

# Prayer in Bible Class

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It is important for children to know that they can talk to God about anything and that He will listen. When a child prays to God about a sick pet or a scary “monster” I am reminded that my Heavenly Father also listens to my heartfelt prayers and cares about my concerns and fears.



## What is Prayer?

- Talking to God. If we speak to someone who is standing on the other side of a curtain we cannot see them but they are still there. God is listening to us even though we cannot see Him.
- Praise. We express praise to Him for His unique and wonderful qualities. We like to hear people praise us and God likes to hear us praise him.
- Thankfulness. In prayer we voice appreciation to our Father for what he has done for others and for us.
- Confession. Prayer is a time when we can tell God that we are sorry for sins we

have committed or for things we should have done that we did not.

- Making Requests on Behalf of Others. Children can pray for the sick or hurting. They can pray for the gospel to be preached to unsaved people. They can pray for adults they know or have heard about.
- Making Personal Requests. In prayer we ask God to forgive us for sin, help us to do better or do good, give us strength when we are weak or even just share our feelings with Him.

## What Children Pray About:

- Their parents and grandparents, step-parents, uncles, aunts...
- Their siblings, cousins and various family members
- Friends and friends' families
- Teachers, coaches, community leaders, government
- Ministers, missionaries and church leaders
- People they have heard adults talk about. People who are mentioned in church announcements in the church bulletin.
- Sick people that they may get well.
- Their pets
- People who have suffered losses or difficulties
- That bullies will be nicer
- That they can do well in math or science or any school work
- That they can do well in a sport

## Respecting Children:

When we ask someone to pray for us we do not necessarily want everyone else to know about that prayer request. It is important to treat a child with the same respect. As a teacher you will sometimes hear a child pray for matters that are private to that child's family. If appropriate you might wish to talk to the parent(s) about it but never gossip

about it to others.

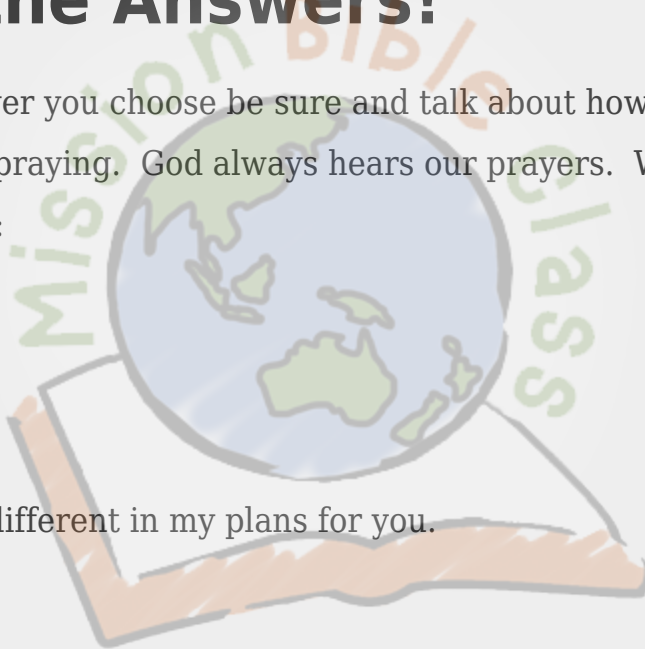
## Inappropriate Prayers:

Sometimes children are not focused on God when they pray in class. They may be silly or try to make jokes in the prayer. If a child prays an inappropriate prayer I generally say something like “Our God is the Creator of the universe. He is stronger than the strongest person on earth. He loved us so much that he sent his son to die for each of us. Next time we pray let’s give him our respect.” Then move on and don’t dwell on it.

## Celebrate the Answers!

Whatever method of prayer you choose be sure and talk about how God is answering the prayers the children are praying. God always hears our prayers. When we make a request he might answer:

- Yes.
- No.
- Not right now, or
- I’ve got something different in my plans for you.



## Ideas for Classroom Prayers:

### Finish the Sentence Prayer

There is no formal structure of prayer that we must pray in every situation. To help children learn to pray I often use the following general outline that I found on the back of a poster from TREND. The teacher can even write out these sentences and let the children fill in the blanks for a written prayer.

