

50. I am Alive: Prayer



Pray in the Spirit always with all kinds of prayers and requests.

Ephesians 6:18

I am Alive: Prayer

For a Christian, praying is like air. It is our breath. It is our life with God. He is our best friend and king!

In order to keep a friendship alive, you need to talk to your friend, right? It is the same with God. He longs to hear from you. You are his sweet child. He is waiting.

Let's make sure our prayers are not just about us. Prayers can often sound like this: "Dear God, Give me this. Give me that. Amen." Ouch! God is not our servant. We are his servants. Learn to follow this prayer pattern. It will help you grow into a mighty, praying Christian.

I P-R-A-Y

I am sorry." Start by telling God the sins you've been doing. Our honesty opens his ears.

Praise him! Tell him how amazing he is. Sing him a praise song. That makes him happy.

Rejoice! Thank him for prayers he answers. Give thanks for your food, water, family, and good life.

Ask him for help and for what you would like. He is your Father. He wants to bless and help you.

Yes. Listen for his voice. "Yes, God, I want to obey."

Each and every day, God hears you when you pray.

Questions

1. What is prayer?
2. Why is prayer important for you and God?
3. What praise songs do you know?
4. Why is the I P-R-A-Y pattern good to learn?

Pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus,

I am sorry for my sins, like not obeying.

Praise to you for being so kind and forgiving.

Rejoice! Thank you for teaching me.

Ask. I am asking you to help me grow in prayer.

Yes. I will obey you. I will pray to you.

Amen

Write in the hand the five ways to pray. It will spell I PRAY.

I am sorry

Praise God

Rejoice! Give thanks

Ask what you like

Yes, I will obey



Story S-t-r-e-tch-ing

50. Prayer

Show students where the story is in the Bible. Use the Bible references above the illustration.

Before you read:

Activate Prior Knowledge

- a) What does it mean to pray?
- b) If you had to explain prayer to a little child, what would you say?
- c) For you, what is the hardest part about praying?

Let's Talk

Talk about ways we communicate today: calling, email, text, Facebook, Instagram, etc. How do you talk to your friends? Why do we spend so much time communicating with each other? Yes, to show that we care. God is the best friend you will ever have. The great news is that he WANTS to hear from you. How? Through prayer. What is prayer? Simply...talking to God. It's how you show God you care about him. God is your loving Father and he wants to hear your thoughts, feelings, needs, wants, and even your questions, fears, and doubts. Close your eyes while I say a silent prayer to God (say nothing). I didn't even speak out loud. I just thought a message to God, and it reached his ears faster than lightening! It is safe to say that prayer is the most amazing and powerful force we humans have. We can touch and move the heart of God! The Bible is God talking to us; prayer is us talking to God. It is how we form a relationship with him.

Recite together the key verse and write it on the board: "Pray in the Spirit always with all kinds of prayers and requests (Ephesians 6:18)." Make headings like this:

Pray	in the Spirit	always	with all kinds of prayers	and requests.
<u>Ways</u>	<u>Ask for Help</u>	<u>When to Pray</u>	<u>How to Pray</u>	<u>What to Say</u>
	<u>to please God</u>			

Go through the I-P-R-A-Y prayer pattern. Write some of those ideas under the above categories. What ways do you know to pray? You can pray with your eyes open or closed; kneeling, walking, laying down. Pray with your hands together or palms up. Some people like to cover their face with their hands so they can concentrate. You can pray out loud, whispers, with friends, alone, or silently. You can even sing a prayer. Pray outside, in a tree, in a quiet closet, or even in a car. Pray all day long, everywhere, and anywhere. Keep your friendship with God alive and warm.

Wishful Thinking or True Prayer?

Teach kids the difference between a real prayer and wishful thinking. Often, children will try to pray like this: "I hope that I can find my cat." But that is not really a prayer. How can they turn that into a real prayer? Teach them to pray directly: "Dear God, I am so sad that my cat is lost. Please let me find Muffin. Keep her warm and safe until you bring her home. Amen." To make this concept clear, get a fancy chair; pretend it is the throne of God. Label it "My Heavenly Father." You are a child of God and you have a want or need. Would you wishfully think a thought or would go directly to your father and humbly ask for what you want or need? Read Hebrews 4:16 and practice coming boldly to the throne of grace so that God can help us in our time of need.

