

God Answers Prayer

(James 5:13-16; Jeremiah 29:11-13; 1 Chronicles 29:10-13)

Introduction

We've been learning about God's attributes. An *attribute* is a character trait or quality about someone.

What are some of things that we've learned about God already?

- God is **great creator** —He created the whole universe! We know that there is a God because we see what He has done. We see the wonderful things which He has created.

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. (Psalm 19:1)

- God is **holy**—He is without sin; He is perfect in every way.
- God is **just**—He always does what is right and fair.

Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Exodus 15:11)

He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He! (Deuteronomy 32:4)

- God is **merciful**—He extends forgiveness to us even though we don't deserve it.

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23)

- God is **love**—He always does what is best for me even when I'm not at my best.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8)

- God is **all-knowing**— God knows everything—past, present, and future. He knows all about you—even what you are thinking. He knows your deepest needs and desires, and He knows how to meet them.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! (Romans 11:33)

- God is **all-powerful**—He is almighty; He has all power in heaven and earth and can do anything. There is no limit to His power.

With God all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26b)

- God is our great **provider**—He is a generous, gracious, abundant provider.

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)

- God is our great **protector**—He is always with us and is powerful enough to protect us from the strongest, meanest, and most frightening of situations when you call on Him in times of trouble.

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. (Psalms 46:1)

Today we're going to focus our attention on the fact that God **hears and answers our prayers**.

[Teacher, have the following items on display in your classroom as the children arrive: telephone, newspaper, letters & envelopes, an eMail, a road map, and a radio.] What do you think these things all have in common? These are all communication tools—things that help us get and to give information.

Today we're going to talk about communicating with God. We may not be able to call God on the telephone or to send Him a letter, but when we pray to Him it's just as real as a TEXT.

Opening Prayer

Our Father, help us to learn today that there is no prayer too small or too great that it isn't important to you. We're so thankful that You love us and hear us when we pray to You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. (Psalms 34:17)

Lesson

To have a real friendship with someone you have to communicate. Communication involves both people. That means you not only have to talk to your friend and tell him everything that's on your heart, a good friend also listens!

Can you imagine trying to have a best friend without talking to him? Jesus is the best Friend you will ever have. And, He wants to communicate with you.

Prayer is our way of telling God all that's on our hearts *and* as we quietly wait upon the Holy Spirit, He will speak to us. If we listen for God's still small voice, we will hear what His plans are for our lives.

We have been learning about God's attributes. We've learned that He is the almighty, all-knowing, all-powerful creator of heaven and earth. That He put the sun and the moon and the stars in place with just the flick of His finger. But, not only is God grand and powerful, He is tender and personally involved in every detail of your life.

God is so good, He will help us when we are happy, sad, sick, or even when we're in trouble. God will give us wisdom, strength and

understanding if we only ask Him. In fact, God is willing to give us many good things as long as the things we ask for are His will for our lives. He wants us to talk to Him to give us direction for our lives.

James 5:13-16

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. (14) Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. (15) Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. (16) Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

What is James telling us are some reasons to pray? (When you are in trouble, when you are happy, when you are sick, to show faith, for confession of sin, and to pray for others.)

God is a God who loves to hear and answer our prayers. What are some ways God answers our prayers? He can arrange the circumstances in our lives (like having the bread truck crash just outside of George Muller's orphanage). He can send certain people into our lives at just the right moment to help us. And, He also speaks to us through His word, the Bible. As you are reading a passage, it can jump off the page at you and you will know that God is speaking right into your heart.

Praying before meals and at bedtime is good, but He wants to hear from us more often than that. He wants to be involved in our lives, to comfort us when we are sad, strengthen us when we are scared, and laugh with us when we are happy. God will give true meaning and direction to our lives. We need to make Him part of our lives throughout the day by reading His Word, the Bible, and seeking Him through prayer.

Jeremiah 29:11-13

For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. (12) In those

days when you pray, I will listen. (13) If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.

God wants us to pray heart-felt prayers. He wants us to tell Him our desires, our fears, our hopes, and He wants us to sing songs of joy to Him when we are happy.

Psalm 34:15

The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help.

God's eyes and ears are open; He is watching and waiting for us to come to Him in prayer.

Psalm 34:17

The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. (NLT)

God hears us when we pray and He is able to save us from all our troubles. No prayer is too small or too large for God to care about, hear, and answer. He answers all our prayers and wants to hear about all our problems.

Psalm 65:1-2

What mighty praise, O God, belongs to you in Zion. We will fulfill our vows to you, (2) for you answer our prayers. All of us must come to you.

Knowing that God hears and answers our prayers should make us want to jump for joy and sing praises to Him.

Let's read King David's prayer of praise:

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

Then David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly: "O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, may you be praised forever and ever! (11) Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is

yours, O LORD, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things. (12) Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. (13) "O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name!

Let's give God our praise and thanks for being a God who hears and answers prayer. [Teacher, let each child pray a prayer of thanksgiving.]

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for being a God who delights in hearing and answering our prayers. Please help us never to forget to give you all our praise. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

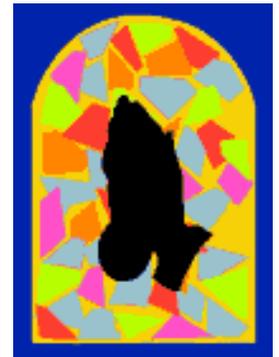
Praying Hands Picture

What you need: Construction paper (yellow, dark blue, and scraps), black gel pen paper, scissors, glue, gel pens.

What to do: Before class print out the pattern of the praying hands and the stained-glass window.

Using the patterns, cut the window shape from the yellow construction paper and the praying hands shape from black gel-pen paper. Note: Black construction paper may not work with gel pens. They need a very smooth paper to work well. You can purchase gel-pen paper wherever you buy gel pens.

Cut up scrap pieces of construction paper or computer paper (neon color work best) into small one-inch shapes.



In class have the children glue the window shape to a piece of dark blue construction paper and then glue the small pieces of paper to the window shape.

Have them write a prayer (The Lord's Prayer or the Prayer of Jabez) on the praying hands shape using gel pens and then glue it in the center of the stained glass window.

Game Center

Use the following review questions in a time of discussion or a game of your choice:

1. What are some of the examples of why to pray mentioned in James 5:13-16? (When you are in trouble, when you are happy, when you are sick, to show faith, for confession of sin, and to pray for others.)
2. What does James 5:16 say about the prayer of a righteous person? (It has great power and produces wonderful results.)
3. What kind of plans does God have for us? (Plans for good to give us a future and a hope.)
4. What are some ways you can pray for others? (Praying for a sick friend or family member, praying for money to buy food, etc.)

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