

# TEACH US TO PRAY



We can pray in lots of ways.

## KEY VERSE

“Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”

Matthew 6:9

## STORY AT A GLANCE

### Jesus

- Teaches that prayers should be simple and private so that those praying won't get distracted.
- Says that God “knows what you need before you ask” (Mt 6:8).
- Gives people the Lord's Prayer as an example of one way to pray.
- Invites believers to call God “Father” as he does, probably using the Aramaic word *Abba* like in Mk 14:36.



### Hypocrites

- People who pray or do good deeds in order to attract attention.
- Won't be rewarded by God because they've already been rewarded with public approval (Mt 6:5).
- Judaism required daily prayers—but Jesus wasn't the only Jew who criticized people who prayed for show.
- Word means “actor” or “performer.”



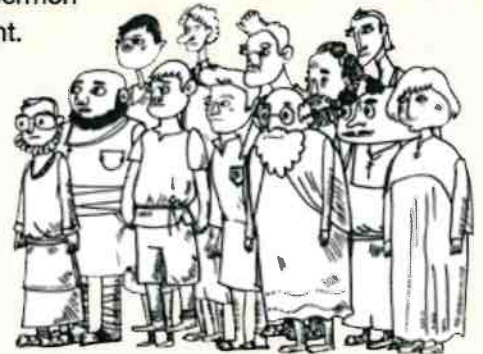
### Lord's Prayer

- Taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7) and in Luke 11.
- Praises God, then asks for help to live as a child of God.
- Biblical text is shorter than what most Christians say today.
- Paul writes that calling God “Father” is a sign of a believer's close relationship with God (Gal 4:6-7).



### Disciples

- Many people followed Jesus, but only his closest followers heard the Lord's Prayer during the Sermon on the Mount.



## Supplies:



Holy Moly DVD



Holy Moly Book



Holy Moly Bible Sign



Crayons/Markers



Scissors

(10–15 min.)

## DISCOVER

### Get Ready

Music gets our whole bodies moving! And we can use our whole bodies to pray. Invite kids to stand with extra space around them. Sing the familiar song “Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes.” Then sing a variation, pointing to body parts and doing actions, slowly, then faster.

I can pray (*fold hands*),

Night and day (*close/open eyes*).

Night and day (*close/open eyes*).

I can pray (*fold hands*),

Any way (*show a way*).

Any way (*show another way*).

Stand and kneel and wave your arms this way (*add those actions*).

I can pray (*fold hands*),

Night and day (*close/open eyes*).

Night and day (*close/open eyes*).

### Introduce the Characters

- Jesus is out and about in the big city of Jerusalem.
- Mary Magdalene and a disciple are with him.
- There is a woman trying hard to pray in the noisy world.



### Play the Teach Us to Pray Video



**Watch for the woman trying to pray. Count how many times her prayer is interrupted.**

*If time permits, watch it again!*

(5–10 min.)

## RELATE

### Talk about the Teach Us to Pray Video

- Why do you think Jesus was paying attention to how people prayed?
- I wonder what other people were thinking about prayer.
- What surprised you about the people praying—especially those who were looking at each other to see if they were watching?
- How do you like to pray?
- Why did Jesus and the disciples follow the woman praying quietly?
- What did the woman they were following teach them and us about praying?



(5–10 min.)

## CONNECT

### Open the Holy Moly Bible Storybook

Read Lord, Teach Us to Pray on pages 17-20. Invite kids to write their own version of the Lord’s Prayer in the space at the end.

God expects us to forgive others.

- Have you ever forgiven someone for something she or he did?
- Why did you forgive that person?
- Has someone forgiven you? For what?

People pray the Lord’s Prayer all around the world.

- Do you say the Lord’s Prayer? What language do you use?





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## Supplies:



Holy Moly  
DVD



Holy Moly  
book



Connect Bibles



Scissors



Markers



Chart Paper



Sticky Notes

(10–15 min.)

## DISCOVER

### Get Ready

Invite kids to pray the Lord's Prayer with you (by heart or written on chart paper).

- What words do you think are important in this prayer? (Write on chart paper.)
- Can you think of other words that mean the same thing? (Write on sticky notes.)

Give kids sticky notes to post beside the word with the same meaning in the Lord's Prayer.

### Introduce the Characters

- Jesus is walking through the city with his friends John and Mary Magdalene.
- Jesus wants to teach them something about prayer.
- They see people making a big show of praying—shouting, kneeling, and waving their arms.
- They see people in big groups.
- Jesus keeps looking until he sees exactly what he wants to show his friends.