- (Opening) “Dear God”

- (Praise God) “Lord, you are \_\_\_\_\_”
- (Confess Your Sins) “Lord, forgive me for \_\_\_\_\_”
- (Thank God) “Lord, thank you for \_\_\_\_\_”
- (Pray for Others) “Lord, please help \_\_\_\_\_”
- (Pray for Yourself) “Lord, I need \_\_\_\_\_”
- (Closing) “In Jesus’ name, Amen”

### **Repeat After the Teacher:**

This is often one of the first ways a young child learns to pray. The teacher should ask the children to fold their hands (or sit quietly or whatever your chosen posture). The teacher says a prayer, one phrase at a time, and the children repeat after the teacher. Example: Teacher says, “Dear God” and the children repeat “Dear God”. Then the teacher says, “Thank you for this day” and the children repeat “Thank you for this day.” This continues for the entire prayer.

### **Group “Chain” Prayer:**

This works best if everyone is sitting in a circle. The teacher and children should join hands. The teacher (or one of the children) begins the prayer and then squeezes the hand of the person sitting next to him/her to let them know it is now their turn to continue the prayer. After that person says a part of the prayer then he/she squeezes the hand of the next person. Once the prayer has gone around the circle then the last person (or the teacher) completes the prayer with “In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

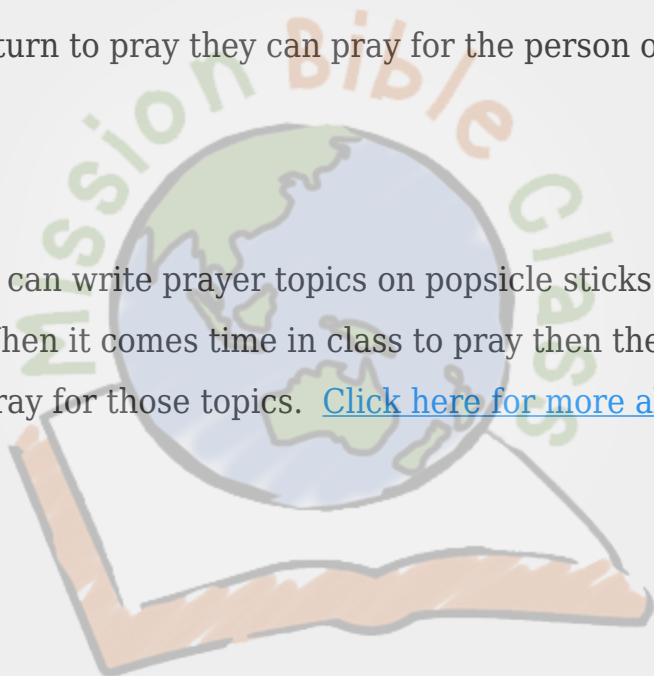
Note: As the prayer goes around someone might not wish to pray for some reason. When their hand is squeezed they should just quietly squeeze to next hand in the circle so the prayer chain continues without a pause.

It is often helpful to suggest a theme or assign particular topics for the children to pray for. Here are some variations you can try:

- The teacher begins the prayer and then each child prays thanking God for one thing before passing to the next person.
- The teacher begins the prayer and then each child, in turn, prays about something relating to the Scripture that has just been studied or something relating to the theme of the day. For example, if you have been learning about kindness then each child can ask God to help everyone in the class to be good in a different situation (“please help us to be kind at school” or “please help us to be kind our brothers and sisters at home”)
- The teacher begins the prayer and then each child prays for one person on the class prayer list.
- When it is a child’s turn to pray they can pray for the person on their left or right.

