

GOD TALK



1. In **three words**, how would you describe your prayer life?
2. If you could pray for **only one thing**—and knew it would be answered—what would it be?
3. How much time do you think Christians should spend in prayer each day? Put an arrow by your choice.
 - A few minutes
 - At least 15 minutes
 - A half hour
 - An hour or more
 - Whatever you can fit into your day
4. What is prayer to you? Read and complete the sentences below.
 - I know God answers my prayers because—
 - I pray because—
 - Praying for me is—
5. Halley knew she shouldn't have gone party with Leon—he had always been trouble. She had lied and told her parents she would be spending the night with her friend Kali. The cops had come to break up the party and now she was panicked—"God, if you get me out of this one, I promise never to go to parties like this again."
Is it fair of Halley to ask God for help?

Why should God answer her prayer?

How would you react, if you were God?
6. Check out one of these verses—and write what it says about prayer.
 - Matthew 6:9-19
 - 1 Timothy 2:1-4
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
 - Hebrews 4:14-16

GOD TALK [p r a y e r]

THIS WEEK

Prayer is a conversation with God. Some kids don't think they need to pray or don't feel like it. But both talking and listening to God are crucial for understanding God and growing closer to him. This TalkSheet offers your group the opportunity to take a closer look at the importance of prayer.

OPEN

What is God's model for prayer? Check out the Lord's Prayer with your group. You may want to go through this with your group and break it up into sections. Break your group up into small groups and give each small group a phrase of the Lord's Prayer. Ask them to discuss what the section of prayer means and then write it in their own words. Then together as a group, put all the sections of the prayer together and write a master group interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. Keep this master list for discussion later on and possibly make copies for your kids to take home with them if they need a prayer boost.

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. What three words did your kids come up with? Why did they choose what they did? What do these words say about the importance of prayer in their lives?
2. Make a master list of what your kids would pray for and why. What if God answered their prayers differently? Remind them that God answers all prayers—go, no, or grow. Go means yes, no means God doesn't want it for us, and grow means wait.
3. How long do your kids think Christians should pray? What are the positives and negatives of spending a long or short time in prayer? Why can some people pray longer than others?
4. Discuss each of these in a general way. You may want to point out that God hears their prayers, loves them, and is concerned about their problems and struggles. Maybe they won't get the result they're expecting—but it doesn't mean he's not listening.
5. This tension-getter offers an opportunity to discuss prayer in a true-to-life situation. Allow them to debate their views. Prayer isn't designed to be an insurance to get God to help them out of a tough spot.
6. Take some time to discuss these verses. How did the verses apply to their lives?

THE CLOSE

As you close, keep the following points in mind—

- It's hard to have a relationship with God without talking to him—just like it's hard to keep a friendship without talking.
- Prayer isn't magic—it's a conversation with God. He wants us to talk with him, using our own language and letting him know what's on our minds.
- Instead of challenging the kids to do something unrealistic—such as praying for an hour each day—encourage them to begin with two minutes of prayer a day. If they are already praying two, have them strive for four. Challenge them with manageable goals.
- Also, remind them that prayer involves listening, too. Let them know that sometimes it's good to just sit back, relax in a quiet place, and reflect on what's going on in their lives and what God would want them to do. God doesn't shout out answers, but he does speak to us through our feelings and thoughts.
- Suggest that they keep a prayer journal, or list of prayer requests. This is a great way for them to start their prayers if they don't know what to say. Encourage them to use their letters as a start and write out requests as they go along. This is also a way to look back later and see how God has answered their prayers.

MORE

- With your group, make a prayer request list and encourage them to pray from the list each day. Use this to illustrate the importance of praying for and supporting each other. Encourage your kids to e-mail you with concerns and prayer requests. Then distribute the list weekly to encourage prayer among the group. Include praises in this list, too!
- Encourage your kids to get their thoughts on paper. Challenge them to pray with a pen and paper—to write down things that they are praying for. Have them journal their prayers for a week, then take a look back to see if and how the prayers have been answered. They might have to wait longer than a week. But encourage them to do this. It's a great way to look back and thank God for what he's done!