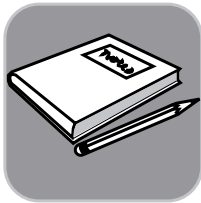


WEEK 1

The Lord's Prayer

Preparation:

Read Matthew 6:5-15, using the Bible Study notes to help you.



Lesson Aim:

To teach the important aspects of prayer.

6:5-7 They are told how not to pray. Prayer should not have the aim of impressing others, as with the hypocrites, nor is it to impress God through the use of endless words. Rather, prayer should express the relationship we have with a Heavenly Father who is aware of our needs (v.8) and will answer our prayers (v.6).

6:9 **Our Father ...** It is right to address God in this way because we are to look up to him in love and trust. He is the one who is always near us in perfect love. Also, 'our' indicates the unity of believers.

In heaven ... acknowledges God as the Almighty Ruler over heaven and earth.

May your name be honoured ... is a prayer that God will work in all people so that everyone will worship and serve him.

6:10 **May your kingdom come ...** The kingdom has two aspects - present and future. Firstly, that God may rule in my heart here and now and in the hearts of individuals all over the world. Secondly, that Jesus will come again, establishing God's kingdom for ever.

May your will be done ... In heaven God's will is gladly obeyed by everyone all the time. Believers should pray that the same will apply on earth now.

6:11 **Bread ...** symbolises everything we need for daily life. Linking this to the previous verses we see that we need daily food to enable us to do God's will. We look to 'our Father' to provide out of his great love for us all we need, so that we can live according to his will.

6:12 **Forgive us our sins ...** This is both a prayer and a confession. By praying for forgiveness we admit we have sinned. As we receive forgiveness from God we must also forgive others.

6:13 **And lead us not into temptation ...** If you have just prayed for forgiveness you long not to sin again. We confess here that we easily sin and plead with God not to allow us to be brought into situations which involve great temptation.

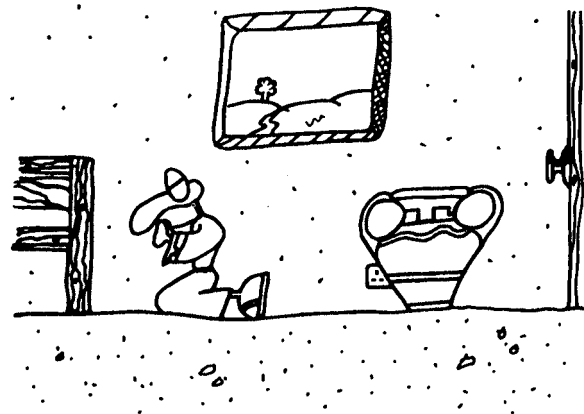
6:14-15 Failure to forgive is itself a sin. Thus true prayer to be forgiven must inevitably mean that we forgive others. If we do not, then our prayer cannot have been sincere.

Conclusion

We need to help the children understand that we can approach the God who is the maker of heaven and earth as our Father, but we must remember that he is the ruler of all. Therefore, our requests for ourselves should have the aim of loving and serving him better. It could be discussed with the children how they pray at home - do they just ask for things?

For teaching purposes this prayer can be split into 6 petitions - the first 3 dealing with God, the last 3 with me.

1. God's name
2. God's kingdom
3. God's will
4. My need of bread
5. My need of forgiveness
6. My need of victory



As this is the first lesson of the series, you need to start with an introduction. Tell the children that the group will write a letter to God. Ask the group to contribute things to go in the letter. When the letter is finished sign it and put it in an envelope. Ask the children where to address the letter. Can we send a letter through the post to God? How can we send our message to him? Can we telephone God? Explain that prayer is talking to God. Jesus taught his friends how to talk to God. Tell the children that Jesus started by telling his friends 2 things not to do when praying. Ask them to listen carefully so that they can tell you what the 2 things were.

Lesson Plan



At the end of the story go over the 2 things Jesus said not to do. Remind the children that God always hears them, even though they cannot see him. End with a short time of prayer, encouraging the children to pray one sentence prayers.

Work out from the passage the aspects you want to stress - e.g. privately (v 5-6), simply (v 7-8), putting God first, etc.

Visual aids



For the 3-7s you will need pictures to illustrate these points.

- privately - a child praying on their own in a room.
- simply - 2 children praying. One has a speech bubble with a single line of speech, the other an enormous speech bubble with the same line of speech repeated many times.
- God first - the word 'God'.
- daily bread - a loaf of bread (or other staple food).
- forgiveness - a child being hugged by a parent.
- freedom from temptation - a child with back turned to a bar of chocolate or other desirable thing.