### Prayer Sticks

Children (or the teacher) can write prayer topics on popsicle sticks and then put the sticks in a pail or cup. When it comes time in class to pray then the children can pull out one or more sticks and pray for those topics. [Click here for more about prayer sticks.](#)



### Five Finger Prayer

Each finger represents a group of people to pray for. Children can use this as an outline for their prayer. [Click here for further explanation of the prayer](#)

- Thumb- (point to heart with thumb) Pray for those who are close to you.
- Index Finger- (point away from you) Pray for those who are far away.
- Middle Finger- (tallest of your fingers) Pray for leaders.
- Ring Finger- (only finger too weak to stand straight up) Pray for the weak.
- Little Finger- (least or could be the letter “I” in sign language) Pray for yourself last.

## Written Prayer Requests

Before prayer time ask the children to help you write prayer requests on pieces of paper. Divide the papers out so that each child has at least one request to pray for.

Alternatively, ask for prayer requests from the children and you can pray for them. Older children are also able to write down requests and lead the prayer.

## Prayer Tree

Set up a tree branch in the classroom to represent a “prayer tree”. You might prop it in a bucket of rocks so it will stand up. You and the children can write prayer requests on papers and then peg them to the limbs of the tree. When it is time for prayer then you or the children take one of the papers and prays for the request on the paper.

## Post-It Prayers

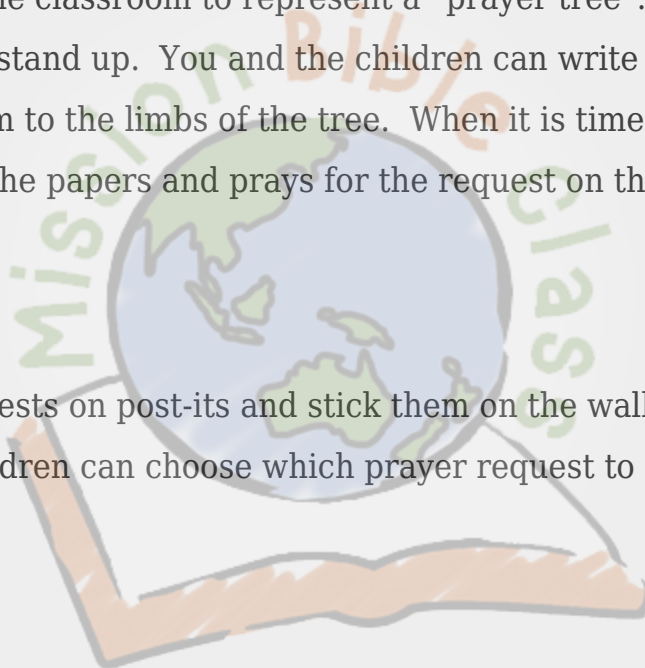
Simply write prayer requests on post-its and stick them on the wall or wherever you wish. At prayer time children can choose which prayer request to pray for.

## Prayer Journals

Provide children with paper and help them make their own personal booklet or journal. During the class prayer time they can add their own prayer reminders to their journal. Allow class time for them to silently pray for items in their journals. A simple prayer journal idea can be found at <http://www.littleblots.com/BibleCraftsPrayerJournal.html>.

## Prayer Chains to Make

Write specific prayer requests on small rectangular slips of paper. Staple the ends of the papers together to form links of a chain. Connect the links to form a chain of prayer requests. The children can take these home and hang them somewhere in their room to



help them remember what to pray for. [Click here for more about prayer chains.](#)

## Prayer Videos

Here are a few videos I've found about children praying. They really made me think so I thought I would share.

Kid's Prayers (1 minute 50 seconds)

Innocent Prayers of Children (1 minute and 44 seconds)

<http://www.godvine.com/The-Innocent-Prayers-of-Children-13.html>

What do children pray for? (1 minute and 8 seconds)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0faiprt4To>

## Bible Stories That Emphasise Prayer

- [God Answers Hannah's Prayer](#)
- [Jehoshaphat and the People Pray](#)
- [King Hezekiah Prays for Health](#)
- [Isaiah Helps King Hezekiah Pray](#)
- [Night of Betrayal and Prayer](#)
- [Peter's Miraculous Escape from Prison](#)

# Other Helpful Online Resources

- [Try some of the imaginative ideas for prayer](http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.co.uk/p/creative-prayer.html)  
at <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.co.uk/p/creative-prayer.html>



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