
“The Prayer Hand for Kids”

Based on the Lord’s Prayer. Instructions by Bethany Darwin



If you’re looking for a fun activity to teach your young elementary kids (ages 4-8) about prayer, then look no further than your hand. The hand is a perfect tool to remember the parts of prayer that we see Jesus model in the Lord’s Prayer in **Matthew 6:5-14**.

All you need for this activity is blank paper, pencils or markers, a Bible and little hands. Start out by reading the text as a group and then talk through the following points:

1. Jesus is teaching His disciples how to pray
2. Jesus is teaching the disciples that prayer is about conversing with God, or building a relationship with Him.

3. In this model prayer (or the Lord's prayer as it is sometimes called), Jesus calls His followers to praise God, to confess sin, to ask for forgiveness and to pray for the needs of themselves and others.

Hand out the blank paper and help them trace their (non-dominant) hand on the paper with their fingers spread apart. Explain to the kids that they're going to use their hand as a reminder of how to pray.

Once they've all traced their hands, have them write the following words on each of the fingers and then go through the discussion about what that kind of prayer is. Have kids help you come up with examples of what you could pray about for each of these types of prayer. Kids may want to draw their examples on (or around) their hands as reminders of what each part of the prayer is.

PRAISE (thumb)— Praise is telling God how great He is and talking about all the great things that God has done. Ask kids, 'What are some things that you could say to God to tell Him how great He is?' If you think time will allow, make an alphabetical list with one truth about God for each letter of the alphabet.

THANKS (1st finger)— Thanksgiving is about thanking God for the things He has done and the things He has given us. Ask, 'What are you thankful for?' Help kids think of things in their lives, their families, the Bible, etc. that they can thank God for.

SORRY (middle finger)— Confession is about telling God the things you've done that you know He wouldn't want you to do. Tell Him you're sorry and ask Him to forgive you. When we repent of our sins and turn to Jesus to follow Him, that is confession. Take this time to define the words sin and repent...

- ~ SIN ~ anything we do that goes against God's law or anything we do that puts our desires above God's desires
- ~ REPENT ~ turning away from your sin and turning to God. (you can illustrate this by writing God on one piece of paper and sin/ self on a 2nd piece of paper and putting them on opposite walls. Have all the kids walk toward the sin sign while you talk about sin, then say repent and have them

turn their back on 'sin' and walk toward God. Ask if they can be walking toward both at the same time....can you be sinning and obeying God at the same time?

ASK (ring finger)– -Ask is asking God for the things that you need. This is the time to ask for things you need, not just things you want. Ask kids, 'What's the difference between a need and want? What are some of the things we need?' Remind kids that one thing we all need is a Savior and that Jesus is the only way to be saved and the only way to have a relationship with God. Take a minute to remind kids of Acts 4:12 which reminds us that salvation is only by believing that Jesus died on the cross and paid the price for our sin.

OTHERS (PINKY)– -Intercession is a word we use when we pray for others and it means asking God to help other people. You can pray for your family, your friends, people in your church and other people who need to hear about Jesus. Ask kids, 'Who are some of the people you could pray for?' Make a list of people to pray for and spend a few minutes praying for them.

For non-readers – the key words should be written on a piece of paper so that they can copy them onto their hands. Or you can write the words for them.

[HEART TO HEART] As the kids are drawing their prayer hands, discuss how each aspect of prayers points to Jesus' work on the cross. Feel free to use your own thoughts here, but one idea would be –

- praise– Praise God for being the creator & sustainer of the world and for always remaining faithful to His people,
- thanksgiving– Thank God for sending Jesus to die in our place,
- confession– admit that we are sinners and confess the sin in our life-
repenting and turning to Jesus,
- ask– ask God to teach you more about Him and His Word and what it means to be a follower of Jesus,
- others– pray for those who haven't heard the good news that they would have a chance to hear about Jesus.

SAY: “When you pray, you are talking to God, and spending time getting to know Him. God wants us to pray and spend time getting to know Him, but sometimes it’s hard to know what to pray about or how to pray, so it’s great that we have these verses where Jesus teaches His followers how He wants them to pray. When we pray, we need to remember that ***prayer is about getting to know God.***”

“The Five Finger Prayer”

Another popular method of teaching kids to pray.

Here is a helpful approach for teaching kids to pray. It’s a format that allows children to recall and pray in their own words for five different groups of people. All this lines up with the five fingers of their hand.

There are a few different versions of the five-finger prayer on the Internet ([here](#) and [here](#)). I was unable to track down the original, so I’ve collected below what seems like the best of each version.

Teaching Kids the Five Finger Prayer

- **Thumb (people who are close to you)** These are your close friends and family, often the first you think about when you pray. Give thanks to God and ask his protection on your parents, siblings, friends, and classmates.
- **Pointer (people who point the way)** These are leaders in your life, such as teachers and pastors. Offer God your thanksgiving for them and ask him to help them in their important work.
- **Tall Finger (people in authority)** The big people in the world need prayer too. Ask God to give wisdom to our government, military, and police.
- **Ring Finger (people who are weak)** This is your weakest finger. We should remember others who are sick, live in poverty, or are treated badly. Pray that Jesus would give them new strength.
- **Little Finger (your own needs)** God wants to hear your needs too, especially when you put others first. Pray for your own growth in mind, body, and spirit.

The following printable in PDF format sent to us from Paula Baytieh.

The 5 Finger Prayer

Thumb: Those closest to you, your family.

Pointer: Those that point you in the right direction (teachers, doctors, priests) ask for wisdom & support.

Index: (tallest) Those that lead us, (Government) ask for guidance & wisdom.

Ring: (weakest) Those that are weak, in trouble, or in pain. We cannot pray too much for them.

Pinkie: (smallest) Our prayers for ourselves & our own needs.



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