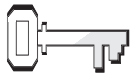


United in Service



References

Acts 1; 2:1–4; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 829–835; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 35–40



Memory Verse

“They all joined together constantly in prayer” (Acts 1:14, NIV).

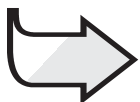


Objectives

The children will: **Know** that prayer prepares us for Christian service.

Feel a desire to pray with others.

Respond by praying that the Holy Spirit will show them how to serve.



The Message

Prayer prepares us for service.

Monthly Theme

God gives us skills for service.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Following Jesus’ ascension the disciples walk back to Jerusalem. They go to the upper room where they have been staying. People are amazed when they see them. Instead of being crushed, they are full of joy. Other believers, the women who followed Jesus, Mary (Jesus’ mother), and His brothers join them in prayer and praise. Praying together brings a spirit of unity among them and prepares them to receive the Holy Spirit.

This is a lesson about service.

The disciples, together with other believers, gathered in a room to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. They spent their time praying together. The resulting unity prepared them for the arrival of the Holy Spirit and for service. Praying together prepares us for service and brings unity among believers today.

Teacher Enrichment

“The assurance is broad and unlimited, and He is faithful who has promised. When we do not receive the very things we asked for, at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears and that He will answer our prayers. We are so erring and short-sighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us, and our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see all things as they really are. When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most. But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire, is presumption. God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon His sure promise, ‘Ask, and it shall be given you’ ” (*Steps to Christ* p. 96).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. Combined Strength</i> <i>B. Priceless Treasure</i>	three or four types of string or rope, stones or heavy books box
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> box covered with words/pictures of people serving others praying hands pattern (see p. 141), basket, pencils
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	adult Bible-times costume, adult male none Bibles, paper, pencils
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Lap Sit</i>	<i>Sing for Joy</i> songbook
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>A. Prayer Blossoms</i> <i>B. Building Together</i>	fresh or artificial flower per child, plain card 4x6 inch (10x15 cm), pencil/markers picture of a church

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- three or four different types of string or rope
- stones or heavy books

A. Combined Strength

Form three or four groups. Give each a length of string/rope and ask them to try to separate it into as many strands as possible. When they have divided the string/rope into different strands, give them a heavy book or stone and ask: **Can you lift the book/stone with the strands of the rope?** Allow time for them to try.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many strands were in your rope?** (Answers will vary.) **How easy was it to lift the book/stone using the separate strands? Why? Why is it easier to use the rope when the strands are woven together to make a single rope?** (A single rope is stronger.)

When Jesus went to heaven, the disciples were like individual strands of a rope. As they waited for Jesus to send the Holy Spirit, they prayed together. Prayer helped to bring them together and make them stronger. Prayer helps us come together and get ready to do what Jesus asks us to do. That makes me think of today’s message:



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- box

B. Priceless Treasure

Say: **In this box I have a priceless treasure.** Place the box in the middle of the room. Choose one person to stand by the box. **You are the defender of the treasure. Everyone else is trying to steal it from you.** Have the other children try to take the box from the “defender.” When the treasure has been “stolen,” give it back to the defender and increase the number of guards. Keep increasing the “guard” until it is impossible to steal the treasure.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask the first “defender”: **How did you feel when you were by yourself defending the treasure?** (alone, hopeless, defeated) **How did you feel when you were part of a large group defending the treasure?** (confident, hopeful of success.)

When Jesus died on the cross, His disciples felt lonely and defeated. After Jesus went to heaven, they spent time together praying. During this time they

became close friends and grew stronger in their desire to serve Jesus. They were ready for the Holy Spirit to come.

Praying together brings us together too and brings the Holy Spirit into our lives. That makes me think of today's message:



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Trust in the Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 111)
- "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 132)
- "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129)
- "I Will Make You Fishers of Men" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 135)
- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 133)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize how prayer and Bible study help to prepare us for service.



