Enter His Gates with Thanksgiving

(Learning to Pray)

I. Prayer is important

A. Definition

Prayer is talking to God.

B. Key Scriptures

Jeremiah 33:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Psalm 91:15

II. Basic principles

A. Guidelines for prayer

_____ can pray?

Anyone can pray.

_____ prayer does He promise to answer?

God promises to answer the prayers of those who have received the Lord Jesus as Savior from sin.

_____ can you and should you pray?

Anytime.

_____ should you pray?

Anywhere (e.g., playing, in school, while walking, in bed).

You do not need to always kneel or close your eyes.

_____ are prayers hindered?

Unconfessed sin hinders prayers (Ps. 66:18; 1 John 1:9).

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_____ do you pray?

Pray according to God's will (1 John 5:14, 15).

Pray in Christ's name (John 14:13, 14; 16:23, 24).

Pray in faith (Mark 11:24; James 1:6, 7).

_____ do you pray for?

Praise God for who He is.

Thank God for what He has done.

Confess sin.

Pray for *others* with specific requests.

Pray for *yourself.*

B. How does God answer prayer?

1. He always does what is best for us.
2. If according to His will, He will answer "yes" (1 Kings 18:37, 38; Judg. 6:36-40; Gen. 24:14, 18).
3. If it would not be good for us to receive, God graciously answers "no" (2 Cor. 12:8, 9).
4. If it is not God's perfect time, He will answer "wait;" an example is the Israelites and their deliverance from Egypt.
5. God sometimes answers by giving us more than we asked for (Eph. 3:20).
6. God sometimes answers before we call or voice the desire (Isa. 65:24).
7. God answers prayer to glorify Himself (Ps. 50:15).

III. Practical "how-to" ideas

A. Use the following acrostic "A-C-T-S" to remind the children of four things they can pray about:

A–_____

Adoration is telling God how much you love Him. You can tell Him why you appreciate Him or how wonderful and great He is (Ps. 95:3; 104:1).

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C—_____

Confession is naming your sin and admitting to God that you have sinned. When you confess your sin, He will forgive you (1 John 1:9). Talk to God about it when you know you have sinned.

T—_____

Give thanks to God for what He means to you or has done for you (1 Thess. 5:18). Thank Him for what He has given you (salvation, food, clothes, family, friends).

S—_____

Supplication is to ask humbly or earnestly. Talk to God about the needs of other people (sickness, problems, their need of salvation). Pray about your own needs and requests (Phil. 4:6).

B. Use examples from your regular lessons where people pray—Jesus, Moses, Esther, Joshua, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Peter.

C. Use music.

a. "God Wants to Spend Time with Just You" (CEF Press®)

b. Use the tune "O Be Careful" to sing the following words:

Sometimes God answers 'yes' when I pray.
Sometimes God answers 'wait' when I pray.
Sometimes God answers 'no' just because He loves me so,
But I know He always answers when I pray.

D. Use *The Wonder Devotional Books* (CEF Press).

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