



Date: _____
Series: Meet the Amazing Jesus
Winter Year 3, Lesson 37

God Answers Prayer

Primary Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

Key Verse: Luke 11:13b, “So how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Kids are trusting and often more willing to believe that God directly hears and answers their prayers. Yet, from experience, they find that there are certain things that are not answered in the way that they have requested. What are they to do with these prayers? Today's lesson helps children understand that God answers prayers in three ways. He says, “Yes,” “No,” or “Not yet.”

The biggest gift God gives is not just answers to our outward prayers, but a relationship with him. He gives us his Holy Spirit. Therefore, in all of our prayers we are inviting his presence and his power through the Holy Spirit.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus won the victory for us through his death and resurrection. In Jesus' name, therefore, our relationship with God is mended so that we might be bold to ask him for anything in Jesus' name.

Jesus in us: Jesus promises us fellowship. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus dwells in us and helps us understand what we need to pray for.

Jesus through us: The more we focus on Jesus, the more we see our prayers are shaped by what Jesus desires. Our prayers become less self-centered and more focused on seeking God's will. Therefore, more and more of our prayer concerns are for others.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies needed: strip of paper that is 8 ½" long and 3" wide with the word "prayer" on it, two paper clips—each a different color

Read Luke 11:11-13. Leave out the words "Holy Spirit" when you come to them.

"If your child asks you, his father, for a fish, would you give him a snake instead? Or if your child asks you for an egg, would you give him a scorpion? Even though you're evil, you know how to give good gifts to your children. So how much more will your Father in heaven give the _____ to those who ask him?"

Ask the children what they think fits in the blank.

The greatest gift that God can give us is himself. His presence comes to us in the person of the Holy Spirit. We should ask God for many things, but the best thing to ask for is more of his presence that comes to us through the Holy Spirit. Here is an example of how that works.

Have available two paper clips (each a different color) and a strip of paper that is 8 ½" long and 3" wide. Write the word "prayer" on the strip of paper.





Make an accordion trifold, folding the word “prayer” into thirds. There should be two creases in the paper, both at approximately three inches from one of the short edges. The crease should be folded in a direction that lets the paper open up like an accordion.

Place one paper clip one inch from the end of the paper and connect the middle fold with the fold facing you. The other paper clip will be placed in similar fashion one inch from the end of the paper and connecting to the middle fold.



The effect will be shown as the two ends of paper are pulled apart and the paper clips connect with one another.



The illustration of this is simple:

As we come to God in prayer, he connects with us and gives us his very best present – himself. He wants us to ask, seek, and knock and he will come to us.

Point out that in today’s worship, we invite his presence and he comes to us. He will speak to us clearly in his word and make promises to us in baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Invite the children to follow along in the words of the Lord's Prayer. Explain that this is a model of prayer that Jesus taught us. Point out that in the very middle of the prayer, he wants us to pray that our sins would be forgiven and that we would forgive others. Take time to do that right now. Then give the children assurance of forgiveness through Jesus and the power that he gives them to forgive others.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.



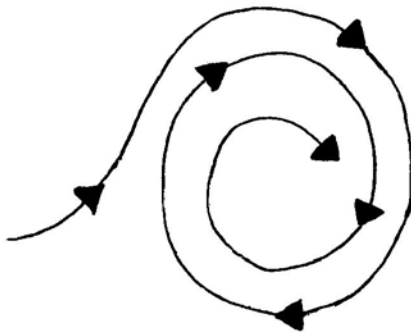
The Word

Learning Game:

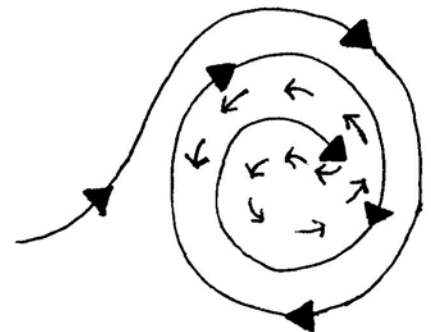
Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

“Spiral”

Spiral is a large group game that creates quite an amazing effect. The children will join hands to form a long line. The line can snake through all different parts of the room and eventually make a circle as the “head” gets closer to the “tail.” The head needs to move in the same direction and keep its line as close as possible to the outside line. This begins to create a spiral which gets tighter and tighter.



Once the spiral is wound, the leader at the head of the line will be in a small, constricted space. To get out, he quickly turns to go the opposite direction to which the spiral is winding. The leader is now beginning to unwind the spiral. He will walk in the gap created between the two lines.



The teaching point is simple:

God calls us to pray and pray to get closer and closer to him. As we do so, he answers our prayers and uses them to help people farther and farther away. In prayer, we move closer to God and, as he answers, we take his answers out to the world.

