

Praying for Our Needs

OBJECTIVE: *To explore how to pray for our own needs.*



WORSHIP

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

- "Day by Day"
- "Give Thanks"
- "God Is So Good"
- "God Will Make a Way"
- "He Cares for You"
- "Kum Ba Yah"
- "Only by Grace"
- "Standin' in the Need of Prayer"
- "The Steadfast Love of the Lord"
- "Whisper a Prayer"

STORY

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer, Matthew 6:5-8

- Jesus teaches his disciples not to pray for the purpose of being praised by others.
- Jesus says to pray in secret.
- Jesus says God knows what we need before we ask.

Give each person a piece of white paper on which you have written *pray* with a white crayon. Tell them that this paper has a secret. Then let everyone paint over the paper with watercolor markers or paints. The word will show up. Read Matthew 6:5-8 and discuss praying in secret.

MEMORY VERSE

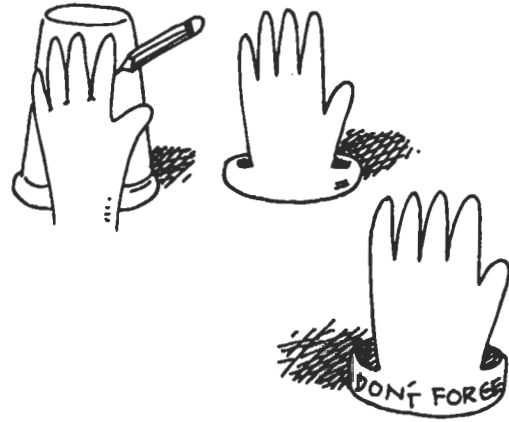
"Your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matthew 6:8).

To help the children remember the verse, play "Scrambled Eggs." Get twelve small plastic Easter eggs, twelve Ping-Pong balls, or twelve slips of paper about 1½ by 2 inches. Write one word of the verse on each egg, ball, or slip of paper. Write *Matthew* on one and *6:8* on one. Place one egg, ball, or slip of paper in each compartment of an empty egg carton, mixing them up (scrambling them). Ask everyone to say the verse after you a few times. Then each person can choose a partner to help unscramble the eggs. Let everyone have a turn.

ACTIVITIES

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

PRAYER HANDS. Give each person a large Styrofoam cup. Each person places a hand on the side of his cup, fingers facing the bottom. Trace around his hand. Being careful *not* to cut through the border ring around the rim, cut out the handprint, leaving it attached to the border. Then stand the handprint up, with the border ring as the base. Tie a piece of ribbon or yarn around one of the fingers and write "Don't forget to pray" around the border.



PRAY DOUGH. Let the children help mix 2 cups flour and 1 cup salt. Add water as needed (up to 1 cup) to make a kneadable dough. Add food coloring if you want. Each person makes four "snakes" of dough and forms each into a letter to spell *PRAY*. Bake letters at 250 degrees for 10-15 minutes. Each person glues his letters onto a paper plate. Talk about prayer.

PRAYER CHARADES. Give each person a piece of paper on which you've written the location where a Bible person prayed: Daniel (lions' den), Paul (beach, Acts 21:5), Jonah (in fish), Paul and Silas (in prison, Acts 16:25), Paul (on ship, Acts 27:29), Peter (on rooftop, Acts 10:9), Jesus (on mountain). Each person acts out coming to that location and praying there. The others guess where they are. Read Scriptures and discuss.

DANIEL ROLL. Lay a paper sack on its side on the floor. Choose one person to be the caller. He stands behind the bag. The others line up side by side a few yards across from the bag's opening. Everyone passes a ball up and down the line as the caller calls, "Daniel, Daniel, Daniel" several times. When he chooses, he calls, "in the lions' den!" Then whoever has the ball moves to the center of the line and tries to roll it into the sack. The caller then joins the line, and the roller becomes the caller. Read the story of Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 6). Discuss prayer.

QUESTIONS

1. Where do you pray? What do you pray about? Do you think your prayers make a difference to God?
2. Do you always get what you pray for? Why or why not?
3. What are some different kinds of things to talk to God about? What is a prayer of praise?

KIDS' COUNCIL

BRING IT HOME

- Read the sixth chapter of Daniel. Why did Daniel pray so much? Why do you pray?
- Read Daniel 9:1-3; 17-23. What happened when Daniel prayed? Verse 23 calls Daniel highly esteemed. What does that mean? Why do you think Daniel was highly esteemed?
- If God already knows what we need, why do we have to pray?

SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask children to pray for their own needs and the needs of each other.
- Thank God for caring about what we need and giving us what we need.

ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- If God already knows what we need, why should we ask God for what we need?
- Read and discuss Philippians 4:6, 7. What does this have to do with praying for our needs?
- Are there any limitations to what we can say to God in prayer?
- Read and discuss John 15:7; James 4:1-3; 1 John 5:14, 15. What are some principles about prayer to be learned from these Scriptures?

SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

Veggies and Dip. Serve fresh vegetables, such as carrot sticks, celery sticks, broccoli and cauliflower florets, and sliced yellow squash. Healthful foods are one of our body's needs. Thank God in prayer for providing nourishing and tasty food for us to eat.