For the older ones you can use words.

Have a big heading on the board 'How to Pray' and pin up the pictures/words as you come to them. Talk about what each aspect means in the life of the child.

Take time to teach the prayer.

3-5s

Photocopy page 8 for each child. Fold the page in half to make a card with the pictures

Activities



on the outside. Prior to the lesson write inside each card **Just me**. Talk about the front of the card with the children, putting a tick or cross in each box. (Each box should end up with a cross!) At the end, stress that the children only need themselves to pray to God. They can draw a picture of themselves above the words 'Just me'. The cards can be coloured if time permits.

5-7s

The children will make a prayer flower. Follow the instructions on page 9.

7-9s

Photocopy page 12 onto white paper and page 13 onto coloured paper for each child.

- Cut out the hand from the sheet of white paper, cutting around the outer edge of the black line.
- Cut along the solid lines around the 4 windows and fold back along the dotted lines.
- Put glue around the outer strip of the hand on the sheet of coloured paper where marked. Place the cut-out hand on top, being careful to line up the flaps with the words underneath. Press firmly around the edges of the hand to secure it.
- Punch 2 holes at the top of the sheet of coloured paper and thread a length of wool through them to make a wall hanger.



What
do
I
need
to
talk
to
God?

Each child requires pages 10 and 11 photocopied on card and this page photocopied on yellow paper, a dowel or garden stick approximately 30 cm long, glue and sellotape.

