

Persistence in Prayer

OBJECTIVE: *To encourage each other to be persistent in prayer.*



WORSHIP

Sing praise and worship songs as well as songs about prayer that are familiar and meaningful to your group. Here are some suggestions.

"God Is So Good"

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

"I Will Call Upon the Lord"

"Surely the Arm of the Lord Is Not Too Short"

"The Name of the Lord Is a Strong Tower"

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

"Whisper a Prayer"

STORY

Jesus' Story of the Friend at Midnight, Luke 11:5-13

- Jesus tells about a friend who shares bread at midnight because his neighbor keeps asking.
- Jesus says that those who ask receive.
- Jesus says that if earthly fathers give good gifts, our heavenly Father will give good gifts.

Ask a father and son to help demonstrate the lesson. Give the father a picture of a snake, a picture of a fish, an egg, and picture of a scorpion. (You may use the pictures on pages 51 and 52.) Begin by telling the first part of the story (going to a friend's house at midnight) by flashlight. When you read, "knock and the door will be opened to you," knock on a nearby door and open it, or knock on a wooden table or wall. Then as you read on, ask the son to ask his father for a fish. Let the father hold up the picture of the fish and the picture of the snake. Ask everyone which the father will give the son. Do the same with the egg and the scorpion picture. Finish the reading.

MEMORY VERSE

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9).

Help the children remember this verse by singing it to the tune of "Buffalo Gals."



1. Ask and it will be giv - en to you,
2. Knock and the door will be o - pened to you,



giv - en to you, giv - en to you. Ask and it will be
o - pened to you, o - pened to you. Knock and the door will be



giv - en to you. Seek and you will find.
o - pened to you. Luke e - le - ven nine.

ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to support the story and to provide a springboard for discussion.

ALPHABET FEELINGS. Sit in a circle. The first person starts by saying the sentence, "My name is ____ (make up a name starting with A). When I'm ____ (name a feeling or emotion that starts with A), I pray." The next person continues, starting the name and feeling with B. Younger children can play if an older child or adult helps them decide what to say. See how many times you can get around the circle without being stumped. Discuss praying no matter how you feel, and talking to God about your feelings.

PRAYER PLACE. Choose one person to hide first. He has one minute to find his prayer place. Then a second person has a minute to find him. When the second person finds the first, he hides with him. Then the third person looks for the first two and joins them, and so on. If one person can't find the others within one minute, he joins the group again and becomes the last to look. The game is over when the last person to look finds the prayer place. Discuss having a special place and time to pray, and also praying any time.

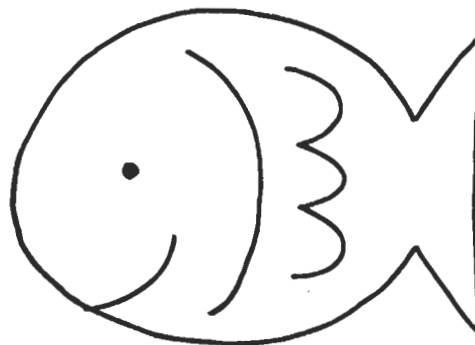
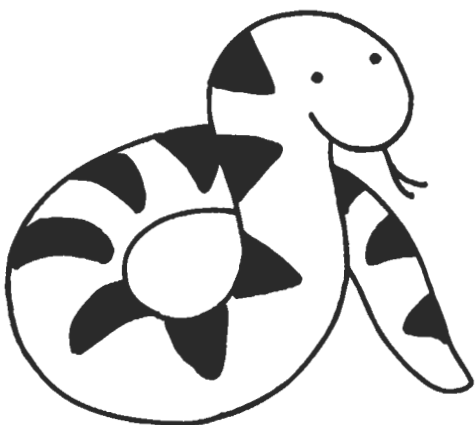
PRAYER TAG. This is like tag, but the player being chased by IT can kneel and fold his hands as if praying. Then IT must take five steps backward. When he does, the kneeling player must get up and run. Discuss prayer.

JUMP ROPE PRAYER. Two people hold the ends of a long rope, turning it while a third person jumps. Chant: "As you were going through this day, how many prayers did you pray? 1-2-3 . . ." Count until the jumper misses. Discuss 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray continually."

SOMEBODY PRAYED. Choose three people to be IT. The others close their eyes. Each IT taps one other person. This represents a prayer for that person. When the ITs are back in their places, the others open their eyes. The ones who were tapped try to guess who "prayed for" them. The person who guesses correctly becomes IT. If someone guesses incorrectly, IT keeps his place. Discuss prayer.

QUESTIONS

1. If God knows what we are thinking, why do we have to pray?
2. Do we always get what we pray for? Why? How can we know what God wants us to pray for?
3. When can we pray? Where? Is there ever a time when God will not listen to our prayers?



KIDS' COUNCIL

BRING IT HOME

- Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17. How can we pray all the time?
- Is God interested in hearing anything we have to tell him? Why or why not? Is there anything we should not talk to God about?
- Tell of some places where you've prayed. Even though we can pray anywhere, it is good to have a very special, private place to pray. Can you think of a place that could be your special prayer place?

SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask the children to share their concerns and pray for each other.
- Thank God for listening to their prayers.
- If they don't have a special prayer place, they can ask God to help them find a special prayer place.

ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- Read and discuss 1 John 5:14, 15. How do we know we are asking according to God's will when we pray?
- Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15-22. Is this God's will for you? You can practice praying this as God's will for you by praying the Scripture: "Help me not to pay back wrong for wrong." What other Scriptures are God's will for you? How can you pray these Scriptures?
- Some people think of God as a loving old Santa Claus, ready to fulfill their every wish. Other people think of God as a stern master, withholding anything that would be pleasurable. How do you think of God?
- To some people, the word *father* has a bad connotation. How can you communicate God's father qualities to them?

SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

Ask Me Splits. Serve bowls of frozen yogurt or ice cream and have a variety of fresh fruits (berries and bananas), sauces, and nuts to put on top. Close to these, set out mustard, hot sauce, salt and pepper. Choose a couple of people to serve the toppings. Everyone else has to ask for the type of topping they want. Talk about how you won't serve mustard if they ask you for caramel sauce. You won't serve them pepper if they've asked for bananas. Discuss God's kindness in giving us good gifts when we ask.

