

Racial inclusion in the Kingdom of God



Verse:

Matthew 6:5-13

Jesus teaches about prayer



Aim:

To know that inclusion is part of God's Kingdom



Jesus gave his followers a special prayer that they could use. It is known as the Lord's Prayer.

One of the lines says, 'Your kingdom come', and in today's session we're going to explore what that means. We'll spend time praying for those who feel excluded and asking God to show us a glimpse of his Kingdom here on earth.

Each child will need:

- Poster paint and trays to make handprints
- Pens/pencils and paper
- *Explore it ideas* handout

You will need:

- Large strips of paper, each with one line of the Lord's Prayer on it – see Start it
- To find source material on a recent news event, eg children's newspaper or a **BBC Newsround bulletin** – see Tell it
- A really large piece of paper with the word 'CHURCH' sketched on it, to make a banner – see Action it



Start it

Place the large strips of paper around the room and see if the children can collect them and put them in the correct order. Read through the Lord's prayer together to start the *Explore it* session.

'Our Father in heaven,
we pray that your name will always be kept holy.
We pray that your kingdom will come.

We pray that what you want will be done,
here on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us the food we need for each day.
Forgive the sins we have done,
just as we have forgiven those who did wrong to us.
And do not cause us to be tested;
but save us from the Evil One.'

(Matthew 6:9-13 *ICB*)



Sing it

Say:

Today we will be discovering more about the special prayer Jesus gave to his followers. Let's sing 'The Lord's Prayer' together.

Song

'The Lord's Prayer' by Saddleback Kids (3:03)

Tell it

Say:

Jesus gave his followers a special prayer that showed them how they could talk to God.

Video

Jesus prayed - Bible Story by Life Kids (1:28)

Ask:

In the clip there were lots of examples of times when Jesus prayed. What kinds of situations and people did Jesus pray for?

Say:

We have already read the special prayer that Jesus taught his followers. We are going to spend some time focusing on one line: 'We pray that your kingdom will come.'

Ask:

- What do you think God's Kingdom is like?
- How is it different from the world we live in now?

Say:

Sometimes when we watch the news, or see people treating each other unkindly, it can feel like

we can't see any of God's Kingdom here on earth. Maybe we need to look a little closer. Maybe we need to realise that we can play an important part in showing people what God's Kingdom is like.

Say:

We know that inclusion, welcome and acceptance are signs of God's Kingdom on earth because the book of Revelation tells us that there will be no pain and every tear will be wiped away. We can show God's Kingdom to those who feel excluded.

The news

Share a recent news story with your group, perhaps about tragic situations or people trying to cause divisions between races and religions. As you watch or read the source material, model and discuss with children what prayer points are raised. Encourage the children to think of prayer and action points in response to the parts of our world that do not reflect God's Kingdom. Rather than feeling helpless, how can the children pray 'Your Kingdom come'?

Encourage the children to think about how they can show God's Kingdom here on earth. Ask the children to think of actions that they could take to make this situation better. They may not be able to directly help the situation, but they can reflect the attitude of Jesus in their everyday relationships, which is where the Kingdom of God *can* come.

Example

Prayer point: praying for families that are stuck in the middle of war and conflict.

Action point: be careful with the words that we say to each other and try to bring peace to the situations we face at school and at home.



Action it

Ask:

What is the Church?

Video

The Church is the People – A Sunday School lesson for kids by Douglas Talks (3:13)

Ask:

What did Douglas teach us about God's house?

Say:

Remember that God – Douglas called him 'the Holy Spirit' – comes to live inside us, so we become God's home. We don't do this alone, and once God is inside us, we want to be a friend and include others.

Banner

After discussing the clip and thinking about God's Church, create a large handprint banner spelling out the word 'CHURCH'. Make each letter from the children's handprints. You may like to add the words 'Your Kingdom come' to the banner and display it in the worship hall. The children could share what they have learned in these *Explore it* sessions with the rest of the church, showing their banner and singing their memory verse song.

Pray it

Say:

Let's share our memory verse together before we spend some time in prayer.

Memory verse

'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'

(Galatians 3:28 *ESV*)

Say:

In God's Kingdom everyone, no matter their colour, religion or background, is one in Christ Jesus. Here on earth we don't always see God's vision for his Kingdom. People treat each other in ways that do not represent the love that Jesus showed to others.

Ask the children to look at the banner they have created. Encourage them to imagine if the banner was made with handprints from all the people Jesus loves across the world. Whose handprint would be included/excluded?

As the children reflect on the endless love of God for all his people, sing the memory song together and then bring the session to a close in prayer.

Your group may wish to remember that 26-28 January is The Salvation Army's Prayer Gathering Weekend. Pray that this part of the Church becomes more racially inclusive and accepting of all people in 2024.

Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore it ideas* for children and families.

Explore it is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

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Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



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Matthew 6:5-13
Jesus teaches about prayer



Aim:
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Discover

Watch this clip where Douglas will help you to discover more about the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer - Explaining the Lord's Prayer for Kids by Douglas Talks



Create

Gather the people at home together and create your own handprint picture.



Song for the week

'The Lord's Prayer' by Saddleback Kids
(3:03)



Memory verse

'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'

(Galatians 3:28 *ESV*)

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