

## Lesson 38

**Question**  
What is prayer?

**Answer**  
Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God.

### Memory Verse

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Psalm 62:8

### Main Idea

Prayer is talking to God in response to his Word.

### Lesson Outline

#### Open in prayer

**Introduction:** Using the Q38 Question Mark (RB), cut out a question mark for each child.

Explain that the focus of the lesson is the question "What is prayer?" As part of the introduction to the question, ask the children to write any questions they may have about prayer on the question marks. Stick the question marks up somewhere clearly visible. Assure them that you'll engage with their thoughts and questions throughout the next few weeks.

Follow by asking them to think about these questions:

How did how they get to know their friends and build relationships with them?

How do they usually communicate with their parents?

Explain that the way people build relationships is by talking to one another. Tell them that God longs to have a relationship with his people and so he has enabled us to talk to him through prayer. God is not distant or uninvolved in his world or with his people. He is very present and is always listening to the prayers of his people.

Tell them that prayer is simply talking to God. Explain that when we pray, we give God his rightful place in our lives. We acknowledge gratefully that he gives and sustains life, and we trust him in all circumstances. In the same way that we build relationships with friends and family through talking, our relationship with God will grow and mature as we spend time talking to him.

**Activity:** Give each child a turn. Whisper in his or her ear one of the types of communication listed below. They should use motions but no speech to act out the word. When one word is guessed, let another child come up and act out the next word on the list.

Talking

Letter

Email

Phone call

Text message

Facebook

Skype

Facetime

Message in a bottle

Explain that we have many types of communication in the world today; the game included just a small selection. Remind them that God loves to communicate with his people through the Bible and prayer. God speaks to his people through his Word and then invites us to speak in response to him in prayer.

**Lesson:** Begin the teaching time by asking for God's help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the children might listen well.

Explain that prayer is an essential part of the Christian life. Yet sometimes Christians don't know how to pray in any way other than bringing lists of wants and needs to God. Ask them whether they ask their parents for things they need. Of course, they do! But is that the only thing they ever talk about with their parents? Do they ever tell their parents that they love them or share the interesting things going on in their lives? A good relationship includes many different kinds of communication.

Tell them that prayer is talking to God, our heavenly Father, in response to his Word.

Read Psalm 62. Invite the children to join you in reading aloud. Provide Bibles for the children.

Explain that this psalm was written by a man named David, who was king in Israel. It is found in the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. Tell them that in this psalm, David encourages his hearers to pray, and in verse 8 he describes prayer by saying, "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us." In this psalm, David encourages God's people to pour out their hearts to the Lord.

Ask what they think pouring out their heart would look like.

Tell them it is telling God everything about our lives and what we are thinking and feeling. Ask if this kind of prayer would be easy or hard, and have them elaborate on why they think so.

David isn't encouraging God's people to pour out their hearts to just anyone, but to a most amazing God! Have the children search Psalm 62 to identify the different ways David describes God. (A rock, a fortress, a refuge, and the One who saves.)

Tell them that David builds a picture of a great God who is the completely reliable and trustworthy Creator, in contrast with created people and things (vv. 4 and 10), both of which will disappoint and fail. God longs for honest and regular communication with his children. Help them to consider what talking with such a trustworthy God is like. Does it mean they can talk to him at any time and in any place? Does it mean they can tell him anything and everything? This psalm shows David trusting fully in God, and therefore relying fully on his strength.

Tell them that the way we live is often different from the picture David paints for us. Explain that people rely on themselves, doing things in their own strength, until they can't do it on their own anymore, and only then they turn to God. David says that if he relies on his own strength, he will be as easy to knock down as a badly built wall, but when he is relying fully on God he will not be shaken. The kind of relationship David has with God brings him rest; he doesn't have to worry about anything.

Remind them that prayer is gratefully recognizing that God is God, that he is in control, and that he is completely trustworthy. It is responding to all that we know of and learn about God in his Word, the

Bible. When we pray this way, we demonstrate that we trust God to take care of our lives. This is a vital part of a life of faith.

**Recite:** Help children memorize this week's verse, question and answer.