



PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

This month we'll be looking at prayer and how we can bring prayer into our daily lives together.

Living in the 21st Century our lives are very chaotic, whether it's homework, work, extra-curricular activities, or visiting loved ones. Often it can be difficult to find time in the day to sit down and pray together. But prayer brings the family together and it is a time to share and to talk to God in a place where we feel most comfortable.

This Faith@Home Challenge provides different ideas on how to pray; you can use what you feel most comfortable with. It also divides the session into four weeks, so each week we can pray with a different focus. But of course, we must remember that we can pray wherever we are and at whatever time of day, because God will always hear us.

PREPARATION

+ Make sure you have been given a copy of the *Lord's Prayer* and the *Hand Prayer* sheet.

BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

The most well-known prayer is the prayer Jesus taught his disciples:

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 forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

(MATTHEW 6:9-15 MODERN ENGLISH VERSION)

Put your copy of the *Lord's Prayer* in a place where you will see it daily, and remember that as Jesus taught it to his disciples, so today he wants you to take it and use it in your daily journey. Wherever you go and whatever you face, may you remember that prayer is a vital part of your daily walk with him.



FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Here are some simple ideas to help children with their prayer times, but grown-ups can use them too!

TEASPOON PRAYERS ('TSP' PRAYERS – THANK YOU, SORRY, PLEASE)

To help younger children remember these three words you can give them a teaspoon when they pray and it will remind them of 'thank you', 'sorry' and 'please'.

HAND PRAYERS

Say a prayer for each finger on one hand. Five things to pray about: for myself (thumb, nearest to me), for people who point the way (index finger), for people who rule over us (middle finger, the tallest), for people we love (ring finger), for people who need help (smallest finger). Use the *Hand Prayer* sheet to help you.

'SORRY' PRAYERS

Sometimes we need to say sorry to God. Write down what you're sorry for. Perhaps it was an argument you had with a friend at school, or perhaps you did not hold the door open for an elderly lady today. Maybe you did not try your best in your test today. Now throw away or destroy the paper you wrote on. This will help you move on.

CARD PRAYERS

Write down a prayer and put it somewhere safe. After a week read what you have written. Then repeat, write another prayer and re-visit it a week later.

How to Pray?

(We can begin our prayer with...)

Dear God / Dear Lord / Heavenly Father,

(Then we can just talk to God and tell him what we want to pray for. This can be as you would talk to a friend, or to your parents. It can even be in another language. God understands it all.)

(We finish our prayer with...)

Amen / Talk to you soon, God / Thank you.

Each week it is good to have something to focus our prayers on for that week. It is always helpful to find a balance between good things and things that give us cause for concern. Here are some suggestions to help you with your prayers.

Week 1 – This week let's pray for our world.

This could be things we see on the news or tragedies you have heard about in school. It could be situations that have been mentioned in church. It could be devastations that you read about in the newspaper. It could be positive decisions that have been agreed in parliament. Anything you want to pray for concerning our world, this is the week to do it!

Week 2 – This week let's pray for our community.

This week we are praying for the area where we live. It could be for the neighbours who have just moved in next door and we have not yet introduced ourselves. This could be our school or work place. It could be the church we attend. It could be for the local park to be kept clean. It could be that people will drive more slowly.

Week 3 – This week let's pray for our friends and family.

We could pray for our family members who live far away, that we will have more opportunity to talk to them. It could be that situations will be available when we can talk to our friends about our faith. It could be a prayer that we do not argue with our brother or sister so often. It could be that we can spend more time together as a family.

Week 4 – This week let's pray for ourselves.

It can be that we are so busy praying for other people that we forget to pray for ourselves! We have situations ourselves that need praying for, too. It could be a driving test we have coming up or some coursework due. It could be we are worried about starting a new after-school club.

SONG TIME

Spend time listening to, reflecting with, or singing along to...

♪ 'Peace' by Kenneth Downie

♪ 'His Provision' by John Gowans / Ivor Bosanko

♪ 'Silent Love' by Neil Winton / Rachel Bywater

Visit www.salvationarmy.org.uk/faith-at-home

REFLECT

When Jesus first taught his disciples to pray, they did not know how to, so the Lord's Prayer was a model prayer and enabled the disciples to learn.

Hopefully over these few weeks you now have learnt different ways of praying, as Jesus' disciples eventually did too.

It is important to remember that as the Lord's Prayer starts off with 'Our Father', you too need to find a close relationship with God as a reminder of who you are praying to.

I wonder if a prayer you have prayed over these few weeks has been answered, and how?

SHARE

Share your favourite way of praying as a family with each other and the person who gave your family the Faith@Home Challenge.

Remember that even though this Faith@Home challenge is for June, praying is such a vital part of a walk with Jesus that it is important you do it often.

