

**6.13.10 – Mark 11:12-14, 20-26**

**Materials Needed:** Copies of the *How to Pray* prayer for each child in the group, Construction Paper, Glue/Glue Stick, Scissors, Markers, Crayons, highlighters, Any other art supplies that would allow the children to decorate their very own prayer (Leaders: Don't feel like you need to purchase all of these supplies. Just use what you have or have some of the children bring some of their supplies to increase the selection.)

**Opening Activity**

Explain to the children that we're going to discuss the importance faith and forgiveness plays in our prayers tonight. To help us learn to pray ourselves, we're going to decorate our very own prayers so that we can be reminded of how Jesus has taught us to pray.

- Pass out a copy of the *How to Pray* prayer to each child and the appropriate art supplies for the children to use depending on their age.
- Instruct them to decorate their prayers to help make them personal. Spend 5 minutes or so doing this, and tell them that they can do whatever they want to do with the prayer: Cut it out and glue it on construction paper, draw on it with crayons or markers, highlight certain words that are special, etc.
- As the children conclude ask them to sign their name at the bottom or help younger children write their name so the prayer becomes very personal. For example: Love, Jenny.

**Read Mark 11: 22-25**

And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. 23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received F55 it, and it will be yours. 25 And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." F56

**Discussion**

Jesus' response to his disciples here helps us get a better understanding of the essential role our *faith* in God and seeking *forgiveness* from Him plays in our prayers.

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith this way: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

What this means is that just as our physical eyesight allows us to see evidence of the material world, such as the trees, birds and oceans, faith allows us to see evidence of the invisible, spiritual world – things of God. Faith is then needed for what we *can't* see and *can't* touch. Faith is the exact tool we need when we pray, and is just what Jesus tells us we need in Mark 11:22: "Have faith in God."

**Question One:** What things in your life do you know exist, but can't see? Allow the kids to answer on their own. Here are some ideas: 1) Love. You know that your parents love you by the way they care for you and the things that they do for you. You can't see love, but you know it exists because of the ways your parents respond to you because of it. 2) Wind. You know the wind exists because of the way the leaves rustle on the trees as it blows. You can't see it, but you still know it's there. 3) God. We read about Him all the time in the Bible. He says that He created the world and everything in it, including you and me. We believe what He says is true, but we can't see Him.

Knowing and believing that these things exist rely on faith.



Jesus continues to explain that having faith when we pray means that we believe that we have already received what we have prayed for. This seems a little strange: Why ask for something that we already know we have received? Well, the truth is that once we become followers of Jesus, He begins to change us through His Holy Spirit as He comes to live inside us. With the Holy Spirit in our hearts, He gives us godly desires and those desires become the desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:4). As we pray then, our prayers begin to reflect God's desires for us, and since those are the things that God wants for us, they will come to pass because they bring glory to Him. Let's take a look at John 15:7-8 to look at this a little deeper:

"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."

The key is that once we believe in Jesus, we need get to know Him well. If we know Jesus and allow His words to live inside us, ultimately affecting the way that we respond to Jesus in prayer (John 15:7) and together with the power of the Holy Spirit, He will grant whatever we ask because our prayers will be in tune with what He desires. It's similar to how we may know a good friend or brother or sister. We know what she likes, dislikes, or how he might respond to a certain situation. Jesus gives us the opportunity to know him well too. And through the power of prayer, His Holy Spirit and the Bible, He gives us the opportunity to develop a better understanding of what He likes, dislikes and how He would respond to situations that we find ourselves in. Therefore, we gain a better idea of who He is and can focus our prayers around that renewed understanding of Him. Neat, huh?

**Question Two:** In what ways can you get to know Jesus better? *Read about Him in the Bible and pray to Him, asking that He will allow you to know Him better.*

If we look back over the book of Mark that we've already studied, we can see that as people drew near to Jesus because of their faith in Him, their faith increased and their lives and those around them were healed both spiritually and physically. Here are two examples:

1. *Jesus heals the paralytic (Mark 2:1-5):* Remember, four men brought a man that couldn't walk, a paralytic, to Jesus. Their faith was so strong in Jesus that they opened up the roof to the building where He was teaching and lowered the paralytic down to Jesus. Jesus healed the paralytic because of the faith of these men. These men risked embarrassment and punishment for what they did. But they did it because they had faith that He could heal this man. Do we have faith that Jesus can heal the people that we pray for?
2. *Jesus heals the bleeding woman (Mark 5:25-34):* Remember, Jesus was in a large crowd and because of the many miracles He had performed a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years touched his clothes. She thought that if she could just touch his clothes that she would be healed. And even though she was fearful, when Jesus looked for her, she fell down before Him and told Him her story. Jesus declared that her *faith* had healed her! Even when we're scared, do we fall down before Jesus and with faith tell Him what's going on in our lives and trust that He can heal us and save us from our fears?

Can you think of others? Think about it, as we get to know Jesus and pray for the things that He desires for us, these things can happen in our lives and those around us too!

In the final portion of this passage, Jesus also explains the importance of asking for forgiveness, both from the people that we've hurt and from God. This means that it's good to tell Him about the hurtful things that we've done and ask that He, in His love and mercy, would forgive us and make everything right again (which He has already done through Jesus!)



**Question Three:** When you pray, is asking for forgiveness for the hurtful things you've done to others and to God something you do regularly? If not, how can you begin to do that? Allow the kids to answer on their own. As they answer be sure to explain that just as Jesus asks us to seek forgiveness, He also asks us to have faith and when we have faith in God, we have faith that He can forgive us and make us NEW! Seeking forgiveness is just part of the process.

### Wrapping Up

All in all from this passage, we can see that Jesus can do the impossible: He healed a paralytic and a bleeding woman, and He says that He can even take up a mountain and throw it into the sea! All we need is a little faith in Him and the humility to seek forgiveness as we pray for the impossible. Following Jesus is an exciting adventure and as we get to know Him better each day, our prayers will reflect His desires more and more, and He'll be able to use us in incredible ways to do the impossible!

### References

David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible