, to not be so busy that we forget to come and worship You. As Your Word tell us in 1 Chronicles 29:11, “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; You are exalted as head over all.” May we praise You each and every day and never take for granted the blessings You give us. In Jesus’ name, amen.



Cy's Challenge: Choose a specific time and place that you will talk to God this week. Write it down and keep your appointment!



Let's Review!

If you have extra time, use these review questions to keep the kids focused on the lesson until time to dismiss. A handful of candy will help you keep their attention. After each question, take a minute to reiterate the lesson point related to the question.

- 1) What does “praise” mean?
- 2) Prayer is like a HOTLINE to ____ .
- 3) P-R-A-Y starts with P ____ .
- 4) God is impressed when we pray in ____ .
- 5) T/F Fancy prayers impress God.
- 6) “Hallowed” means ____ .
- 7) What did Jesus do really early in the morning?
- 8) Our KeyVerse is ____ .



For the Home

DiscipleTown Table Talker: Give each child a copy of this week's *DiscipleTown Table Talker*. Be sure to show the kids how to put it together and encourage them to ask their parents to lead family devotions three times this week.

Parent Email: Copy and send the email below to help your parents connect with their kids during the week. Send them early in the week, but not on Sunday. As a courtesy, be sure parents have opted to receive these emails. Review and edit as necessary to reflect the lesson elements you have used. You can also find this email as a Microsoft Word document in your download bundle.

Dear Mom and Dad,

*This week in **DiscipleTown**, we started a new series called How To Pray. Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking that our kids are capable of only basic prayers, but in the coming lessons we will explore how simple it is for our kids to pray meaningful and effective prayers. They will grow in confidence that God hears their prayers and will grow deeper as they learn to allow God to change their hearts.*

*This unit is based on Matthew 6:5-13, where Jesus uses the Lord's Prayer to teach His disciples how to pray. To make it easy to remember, we'll use the letters in the word "PRAY"—**P**raising, **R**epenting, **A**sking, and **Y**ielding to explore the different parts of effective prayer. Our KeyVerse to memorize for this unit is Philippians 4:6. Please help your child(ren) hide this word in their hearts.*

The Lord's Prayer starts with praise, so this week we learned the importance of praising and thanking God for who He is and for what He has done in our lives. I encourage you to take time when you pray with your child(ren) to have them express their praise and thanks to God.

You can also use the DiscipleTown Table Talker we sent home to add more great discussions about prayer to everyday life with your child(ren).

Another great activity you may want to consider this month is to start a prayer journal with your children. Write down the things your family is praying for, and watch as God begins to answer your prayers. Be sure to write down the answers, too, so you can go back and read them again! I hope you will share some of these special moments with us, so that our faith can also be built up.

If you have any questions, or if there is a way I can pray for your family, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Forming young disciples,

[Your Name]



BONUS MATERIALS

Use these options to extend your time or as substitutes for the ideas above.



Chip's Snack Time!

Supplies: see below

Have fun exploring God's creation with food—kids love to play with their food. Why not let them play and eat? For best results, have a collection of fruits, veggies, and candies for your kids to "create" with.

Here is a list of food items you could use. The options are endless, so be creative: fruit roll-ups (green for grass, blue for ocean), broccoli pieces (trees), pretzel sticks (bare trees, etc.), string licorice, gummy fish, grapes (rocks), bananas (chunks for mountains, rock formations, or cliffs), apple slices (flower petals, beaches, etc.), mini marshmallows, frosting (to make things stick together).

Ahead of time, put an equal assortment of candies and snacks in plastic bags for each child (have a few spares). The morning of the lesson, pre-cut fruit and cover in plastic or put in pre-bagged portions like the candies.

Give each child a fruit roll-up on a plate, and their assortment of goodies, fruits/veggies. Let kids create by pressing goodies on the fruit roll-up to create a scene... and then eat it! Be sure to have wet wipes for cleanup. Challenge them to create a picture of nature that makes them think about how great God is. As they are creating, let them tell you about what they are making. For fun, take a picture of their artwork before they eat it. Nature is just one reason we can praise God when we pray!

Additional Ideas

Prayer Journals—Encourage the children to keep prayer journals this month. Provide inexpensive notebooks for them to decorate. Make a "Prayer Journal Notebook" sticker complete with your children's ministry name and logo, church logo, or even **DiscipleTown** logo (available in the Supplemental Resources folder) and have them put it on the notebook. Encourage your kids to write a short prayer to God every day or so. Let them know it's okay to miss a day. The purpose is to record their prayers so they can see when God answers, and to write the answers to prayer they experience. This will encourage them to keep praying, especially in times of discouragement—they can reread the ways that God helped them in the past! Through the unit you can provide suggestions of things they can journal about, especially about praying for others, asking for prayer requests of family and friends, pastors, missionaries, and writing out verses on prayer that they discover, etc. On the final lesson, award a prize to the children who bring in their prayer journals. (Don't announce this until the third lesson, so that children aren't doing the prayer journal solely for this reason.)

So Awesome A God!—This activity is ideal for smaller groups. For larger groups, divide them into eight to ten teams. Give each player (or team) a sheet of paper with the alphabet down the side, A through Z. Each player or team then writes down one word that starts with each letter that describes God. (For example, "Kind" for "K") After everyone is finished, or a time limit is up, the leader goes through the alphabet and each player reads his or her words. If anyone has the same word, cross it off. If no one else wrote a particular word, circle it. After every letter has been read, the player (or team) with the most circles wins for having the most unique descriptions of God!