

# Prayer Detectives

What do you know about prayer? Maybe you pray on your own or with your family. Maybe you pray before meals or before you go to sleep at night. Maybe you hear people praying at church. Have you ever wondered why we pray? Have you ever wondered what you should pray about?

Prayer is a very important part of our walk with God and it doesn't have to be a mystery! This month we'll be "Prayer Detectives", discovering the 5 W's (who, what, when, where, why) and an H (how) of prayer. So get ready to search for clues and learn all about prayer!



## Parent Guide:

I'm so glad you and your family are joining us this month! Here are a few tips to make your lessons go as smoothly as possible.

- Every study includes four parts to "RAMP up" learning – Read, Apply, Make it Stick, and Prayer. See [comesojourn.com/resources](http://comesojourn.com/resources) for more information on this method.
- I encourage you to preview the lessons before doing them with your family so you are familiar with the material. You know your children best and looking ahead gives you a chance to anticipate areas where they might need more (or less) time and focus for the best understanding.
- The lessons often build upon one another, so it is ideal to do them in order without skipping any.
- Before starting, check out the "Make it Stick" sections where materials for each activity are listed. I try to keep the crafts and activities simple, using things you may already have at home, but take a look in case you need to stock up on anything.
- I recommend printing the verses (last page), cutting them, and posting each verse in a place your children will frequently see it. We like to use the bathroom mirror – memorizing and brushing teeth at the same time!
- Looking for additional reinforcement of the lesson? Check out the "Bonus" section for optional extras!

Thanks again for joining us. I pray God blesses your family as you draw near to Him together!

# Lesson 1: Who?



## Read:

*Parents: If your child is old enough to do so, now is a great time for him/her to start looking up the verses in the Bible as you complete the “Read” section. You can guide as much or as little as needed. This month, in keeping with our “Prayer Detective” theme, we’ll refer to some verses as clues, so anytime you see instructions to “search for clues” you can use this as an opportunity for kids to find those verses in the Bible, encouraging them to become familiar and comfortable with using the Bible on their own.*

Who do we pray to when we pray? Who are we actually talking to?

The short answer would be that we pray to God. When we pray we are talking to Him.

But there’s a little more to discover...

We often begin our prayers saying “Dear God” or “Dear Lord”. Sometimes we may say “Heavenly Father”. When we end our prayers we say “in Jesus’ name” before the amen. And you’ve probably heard people talk about the Holy Spirit as well.

If all these different names seem confusing, that’s okay! The big word for this concept is the trinity.

- The trinity means there is one God who exists as three persons
- The three persons of the trinity are the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit
- All three persons of the trinity are distinct from one another, but they are each fully God
- There is only one God

Let’s search for clues in the Bible to help us understand this more! Find and read the following verses in your Bible:

- Matthew 28:19 – the three parts of the trinity
- John 16:13-15 – the persons of the trinity are distinct
- Isaiah 45:21-22 – there is only one God

When we pray to God the whole trinity is involved. We are able to come before the holy throne of God the Father because of the sacrifice Jesus (the Son) made for us.

**Hebrews 4:14 and 16** says, “**Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession... Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**”

We also pray in and through the Holy Spirit; He helps us when we pray.

**Romans 8:26**, “**In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words**”.

**Jude 1:20**, “**But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit**”.

So, who do we pray to? We pray to God. God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit are all part of prayer, making it possible for us to come before a perfect God and talk to Him!

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**Apply:** If all three persons of the trinity are God, and God exists eternally (no beginning or end), then all three persons of the trinity must also be eternal. Find another clue in your Bible that proves this is true – read John 1:1-3.

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**Make it Stick:** Trinity Braid Bracelet

Create a visual reminder of the trinity – three in one – by braiding together three strands into one bracelet.

