

God Always Answers Prayer

Lesson 14a — Yes, No, Wait

Lesson 14b — God Answers Joshua and the Blind Man — Yes

Lesson 14c — God Answers Jesus — No

Lesson 14d — God Answers Abraham — Wait

OVERVIEW

Our unit for this month deals with the three different ways God answers our prayers. To open the unit, we suggest you incorporate the visual aid of a traffic light — the three colors representing the possible answers God may give when we pray. This aid can be used on each of the four Sundays. The first lesson gives a broad view of the three examples we will focus on in depth on the three succeeding Sundays.

In the incident recorded in Joshua 10:12-14, Joshua was in the process of obeying God's specific command. God had told Joshua to conquer the land and in Joshua 10:8 he was again commanded to attack fearlessly the enemy and was promised complete success. Joshua knew what God's will was and had set out to accomplish it, so God was willing to do what Joshua asked.

Christ's prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," is reflective of the

profound struggle He was going through. Of course Jesus' will was in total agreement with His Father's will, but His humanity was grappling with the awful agony of the sacrifice He was about to make. Had God quickly responded to the cry of His beloved Son, there would have been no redemption possible for mankind.

Abraham also was a man who knew the voice of God. Genesis 12:1-4 and Genesis 17:1-4,19 are records of the specific promises of God to Abraham that he would have a son by Sarah, his wife. It was Abraham's duty to believe (Genesis 15:6) and wait for God to fulfill it in His own way and time.

Your students should understand that we can expect God to answer our prayers only as we honestly seek, in faith, His will and are asking in obedience to His Word. Psalm 34:17; Proverbs 15:29; James 4:2,3; 1 John 3:22

GAMES FOR REVIEW

Have a YES, NO, WAIT bean-bag toss (see Patterns). Prepare an equal amount of questions on each of the Yes, No, Wait lessons so each child has the chance to answer at least one of them. Let the students take turns tossing a bean bag into one of the holes. If the bean bag goes into the YES hole, ask the student a question from the YES lesson, etc. If he answers correctly give him a card on which is written the word AMEN (see Patterns). Each student should try for at least one AMEN card. (If your group is too large, divide into several teams. Let a team leader toss the bean bag and then let the team decide together on an answer. Each member of that team receives an AMEN card if their answer is correct.)

Attach several cards to a board, each of which has a

question written on the back side and a large question mark drawn on the front side. Have each child choose a question to answer. A correct answer receives a prize.

With masking tape, mark out a simple game board on the floor of the singing area. Divide the students into four groups and select a representative from each group. The teacher will stand in the center with a small box of circles on which are written YES, NO, or WAIT, with instructions. Example: Yes — take 2 steps; No — go back to Start, or lose a turn; Wait — don't move. Have the players take turns selecting circles from the box which should be deep enough so that the player can't see what is written on the circles. The player who finishes first wins prizes for his group. (This game can also be used by the teacher to ask questions about the lesson instead of using the circles.)

CONTEST IDEAS

Draw, or cut from construction paper, the trunk and branches of a big tree (see Patterns). Assemble them on a board or wall. Attach to the branches various colored leaves (see Patterns) on which you have written a question or parts of the memory verses. Choose a different color for each of the lessons: orange or brown for lesson A; green for lesson B; red for lesson C; yellow for lesson D. Each Sunday have the children take off of the tree a leaf that goes with the lesson for that day. If they can answer the question or complete the memory verse correctly they can sign their name on the leaf and keep it. Then on the last Sunday of the month the students take turns choosing a leaf until all the leaves are off the tree. (Any questions that cannot be answered may be disposed of.) The student who has collected the most leaves receives a prize. Each child should have a place to store his own leaves during the month — a folder, pocket on the wall, or kept by the teacher.

