

# Leader's Guide

## Let's Explore Our Faith

### Lesson 9 · Prayer

#### Aims:

- To review what the Bible teaches about prayer
- To understand the importance of prayer in growing close to God
- To respond with a commitment to pray daily for one week

#### Preparation:

- Re-read the *Article of Faith 1.a.* (concerning God) Note questions that come to mind as you view these articles from the perspective of prayer's priority in the life of a believer. Any question(s) you have may be the same one(s) your students ask.
- Read the Scriptural basis for this lesson: *Jeremiah 33:3; 1 Peter 5:7; Matthew 6:5-13, 7:7-8; John 14:12-14, 15:14-17, 16:23b-24; Proverbs 2:3-5, 3:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Psalm 5:3; Mark 14:35; Romans 8:26-27; Philippians 4:6; Luke 18:1-5; James 5:16*
- Highlight the connections between the key points of the lesson and the Scripture passages referenced.
- Make an invitation from God to the students. May be a pre-printed card or handcrafted. The card should say something like: (on the front) *You are invited to... (inside)...Talk with Me! Date: Daily, When: Any time, Where: Any place, Hosted by: Your Heavenly Father, Phone: JER 33:3.* Put the invitation in an envelope addressed to your class, with no clues to the sender. Seal the envelope and tuck it away in a pocket or your Bible. You may want to have the students design their own invitation.
- Prepare the student lesson.

#### Needed:

- Student workbook, Bible and pencil for each student
- Copy(ies) of *MC Constitution with Articles of Faith and Practice*
- Marker board, markers and eraser
- The invitation and envelope as prepared above.

#### Getting Started:

Begin your class with a short prayer. Ask God to help students understand what He wants to say to them about their need to talk with Him daily.

Distribute *Student Workbooks*, Bibles and pencils. Students answer first question on page 1, telling of a time when they were invited to do something or go somewhere. Volunteers answer. **Who invited you? Where did you go? What did you do? How did you feel about being invited?** Guide the discussion to show that being invited to do something or go somewhere makes us feel special because someone wanted our presence or participation. An invitation makes us feel welcome, and we become better friends with the person who invited us because of the time spent with them. Now say, **Oh! I just remembered. I have an invitation for all of you.** Ask a volunteer to examine the envelope. Ask, **Who is the invitation from?** Cannot tell from the outside. Allow the volunteer to open the envelope and read the invitation. **Wow! God wants us to talk with Him!** Ask for a volunteer to read Jeremiah 33:3. (*Answers: Call, answer, tell, unsearchable*) Re-emphasize that prayer is talking to God, and when we pray God hears us and wants to help. We also become better friends with or closer to God because we spent time talking to Him.

Direct the students' attention to the second paragraph. Ask, **When might a kid your age pray?** Have students write or draw their answer. Volunteers answer. Point out that prayer is basic for believers, just like a telephone is in a home. Prayer keeps us in touch with our Heavenly Father. Ask, **So why don't we pray more?** Allow students to answer. Possible answers include: too busy to pray, prayed-didn't get the answer they wanted-so stopped, don't see a need to pray, don't see any difference when they prayed-so why bother. Explain that most people just don't understand prayer or feel unsure about talking to God. Transition into the lesson by reading aloud the last sentence of that paragraph that says, *To better understand prayer....*

#### Study:

Direct the students' attention to the paragraph in the workbook under the *Article of Faith* heading. Ask for a volunteer to read the first paragraph, "*The Missionary Church does not....*" Emphasize that even though the Missionary Church does not have a separate *Article* about praying, our beliefs are based

on the truths taught in God's Word. Briefly review with students the key points made about the mighty power of God in Lesson 2.

Now direct the student's attention to the question. Ask, **How does it make you feel to know that you can talk to the awesome God of the universe?** Have students write in their answer. Allow volunteers to share.

Work through the remaining study material as a group. As needed, ask students to read the Scripture passages aloud.

### **Question 1. Why should we pray?**

We obey God. (*Answer: "when you pray"*) Stress to the students that God wants us to pray, Jesus taught us to pray and gave us His example to follow—He expects us to pray, and the Bible tells us to pray.

We can tell God about ourselves. Assure your students that God is interested in them. He wants us to tell Him how we feel—what makes us happy, sad, angry, scared, worried, frustrated, things you did, things you didn't do....We can even talk to God about things that we wouldn't tell anyone else. God knows and understands what is in our hearts.