Make Your Prayers Personal

Give each child a card that you bought at the store that has a pre-printed message or use the one below. (Photocopy it onto card stock. Create your own front cover. You can cut and paste the images and words for the front.) Now, next to the manufactured message, write a personalized note to the child telling her why you are grateful she is in your life. Have the kids open them. Ask: "What did you read first – the message that I wrote myself or the printed words that the card company wrote? Why?" Jesus tells us to not pray the same "pre-written" memorized prayers over and over again (Matthew 6:5-8). With those kinds of prayers, it's easy for the heart to drop out, and the lips to move without thinking or feeling. Like you, God wants our real feelings and personal prayers. Give each child a blank card or paper. Have them write a personal prayer to God.

	<p>Dear Friend,</p> <p>Thank you for being in my life.</p> <p>You have blessed me with your friendship.</p>
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*Friendship
Joy and Happiness
THANK YOU for
blessing my life.*



Daily Journal

Photocopy several copies for each student. Keep one for the class. Write on the left side what you would like God to do. On the right side, record his answers. Some will be answered quickly; others may take years. It's ok. Just keep praying.

Jesus said: "I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened.


Luke 11: 9-10

Dear Lord, I... ask... seek ... knock...	Thank you! "It will be given to you." "You will find ." "It will be opened to you."

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I PRAY Mix and Match

Teach the many ways to pray to reinforce the prayer pattern. Photocopy two of these pages onto card stock. Cut the squares and mix in two piles face down. Divide the class into two teams. One team will each have the same pile. On a marker board, write I PRAY in large letters. Create a column for each letter. Teams race, taking turns reading a card and placing it in the right category using a small piece of sticky tacky. Or, turn the page into a bingo game.

