

**MODEL UNIT
BAND B
LEVEL 1**

JESUS AND PRAYER

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD HELPS PEOPLE PRAY

YEAR:SUGGESTED DURATION: 4 weeks (135 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO PRAY TO HIM IN JESUS' NAME

- 1a explore Christian prayer as thanking God and asking God for help
- 1b explore the Christian belief that people can pray to God because God loves them for Jesus' sake
- 1c investigate forms of Christian prayer, eg quiet meditation, circle prayer, class prayer, prayer partners

2. GOD PROMISES TO HEAR AND ANSWER PRAYER

- 2a investigate the Christian belief about ways God answers prayers
- 2b explore the Christian belief that people can pray to God about all aspects of their lives

3. JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO PRAY

- 3a explore the role of prayer in Jesus' life
- 3b examine the basic structure and meaning of the Lord's Prayer

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

- Illustrate places where Jesus prayed and describe reasons why he prayed. (3a,1a)
- Describe what Jesus taught about prayer. (1a,1b,2b,3a)
- Describe prayer observations or experiences. (1c)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- ⇒ visual display
- ⇒ prayer banner or mobile
- ⇒ prayer report sheet

UNIT SUMMARY

Students imagine being in a special place. They identify occasions Jesus went to a quiet place to pray and explore the reasons he prayed. Students record what Jesus taught about prayer. They participate in or observe a variety of prayer experiences.

UNIT NOTES

In section four of this unit the students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of prayer experiences. It is important not to force students to pray. However, clear behavioural expectations need to be established in order to respect those students who want to pray. Encourage those students who are unfamiliar with praying to observe what is taking place or to use the time provided as a time of peace or to think about important issues in their lives.

INTRODUCTION

1. MY SPECIAL PLACE

Assist the students to find a comfortable position, eg lying on the floor or sitting comfortably in their seats. Consider using quiet meditative music to set a peaceful atmosphere. Help the students to relax by telling them to slow their breathing and to take deep breaths, concentrating on relaxing their bodies as they breathe out.

When students are relaxed and quiet, ask them to close their eyes and to think of a special quiet place they like to go to. It could be a place where they like to go on their own to enjoy just being there or to think. Maybe it is a place where they like to go with a friend or family member to talk or just to be close to them. *Imagine you are there right now. Spend a few quiet moments there. Look around. What can you see? What can you feel? How does this place make you feel?*

Provide a few moments of quiet for the students. Tell them that they can gradually open their eyes when they are ready.

Ask students to paint a picture of their special place and to write a few sentences which describe how they feel and what they think about when they are there.

DEVELOPMENT

2. JESUS PRAYED

Tell students that they will be finding out about places Jesus liked to go to in order to have quiet time, what he did during these quiet times and why he did this.

Share with the students examples of Jesus' praying. Students can read the following verses, after the teacher sets the context for the prayer: what had happened just before or what was going to happen afterwards. (See Teacher Resource Sheet [TRS] B1/1 for further information.)

- After feeding many people Matthew 14:23
- Between days of teaching and healing Mark 1:35
- After healing people Luke 5:16
- Before choosing his twelve special followers Luke 6:12,13
- Before his arrest and death Matthew 26:36–46

Discuss with the students the following questions and record responses of students:

- Why did Jesus go to a quiet place?
- Why did he pray to God?
- What do you think Jesus prayed about?

Ask those students who pray to tell the class about

- places where they pray
- why they pray
- what they pray about.

Record their responses. You may also wish to share your own prayer experiences with your students.

Students complete TRS B1/2.

Divide the class into five groups. Each group paints a panel of a display entitled *Jesus prays*. Include not only a picture of the place where Jesus prayed but also what had happened before or what was about to happen after the prayer time.

You may also wish to include on the display other places where Jesus prayed (see Bible References Menu).

3. JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT PRAYER

Tell students that Jesus taught people about prayer through the things he said and the prayers he prayed.

Explore the following passages to discover what Jesus taught about prayer:

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|--------------------|--|
| Matthew 5:44,45 | Pray for enemies |
| Matthew 6:6 | Pray in private |
| Matthew 6:9–13 | What to pray about |
| Matthew 7:7–11 | Your Father gives good things |
| Matthew 6:9; 26:39 | Pray for what our Father wants |
| John 16:23b | Pray in Jesus' name — believing in Jesus |

Students work in six groups to make a display of what they have learnt about prayer.

P R A Y E R

Give each group one of the Bible passages and a large paper with the outline of one of the letters PRAYER on it. Students write or draw what the passage says about prayer, including key words, eg pray for enemies.

Alternatively, each group can make their own PRAYER banner which describes Jesus' teachings about prayer.

4. TALKING TO GOD IN ALL KINDS OF PLACES

In the following section the students will participate in or observe a variety of prayer forms. Choose those prayer experiences you feel students will be comfortable with and do not force the students to pray. Students who do not feel comfortable praying can use the activity to observe what is taking place and to think about things which are important to them.

Explore with the students ways of establishing a special setting and atmosphere for prayer in or outside the classroom. Establish behavioural expectations, eg maintain respect for those who are praying. Consider using aids, such as quiet music, candles, incense, darkness.

Tell the students that Jesus taught and demonstrated that people can and should talk to God about anything, at any time, in any place. The class will be experiencing or observing different ways that people can talk to God.

PRAYER EXPERIENCES

- Repeat the introductory activity, but this time ask students to imagine Jesus is sitting next to them in their special place. 'What would you say to Jesus?' Give students time to consider their responses. You may wish to ask students to record their thoughts/words/prayers in a journal.
- Take the students to a park or place where they can have space on their own. Tell the students to spend quiet time thinking about the important things in their lives at the moment or about the beauty of the surroundings. Encourage students to talk to God about these things.
- Tell students a Bible story in which Jesus is part of the story. Ask students to imagine themselves in the Bible story.