We can ask for and receive His help. Read Matthew 7:7-8 for your students. Jesus simply says, "Ask...seek...knock....For anyone who asks receives...." Emphasize that God wants to hear our requests, and He will answer prayer—in His way and in His time. Ask a volunteer to read John 16:23b-24. Have students identify and write down what two things happen when we ask God to help us. (*Answers: God will give us whatever we ask in Jesus' name, our joy will be complete*) Make the point that nothing we ask for in prayer is too hard for God. He is so great. And, because God is so much bigger and greater than we are, we need to trust Him to do what is best.

We can think about God and discover His plan for our lives. Have students look up Proverbs 2:3-5 and fill in the blanks. (*Answers: cry, insight, look, treasure, understand, fear, knowledge*) We shouldn't try to figure out everything ourselves because we don't know it all. Stress to your students to trust God with their whole heart. *Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track.* (*Proverbs 3:6, The Message*)

### **Question 2. How should we pray?**

Ask, **What are some things that confuse people about prayer?** Allow

volunteers to respond. Possible answers include: Should I stand or kneel? What words should I use? How can I talk to someone I can't see? Should I pray with my eyes open or shut? While answers to these questions are fairly simple, there probably are some things about prayer that are more difficult to understand or know. Emphasize to the students that it is important to keep praying even when you don't understand it all, because prayer is key to knowing, loving, and serving God. That was obvious to the disciples as they watched Jesus. Ask for a volunteer(s) to read Matthew 6:9-13. Explain that Jesus gave us this model prayer to show us how to pray. Tell students to get a partner. Assign each pair of students one or more of the run-on sentences to solve. Have pairs share their answers. (*Answers: 1—A good way to start praying is to say, "Our Father." Only a child of God has this right. 2—Honor God's name. Tell God His name is "Hallowed" or holy. 3—Pray for His kingdom to come soon. What a great day that will be! 4—Ask God to do what is best here on earth, just as in heaven. 5—Ask God to supply the normal needs or "daily bread" for each day. 6—Ask God to forgive our sin, just as we forgive those who sin against us. 7—Pray that God will help us not give into sin and Satan's tricks.*)

The main point of the next paragraph is that we can pray to God anywhere and anytime. Have a volunteer read 1 Thessalonians 5:17. (*Answer: continually*) Explain that to "pray continually" means to always have a prayerful attitude. God is always with us, so we can talk to Him. We will feel comfortable praying often, quick prayers and on the spur of the moment. Your students need to understand, however, that a prayerful attitude cannot take the place of regularly talking with God.

Briefly discuss why we pray *in Jesus' name*. Have them look up the John 14 and 15 passages and fill in the blanks. (*Answers: ask, name, ask, name*) Basically we pray *in Jesus' name* because He is the only One who could be our Savior, and He tells us to. Emphasize that the words *in Jesus' name* are not a magical formula for getting what we want. God is not like a soda pop or candy machine. Instead, when we pray *in Jesus' name*, we ask Him to answer based on who He is and what He wants.

**Leader**, at some point during this lesson, one of your students might ask, "So why don't I always get what I prayed for?" The answer to that question is a whole other lesson. But a simple explanation can be given. God answers some prayers with a definite *yes*, and others with a definite *no*, and still others with a *wait*. The Bible also teaches there are some things that can

block our talking to God—causing God’s answer to prayer to be put *on hold* until the problem is corrected—such as disobeying, wrong reasons or motives, not trusting God and/or His Word. We must always remember that God is our Heavenly Father and we can trust Him. He will hear our prayers and answer based on what is best for us.

Now divide your group into pairs or small groups. Say, **The Bible teaches us that God is mostly concerned about our attitude when we pray.** Assign each pair or small group 1-2 Scripture references to read and match to the truth it teaches. Have groups share their answers. (Answers: E, C, A, B, F, D)

Have a volunteer read the last paragraph in this part of the study. Say, **All of these biblical truths about prayer are important and helpful in knowing how to pray. But they are not as important as just praying.** We may not understand everything about prayer, or we may not feel like praying, or we may be discouraged because our prayers don’t seem to be answered, but we must not give up. We must pray anyway. As a NIKE shoe commercial would say, **Prayer—just do it!**