### Play the Teach Us to Pray Video



**Watch to see why the woman who is praying keeps moving.**

*If time permits, watch it again!*

(5–10 min.)

## RELATE

### Talk about the Teach Us to Pray Video

- Why did the woman keep moving to a new place?
- What did Jesus see that he didn't like about how the other people were praying?
- What did Jesus think was important about the way people prayed?
- What do you think is important about prayer?
- How do you usually pray?
- I wonder what the woman said in her prayer.
- Why do you think that Jesus thought it was important to teach us how to pray?
- Which of your friends can you talk to about prayer?



(5–10 min.)

## CONNECT

### Open the Connect Bible

Help kids find and mark Matthew 6:9 on page 1075.

- Chapters 5–7 of the book of Matthew are called The Sermon on the Mount. They are a collection of Jesus' sayings and teachings. Look at the story titles in these chapters. Circle 3 titles you want to read more about later.

Do the Matthew 6:5–15 Connect Bible activity on page 1076.

- Do you think Jesus thought you should only pray by yourself?
- Where do you pray with other people?
- What prayers do you say out loud?
- How can you pray in secret even if you are not alone?
- How can you pray without words?



## ACTIVITY TIPS

### Fewer kids?

invite kids to demonstrate for the group their ideas for ways to pray. Then give them time to find a quiet place away from others to pray in 1 of their ways.

### Less time?

Have kids do the drawing in class and save some of the cutting to do at home. Precut a couple of each kid's strips.

### More kids?

Suggest that kids hunt for classmates who drew similar ideas on their flip sheets, and then practice those ideas together with short prayers of praise and thanks to God.

### More time?

Teach kids the Lord's Prayer or review it with them.

## CLOSING PRAYER

**Dear God,**

**We love praying! You are always with us, hearing us as we pray. Thank you for sending Jesus to teach us to pray.**

**Amen!**

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MOJY





# 5 WAYS TO PRAY WITH KIDS

Prayer is an anytime and anywhere conversation with God—no fancy words required! The five ways to pray listed below are easy and meaningful to do. Use them with your family to encourage ongoing conversations with God.

## 1 KEEP A PRAYER JOURNAL

Write prayer concerns in a notebook, on a calendar, or on paper “leaves” that you hang from a branch in a vase. Then go back and look at the ways God answers those prayers over time.

## 2 TRY CIRCLE PRAYERS

Hold hands and take turns praying one sentence at a time for each “round.” You may find it helpful to focus your prayer by using this kid-friendly version of the “ACTS” model, replacing Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication with these prompts:

- “God, you are . . . ”
- “I’m sorry for . . . ”
- “Thank you for . . . ”
- “Please . . . ”

## 3 BUILD YOUR PRAYERS

Have each person create a shape that represents what they’d like to pray about. LEGO™ bricks, play dough, or pipe cleaners work well! Then pray about those things.

## 4 TAKE PRAYER WALKS

Name and pray about the things and people you see while walking in your neighborhood. Broaden your child’s sense of community by also praying for the people and places you locate together on a map or globe.

## 5 JUST BREATHE

Teach your kids a simple prayer verse or phrase to silently repeat while inhaling and exhaling. This is a great way to calm their spirit and/or help them focus as you enter into prayer together. For example, “When I am afraid, / I put my trust in you” (Psalm 56:3) or “Be still, and know / that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

# Teach Us to Pray

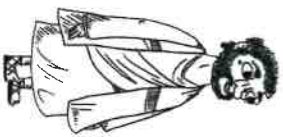
Matthew 6:5-15



The disciples wanted to learn how to pray. Jesus taught them that when they prayed, they should be humble and never try to show off. He taught them the Lord's Prayer, praising God, giving thanks to God, and asking God's forgiveness.

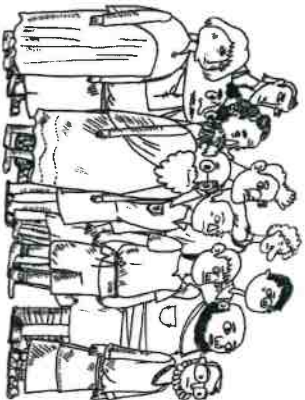
## Take a Look

Here are some of the people and things in today's story. What can your child tell you about them?



