

Lesson 5: Talking with God

Aims for each learner:

- Be able to talk with God throughout each day.
- Understand that prayer is talking with God, not just a ritual.
- Learn that prayer includes confessing, thanking and asking.
- Memorize the Lord's Prayer.

Cultural clues:

- Theology of prayers
- Sufi meditation
- Muslims, prayer and 'wudu' cleansing
- Making a prayer list

Prepare: Headings for activity (Q.14), paper or flash cards, pens, scissors, sticky tack.

Opening

Pray together. Review last week's practical task: Did you pray each day for God to fill you with His Holy Spirit? How did you see the Holy Spirit at work in your life each day?

Review last week's memory verse (1 Peter 1:15): Ask everyone to repeat it.

Lesson 5 home study review:

Question 1: a)

Question 2: apologizing, thanking, requesting. *In any order.*

Question 3: pray continually

Question 4: The Lord's prayer as in Question 14.

Introduce today's topic: Look at the picture in question 1. God is like a great King. Why does he listen to us? *Because he is our heavenly Father who loves to listen to his children!*

Discussion

Talking with God as Father (Questions 2-5)

Question 3: Read the first paragraph.

- Why do we not need the intercession of holy men to bring us close to God? *We are God's spiritual children, so we have the right to come close to Him ourselves!*

Question 4: Read the first paragraph.

- On which of these answers did you put a tick? *We can talk to God about everything!*
- Which things do you find it hard to talk to God about? Why?

Ritual and personal prayer (Questions 6-10)

Question 9:

- For what reasons do people say ritual prayers? Why do they do informal prayer? *e.g. people often do 'salah' (ritual prayer) to earn merit, or 'dua' (informal prayer) to meet a need.*
- What should be our highest motive in prayer? *To come close to God and live in his intimacy.*

Question 10: Read the first paragraph and the box (1 Peter 1:8).

- Have you ever felt this 'inexpressible and glorious joy'? Describe how you felt.
- Some people try to experience this closeness to God through chanting (*dhikr* or *zikr*) but how we do reach God's heart? *Through Jesus Christ himself. He is the way to our Father's heart!*

Pray continually (Questions 11-13)

Question 12-13:

- What does 1 Thessalonians 5:17 command us to do? *We should pray continually.*
- How is this possible in practice? *e.g. By his Spirit we can be close to God all day, see the quote in question 13. Or an example from learners' lives.*
- From the list in question 13, which option did you choose?

- The last option listed is 'before each meal'. If your circumstances allow, have you made this your habit?
- Read the speech bubble at the end of question 13.

It is a good habit to develop. Learners living with Muslims may not have the opportunity, but some may be able to do so as a witness.

The Lord's prayer (Questions 14-15)

Learning the Lord's prayer: Jesus' disciples once asked him: "Teach us to pray". He taught them the Lord's prayer. *Ask someone to read out Matt 6:9-13 in each learners' language. Then learners should write each sentence of the prayer on separate paper strips in each language. Mix up the strips on a table (not the floor!) and ask learners to put them in the correct order.*

If your participants are asylum seekers, the authorities may ask them to say the Lord's prayer during the asylum process, so it is important for them to learn it by heart.

- Do we earn any religious merit by praying the Lord's Prayer? If we recite it ten times instead of one time, will that give us more merit?
- In which language do you think it is better to pray, in English, Arabic or in your own language?

No! The Lord Jesus said, 'When you pray, do not keep babbling on like the pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words' (Matt 6:7).

Some say Arabic is best. But we can pour out our thanks and needs to our Father more freely in our own mother tongue.

Apologizing, thanking and requesting (Questions 16-22)

Question 15: The Lord's prayer includes 3 types of prayer: apologizing, thanking and requesting. *Ask learners to sort each sentence of the Lord's prayer under into these types of prayer using 3 headings. You could either stick them on a wall or lay them out on a table.*

Question 17: Read the whole question.

- How can we be sure that God will forgive and cleanse us when we say sorry to Him?

Because He promises this. 1 John 1:9 says 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.'

Question 20: Together, read Matthew 7:7-11 from the Bible.

Learner(s) may need help finding the passage. Lesson 6 explains how to look up Bible verses.



- In verse 7, what commands does Jesus Christ give?
- In verse 7, what promises does Jesus Christ give?
- What point is Jesus making in verses 9-11?
- Give an example of how God has answered your prayer.
- So why do we not always receive what we want when we pray?

Ask, seek, and knock.

It will be given, you will find, the door will be opened. These promises are repeated in verse 8.

Our heavenly Father is good, and he loves to give good things to his children.

Sometimes what we ask for would not be good for us. So if the son asks for a snake would a loving father give it? No, never. When we do not receive what we want, we can still trust God as our loving Father. He is not punishing us. He knows our needs.

Question 22: Whose needs can we pray for? Which options did you tick in question 22?

Conclusion

Apply: What difference will today's lesson make in your life? How will you change the way you pray?

Review: Go over the practical task. Discuss how to make a prayer list. Encourage them to write names in the box, if it is safe to do that. You could recommend to them a prayer app, such as 'prayer mate' to try.

Encourage: Keep going with the home study! Bring your Bible or New Testament next week.

Pray: Use the Lord's prayer to inspire your prayers. Ask God to help us live close to him and 'pray continually'.