Give each student a legal-sized envelope on which you have glued three circles: red, yellow, green (to represent a traffic light). Also, have enough red, yellow, and green circles cut so each child can earn at least twelve circles during the month (for attendance, memory verse, and bringing Bible). Give out AMEN cards to the children for their missionary efforts. If you choose to, a reward can be given on the last Sunday to the child with the most circles and AMEN cards.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Make a large traffic light for the center of your bulletin board and write the title, GOD ANSWERS PRAYER across the top (see Patterns). On either side of the traffic light, write the words, Sometimes NO; Sometimes YES; Sometimes WAIT.

Cover your board with a brightly colored background paper. Make the word PRAY, in large letters (see Patterns) from white or a very light colored butcher paper and mount it over the background paper. Each week let the students write or draw a prayer request on small sections of the word. Tell them that whenever they have a need they should remember the biggest word on the bulletin board — PRAY!

Make a prayer board with your class (see Patterns). Cut hearts out of red construction paper. Write the name of each child on a heart. Line up the hearts across the bottom of the board. Make three large white clouds out of construction paper, with YES, NO, and WAIT written on them. Line them up just above the hearts. In large letters write GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS PRAYER across the top of the board. Then make four

small white construction paper clouds for each child. Place the small clouds above the hearts, floating up to Heaven. Ask each child to choose something to pray about. Write that prayer on one of the prayer clouds. Each Sunday review the answers to their prayers and get a new subject of prayer for the present week. Give lots of praise and encouragement to the children for taking their needs to the Lord in prayer.

Make a train for your bulletin board (see Patterns). On the engine write the words GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS. On the cars, write the words YES, NO, and WAIT. On the caboose write AMEN!

CHART IDEAS

Make a Word Mobile (see Patterns). Cut the words GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS from heavy construction paper. On the three following weeks, cut the words YES, NO, and WAIT and attach them to strings hanging from the original three words.

Make a copy of the "Answered Prayers" finger-play book for each of your students (see Patterns). Have them cut it out and fold it to make a book. Help them to learn the poem and finger play.

Make a wheel chart for each of your students (see Patterns). Each week let them color the section of the wheel which relates to that Sunday's lesson. On the fourth Sunday, put the two sections together with a paper fastener and use the chart to review the unit.

Make a large YES, NO, and WAIT traffic signal from construction paper (see Patterns). Use green, red, and yellow paper circles for lights, adding these circles on the appropriate Sunday.

On the first Sunday of this unit, give each child a sheet of colored construction paper and a cut-out silhouette of a child praying (see Patterns). Have them glue the silhouette onto the construction paper. Across the top, help them write the words, GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS. On each of the three following weeks, help them cut out and paste across the bottom the words YES, NO, and WAIT.

UNIT SUPPORT MATERIAL

Prayer Is — by Furn L. Kelling, Broadman Press
I Can Pray to God — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing

Prayer: Learning How to Talk to God — Arch Book, Concordia

What Is Prayer? — by Carolyn Nystrom, Gospel Publishing House

TEXT Joshua 10:12-14; Matthew 26:36-46; Genesis 12:1-4; 17:1-4,19-21; 21:1-3

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that God always answers prayer . . . sometimes Yes, sometimes No, and sometimes Wait.

MEMORY VERSE Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. — Isaiah 65:24

Yes, No, Wait

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

BEFORE THEY CALL — Place both hands to sides of mouth as though calling to someone.

I WILL ANSWER — Put right hand to lips and move away from face.

AND WHILE THEY ARE YET SPEAKING — Hold right index finger in front of mouth, then roll it forward in a circular movement.

I WILL HEAR — Hand cupped around back of ear.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse for this week is illustrated by two people talking to God. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the five sections on the heavy black lines. Reassemble the picture with your group as each portion of the verse is learned.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Show your class a traffic light made from construction paper, as given in the patterns for this unit. Ask them to identify what each color means in relation to traffic laws. Then compare it to the three ways God answers our prayers.

1. God answered Joshua's prayer with a YES.
2. God answered Jesus' prayer with a NO.
3. God answered Abraham's prayer with a WAIT.

Climax: God always answers our prayers.

Conclusion: God may not always answer prayer the way we would like Him to, but His answer will always be what is best for us.