**Kinds of Prayer.** Ask students to respond by raising their hands, **Have you ever wondered what you should pray about?** Explain that it’s common to need a little help thinking of what to talk to God about. A-C-T-S can help. Divide the class into three or four groups and assign each group a letter of the ACTS acrostic. If your group is small, you may assign the letters to individual students or pairs. Instruct students to read their assigned paragraph and fill in the section blanks using words from the Word Bank. The first letter of each word has been given to simplify the fill in. (Answers: *great, love, sin, agree, forgiveness, hear, done, given, answer, bread, humble, needs, others, you*)

If time permits, have a Bible drill using the following references: Exodus 32:11-14, *Supplication/Petition*; Psalm 51:3-4, *Confession*; Luke 1:46-49, *Adoration*; John 17:9, *Supplication/Intercession*; 2 Corinthians 9:15, *Thanksgiving*. The student who finds the passage first, reads it and tells what kind of prayer it is.

Conclude the study portion of this lesson with this analogy. **It is hard to have a best friend if you don’t talk with that person. The same is true with God. It is hard to have Him as your Best Friend if you never talk with Him.** A believer becoming more like Jesus must pray.

## Let’s Review.

Have students work alone to answer the true or false questions. Or, you may prefer to use the sentences for a review exercise between two teams. That’s okay too. (Answers: T, F, F, T, T, F, T, F, F, T, T, T, F)

Emphasize the *Scripture to Learn*. To teach James 5:16b to students, read the verse together emphasizing the next word in the verse with a louder voice. For example, 1x—THE prayer of..., 2x—The PRAYER of..., 3x—The prayer OF...and so on. Continue until each word of the verse has been stressed.

## My Response:

As a follow-up to last week’s lesson say, **Raise your hand if you kept your promise to spend daily time in God’s Word over the last week.**

Have students work alone to finish the commitment card in the *My Response* section of their workbook. Invite students to personally come and share their answer with you. Follow-up the next week by asking how many students kept their promise and spent daily time praying and studying God’s Word, and allowing students to share answers to prayer.

Since we only become pray-ers by praying, spend the last few minutes of your class time talking to God. Have students make a circle and say, **Let’s accept God’s invitation to talk with Him.** Pray around the circle, with each student saying a single sentence telling God how great He is or how much they love Him, thanking Him for something He’s done for him or her, or asking for His help. If a student is totally uncomfortable praying out loud, simply have them say *Pass*.

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### Lesson 9 · Prayer

**When have you been invited to do something or go somewhere?**

Write or draw your answers.

Who invited you? Where did you go? What did you do?

How did you feel about being invited?

**You are invited to...**

... Talk with God. That's right! Your Heavenly Father wants you to pray—talking with Him in the same way loving parents want to speak with their children. **Read Jeremiah 33:3 and fill in the blanks.**

“ \_\_\_\_\_ to me and I will \_\_\_\_\_ you and \_\_\_\_\_ you  
great and \_\_\_\_\_ things you do not know.”

When we pray, we do more than say words. We talk to God and God hears us. **When might a kid your age pray? Write or draw your answer below.**

God enjoys hearing from us, and wants to help, just as loving parents do. And just as it's normal for families to talk, it should be natural for Christians to pray. So why don't we pray more? Because we are uncertain about prayer. To better understand prayer and become more comfortable and secure talking with God, let's find out what the Bible says about prayer by answering two important questions: *Why should we pray?* and *How should we pray?*



## Article of Faith

The Missionary Church does not have a separate Article about prayer, but we understand that prayer is talking with God. God—the one and only who is self-existent, infinite, personal, unchangeable, and eternal in His being; perfect in holiness, love, justice, goodness, wisdom, and truth; omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent; Creator and Sustainer of all things, visible and invisible; both immanent and transcendent to creation; eternally existent in three persons, one in substance and co-equal in power and glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—has invited us to talk with Him. Remember all these words from the Article in Lesson 2, describing who God is and what He is like? This is the God we talk to when we pray! **Think about it, and then write your answer on the line.**

How does it make you feel to know that you can talk to the awesome God of the universe?

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God is so great, as sinners we certainly don't deserve to talk with Him. But He has invited us to pray. So, let's dig deeper to discover what the Bible teaches us about prayer.

### Question 1. Why should we pray?

Unscramble the following words and place them in the correct spaces below.

ALPN    EVEICER    BYEO    LEET    KSA    RUOSESEYV    KNTHI

When we pray...