Set the scene for the students, eg 'It's a hot day. There's a huge crowd trying to get to Jesus. You are listening to what he is saying. . .'

Ask students to imagine they meet with Jesus after the story. 'What would you say

to Jesus? What questions would you ask him? Imagine what he might say to you.'

Students could illustrate what took place between Jesus and themselves and record what they imagine was said.

- Show students slides of nature, and at the same time play meditative music. Students could share their responses, eg amazement at the beauty of creation, thanks for making the world, asking for help to take care of creation, and express them as prayers. Show the presentation again to students to allow for a different response.
- As a class make a list of situations which arise in life, eg getting into a car, being lost, realising you hurt someone. Students choose one of these situations and write a one-line prayer, eg *I'm scared! Help me! Thanks, God!* Draw a picture of the situation and record the prayer.
- Provide students with prayer books to view and read. Students each choose their favourite prayer to record and illustrate.
- Use an item or symbol as a prayer focus, eg a cross. Model a prayer for the class. Students write their own prayers, using the item as a focus. Collate into a book.
- Model informal prayer. This can be used as a basis for a circle prayer. All students sit in a circle holding hands. Each child has the opportunity to pray. Those who do not wish to pray can gently squeeze the hand of the person next to them.
- Take the students into a church and let each student sit on their own. Students use the symbols, pictures, banners in the church as a stimulus for prayer. (It would be helpful to discuss with the students before they enter the church what they could focus on.)
- Take the students for a nature walk. Use this as a stimulus for prayer.
- Play a Christian or secular song to the students. Ask students to write a prayer in response to the song. The teacher may need to model this.

RESPONSE

5. PRAYER REPORT

Ask students to complete the Prayer Report Sheet (TRS B1/3) and to illustrate their favourite prayer experience.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <input type="checkbox"/> meditative music | <input type="checkbox"/> large letters which make the word PRAYER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> materials for painting | <input type="checkbox"/> resources necessary for the prayer experiences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> photocopies of TRS B1/2 and B1/3 for students | |

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Literature:* Through discussion, relate to own experience what is read and viewed. Rely more on text than pictures for meaning. Record and write opinions about what is read. Summarise key events and ideas.

ARTS: *Visual Arts:* Work with others on projects. Discuss own work. Use simple skills of visual communication.

HEALTH: *States of Health:* What it means to be emotionally, mentally, physically, socially, spiritually healthy. *Environmental Interaction:* Describe settings. Visit natural settings, such as parks, beaches, forests.

From the National Statements and Profiles

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' knowledge about what Jesus taught about prayer?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards prayer?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?

JESUS AND PRAYER

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

MATTHEW 14:23

Jesus had been given the distressing news that his cousin and friend John the Baptist had been beheaded by Herod. Jesus crossed Lake Galilee to be alone, but the people followed him on foot.

When he saw the large group, he felt sorry for them. He put his own grief aside and attended to the needs of the people, healing those who were sick. Jesus continued healing and teaching the people until it was nearly evening. In his concern for the needs of the people who were hungry, he provided food for five thousand men, as well as women and children.

He then sent his disciples on ahead of him and sent the crowds away. John's gospel tells us that the people wanted to make Jesus their king 'by force' (John 6:15). It was after this that Jesus went 'up on a mountain where he could be alone and pray'.

MARK 1:35

The Bible passages before and after Mark 1:35 give clues as to Jesus' need to be alone and to pray. On the previous day he had healed many people. The Bible says that 'after sunset all who were sick or had demons in them were brought to Jesus. In fact the whole town gathered around the door of the house' (Mark 1:32,33).

The next morning Jesus was up before dawn, praying on his own. When the disciples finally found him, they told him that everyone was looking for him. Jesus, however, had a strong conviction about what needed to happen that day. He told his disciples that he had to go to nearby towns to 'tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come.'

The Bible goes on to say that Jesus went to Jewish meeting places everywhere in Galilee, where he preached and healed people.

LUKE 5:16

The Bible passages before and after describe how 'crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses'. It is obvious from Luke 5:16 that Jesus needed time to be away from the crowds and to be with his Father in prayer.

LUKE 6:12,13

The Bible tells that Jesus spent the night praying on a mountainside. The above verses help us to see that Jesus prayed when he had some very important decisions to make.


In the morning Jesus chose twelve special followers from the large group of disciples.


MATTHEW 26:36-46


As in the previous passage, Jesus prays before making an important decision. This time, however, the Bible gives a far more detailed account of how Jesus prayed and what he said. It is obvious that Jesus knows what is going to happen to him and asks his Father if there is a way to be spared from the dreadful suffering which is about to begin.

We see clearly, however, that Jesus prays for what his Father wants and not what he wants. The Bible says in Luke 22:44 that 'Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood.'

After he finishes praying, it is clear that Jesus accepts what he needs to do, as the Bible's descriptions of his arrest, trial and crucifixion indicate.

 J E S U S

p R A Y S 

<p></p> <p>Draw Jesus praying. Include a speech bubble with a prayer Jesus might have prayed in each of these situations.</p>	<p>Jesus prays after a busy day</p>
<p>Jesus prays before going to a new place</p>	<p>Jesus prays after he healed and taught many people</p>
<p>Jesus prays before choosing his twelve followers</p>	<p>Jesus prays before his suffering and death</p>

PRAYER REPORT



1. Describe the prayer experience you most enjoyed. _____



2. Why did you enjoy it? _____



3. What did you think or pray about? _____



4. Which prayer experience did you find hard? _____



5. Why was it hard? _____



6. Draw or paint a picture of one of your favourite prayer experiences. Include your thoughts or prayers.