Offering

Say: **There are many different ways of serving God. Some people serve God as missionaries and leave their home to tell others the good news about Jesus. When we give our offerings, we serve God and support others who are serving Him.**

You Need:

- box covered with words/pictures of people serving others



Prayer

Give each child a cutout of a pair of praying hands (see p. 141) and a pencil. Say: **Prayer is one way of preparing for service. Draw or write a prayer request and something you would like to thank God for on the hands, then place them in the basket.** Pray for all the requests and ask God to accept the praise and thanks expressed on the hands.

You Need:

- praying hands pattern (see p. 141)
- basket
- pencils

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- adult Bible-times costume
- adult male

Experiencing the Story

Character: Peter

Setting the scene:

Invite the children to sit in the room scene. Have a man dressed as Peter tell the story. Have the children do the following:

When they hear:	They do:
Jesus	Point upward.
Holy Spirit	Blow outward.

Read or tell the story.

I am Peter, one of **Jesus'** twelve disciples. He chose me along with eleven others. We were with **Jesus** from the beginning when John baptized Him in the Jordan River until He was crucified on the cross.

Every day we listened to His wonderful stories. We were with Him in the temple and heard Him explain the Scriptures better than the priests. Best of all we saw **Jesus** healing people. There were whole towns and villages where there was not one sick person after **Jesus** had been there. Just imagine it! Not one sick person in the whole town!

Jesus tried to tell us what was going to happen to Him, how He was going to die and rise again. We did not listen or want to understand. We thought **Jesus** was going to be a king here and now, and we were too busy arguing among ourselves as to who was the most important. James and John even got their mother to ask if they could sit on either side of **Jesus** when He became king. That really made the rest of us angry. We were so blind!

After the Resurrection, **Jesus** spent 40 days with us disciples and some of His other followers. He patiently explained the prophecies and talked to us about the kingdom of God. We began to understand that **Jesus** was not going to fight the Romans, that He would not set up a kingdom on this world. They were wonderful days.

We soon understood that Jesus had to go back to heaven. However, He promised that we would not be alone. He would send the **Holy Spirit** to be with us. Before **Jesus** went to heaven, He gave us very clear instructions. We were to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the **Holy Spirit**.

This time we listened and obeyed Him. We met every day with other believers. In that room we talked about the things we had learned, and spent time in prayer. As we prayed we remembered some of the things that we had done and said in the past. Things that were not very nice. We thought about how we had been unkind to each other, and we made things right with people we had hurt. Most importantly, we asked God to forgive us for all the wrong things we had done.

During those days while we were waiting for the **Holy Spirit**, something wonderful happened. All the old arguments did not seem important anymore. We became united in wanting to serve God, to spread the good news that **Jesus** came to this world and died to save us, was resurrected, and went back to heaven. Best of all, He is preparing a home for us and will come back to take us to live with Him.

Prayer helped to bring us together, to have one goal—to serve God. Prayer helped us get ready for the **Holy Spirit**. Prayer will help you draw closer to your

family and friends too. And it will help you prepare to serve **Jesus**.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did the disciples argue among themselves?** (They thought Jesus was going to be an earthly king. They wanted the best position for themselves.)

What did Jesus tell them to do when He went to heaven? (wait for the Holy Spirit)

What changed them into a group with a single purpose? (Prayer. Prayer still helps us to prepare for service.) **Let's say today's message together:**



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

Memory Verse

Use the actions outlined below to teach today's memory verse. Repeat as necessary until the children know the verse.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| They all | Point to the rest of the group. |
| joined together | Hold hands with a neighbor. |
| constantly | Rolling motion with hands. |
| in prayer. | Fold hands in prayer. |
| Acts 1:14, (NIV) | Palms together, then open. |

Bible Study

Say: **As the disciples waited for the Holy Spirit, they prayed together. And as they prayed, they came together with a single goal—to serve God and tell others about Jesus. Let's look at the special prayer that Jesus taught His disciples to pray.**

Read Matthew 6:9-13 together.