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Supplies: an Aladdin's lamp (a gravy boat covered in aluminum foil), three envelopes that each contain a slip of paper. The first envelope contains the word "YES." The second envelope contains the word "NO." The third envelope has the words "NOT YET."

Hold up the Aladdin's lamp. Ask the children if they have heard the story of Aladdin's lamp. When the magic lamp is rubbed, a genie appears. The genie grants three wishes to the person that freed him.

If you had such a lamp, what wishes would you ask?

Take responses from around the room.

In Luke 11, Jesus tells us that we have great power in asking God.

Read Luke 11:5-10. Then continue with:

We should not try to find our answers by rubbing a magic lamp. We should find our answers by continually coming and praying to God. God tells us that whoever asks will receive, whoever searches will find, and to whoever knocks, the door will open.

Can anyone tell me something that you asked for and did not receive?

Interview children.

Does that mean that God did not answer your prayer? (Not necessarily.)

Hold up the three envelopes and say:

Each of these envelopes describes a way that God answers prayer.

One at a time, pull out the strip of paper from each envelope and explain each answer.

In envelope one, we find the answer "yes." Sometimes God automatically says yes to our prayers.

Read Luke 11:9 and share a story of how God answered one of your prayers right away.

The second envelope shows us the answer "no."

Read Isaiah 55:9. Give an example of how God might say no for the best reason. The following story is an example of a time like this. A story from personal experience may also be used.

A young girl, Sheri, wanted a part in a movie that was to be filmed in her city. She prayed and prayed that she would be one of the children chosen to be in the movie. She even asked others to join in her prayers. She wanted to be in the movie so badly that it was all she could think about.

On the day of the tryouts, Sheri was so excited as she waited for an answer. Her name was not called, though. She left feeling so sad and heartbroken. She did not understand why God said “no” to something that was so important to her. After all, she had talent and she wanted to use it.

As the weeks went by, Sheri noticed her friends who had parts in the movie hung out only with each other. They made new friends with people from the movie and they started to do some bad things. They started trying drugs and drinking alcohol. Even though they were teenagers, they were trying to act grown up and impressive. They became rebellious and developed attitudes in which they did not listen to anyone else. Finally, they even broke the law.

Six months had passed and Sheri realized the truth. She told her mother, “I’m glad I wasn’t chosen to be in the movie. I’m afraid I might not have been strong enough to say “no” to all of the temptations. I don’t know if I would have been able to resist the pressure of going along with the crowd.”

Sheri realized that even though it hurt to hear God say “no” to her, it was probably best in the long run.

Remove the paper from envelope number three.

The third envelope shows us the answer of “not yet.”

Ryan wanted to pitch on his baseball team. He knew that he was not the best pitcher on the team, but it was still something that he wanted to do very badly. Every night before going to bed, Ryan prayed, “Dear God, let me wake up and be a pitcher.”

The next morning Ryan would look in the mirror. He would ask himself, “I wonder if I’m a pitcher today?” When he went to baseball practice he was still not chosen as pitcher on the team.

Ryan began to wonder if God was answering his prayers. Then he thought to himself that maybe there was something he needed to do. What do you think it was? Maybe he needed to practice.

Ryan did not give up praying. He asked the Lord to show him how he might get ready to be a pitcher. He thought of a great idea. He would ask his dad to help him. Every night after practice, Ryan invited his dad to come into the back yard and play catch with him. Every night he still prayed to God, "Please let me be a pitcher."

In the morning, when Ryan looked in the mirror, he still wondered if he would be a pitcher. He knew that even if it was not the day, God had his own way of answering his prayer in the best time.

What do you think happened to Ryan? Do you think he ever got to be a pitcher? You bet he did! It happened about half way through the season.

One of Ryan's friends, Jimmy, left on vacation. The team needed another pitcher. Ryan said, "I would like to give it a try." When he tried out for the coach, he threw three hard strikes right in a row.

"Wow!" His coach said. I didn't know you could pitch like that."

Ryan said, "I've been practicing and I think I'm becoming a pitcher."

At practice that day, Ryan struck out four batters. In the next game, Ryan pitched for four innings and the other team did not score a single run. After the game, Ryan remembered his prayer. He remembered how he had asked God to become a pitcher. He said, "Thank you, God. You made me a pitcher. You didn't do it right away, but in your own time. I think I'm a much better pitcher now than I would have been earlier."



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Allow the children to talk about prayers answered and unanswered.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- strip of paper that is 8 ½" long and 3" wide with the word "prayer" on it
- two paper clips, each a different color

Bible Presentation:

- Aladdin's lamp (a gravy boat covered in aluminum foil)
- three envelopes, each containing a slip of paper. The first envelope would contain the word "YES." The second envelope would contain the word "NO." The third envelope would have the words "NOT YET."

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