

The “Lord’s Prayer”

In this lesson, we will use rhythms and movement to learn and understand the prayer in Matthew chapter six--often referred to as “The Lord’s Prayer” or “The Our Father”.

Materials needed: Google earth shot of your location (zoomed in and out); bean bag chairs or soft pillows, video or song of the “Lord’s Prayer” (optional)

"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done in secret* will reward you. "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. "Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]" (Mt 6:5-13 NAS95)

Read the first portion, **"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full."** and exaggeratedly say, "Look at ME; I'm praying to God! Aren't I so spiritual."

Tell them, "No, don't do that. If you want to be admired for your fancy, special prayers, then that is all you will get...human admiration. God is not impressed."

Chant: Do not pray like the hypocrites; see me; see me, see me!

Read the next portion, **"But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done in secret* will reward you."** God knows our hearts and secret motives. Consider what the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 119, "Thy word have I hid in my heart..." We pray from our hearts according to God's word. His word is true.

Chant: Pray in secret; close your door; with Him, with Him, with Him!

Read the next portion, **"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him."** and exaggeratedly say, "Oh GOOOOOOD, I know I asked this three times today...and yesterday...and last week...but I know you want me to be faithful to ask you again and again and again and again and again... I need your help, because I'm impatient, and I need an answer right now! Don't worry; I'll keep faithfully praying for you to give my impatient self patience, but I'm getting tired of praying...oh wait, no I'm not TIRED; I'm FAITHFULLY consistently praying without ceasing the same prayer over and over and over."

Tell them, “No, don’t do that either. God knows what we need before we do.”

Chant: Do not pray like the Gentiles do; repeat, repeat, repeat!

QUESTION: So how do we know what or how to pray?

Have everyone get out of the chairs and find a place to get on their knees to pray...

Wait, no...

Have everyone get up and hold their hands high up in the chair with their faces upturned...

Wait, no...

Have everyone sit back down in their chairs with their hands folded in their laps...

Wait, no...

Go back to the floor and have everyone lay flat on their stomachs with their hands folded under their chins...

Wait, no...

Go back to your seats. None of those are right, and yet any one of them is fine. Let’s go to the scriptures and see what is says.

Read the next portion: **"Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."**

We’re not told how to sit or stand or lay down. We are pointed to God:

Our Father, (the one who looks after us)

Who art in heaven (He is above; He can see the big picture and knows what’s truly needed)--show a google.com earth shot of your location zoomed in and out; see if they recognize where they are.

Hallowed be Your name (His name is set apart for His purpose alone.)

Thy kingdom come. (Your authority be established.)

Your will be done on [or “in” according to some translations] *earth as it is in heaven* (All He desires be done here on [or “in”] earth just as it is in heaven.)

Give us this day our daily bread. (Provide for our needs as we need them.)

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. (forgive as we forgive)

Do not lead us into temptation (a trial) *but deliver us from evil* (the evil one or devil)

For Yours is the kingdom (authority), *and the power* (strength) *and the glory forever*.

Amen (truly)

Teach the prayer in sections and add the following motions:

Our Father--eyes down; fists together below chin
who art in heaven--hands straight up into “victory” V
hallowed be Thy name--windshield wipers down to waist height
Thy kingdom come--grab hands in toward chest
Thy will be done--fist in open upward palm
On earth--both hands open and spread apart
as it is--hands back together
in heaven--hands back up and into a V
Give us this day--open hands right in front of chest
our daily bread--rolling hands towards chest and upward toward mouth
And forgive us our debts--hands and head go down towards floor
As we forgive our debtors--hands go out in pushing away motion
And lead us not into temptation--hands shielding upward as we look away right
but deliver us from evil--hands shielding upward as we look away left
For Thine is the kingdom (hands do crown above head)
And the power (muscle pose)
And the glory (hands straight above head)
Forever (hands swirl around)
Amen (drop to knees--preferably into a beanbag chair)

(TIP: After doing each section, build the prayer by starting at the beginning and adding each new section. This reinforces what has already been learned. For reading students, cover a written version that is uncovered section-by-section, as the prayer is built.)

After you have repeated it a few times, see if they can do the motions by themselves as you recite the prayer.

Then, see if they can recite the prayer as you do the motions.

Then, see if they can do both.

Play a game of hide and go seek in which the hiders go into a secret place “to pray”. Instead of counting, the seeker recites the prayer. (This is a great way to individually assess and practice one-on-one.)

(Optional--pull up a youtube video of the song and show it to them. Have them do the motions to the song. I used one by iCharacter at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdGId-ZJtSU>)