**February 7th, 2021: Elementary Age Sunday School lesson
DAILY LIVING - TEACHINGS FROM JAMES lesson 7: becoming a pray-er**

***After completing this lesson, the children will know how they should pray, when they should pray, and why it is important to include prayer as a regular part of their daily living.****by Andrea Wehmeyer*

**ACTIVITY: HOW WOULD I REACT? (Materials: printed activity page, pencils or markers)**

For younger children, you may simply want to read to the different situations found in this activity to them. Then you can discuss what their answers would be to each instead of having them write them down.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Have the children complete an activity that will help them understand that God hears their prayers.

**WHAT YOU WILL SAY:** Today's activity will help all of us understand that we can and should always pray no matter what we are experiencing—trouble, joy, frustration, or sickness.

Once everyone has finished ask for volunteers to share their answers for one or two situations.

 **OPENING PRAYER AND PRAISE AND MEMORY WORK:**

**"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16 NIV**Read the verse together several times, then write the verse on the board. Say the verse together as a class, erase a word or two and say the verse again. Continue in this manner until the words are all erased.

**SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION (20 minutes)**

**Introduction:** James closes out his letter with a very important topic. Can you guess what that is? (prayer) Let’s read and find out exactly what James wrote about prayer.

Read the passage two times. The first time, tell the kids to count the number of times James uses the word pray or prayer. (It is found 7 times.) In this short passage, seven times is quite a lot. Prayer must be very important. Read the passage again as the children follow along. This time have them listen for the different kinds of prayer mentioned.

**Read James 5:13-18**

**Discussion Questions:**
1. James gives three examples when we should pray. What are they? *(When in trouble, when happy and when sick- James 5:13-14.)*
2. What should we pray for when....
     We are in trouble?*(Pray for help or guidance.)*
     We are happy? *(Give prayers of praise, or songs of praise.)*
     We are sick? *(Pray for healing.)*
     We have sinned? *(Pray for forgiveness.)*
3. Why do you think James talks about oil in verse 14? *(Allow for discussion. In the Old Testament, when someone was anointed with oil, it symbolized that they were now set apart for God. But oil was also used as something else. Oil was used as medicine to heal wounds. In other words, the elders, who were there to help people in the church, would come and pray over anyone who was sick. If there was anything the elder could do, he would do it. Say for instance that you have a really bad cold. Someone can pray over you, but you also need to take your medicine.)*4. How are sin and sickness related in verses 15 and 16?*(Allow for discussion. Some people’s sin actually causes them to get sick. Have you ever done something bad and hid it from your parents. Have you ever felt so bad about doing that bad thing, that your stomach started hurting? This is one case when you would need to confess and tell your parents what you did. This is just one simple example of how sin can affect your health.)*
5. Why should we pray for each other? *(We should help each other every way we can, but especially through prayer!)*
6. When you know someone is struggling with something, what's one thing you can always do? *(Pray.)*
7. In verse 16, James says, "The prayer of the righteous man is powerful and effective." What does righteous mean? *(Acting in a morally correct manner.)*
8. Who is the righteous man who has powerful and effective prayers? *(Allow the kids an opportunity to answer.)

Actually, James is talking about us. However, we are not naturally righteous people. Philippians 3:9 says our righteousness doesn't come from us, but through faith in Jesus. We can be righteous because of Christ in us, and when we pray we can trust that God hears our prayers.*

**SKITS: LET THE PRAYERS BEGIN (Materials: copies of each prayer skit; optional – 4 puppets)**

***As Christians, we must choose to pray, knowing that our Father in heaven hears our prayers.****(Three short skits about prayer for three to seven.)*

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Ask for volunteers to play the parts in each mini skit. Let the kids pick who will actually play or perform each part, and allow a few minutes to practice. When they are ready, read the title of the skit and introduction before the teams act out their parts. After each skit, ask the class the following questions:

**Discussion Questions:**1. What did they pray for in this skit?
2. What can we learn from this skit about prayer?
3. At what other times would a similar prayer be helpful?

There are many times when we should pray. The Bible says we should pray unceasingly. That means all the time. From our little skits, we saw that we can feel better when we pray. Prayer can help to remove fear. We can praise God through prayer. It is not always easy to pray aloud, but God doesn't care how we sound. He only cares that we pray.

 **APPLICATION**

We can all pray no matter what we are experiencing—trouble, joy, frustration, or sickness. We can and should always pray and know that God hears our prayers because we belong to Jesus.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**What we learned:** Today the children learned about prayer, how they should pray, when they should pray, and why it is important to include prayer as a regular part of their daily living. There are many times when we should pray. The Bible says we should pray unceasingly. It is not always easy to pray aloud, but God doesn't care how we sound. He only cares that we pray. (Scripture used: James 5:13-18)

**Memory Verses:** "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16 NIV Practice this verse several times with your child during the week. This will not only help him or her remember the verse, but it will also help to reinforce what he or she learned during class.

**Suggested Parent/Child Activity:** Spend extra time with your child this week in prayer. Ask your child to look for opportunities to pray, and give suggestions of how they can pray for each one. This is a great time to start a prayer journal with your child. You can purchase an inexpensive notepad or notebook. Teach your child how to record their prayers by date, and also write down how God answered each prayer.

**Daily Prayer:** Dear Lord. Thank You for hearing my prayers. Although sometimes I don't know what to say, it is comforting to know that You hear me, and understand me. Thank You for loving me, and giving me life. Amen.