Response: Your students will be able to tell the three ways God answers prayer.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Created in the image of God, man is incurably religious; "Atheists are made, not born." Prayer recognizes man's dependence on some higher power, and people of all times and places seek a propitious relationship with a higher power no matter what their understanding of that may be.

Living in a precarious world, surrounded by the vast and often terrifying forces of nature, people in despair or anguish cry out spontaneously to God. In times of crisis often the instinctive nature of prayer is disclosed.

The Bible reveals the religion in which prayer is the focus of personal piety. To be a Christian is to be one who prays. "Thou then art not a Christian that art not a praying person," is a judgment of Bunyan. And Luther is credited with saying, "As a shoemaker makes a shoe, and a tailor makes a coat, so ought a Christian to pray. Prayer is the **daily business** of a Christian."

Prayer is not reduced to mere supplication or **petition** to which God responds sometimes Yes, sometimes No, sometimes Wait. Prayer is a many-faceted phenomenon, but most essentially **communion**. Prayer is also **adoration**, the praise of God because of His greatness and goodness. And prayer is **thanksgiving**, our outpouring of gratitude to God for His mercy, grace, and love. For the sinful man coming to God in his need, it is **confession** and **repentance**. Prayer may be **intercession** in behalf of others.

Prayer at its highest level is **submission**, as Christ Himself taught, to the will of the Father, man's abandonment of his own desires and will to God. This is the exact opposite of the primitive concept of prayer which believes that the supernatural may be wheedled, coerced, shamed or bribed into doing man's will.

The one praying in complete submission to the will of God and in perfect obedience to His Word can be sure God hears and answers his prayer.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prepare a prayer wheel for each child (see Patterns). Attach a spinner to the center of each wheel. Have the children spin their spinners and take turns telling the class what each selection means to them. If it lands on one of the Yes, No, or Wait spaces you might help

them to know that these are some of the answers God gave to people, and that they will be learning more about them in the weeks to come. If their spinner lands on one of the other spaces tell them that these are ways of praying to God which don't necessarily require answers, but God is very pleased when we come to Him in these ways.

Make some flip-sided stick puppets to use in presenting this lesson (see Patterns). Attach a popsicle stick between the front and back of each puppet. Prepare a short sentence about each picture, then ask the children what they think God's answer was. For example, when you show the picture of Joshua, you might say: "Joshua wanted the sun to stand still in the sky so that Israel would have light while they fought their battle. He knew that if darkness came they might be defeated. How did God answer his prayer?" Or, when you show the picture of the cars on the street: "Kevin loved to ride his skateboard. His mother had told him he could take it over to his friend's house but not to ride it in the streets. His friend lived several blocks from his house and he didn't want to have to stop at every street corner and carry the skateboard across the street. So Kevin prayed and asked God if he could disobey his mother, just this one time. All together now, 'God's answer was — NO!' " Do this with each of the stick puppets. Be sure to turn the puppets over so the children can see the answer to each situation.

Make a milk-carton traffic light. Rinse and dry a quart or half-gallon milk carton. Cut black construction paper to fit sides and top of the carton. Then tape or glue it in place. Cut twelve circles — four red, four yellow, four green. Glue them to the sides of the carton. Print the words NO — YES — WAIT on the circles. Use as a prop in class or make enough traffic lights to send home with the children at the end of the unit.

Bring to class a series of cards with a question on the front of each. Let your students write an appropriate response on the reverse side — YES, NO, WAIT. Read the cards aloud and have each student explain the response he wrote. Emphasize that God is all-knowing and chooses the best answer for our prayers.

QUESTIONS

Explain prayer and why it is important.

Compare how praying to God is like going to a parent or teacher for advice. (They know more than we do.)

Tell about a time when your mom or dad said yes when you asked for something. Tell about when they said no. Tell about when they said wait.

Why is it important that we pray about everything?

Is there any prayer too hard for God to answer?

Is there any prayer too small for God to be bothered with?

