

Involving Older Children

If you are working with a mixed age group, the older children can use their bibles to look up references about Jesus praying. If Jesus, who is God's son and without sin, prayed so much then surely we too need to follow his example.

Give the older children a list of bible references to look up and sort into groups of when, where or why Jesus prayed.

Here are some examples to get you started. Use them all or pick out your favourite ones. You could also add to them – Jesus prayed many times. You could write them on a whiteboard/flipchart/big sheet of paper and then ask the children to write beside each reference what it tells us about prayer. Alternatively you could write them on smaller pieces of paper, put them in a bowl/jug/some type of container and allow children to pull out one at a time, look it up and record what they have discovered about when, where or why Jesus prayed.

These older children could then 'report back' to the younger children about what they have found out.

Examples of where, when and why Jesus prayed

Luke 5:16

Luke 6:11-13

Mark 1:35

Luke 9:17-19

Matthew 14:22-23

Luke 9:28-30

Matthew 19:13

John 17:8-10

Mark 6:41

John 18:1-3

Mark 14:32-36

To help you choose which references to use and/or check children's responses, the words of each Bible reference are as follows:

Luke 5:16

16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Mark 1:35

Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Matthew 14:22-23

Jesus Walks on the Water

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.

23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,

Matthew 19:13

The Little Children and Jesus

13 Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Mark 6:41

41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all.

Mark 14:32-36

Gethsemane

32 They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."
33 He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. 34 "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

35 Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. 36 "Abba,^[a] Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Luke 6:11-13

11 But they were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

The Twelve Apostles

12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.
13 When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles:

Luke 9:17-19

17 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

Peter's Confession of Christ

18 Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

19 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

Luke 9:28-30

The Transfiguration

28 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. 29As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. 30Two men, Moses and Elijah

John 17:8-10

8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. 9I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. 10All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

John 18:1-3

Jesus Arrested

1 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it.

2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. 3So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.
