

WEEK 3: Jesus' Prayer of Thanks

Big Idea: We can pray every day.

HANGOUT

1. Before the children arrive, write each day of the week on a separate piece of paper. Use a different colour for each day if possible. Spread out the papers around your group's space at the children's eye level.
2. Read aloud each day of the week. Emphasize the sound of the first letter (e.g., "W-W-Wednesday"), while pointing to it on the sign.
3. Let everyone know that you will say a day of the week, then the children should walk to stand beside the sign that says that day. As you explain, demonstrate what to do by moving around the space (e.g., walking not running). Depending on the reading level of your group, provide clues to help them (e.g., colour of paper). Tell them that when you say the Big Idea (**We can pray every day**), they should walk around the whole room three times, then sit in the middle as quickly as they can. Continue playing as long as there's interest. Wrap up with the Big Idea for the final round, and lead into the Hear activity.

HEAR

4. Let the children know that in today's story from the Bible Jesus says a big thank you to God. Jesus also tells everybody (including you and me!) that he will give us something pretty wonderful when we come to him. Encourage everyone to listen carefully to find out what Jesus gives when people come to him.
5. Use a children's Bible to read about Jesus' prayer of thanks (from Matthew 11:25-30).
6. Discuss:
 - Did you hear what Jesus promised to give people who are tired and worried? (rest)
 - Have you ever said a big thank you to God for something? What was it?
 - How many things could you thank God for today?
7. Provide paper and crayons. Encourage everyone to draw some of the good things they're thankful for. As your group draws, emphasize that **we can pray every day** and thank God for all his good gifts. Explain that we can also come to him when we are sad and worried or just need some rest.

HUDDLE

8. Guide everyone to move around your group's space pretending to be their favourite animal for a few minutes. This will help the children get out some energy before praying!
9. Gather everyone back together. Model how to sit in a prayer posture, with your eyes closed and hands folded. Invite the children to join you but make it clear that it's okay if they don't. If anyone wants to continue being an animal, let them know that they can pretend again soon!
10. Pray, "Thank you, Jesus, for teaching us how to pray every day! We have so many good things to be thankful for, including the rest you give us. We love you. Amen."