Can we get ahead of God by making our own decisions?

What things could hinder God's hearing and answering prayer?

Talk about a prayer God answered for you.

Has God ever answered No to one of your prayers? How did you feel about His answer? Does God always answer quickly? Explain.

Sometimes we have to be patient. Tell of a time you had to wait.

How did God answer Jesus' prayer in the Garden? Why do you think Jesus' prayer was answered in this way? What does it mean to be *in God's will*?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a copy of the PRAY TODAY dot-to-dot poster (see Patterns) and a crayon. Help them to "read" the words as they repeat with you. Tell them to display this poster at home and let it remind them that they should pray every day.

Bring a play telephone for children and one for the teacher. Have them take turns asking for something. Then the teacher will answer Yes, No, or Wait. Adapt answers to requests.

Give each child a pair of the hands cut from felt which can fold in prayer (see Patterns). On the hands print the words, GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS PRAYER. Encourage them to talk about the prayers they have prayed.

To illustrate three possible answers to a request, use dolls to act out a child who is asking for a cookie. Mother would answer Yes if it were after dinner, No if he had already eaten a dish of ice cream and a piece of cake, or Wait if he can have one after dinner but not now.

For each child prepare a cut-out telephone (see Patterns). Print the pattern on heavy paper and cut it out. Fold on the dotted lines and staple together on the right and left just above the dial. The receiver will then fit between the two slips of paper. Talk about how sometimes when we call Grandma on the phone she doesn't answer — maybe she is not at home. But Jesus is always there when we talk to Him, and He will always answer.

REVIEW IDEAS

List a number of items that God may or may not answer with a Yes. For those that are Yes, include salvation, comfort, peace, guidance, loving your neighbor, help in trouble. For No, include picking a fight, playing a mean trick on somebody, or getting even. For Wait, include growing up, getting a new bicycle, visiting Disneyland, getting married, etc.

Make three large, colorful posters. One should say YES in large letters, another NO, and a third WAIT. Arrange

three volunteers to come and tell your group about incidents in their lives when they prayed and God answered. Have the volunteers hold the poster so the children cannot see what the answer is until they get to that point of the story.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Whisper a Prayer"

"God Can Do Anything but Fail"

"Why Worry, When You Can Pray"

