

Prayer Activities

Here are just three ideas for praying with groups of children . . .

Some prayer activities for children

1. Bring it to Jesus

Ask the children about things they can think of that were brought to Jesus and write or put pictures of these things in the middle of a table, e.g. paralysed man, loaves and fishes, perfumed oil, gold/frankincense/myrrh, sick people, little children, family needs, praise and worship. Next ask the children what they want to bring to Jesus, and let them write or draw those things at their part of the table. Explain that Jesus sees what we have written and drawn, and hears our conversation, so what has been done is already prayer. If children want to, they could then put some prayers into spoken words.

This activity can be targeted at a particular focus, so the children could be asked the question, "What things about our church, town or country do you want to bring to Jesus?"

2. Prayer Walk

This is probably best done in groups of about four, so that there can be conversation along the way. Go for a walk - the area near where you are meeting - so that the children can discover things in the community to pray about. They may notice particular objects, places, people, conditions, feelings.

Before you go, have a short prayer time asking the Holy Spirit to show you things that will help you to pray for the community.

On returning from the walk, give the children paper and pens to write or draw what caught their attention. Encourage the children to see what there is that they could pray about, and look for links between things that different groups may have noticed, and things or people that the Holy Spirit may be highlighting.

3. Prayer at Work

This activity can help children to understand that much of the church's ministry takes place by people doing the jobs that God has called them to in their daily work.

Make a time when the children can be together with the adults of the church to ask them where they work and what job they do. Use a map or pictures to illustrate all the different places and jobs. Let the children pray for these people and their work in the community. Ask some of the adults to come to your group and answer the children's questions about their work and about what they would like prayer for. The children can pray with them while they are there.

Text adapted from Graeme Young's chapter in 'Praying Together', the PfS Prayer Manual.

Further Resources

PfS website for the full text of the chapter on children, and Jean Darnall's prophecy for Scotland in 1987.

Children in Revival, Harry Sprange.

Spying out the Land, Graeme Young.

Young Resources: www.youngresources.co.uk

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praying for the nation



Praying with Children

'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.'

(Luke 10:21, NIV)

- Biblical and historical expectations
- Learning about prayer
- Prayer activities for children



Expectations

Biblical Expectation

Involving children in prayer is sometimes given little consideration in churches, and the teaching children receive on a Sunday can be entirely different to what the rest of the congregation is studying. If we really believe that children are part of the church, then surely we must involve them in the prayer life of the church and believe that what God is saying is for them also.

The Biblical foundation for children being included in the church's prayer activity is found in the level of involvement that children exercised in partnership with adults in the history of God's people. In the Old Testament we see that children were involved in:

- entering into the covenant with God. Deut 29:10-13
- being taught to live according to God's ways. Deut 31:9-13
- celebrating God's blessings. Deut 16:10-14
- hearing God's message. Joshua 8:35
- weeping because of the sins of God's people. Ezra 10:1
- understanding God's Word. Nehemiah 8:1-8
- crying out to the Lord for help. 2 Chron 20:5-13
- praying for revival. Joel 2:12-32

Historical and Prophetic Expectation

Harry Sprange's book, *Children in Revival*, describes the place that children have had in the revivals in Scotland over the past 300 years, including the part played by the prayer meetings of children.

Prophetic words given over Scotland have also spoken of how the Lord will use children and will raise them up to be future leaders of his church. This prophetic message has inspired much work with children and young people in recent years.

Learning about Prayer

Hearing from God

These New Testament teaching points to help children to discover more about the place of prayer, are taken from worksheets of "Earlstart" (Young Resources) - a 20 subject discipleship course for youngsters.

We can hear from God:

- *to know Jesus better*
Matt 3:16,17 A voice said from heaven, "This is my Son".
- *to know what is true*
Matt 16:17 This truth was given you directly by my Father in heaven.
- *to know what to do*
Matt 2:13 God told Joseph to escape to Egypt.
- *to know useful things about people and situations*
John 1:48 When Nathanael met Jesus, Jesus already knew about him.
- *to know some things that are going to happen*
Luke 1:76 While John was still a baby God said what he would do later.
- *We can hear from God through:*
Holy Spirit leading Bible Luke 2:27, Matt 4:1
Matt 2:4-6, Matt 4:4
Pictures & Visions John 1:48-51, Matt 17:1-9
Words John 1:32-34, Mark 9:7
Dreams Matt 2:12, Matt 2:19-21
Prophecies Luke 1:39-45, Luke 2:25-35
Angels Luke 1:8-13, Matt 28:1-7

Praying

- puts us in touch with our loving Father John 11:41, Luke 10:21
- puts us in line with what God wants Matt 26:39
- shifts the power of the Devil Mark 9:29
- gets things changed to go God's way Matt 21:21,22
- brings us what we need Matt 7:7-11
- brings to God things that are wrong in us Luke 18:13,14
- brings blessing to others Mark 11:25, Matt 19:13 with Mark 10:16
- brings strength and protection Luke 21:36, John 17:11

condensed
quotes from
Good News Bible