**Jesus** taught that prayers should be simple and private. He said God "knows what you need before you ask" (Matthew 6:8).

**Hypocrites** in this story are people who only pray or do good to get attention. Jesus taught they would not be rewarded by God.



The **disciples** alone heard the Lord's Prayer when Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount. They were Jesus' closest followers.

## About the Video

Some people pray just to get other people's attention. It looks like a show. Other people pray silently, where no one can see. The disciples asked Jesus how to pray, and he taught them the Lord's Prayer to help them, and us, talk to God every day.

- Why do you think the woman in the video kept moving around?
- What did Jesus see in people's prayers that he didn't like?
- When does your church pray the Lord's Prayer?

## Try This!

Make a prayer jar. Write simple prayers on small scraps of paper, and keep them in the jar. Pull one out to use whenever you pray.

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, our prayer today is simple. Thank you for teaching us how to pray. Help me remember you each day. Amen!

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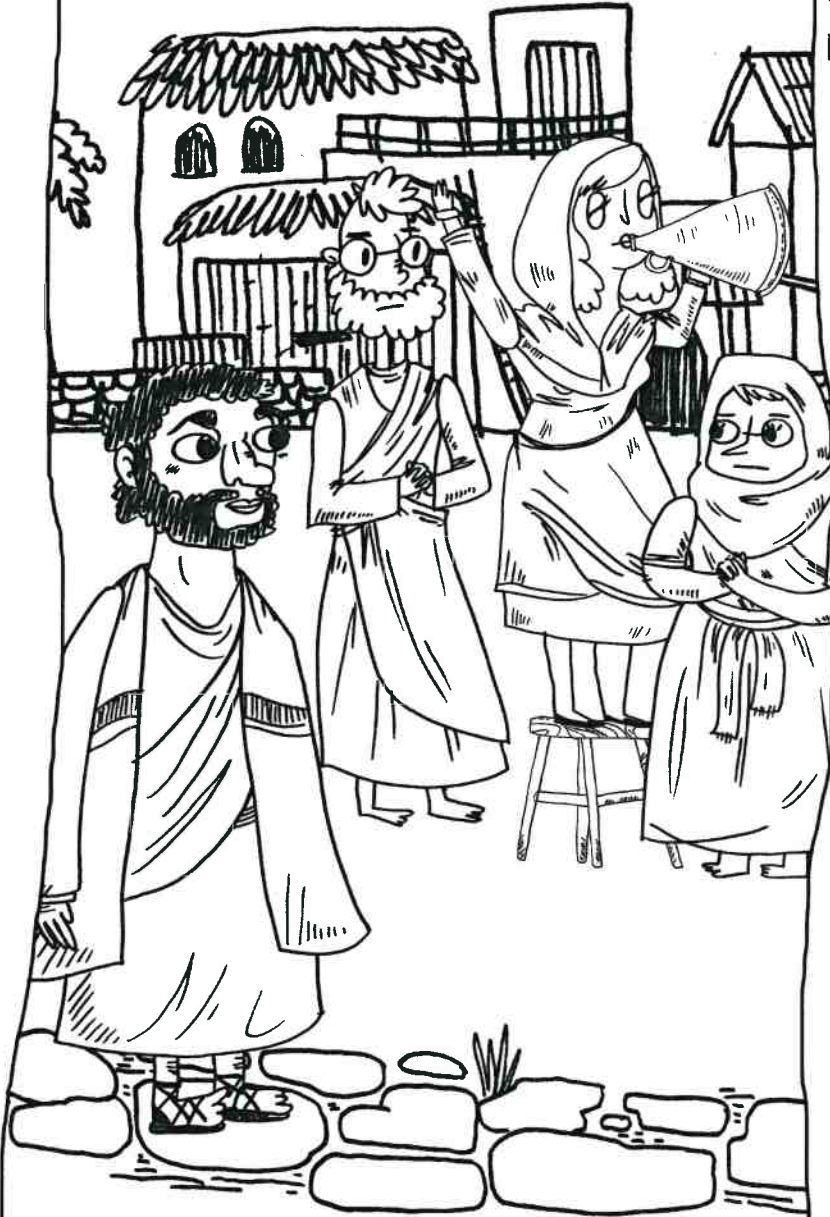
Jesus taught his disciples how to pray. Jesus teaches us how to pray, too.



# TEACH US TO PRAY

Things I can pray for:

People I can pray for:



Jesus teaches us how to pray. What and who can you pray for? Write your ideas above.