MEMORY VERSE SONG

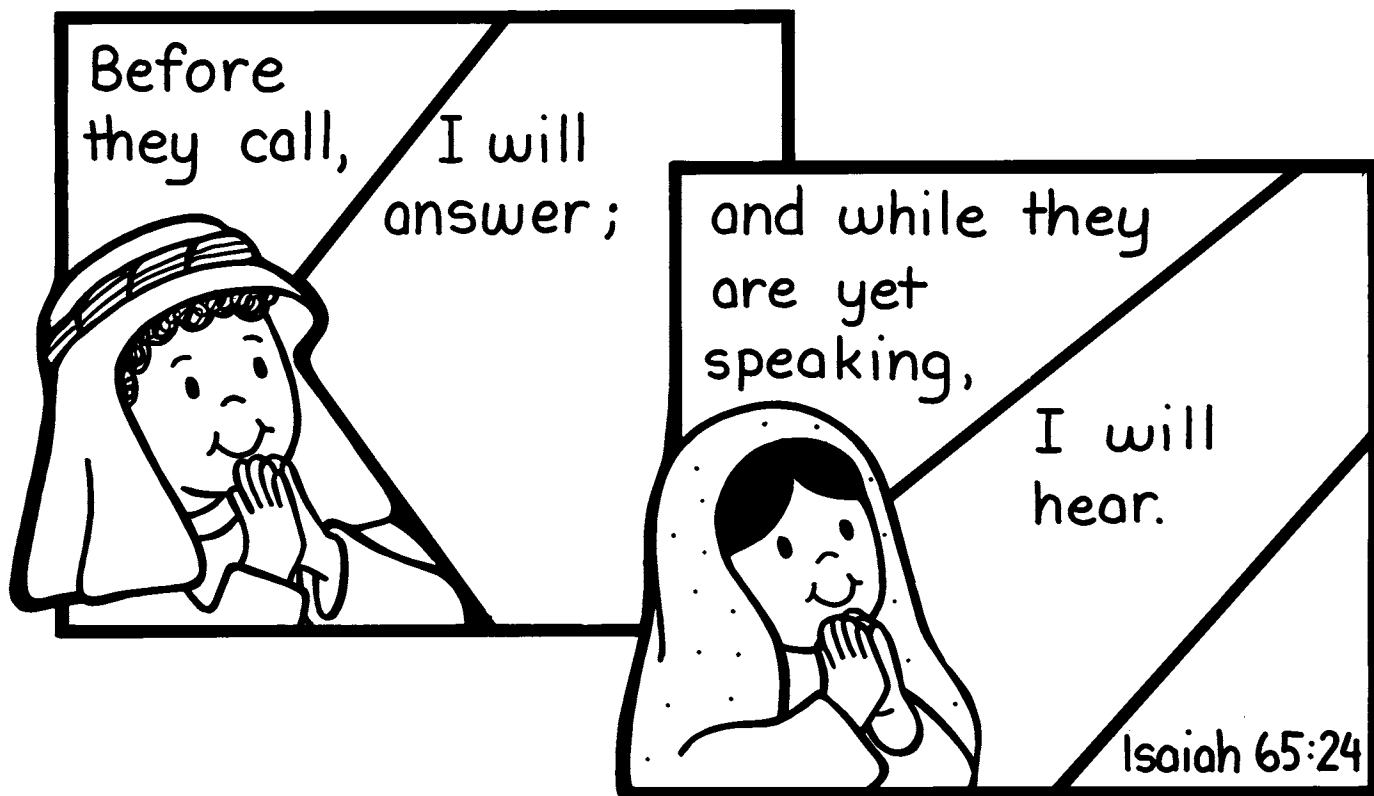


Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.



Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Joshua 10:12-14; Luke 18:35-43

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that God answers some of our prayers with a Yes.

MEMORY VERSE If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. — John 14:14

God Answers Joshua and the Blind Man — Yes

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

IF YE — Point to others.

SHALL ASK — Hold right index finger in front of mouth, then roll it forward in a circular movement.

ANY THING — Move hand in front of body, left to right, palm up.

IN MY — Point up.

NAME — Tap first two fingers of both hands at right angles.

I WILL — Point up.

DO IT — Cup hands, palms down, move side to side.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Three little boys kneeling to pray is the visual display of this week's memory verse. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut the picture apart on the heavy black lines. Display the five pieces, one at a time, as your students study the verse together.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Bring an electric clock to class, as described in the In-class Activity for this lesson. We can unplug the clock and make the hands stop, but does time stop or go backward? Tell your class that today you are going to talk about a time when that did happen — in answer to prayer.

1. Joshua prayed for God to make the sun and moon stand still because the army of Israel was in battle with a heathen nation.
2. God answered his prayer with a yes and stopped the sun and moon for about a whole day.
3. In the New Testament, we read how a blind man heard Jesus passing by, and he cried out to the Master.
4. Though people told him to be quiet, he cried out again, and Jesus called the blind man to Him.
5. Jesus asked him what he wanted, and he requested his sight.

Climax: Again the answer was Yes, and Jesus healed the blind man's eyes.

Conclusion: There are times when God's answer to our prayers is Yes.

Response: Your students will be able to describe the prayers of the two examples given in today's text, and will tell how God responded in each case.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Joshua, an Ephraimite, son of Nun, though born in Egyptian bondage about 1500 B.C. was named, significantly, *Hoshea*, meaning "salvation." Two months after Israel's exodus he was appointed Moses' commander. Later he represented Ephraim in spying out Canaan and returned insisting that Israel, if faithful to God, could conquer the land. This was opposed to the majority report and almost cost him his life. Subsequently, however, for having "wholly followed the Lord," he not only escaped destruction but also received assurance, unique to himself and Caleb, of entering the Promised Land.