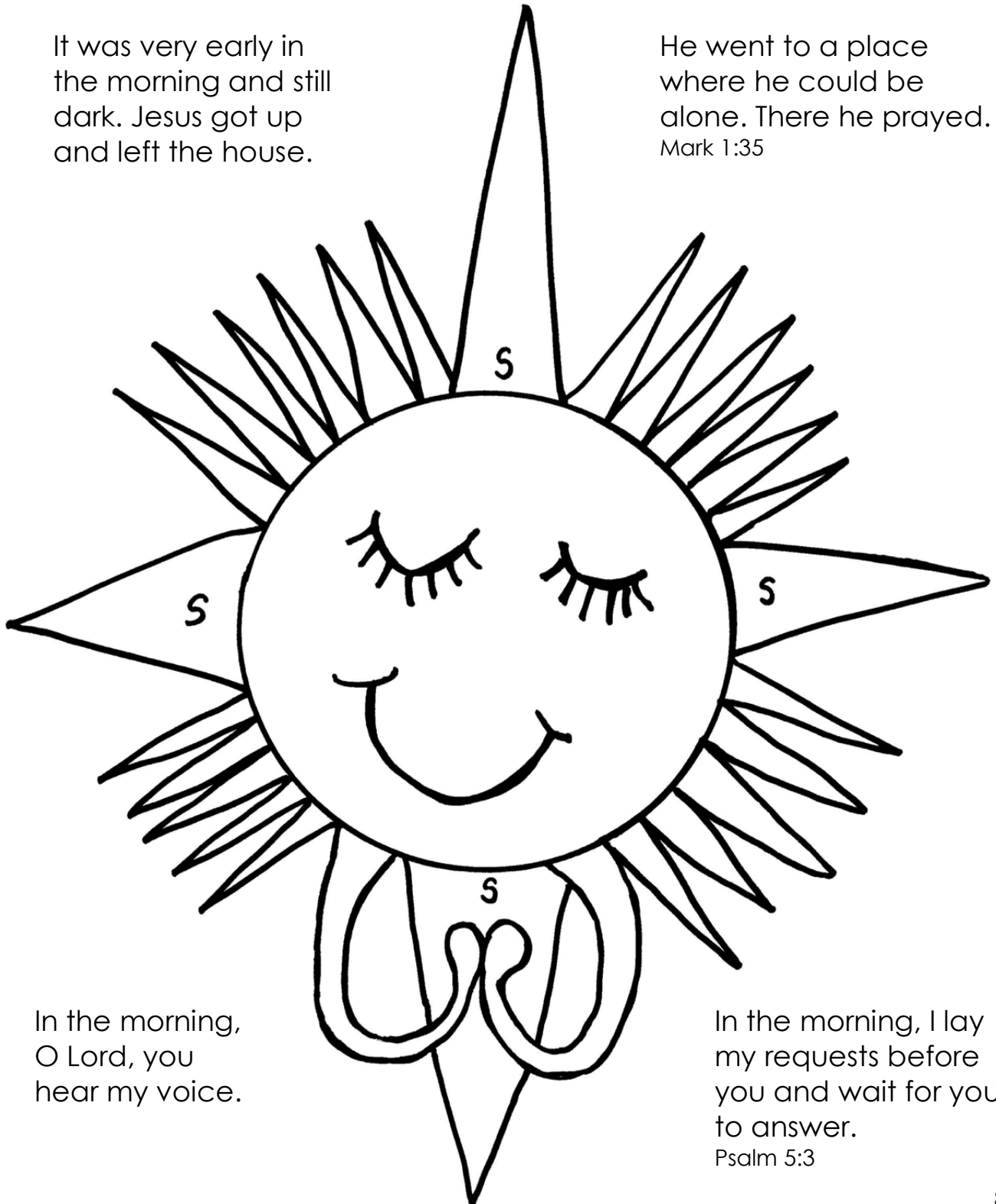
I	P	R	A	Y
I'm sorry for not obeying my mom.	I praise you for being so kind.	Thank you for helping me feel better.	Please make my mom feel better.	Yes, I will be nicer to my brother.
I'm sorry for lying.	I praise you for loving me.	Thank you for all my yummy and healthy food.	Please help me understand my math.	Yes, I will try to read my Bible more.
I'm sorry for taking what wasn't mine.	I praise you for making the sunshine and the tulips.		Please give me the game I want.	Yes, I will share with the children in Haiti.
I'm sorry for saying a bad word.	I praise you for giving us just the right amount of rain.	Thank you for my friend coming to play.	Please help the children in Haiti to have new homes.	Yes, I will invite my friend to church.
I'm sorry for ignoring you.	I praise you for being a God who forgives .	Thank you for dying for my sins and rising again.	Please help my friend like his new home.	Yes, I will not argue with my dad.

My Morning Quiet Time: Prayer

Each morning, get up a little early to spend time with God. Talk with him in prayer, and hear from him by reading the Bible. It takes about a month to start a new habit. Color in one ray of sunshine for each day you have a quiet time. Color in the sunshine's face when the rays are completed. The **S** stands for Sunday.

It was very early in the morning and still dark. Jesus got up and left the house.

He went to a place where he could be alone. There he prayed.
Mark 1:35



In the morning,
O Lord, you
hear my voice.

In the morning, I lay
my requests before
you and wait for you
to answer.
Psalm 5:3

Thank You Song

Sometimes we forget to thank God when he heals us or hears our many prayers. Read Psalm 100 and keep a song on your lips. Thank God for blessings we cannot see but are real, like the Holy Spirit inside us. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K44trVhtZX4>

Thank You Lord by Don Moen

I come before You today,
And there's just one thing that I want to say:
Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord.

For all you've given to me,
for all the blessings that I cannot see.
Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord; Thank you, Lord.

With a grateful heart, with a song of praise,
with an outstretched arm. I will bless your name.
Thank you, Lord; I just want to thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord. I just want to thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord.