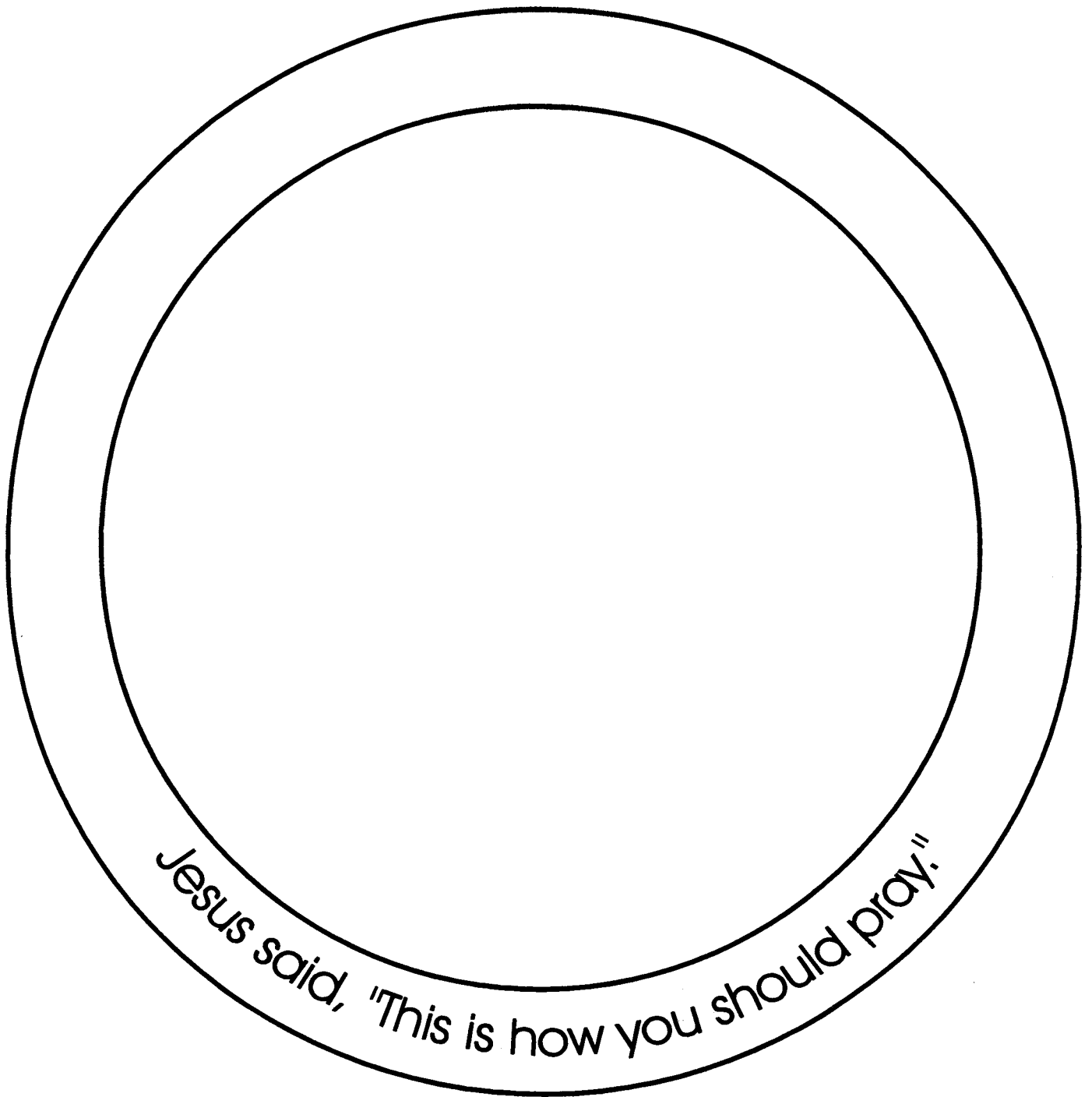
Instructions

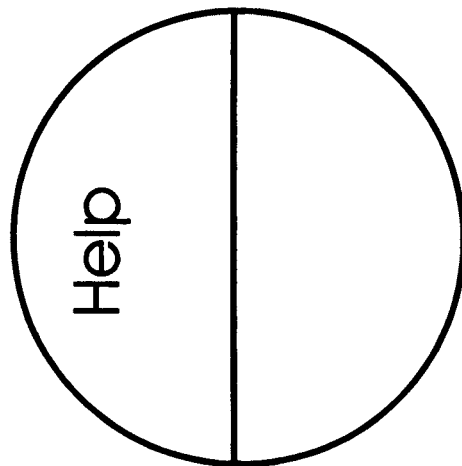
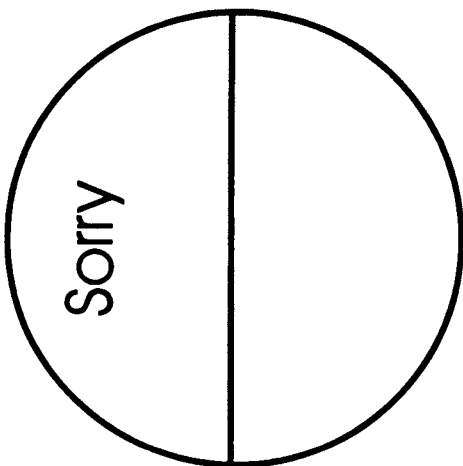
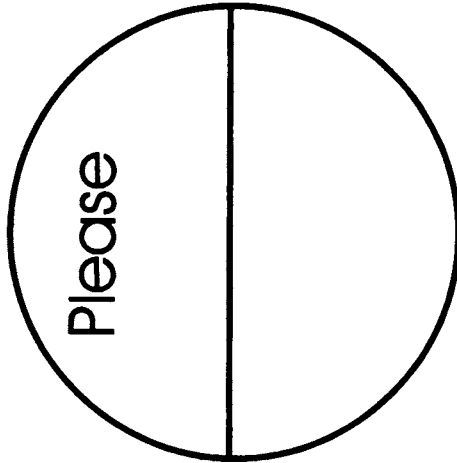
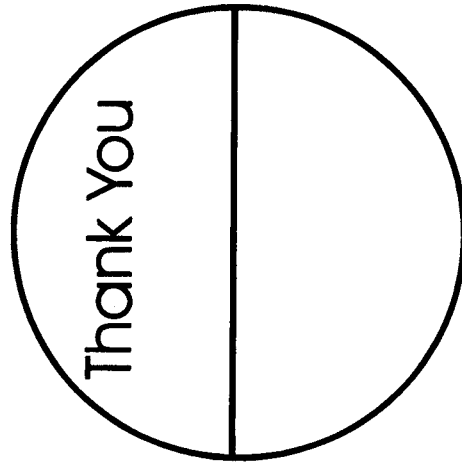
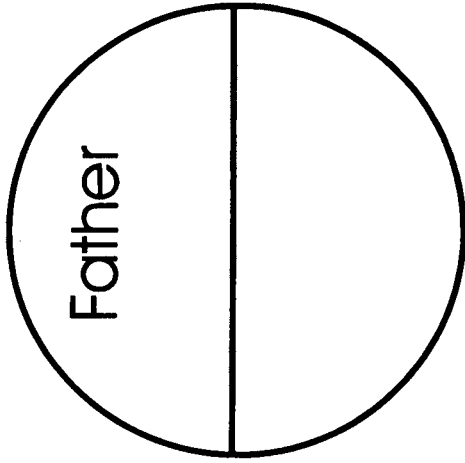
- Cut out both large circles and glue the yellow circle containing the words of the Lord's Prayer onto the centre of the card circle.
- Cut out the 5 small circles and colour, leaving the words visible.
- Cut the small circles in half to make petals and glue them around the edge of the large card circle on the back.
Alternate blank and word petals. Make sure the petals do not overlap too much.
- Attach the dowel or garden stick to the back of the large card circle with sellotape to make a stem.