Materials:

- Colorful string or yarn
- Scissors
- Tape

## Instructions:

- Cut string into three pieces of equal length, long enough to wrap around your child's wrist after braiding
- Tie all three pieces together at one end with a knot
- Tape the knotted end to a table or other solid spot to hold in place as you work
- Braid the three strands together until long enough to fit as a bracelet, then tie a second knot at the end
- Wrap the completed braid around your child's wrist and tie it together to form a bracelet, reminding them of the three in one nature of God

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**Pray:** Thank God that He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

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**Verse:** Matthew 28:19

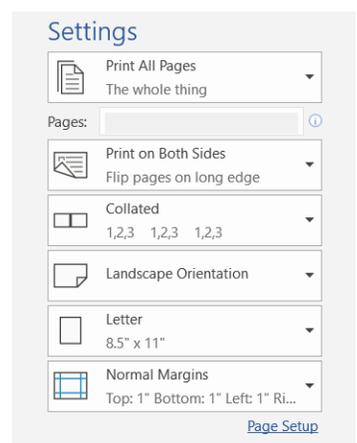
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## **Bonus:** Detective Notebook

This month all bonus activities will center around completing the “Detective Notebook”. You can download and print the notebook separately on the blog – [comesojourn.com/2020/11/02/prayer-detectives](https://comesojourn.com/2020/11/02/prayer-detectives)

To print in foldable booklet form, set to print on both sides, flip pages on long edge. You'll want to print all pages in landscape orientation.

Once printed, fold and put together as a mini notebook for your Prayer Detective to use throughout the month!



# Lesson 2: What and Why?



## Read:

Imagine you're curled up in bed, chatting with your mom and dad before you go to sleep.

You might tell them about the fun things you did that day, or about something special you're looking forward to later that week. Maybe you'd ask a question you were wondering about. You might ask for their help about a problem you're dealing with. And I bet you'd make sure they know how much you love them.

We like to talk to the people we love about all kinds of things, don't we?

Well, prayer is our chance to talk to God! We can talk to God just as we talk to the people we love. Let's search for clues in our Bible about why we pray and what we can pray about.

Why do we pray?

- Out of obedience to God because His Word tells us to – Romans 12:12, Philippians 4:6, and Colossians 4:2
- Because Jesus set an example of prayer – Luke 5:16
- Prayer is how we communicate with God. He listens to and answers our prayers – Jeremiah 29:12

What do we pray about?

- To praise and thank God – Hebrews 13:15
- For forgiveness from sins – Matthew 6:12
- That we can know God's will and have discernment (be able to judge well) – Philippians 1:9-10
- For strong faith – Luke 22:32
- To avoid temptation – Matthew 26:41
- For healing – James 5:14
- For salvation of unbelievers (people who don't know or believe in God) – Romans 10:1
- That the gospel (good news about Christ) will spread – 2 Thessalonians 3:1

That's a long list, but these are just some of the things we can pray about. Truly we can pray about everything! Just as you share your thoughts, ask questions, seek help, and share your love with other people, we can talk to God about all those things.

We pray out of obedience to God and what He says in His Word, following the example that Jesus set for us. But we also pray because it is a wonderful gift to be able to talk to God! He loves us and we love Him. He wants us to know Him and communicate with Him. What a special gift it is to be able to bring everything in our lives before God in prayer!

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**Apply:** We often pray together as a family, and that's a good thing! But this week, make a point to pray on your own as well. Talk to God about things that are on your mind, He loves it when you share your heart with Him!

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### **Make it Stick:** Prayer Hand

Create a prayer list in the shape of your child's hand that can be used as a reminder throughout the week to pray for specific things.

Materials:

- Construction paper (1 piece)
- Crayons or markers
- Scissors

Instructions:

- Trace your child's hand on construction paper
- Cut out the shape of the hand
- Write a specific prayer request on each finger of the hand – consider personal requests, people you know who have needs, missionaries you support, or other things that are relevant to your child
- Decorate as desired!

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**Pray:** Pray about each of the things you put on your prayer hand.

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**Verse:** Philippians 4:6

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**Bonus:** Detective Notebook

Continue with the next section in the Detective Notebook!



**Apply:** What are some places and times that you already pray? Now think of some places and times where you don't usually pray. Could you pray then and there too? Give it a try!

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### **Make it Stick:** Prayer Scavenger Hunt

Send your kids on a fun scavenger hunt to find hidden clues around your home that serve as reminders that you can pray anywhere and anytime!