For all you've done in my life.
You took my darkness and you gave me your light.
Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord.
You took my sin and my shame.
You took my sickness and heal all my pain.
Thank you, Lord; Thank you, Lord.

With a grateful heart, with a song of praise,
with an outstretched arm. I will bless your name.
Thank you, Lord; I just want to thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord. I just want to thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord.

Thank you,
Lord, for my
church and the
freedom I have
to worship you.



(Song repeats)

Thank you, Lord, for
my strong legs and
my delicious dinner!

Raise a Red Flag

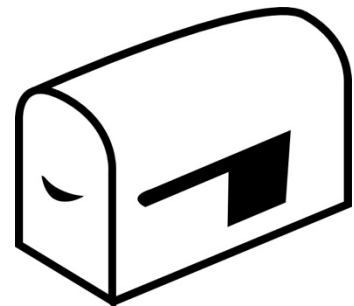
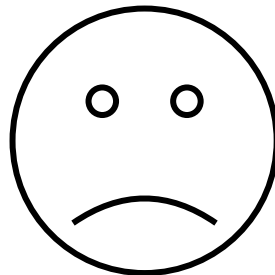
In the old days, people only had letters to communicate. The mailman would raise a red flag on the side of the mailbox to let the family know a letter had arrived. Think of a mother whose son has gone off to war. A letter from her son would be the most treasured thing in her life. Think of that poor mom looking out the window every day, wondering, "Is my son alive? Does he remember me? Does he love me enough to make time to communicate with me?" Then one day, the red flag is raised. She runs out to the mailbox to find the precious letter from her son. She is happy beyond words. God is our loving Father. He is waiting, longing to hear from us. Talk to him in prayer all day long.

Make a mailbox using an oatmeal container. Wrap and tape it with paper. To make the flag, use an empty toilet paper roll. Wrap it with paper too. Tape a red piece of paper to it. Pierce a tiny hole on the inside of the oatmeal box and toilet paper roll. Connect them with a brad to raise and lower the red flag.

Have the kids each write a prayer to God on an index card. Show them the mailbox and recite this poem.

Red Flag of Joy

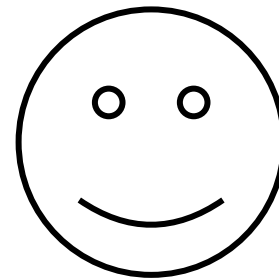
When the red flag is down,
It's like a frown.



It's been awhile...
Where is God's smile?

Send God a letter (put your prayers in)
To make Him feel better.

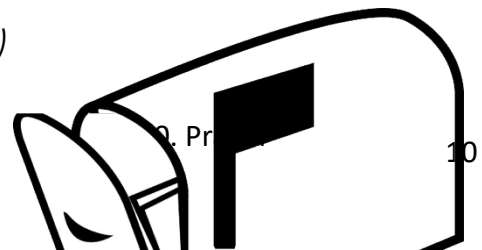
Red flag raised,
God is praised.



Red Flag of Joy (hand motions)

When the red flag is down,
It's like a frown. (hands down, frown)

It's been awhile... (hand at forehead, searching)



Where is God's smile? (*palms up, wondering*)

Send God a letter (*hands together in prayer*)

To make Him feel better. (*smile!*)

Red flag raised, (*hands up*)

God is praised. (*praise hands*)

One-Word Wonders

God listens to long or super short prayers, like the list below. Photocopy onto card stock one of these sheets per child. Cut the squares. Each player gets and keeps up to five words in their hand at all times. Look at the eight prayers. As soon as they can form one of the sentences (super short prayers) below, they set that prayer aside. At each turn, draw two cards. Keep both or discard one or two. Whoever runs out of cards first, wins. Now, how many mini prayers can you say without looking? Say them often and daily.

I believe in you.

Help!

I love you.

Thank you.

I'm sorry.

Give me wisdom.

Your will be done.

Hello.

I	believe	in	you.
Help!	I	love	you.
Thank	you.	I'm	sorry.
Give	me	wisdom.	Hello.

Your	will	be	done.
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