

Lesson Plan for Lesson 33

Introduction to Prayer

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 33, “Introduction to Prayer,” in the handbook.
- Gather Bibles, one for each participant; newsprint; markers; tape; and a variety of craft items.
- Make copies of the handout “Prayer Questions” (Document #: TX003425), enough so that each group of three or four will have a question once the handout is cut apart along the dotted lines.

Pray It! (10 minutes)

Tell the participants that class will begin with a reflection on Scripture. **Give** each participant a Bible, and ask the young people to look up Matthew 6:5–15. **Use** the directions in the Pray It! “A Simple Way to Pray,” on page 371 in the handbook, to lead the young people in a simple process for praying with the Scripture passage.

Study It! (35 to 45 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. Prayer Defined

1. **Direct** the participants to form groups of three or four. **Distribute** to each group one of the questions from the handout “Prayer Questions” (Document #: TX003425). **Instruct** one member of each group to read the question aloud. **Ask** the group members to individually write their responses. After a few minutes, **invite** the young people to share their responses in their groups and then to discuss the following questions:
 - What are the similarities in their responses?
 - What are the differences in their responses?**Invite** a participant from each group to share a brief summary of the group’s discussion.
2. **Direct** the young people to read the chapter introduction and the sections “Prayer Defined,” “Prayer as Covenant, Communion, and Gift,” and “Everyone Is Called to Prayer,” on pages 362–366 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 3 on the handout “Lesson 33 Summary” (Document #: TX003424).
3. **(Optional) Invite** questions and observations on the content. You might also invite discussion on the Reflect question on page 364 in the handbook.



B. Prayer in the Bible

1. **Direct** the participants to form groups of three or four, and give each group a Bible. **Assign** each group one of the following Scripture passages: Matthew 21:18–22, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, James 5:15–16. **Ask** each group to read its assigned passage and discuss what the passage teaches us about prayer. **Invite** the groups to share their findings.
2. **Direct** the young people to read the sections “Prayer in the Old Testament,” “The Prayer of Jesus as Model,” and “The Prayer of Mary,” on pages 366–371 in the handbook. The content covers points 4 through 8 on the handout “Lesson 33 Summary.”
3. **(Optional) Direct** the participants to the Reflect question on page 369 in the handbook and to brainstorm simple things people can do each day to make the attitudes and dispositions that Jesus says are necessary for prayer more a part of their lives.

C. Guides for Prayer

Direct the young people to read the section “Guides for Prayer,” on pages 371–372 in the handbook. The content covers point 9 on the handout “Lesson 33 Summary.”

Note: If you are running short on time, you may wish to just briefly summarize this section of the handbook.

Live It! (10 to 15 minutes)

1. **Direct** the participants to form groups of three or four. **Give** each group a sheet of newsprint, markers, tape, and a variety of craft items.
Explain the task as follows:
 - Each group is to prepare an advertisement that encourages people to communicate with God and to turn to him in prayer.
 - You may create your advertisements in one of the following forms: a T-shirt (designed on the newsprint); a billboard ad, presented in still-life poses; a commercial for television or radio acted out; a Web site, with icons, computer screen, pop-up ads, and links to other pages sketched out on newsprint.
2. **Invite** each group to present its ad to the rest of the class. **Tell** the young people that each presentation should not be longer than 1 minute.
3. **Share** the following comments in your own words:
 - Prayer can become alive and vital when you experience it as a deep, personal relationship with God. Prayer is both talking and listening to God. But in addition to words, prayer involves your mind and heart.
 - According to Scripture, it is the heart that prays. The heart is your hidden center, the place of decision and truth where, as a person made in God’s image, you speak to God, live in God’s presence, and hear God speak to you.
 - Everyone is called to prayer. This is because the desire for God is built into us; it is a response to God, who first and tirelessly calls us to encounter him through prayer. Prayer is a central way that God has revealed himself to humankind and shown us who we are.



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Following any announcements, close by **leading** the young people in this litany asking God to walk with us on life's journey. **Ask** them to respond, "Take my hand and walk with me" after each invocation.

Leader: When I need strength to face the challenges that each day brings.

Leader: When I need compassion to encourage those who are afraid or anxious.

Leader: When I need clarity to know your Word and live it.

Leader: When I need patience and understanding with my parents and family members.

Leader: When I need peace to feel your presence within me.

Leader: When I am tired or weary of helping others to understand.

All: In the name of the Father . . .