Form pairs and ask each pair to rewrite the prayer in their own words. Pair readers/writers with nonreaders/non-writers. Have adults available to help as needed.

Debriefing

Ask the children to share what they have written with the class.

Allow response time as you ask:

What is it about this prayer that can draw us together and get us ready to serve God? (We are asking God to set up His kingdom. We are praying for God's will, not ours.)

What does it mean to follow God's will? (It means that we will forgive others, we will not hurt others, and we will do what is right.)

What are the results when we follow God's will? (We are ready to serve Him.) **Let's say today's message together:**



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- *Sing for Joy* songbook

Lap Sit

Have the children stand close together in a tight circle, touching the left shoulder of the person in front of them.

Say: **When I count to three, everyone is to bend their knees and sit as if you were going to sit on a chair.** The circle will hold as each person sits on the lap of the person behind them.

When I count to three, everyone should stand up. Let's try it again. This time, have someone remain standing.

Debriefing

Ask: **How is this "lap sit" like prayer?**

(When we all pray and follow God's will, we can achieve much together.)

What happens when we are not unified, when we all try to do our own thing? (confusion, arguments arise, no common goal, more difficult to complete the work, etc.)

Prayer helps us get ready to serve God and each other. Let's sing together "Whisper a Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 96).

Let's say our message together:



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

Sharing the Lesson

A. Prayer Blossoms

In advance, write the following quotation where all may see:

“Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence” (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 94, 95).

Also write: “Pray continually” (1 Thesalonians 5:17) [NIV].

Have the children copy the quotation from *Steps to Christ* on one side of the card and the Bible verse on the other side. Adults assist as needed.

Say: **We are going to attach the card to a flower and share it with someone while explaining the importance of prayer and encouraging them to pray. Divide into pairs and practice what you will say when you give your flower away.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Who will share with us? What will you say when you give your flower away?**

Allow time.

What do we need to do before we give it away? (Pray.)

We serve God when we pray alone or with others. Let’s pray that God will bless us as we share our flowers. Then let’s say today’s message together:



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

You Need:

- fresh or artificial flower for each child
- plain card 4x6 inch (10x15 cm)
- pencil/markers

B. Building Together

In advance, cut up the picture of the church so that there is one piece per child. (Large class, use several pictures.)

Give each child a piece and ask:

What are your talents? What can you do to serve God in the church? Has everyone thought of something?

If anyone is uncertain, help them think of something they can do.

Invite the children to come and put their piece of the puzzle in place and say what they can do.

Debriefing

Ask: **What would happen if someone chose not to put their piece of the puzzle in place?** (The picture would be incomplete.)

What happens when we don’t use our talents? (The church suffers. It is incomplete.)

When church members pray together, God will guide us all in the right direction. Let’s say today’s message:



PRAYER PREPARES US FOR SERVICE.

Closing

Say: **When the disciples and other believers prayed together, the church was united. Let’s sing “We Are the Church”** (*Sing for Joy*, No. 141).

Stand in a circle and ask God to bless each one and give them a clear vision of what He wants them to do to serve Him.

You Need:

- picture of church

United in Service

References

Acts 1; 2:1–4; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 829–835; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 35–40

Memory Verse

“They all joined together constantly in prayer” (Acts 1:14, NIV).

The Message

Prayer prepares us for service.

Have you ever had an argument with your best friend? What did it feel like? How did it change how you felt about your friend? Was it easy to do things together after that? Jesus’ disciples argued often. Read on to find out what changed them.

Jesus chose 12 men to be His disciples or special friends. They were with Him in the beginning when John baptized Him in the Jordan River. And they stayed with Him until He was crucified on the cross. Every day they listened to His wonderful stories. They went with Him to the temple. They heard Him explain the Scriptures. Best of all, they saw Jesus heal people. They knew about whole towns where no sick person lived because Jesus had been there. Just imagine it. Not one sick person in the whole town!