... We \_\_\_\_\_ God.

The Bible tells us that we should pray. **Read Matthew 6:5-7 and fill in the blanks with the 3-word phrase that is used in each verse.**

... "W \_\_\_\_\_ y \_\_\_\_\_ p \_\_\_\_\_..."

Repetition in the Bible means *pay attention!* Scripture doesn't say, "If you pray." It says, "When you pray." God assumes we will pray because regular prayer is one of the main ways we grow close to Him.

The Lord Jesus also showed us that prayer is important by His own praying. Even though He is God the Son, Jesus regularly talked with God the Father.

... We can \_\_\_\_\_ God about \_\_\_\_\_.  
As the One who made you, God knows everything about you. But He wants you to tell Him about yourself—both the good and the bad, what makes you happy and sad.

... We can \_\_\_\_\_ for and \_\_\_\_\_ His help.  
1 Peter 5:7 (NLT) says, "Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about what happens to you."

Read John 16:23b-24. What two things happen when we ask God to help us?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Remember, because God is so great, you cannot ask for anything in prayer that is too hard for Him.

... We can \_\_\_\_\_ about God and discover His \_\_\_\_\_ for our lives. God's plans for us are good, to give us a future and hope. And because He loves us, God wants what is best for us in every way. Anytime we need to know what to do, all we have to do is pray.

**Read Proverbs 2:3-5 and fill in the blanks.**

“... And if you c \_\_\_\_\_ out for i \_\_\_\_\_ and cry aloud for \_\_\_\_\_ understanding, and if you l \_\_\_\_\_ for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden \_\_\_\_\_, then you will u \_\_\_\_\_ the f \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD and find the k \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

### **Question 2. How should we pray?**

People are often confused about how to pray. Jesus' followers were. Once, when His followers (called **disciples**) heard Him praying, they asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. So Jesus gave the disciples a sample prayer to help them learn to pray. We call this model prayer *The Lord's Prayer*, and it helps us learn to pray too.

**Read Matthew 6:9-13. Each sentence below tells what Jesus' sample prayer teaches us about talking to God. Each word in the sentence is either combined with part of another word or is divided in the wrong place. Separate the letters, and write each word in order on the line below the sentence.**

1. Ago odway tost artpra ying ist osay, "OurFa ther." Onl yachil doFgo dhas thi sright.  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Ho norGo dsna me. TellGo dHi snam eis“Hal low ed”orho ly.

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3. Pra yfor Hiski ngdo mto com eso on. Whatag reat dayth atwil lbei

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4. As kGo dtod owha tis bes ther eone arth, jus tasin he aven.

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5. AskG odto supp lyth enor malne eds or“dai lybre ad” fore achd ay.

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6. A skGo dto forg iveo urs in, justa swe forgi vetho sewho sinag ains tus.

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7. Prayt hat Godw ill helpu sno tgiv eint osin an dSat an 'stricks.

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Scripture teaches us several other truths about prayer. One is that we can pray anywhere and anytime. We do not have to be at church—we can talk to God wherever we are. And we do not have to pray at a certain time of day. (Though having a daily prayer time is good, just like having a daily time in God's Word.) We can pray to God at all times. In fact, since God is always with us, we should learn to talk with Him quietly all day long.

**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17 and fill in the blanks.**

“Pray \_\_\_\_\_.”

The Bible also teaches we are to pray *in Jesus' name*. Often Christians end their prayers with a phrase such as this, “In the name of Jesus I pray.” We do this because Jesus is the only One who could die on the cross and rise again so that we could be saved and know God personally. We also pray in Jesus' name because He tells us to.

**Read John 14:12-14 and John 15:14-17 to fill in the blanks.**

“And I will do whatever you \_\_\_\_\_ in my \_\_\_\_\_ so that

the Son may bring glory to the Father.” *John 14:13 (NIV)*

“You did not choose me, but I chose you...to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the

Father will give you whatever you \_\_\_\_\_ in my \_\_\_\_\_.” *John 15:16*

(NIV)

When we ask in Jesus' name, it's as if Jesus Himself were making the request to God the Father. When you ask in Jesus' name, you are saying you want God to answer the prayer in the way He knows best.

Scripture gives us still more truths about prayer.