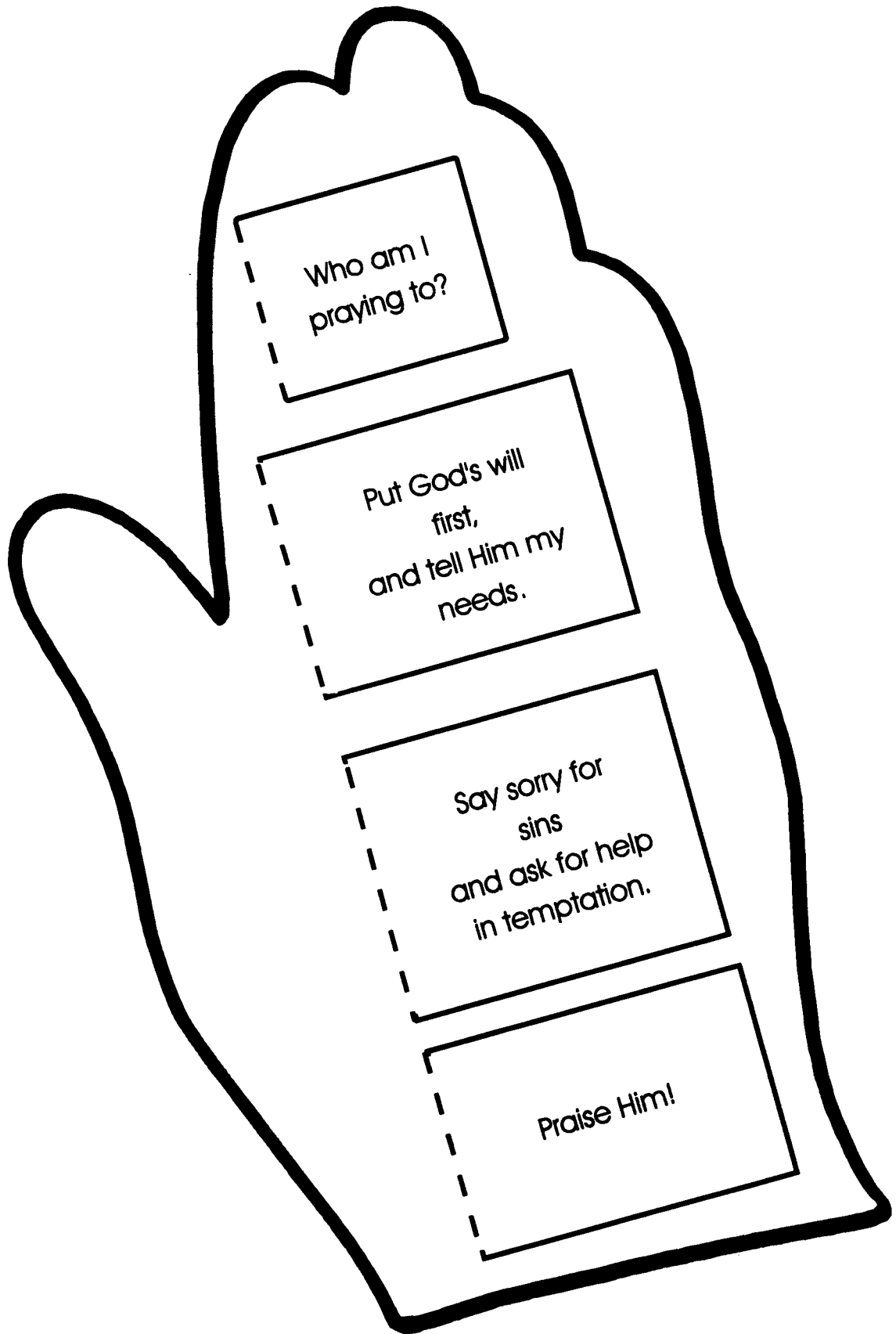


The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our sins,
As we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us
from evil.
For yours is the kingdom and the power and
the glory
For ever and ever.
Amen*







Let us pray