Jesus tried to warn them of what was going to happen to Him. He told them He would die and rise again. But they did not listen or want to understand. They had their own ideas. They thought Jesus would become a king on earth. They expected Him to set up a kingdom and free them from the Romans. And they often argued among themselves as to who would be the most important disciple then. James and John even got their mother involved! She asked Jesus if they could sit on either side of Him when He became king. And that made the rest of the disciples angry!

After the resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with the disciples and some of His other followers. He explained the prophecies about His birth and death. He talked to them about the kingdom of God. They finally began to see that Jesus was not going to fight the Romans. They finally understood that Jesus would go back to heaven.

However, He promised that they would not be alone. He would send the Holy Spirit to be with His followers. Before Jesus went to heaven, He gave them very clear instructions. They were to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit.

This time they listened—and they obeyed. Every day they met in a room with other believers. They talked about the things they had learned, and spent time in prayer. As they prayed together they thought about the past. They knew they had done and said some things that were not good. They realized that they had been unkind to one another. And they made things right among themselves. Most importantly, they asked God to forgive them for all the wrong they had done.

While they were waiting, something wonderful happened. They learned to know one another better. All the old arguments did not seem important anymore. They became united in wanting to serve God. They wanted to spread the good news about Jesus. They would tell others how He came to this world and died for all people. They wanted everyone to know that Jesus went back to heaven. They were ready to tell others that Jesus is coming back to take us to live with Him.

Prayer helped to unite them. Prayer led them to have one goal—to serve God. Prayer can do the same for us today.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a prayer walk with your family. Walk around your neighborhood and pray for the people who live there as you walk along.
- Sing “The Lord’s Prayer” at family worship (*Sing for Joy*, No. 99). Then thank God for the opportunity to serve Him.

Sunday

- With your family, read and discuss Acts 1:1-11. What did Jesus want His disciples to do? Read verse 11 again. What does it mean to you?
- Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem. Sit quietly for five minutes before going to play or eat lunch. What does it feel like to wait?
- Draw a circle. Write the words of the memory verse around the edge of the circle. Cut the words apart. Mix them up; then put them in order again.
- Pray that God will help you always to listen to His plans for you.

Monday

- For family worship today read and discuss Acts 1:12-26. Who were among the people who stayed and prayed together? What happened to them?
- Peel an orange and break it into segments. Hold the segments together as if they were still a whole orange. Take one segment away. Is the orange still complete? Is your church “whole” if all the people don’t use their talents? Why?
- Ask your parents how they serve your church. Talk about ways you can serve together or by yourself. Pray that you will find ways to use your talents to serve wisely.

Tuesday

- With your family, read and discuss the prayer

Jesus taught His disciples. (See Matthew 6:9-13.) What did you learn about forgiving others? Do you need to forgive someone today?

- Go outside and look at a tree. List all the different parts of the tree you can see. Could the tree live without all those parts? How is that like your church? (The church needs all the people. Working together, we are strong.)
- Pray that the people in your church will work together to serve God.

Wednesday

- Read and discuss Luke 11:5-13 during family worship. Make a list of good things God has given you and your family. How can you use them in His service?
- Ask two people to tell you how prayer has made a difference in their lives.
- Review your memory verse. Thank God that He is always willing to listen to us and answer our prayers.

Thursday

- Prayer leads to unity—working together. Take each of the letters in the word UNITY and think of words that explain what it means. For example “You and me together.” Try this with your family during worship today.
- Design a symbol or logo for prayer, service, and unity. Show it to your family.
- Do a secret service for someone today. Pray for that person.

Friday

- During worship today, review Acts 1 with your family. What three important things have you learned from this chapter? Say your memory verse together. Is this one of those important things?
- Sing “Whisper a Prayer” (*Sing for Joy*, No. 96). Then ask God to be with your family on His special Sabbath day.