Materials:

- Scavenger hunt clues and parent guide (see next 2 pages)
- Treat (optional if you want to have kids discover a reward at the end)

Instructions:

- Hide clues 2 through 6 around the house
- Give your kids clue 1 and let them begin the search!
- Use the parent guide to initiate conversations about prayer at each "stop" along the way

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**Pray:** Thank God that He is always there and always listening, no matter where or when we talk to Him.

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**Verse:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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**Bonus:** Detective Notebook

Continue with the next section in the Detective Notebook!

# Prayer Scavenger Hunt - Clues



Cut out the following clues. Keep clue #1 to give your child as a starting point, hide the remaining clues in the appropriate spot based on where the previous clue would send them. For example, clue #2 would be hidden on your child's pillow since clue #1 would send them there!

**#1:** When it's almost time for bed, this is where you lay your head

**#2:** If you get messy and need to scrub, grab a towel and head for the tub

**#3:** When you curl up to read in a cozy nook, this is where you'll find a book

**#4:** In winter snow or summer sun, this door leads the way to fresh air fun

**#5:** It's movie night with the family, go and check by the TV

**#6:** Your stomach rumbles, it's time to eat, where can you find a tasty treat?



# Lesson 4: How?



## Read:

When Jesus was on earth, crowds of people gathered to hear Him teach. He taught many things and answered many questions, including how to pray.

Let's search for clues from Jesus's teaching on how to pray. Read Matthew 6:9-13 in your Bible.

This prayer is often called the Lord's prayer. Jesus gave us this example to follow when we pray. It is good to learn the words He said and pray this prayer as He did, but we can also use it as a model to follow in praying our own prayers.

When we use Jesus's prayer as a model we don't repeat it word for word; instead we use the themes of what He said to pray our own prayer. Let's take a look at this guide as an example. On the left side we can see parts of the Lord's prayer, while the right side gives some themes we can focus on.

The Lord's Prayer	Themes to Pray
Our Father who is in heaven	Remember that God is our father, we are His children. Also remember that He is in heaven, greater than anything on earth.
Hallowed be Your name.	Hallowed means holy – remember God's holiness and pray that He will help us be holy, honoring Him.
Your kingdom come.	Pray for the gospel to be spread in the world. Pray that we will be witnesses to those around us. Pray for missionaries.
Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.	Pray that God's will is done in your life.
Give us this day our daily bread.	Pray about your own daily needs. Pray about your requests.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors	Confess sins and ask for forgiveness. Ask for help in forgiving others in your life.
And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.	Pray for protection spiritually. Pray over yourself, your family, and others you know.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.	Praise God for who is!

Following the model of the Lord’s prayer is not the only way to pray, but it is a great example to guide us. Prayer isn’t about saying words that are “just right”. We don’t have to worry about what we sound like to someone else when we pray. What matters most to God is our heart when we come before Him.

Jeremiah 29:12-13 is a great reminder of how we should approach God in prayer:

**“Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”**

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**Apply:** Throughout the month we’ve discovered the 5 W’s and an H of prayer. We searched the Bible for clues and often we have seen Jesus as an example for prayer. Try to remember some of the specific things we learned about prayer from the example Jesus set. How could you follow His example?

Hint – if you need some reminders, look back at these clues!

- Luke 5:16
- Mark 1:35
- Matthew 14:23
- Mark 8:6
- Matthew 6:6

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## **Make it Stick:** Prayer Walk

Take a walk around your neighborhood or a favorite park. As you walk, pray together. You can use the Lord's prayer as a starting point, but also encourage your children to think about all they have learned this month and put it into practice. If possible, pray specifically for needs you know of in your neighborhood/community and encourage kids to notice things around them as inspiration for further prayer.

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**Pray:** Say a prayer using the Lord's prayer as a model. Look back at the guide in the "Read" section to help you as needed.

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**Verse:** Jeremiah 29:12-13

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**Bonus:** Detective Notebook

Finish off the last section in the Detective Notebook!

**Verses:** Cut out the verses to post each week

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19

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Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6

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Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:12-13