**Read the verses below. Put the alphabet letter of each reference on the line next to the truth it teaches.**

- |                   |       |   |
|-------------------|-------|---|
| A. Psalm 5:3      | _____ | Pray—even when you feel tired or weak in waiting for an answer. |
| B. Matthew 6:7-8  | _____ | Pray, saying, “Not what I want, but what You want.”             |
| C. Mark 14:35     | _____ | Pray regularly or daily.  |
| D. John 14:12-14  | _____ | Don't pray meaningless words, chatter or babbling.              |
| E. Romans 8:26-27 | _____ | Pray with an attitude of gratitude                              |
| F. Philipians 4:6 | _____ | Pray—trusting and believing in Jesus.                           |

The Bible teaches that Christians have a special relationship with God, and that He wants to answer their prayers. So remember, talk to God about everything. Then trust Him to do what is right. He will answer your prayers always giving you what is best for you—*when* it's best for you, not always what you want—*when* you want it. What Jesus told his disciples in Luke 18:1-5, He tells us: keep praying and never give up!

# Kinds of Prayer.

Have you ever wondered what you should talk to God about? The letters A-C-T-S can remind us what to pray about. **Put words from the word bank into the correct spaces.**

WORDBANK: agree you hear great needs sin others blessings  
given forgiveness humble done answer love

**A = Adoration.** Adore God. Praise Him because He is g\_\_\_\_\_. Tell Him how awesome and wonderful He is. Tell God how much you l\_\_\_\_\_ Him.

**C = Confession.** Confess your s\_\_\_\_\_ to God. To confess means to “agree with” or “say with.” Instead of lying about your sin or making excuses say, “God, I a\_\_\_\_\_. I was wrong when I...” and say your sin. Then ask His f\_\_\_\_\_. God will not h\_\_\_\_\_ your prayer if you hold onto sin.

**T = Thanksgiving.** Tell God “thank you” for all the things He has d\_\_\_\_\_ for you and g\_\_\_\_\_ to you. Thank Him for a\_\_\_\_\_ to prayer and daily b\_\_\_\_\_.

**S = Supplication.** The word “supplication” means to ask in a h\_\_\_\_\_ way. So humbly ask God to supply n\_\_\_\_\_. Talk to Him about the needs of o\_\_\_\_\_ (family, friends, missionaries, etc.) We call this *intercession*. Ask Him for what y\_\_\_\_\_ need. We call this *petition*.

Remember, when it comes to prayer, you are not too young to get your **A-C-T-S** together! Your Heavenly Father invites you to talk with Him. Make prayer part of your daily life.



## Leif's Review.

Read each statement below. If it is true, circle the "T."  
If it is false, circle the "F."

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | When we pray, we talk to God and God hears us.   |
| T | F | The Bible suggests that we should pray.  |
| T | F | We should tell God about ourselves because there are some things He doesn't know.        |
| T | F | When we ask God to help us our joy is complete.  |
| T | F | When we need to know what to do, all we have to do is pray.                              |
| T | F | Jesus' model prayer is called <i>The Sinner's Prayer</i> .                               |
| T | F | A good way to start a prayer is to say, "Our Father . . ."                               |
| T | F | Asking for our <i>daily bread</i> means we should only pray for our own personal needs.  |
| T | F | We can pray to God from anywhere and almost any time.                                    |
| T | F | When we pray <i>in Jesus' name</i> it's as if Jesus makes the request to God the Father. |
| T | F | The Bible teaches us to pray, trusting and believing in Jesus.                           |
| T | F | Jesus wants us to never give up praying.   |
| T | F | It's okay to make excuses for our sin instead of confessing the wrong things we do.      |



## Scripture to Learn.

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:16b (NIV)

# My Response °



Review last week's commitment to spend daily time studying God's Word. Fill out the blanks below to help you cement your decision to add prayer to your Bible study for the next week. As you keep your promise, write what you pray about in the space on the chart for that day. (You do not need to write down what you confess. After God forgives sin, He forgets it—and so should you.) Be sure to write down the date God answers your requests for others or yourself.

***Starting tomorrow and for the next seven days, I will spend daily time studying God's Word and talking to Him in prayer.***

I will spend at least \_\_\_\_\_ minutes each day.

\_\_\_\_\_ would be the best time of day for my Bible study and prayer.

My quiet place will be \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

## SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Kinds of Prayer	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
<b>Adoration</b>							
<b>Confession</b>							
<b>Thanks</b>							
<b>Intercession</b> Pray for others							
<b>Petition</b> Pray for yourself							