

Jesus Prays for Us (John 17) Bible Lesson for Kids

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This Sunday School lesson was designed for parents to use with their children at home on the week of May 24, 2020. It's based on John 17:1-10; 20-26 where Jesus talks about how he prays for his followers. Everything is included in the PDF download below (teaching notes, coloring pages, craft directions, game ideas, and worksheets).

Use what is most helpful for your kids and ignore the rest. Families can also watch our children's message, suggested music, and craft demonstration in the video playlist below.



“Jesus Prays for Us”

Kids Bible Lesson on from John 17:1-10; 20-26

Sunday School Suggestions on the Priestly Prayer of Jesus

Let's be honest: when a pastor prays in church, do you listen wholeheartedly, or do you tend to tune out a bit? Are you more likely to pay attention if someone prays for you individually? Or should prayer be a completely private practice to begin with? The Gospel in this lesson has a lot of elements to consider. Perhaps the key component is the beautiful comfort that Jesus has prayed on our behalf. We also see evidence that we as Christians can be in the world, but that does not mean absorbing worldly practices. We ought to be people who demonstrate His love, and share that love with one another.

Lesson focus: Jesus has offered a special prayer for us, and we can recall its blessings for joy and hope in our lives. The words of this prayer also remind us that we should live as people who love God, sharing His compassion with those around us.

Bible Passage: John 17:1-11; 20-26

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (or whoever you might have at home!)

Materials Needed: Globes, oil, water, prayer book, Bible (all optional, depending which activities you choose to use—except for the Bible, you need that for sure).

More Teaching Helps for this Bible Lesson

- [lessons and printables on the topic of prayer](#)
- [Jesus gift of himself on the cross](#)

Game and Lesson Introduction

In this lesson, Jesus prays for the disciples, and for all who believe. He prays for strength, knowing that it can be tough to live in love all the time. Start with some fun activities that relate to the topic of prayer, as well as the idea of being a Christian...

- On Earth and in Heaven... Jesus prayed for people who would be left on Earth, after His departure into Heaven. This includes us, of course. Think about some features of planet Earth. Look at some facts about geology or seasons, and look at pictures of Earth from outer space.
- As Christians, we hope to live in unity with one another, and we desire all people to come to know Jesus. Look at some facts about people in other countries. Search for information about missionaries and people who need to hear the Gospel. Pick a country that you can pray for, asking God to make ways for people to be reached. Perhaps you can learn a few phrases in another language, too!
- Sometimes there are things that we have to wait for in life, and we don't receive everything we might want right away. Discuss things that require patience and waiting, but which are worth the wait.
- In the lesson, Jesus mentions how Christians are in the world, but in a way we are separate from it, too. That is, we don't do everything that others might do. To illustrate how we can be this way, watch what happens when you pour oil on top of water. They are in the same glass, but they aren't completely blended together. We can be in the same area as others, but we don't have to adopt all the same behaviors.
- "Evidence": look at some things that prove who we are (birth certificates, driver's licenses, passports, etc.). How will people know we are Christians? We prove that we love Jesus when we show His love to others. Discuss how that happens.

Explain that Jesus prayed for His disciples. Before He was killed and rose again, He gave a special prayer. That prayer was not just for the people gathered around Him, but for all of us, too, and it is a beautiful reminder of the hope and comfort we have in Jesus. In this Gospel passage, we will look at that prayer, and consider what it means to be children of God. **Ask:** How do you pray? What kinds of things do you say, and when do you pray? Do you like it when other people pray for you?

Bible Lesson "Jesus Prays for Us" John 17:1-11; 20-26

As always, how you choose to experience the story will vary according to the ages and abilities of your children (and how many are participating). This passage is a little bit different than a typical story, but carries interesting principles. It connects to the example Jesus provided in the Lord's Prayer, as well as following passages from John. You can discuss what the passages mean and, for older students, perhaps reference other related verses.

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. -John 17:1-5

Ask: What does it mean to "glorify" something? What do you think Jesus means by being glorified?

Explain that Jesus has authority. Remind kids that Jesus IS God, which of course might make it confusing that He is praying this way. Jesus came down to Earth as a human, temporarily setting aside His glory as God. But because He did so, we are able to approach God's throne. Jesus allows us to come near to God. Because of what Jesus did, we can be in God's family!

"I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. ⁸ For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹ And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. -John 17:6-11

When Jesus offered this prayer, He knew that He would soon be in Heaven. But we are still on Earth. Jesus knew life would be hard. He was not only praying, but was offering a message of hope and encouragement to the disciples. That encouragement is for us today, too. We have to live our lives in the daily practicality of being in the world, surrounded by sin and challenges. That doesn't mean we have to succumb to that sin. We can be in the world, but still demonstrate that we are unique and stand apart as people exhibiting Christ's love!

"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them." -John 17:20-26

The world won't always understand what it means to be a follower of Christ. And we can't be "perfect Christians" in any sense. But Jesus did the work for us. He allows us to rest in His glory, and brings us into fellowship with the Father.

***Ask:** Since we know Jesus loves us and prays for us, what should be our response? How can we demonstrate our love for God and for one another?

Emphasize to kids again what a beautiful promise this is. God loves us enough to give us His son, Jesus. He has also given us the Holy Spirit to remind us of His love. We can pray through the help of the Holy Spirit, and it can bring us back to a recognition of God's presence. This Spirit can comfort our souls in times of trouble. Something comforting brings peace, hope, and joy. We are comforted by our great God's love. Let us pass that on to one another! In Jesus' name, Amen!