

The Power of Prayer

TEACHING NOTES

KEY VERSES

Luke 22:42
Ephesians 3:20-21

KEY THEMES

God communicates
God uses people of faith
God moves

We pray because we know we are dependent on the Father

God hears and answers prayers

INTRODUCTION INNOCECE CONSCIENCE HUMAN GOVT. PROMISE LAW GRACE



The example of Christ and His teachings on prayer (John 14, Luke 18)

Lesson Objective:

To see prayer as an expression of our dependency on God

PERSONAL STUDY**Study 1****Prepare your heart and mind**

Begin by sitting quietly for a few moments. When you are ready, consider the first two words of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father." Spend some time contemplating your relationship to God. Think about characteristics that describe God the Father. Reflect on why you think the prayer begins with "Our Father" and not "My Father."

**God is responsive**

Volumes of books could be filled with stories of God's power exercised in response to prayer, because the prayer of faithful believers is effective (James 5:16b). One common thread can be drawn between every testimony of answered prayer: when God responds to prayer, He exercises His power as an expression of His love. Therefore, God's power is best understood in the context of a relationship. Outside of a relationship with Jesus Christ, God's power is too easily misunderstood.

**Read Exodus 32:11-14**

You may remember the story of The Golden Calf. After the Exodus, it did not take long for Israel to choose an idol over a relationship with the living God. Thankfully, as we see in this passage, God chose to respond to Israel with mercy.

What stands out to you about the prayer of God's servant Moses?

How do you think God views the prayers of His children (in the New Covenant) differently?

**Read Romans 8:26-28**

Notice what this passage does and does not say. Does God cause only good things to happen to believers? No, God causes everything (good, bad, or ugly) to work together for the good of His children.

What can this passage teach us in times when God seems to be silent?

What can it teach us when we do not get the answer we are looking for from God?

The practice of prayer

In Christ, the church body is a family. What does it look like when the church body supports one another in prayer?

Try to remember an answered prayer in your life. Describe the situation below.

Now take a moment to think about a prayer that is still unanswered. Describe the situation below.

In what ways could God choose to answer your unanswered prayer?

Two common misconceptions with unanswered prayers are that we don't have enough faith or that God doesn't care. These are both incorrect views. The truth is that God does care, He loves us, and His answers aren't dependent on our faith. Sometimes God responds to our prayers in ways that we will not understand right now. This is where we have to trust in God's goodness.

Key verse

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. – Romans 8:28

Using the provided card, put to memory Romans 8:28. Place the card somewhere you'll see it throughout the day.

Prayer time

Spend some time thanking God both for saving you and making you a son or daughter in Christ. Humbly ask God to help you have confidence in Him. Share all the prayer requests you have with Him. Close your time of prayer by asking for eyes to see and ears to hear as He responds to prayers in your life.

Study 2

Prepare your heart and mind

Whenever we spend time reading and studying God's Word, we should ask God to prepare our hearts and minds to receive the truth that He has for us. Take a moment to do this now.

Prayer increases our dependency on God

Remember life before Christ? Without Him we're on our own carrying the weight of the world on our shoulders and hoping that it doesn't swallow us up alive. When we believe in Christ, we admit our need for forgiveness of sin, but we often don't think we need Him for anything else. We continue to live independent, self-governing lives convincing ourselves we can handle it all, but secretly knowing inside we can't. From this position we cannot enjoy the intimate, power-filled relationship God desires to have with us.

How then do we move from an independent way of living to an intimate relationship with the most high God? Prayer plays an important role in our walk of faith as it increases our dependency on God. Let's take a look at how Jesus modeled this dependency on God through prayer.

Read the prayer of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane found in Luke 22:42

"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

What qualifier does Jesus use when asking His Father to take His suffering away?

What do the words "if you are willing" suggest?

Jesus knew the Father well enough to know that He possessed the power to keep Him from the cross. The more we understand God's greatness, the more we become aware of our inability to accomplish anything in our own strength.

What has helped you to know God in a more intimate way?

Our dependency on God grows when we study His character through the Bible, learn through our experiences, spend time talking to Him, and being still before Him.



Read Colossians 1:9-10

So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

Believers are empowered through prayer. What are some of the privileges believers receive from a life connected to God?

It is God's power at work in and through us that produces change. When you pray don't doubt, ask with confidence. You know the power of your Father if you know Jesus.

Key verse

Continue putting to memory Romans 8:28. Attempt to write it out from memory in the space below.

Prayer time

Father, I acknowledge that apart from you I am powerless to become who you desire me to be and to live out the plans that you have for me. Help me to spend time just talking and listening to you. I want to know you, experience the power that is available to me as a believer, and grow in my dependency on you.

PARENT GUIDE

This week we heard about the power of prayer. Prayer is an essential tool in the life of a believer. It is a powerful connection between us and our Heavenly Father. Often we need to be reminded of its power and to be open to how God might respond. We can help our children know that God hears and answers their prayers.

Ask a few opening questions

What does it mean to pray?

Do you think that God hears your prayers?

Now, read Acts 16:23-34 aloud together

(With younger children read the story ahead of time and then share it appropriately with them in your own words.)

Ask some follow-up questions

(Don't feel like you need to go through all these questions. Choose the questions you feel will bring home the point for your child.)

What happened to Paul and Silas at the beginning of this story?

(They were thrown in jail.)

What were they doing while they were in jail?

(They were praying and singing songs.)

What happened after Paul and Silas prayed and sang?

(There was an earthquake and all the doors of the jail were opened. The jailer was about to take his own life when Paul told him that none of the prisoners had left. The jailer and his whole household were saved through this experience.)

What does this story tell you about prayer?

(There is power in prayer. God has the power to answer our prayers.)

Share about a time that you have prayed in a difficult situation.

Parent sharing

This is a great chance for parents to share about other aspects of prayer in their own life. Share any stories where you felt you had a powerful experience with prayer.

ADDITIONAL STUDY

James 5:16b says, *“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.”* One of the many benefits of believing in Jesus, and therefore being a child of God, is that we have access to the Father through prayer. We have direct access into the throne room of God Almighty and a promise from the Lord that He hears our prayers.



Read Daniel 9 & 10:12-14

How did Daniel position himself toward God in order seek an answer and action from the Lord?

In Daniel 9:4-19, what are the different aspects (praises, confessions and petitions) of Daniel’s prayer toward God?

How does the Lord respond to His humble servant Daniel?

There is great power when men and women humble themselves before the Living God and earnestly seek Him in prayer. There are countless examples in the Bible when God pleads with His people to cry out to Him in their time of need. The Lord has portrayed Himself throughout history as the one who is able to meet all the needs of His children. When we respond to God by faith in prayer He begins to move in ways that can only be called supernatural.