In the spring of 1406 B.C., Joshua was chosen by God to be Moses' successor. God promised to be with him as He was with Moses, saying, "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." God warned him, though, of coming apostasy, but even here God promised Joshua the successful conquest of Canaan. In just six years Joshua took the whole land, "leaving nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses."

It was God's presence with Joshua that brought the victories in the many battles against the Canaanites. When Israel was defeated, it was because sin was in the camp. Many times Israel faced overwhelming odds, but God's miraculous power intervened and the victory was won. It was not the numbers or the skills of the armies of Israel but God who had promised: "I have delivered them into thine hand." Joshua believed God. He dared to command the sun to stand still upon Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon. God didn't fail him.

Ajalon was a city of Dan assigned to the Levite sons of Kohath. It is identified today with the modern Yalo, 14 miles from Jerusalem, north of the Jaffa road.

Our God is not just a God of Old Testament times but He also revealed Himself through the ministry of Jesus. The blind man that Jesus healed as He came toward Jericho, had to exercise the same faith that Joshua had in God Jehovah. And it is faith in God and obedience to His Word that brings answers to prayer today.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Use a sandbox with dolls, Fisher-Price figures, or Playmobile figures. Make a sun and moon of construction paper to hang over the box. Show the children what the sun and moon usually do, then explain what the sun and moon did after Joshua prayed and asked God to help him.

Bring an electric clock with a second hand, or make a clock of construction paper, with moveable hands (see Patterns). Explain how time never stops — turn hands as you talk. Explain very simply Joshua's asking God to have the sun and moon stand still. That was their clock. God made the sun and moon stand still. Time stood still when God answered Joshua's prayer.

Have your students draw what they think the expressions might have been on the blind man's face before and after Jesus healed him (see Patterns).

Give each child a copy of the flip-sided chart of the blind man which shows the change in his eyes when Jesus healed him (see Patterns).

Have students write a list or draw a picture showing how Jesus has answered their prayers with a Yes. Display their pictures on the bulletin board.

Make paper eyeglasses with no eye holes for each of the children (see Patterns). Have them wear the glasses while you tell the story. Then remove them at the end to emphasize the blind man's receiving sight and what a great answer to his prayer that was!

QUESTIONS

Why did Joshua want the sun to stand still?

If the sun had not stood still, what would have happened in the battle?

Could anyone but God make the sun stand still? Explain.

"With God all things are possible." What does this mean?

Both Joshua and the blind man prayed for one special answer from God. They both knew exactly what they wanted and God said Yes. How can we follow this example?

Why did the blind man call to Jesus when he heard that Jesus was passing by?

We know that Jesus knows everything about every one of us. Why then, did He ask the blind man, "What will ye that I shall do unto you?"

How did the blind man's faith "save" him?

How much faith do we need to have God answer our prayers?

Tell about a time when God answered a special prayer for you or your family.

What must we remember to do when God answers our prayers?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Use a flannelgraph of Joshua, showing the moon and sun. Give the children a figure from the set, and as you tell the story, let them place the figure on the background at the appropriate time.

Give each child a sack puppet representing the blind man whose eyes were opened (see Patterns).

Show pictures of birthdays or Christmas parties. How happy we are when we get what we want. Show how Jesus likes to make us smile.

To illustrate when the blind man was healed: Have children cover their eyes, or you could blindfold them if they wouldn't be afraid. Have them say what the blind man said to Jesus. Take the blindfolds off or have them uncover their eyes as you say, "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee."

REVIEW IDEAS

Have several students or teachers come up carrying a posterboard showing something they once asked God for. (The illustrations can be simple line drawings, pictures cut from magazines, etc.) Have them briefly tell their story, including what the circumstances were surrounding their request. Then have them turn their posterboard over to show the word Yes — God's answer.

Make a "Prayer-Memory Box." To do so, collect several items which might trigger your memory of a time when God answered Yes to one of your prayers. (A toy car

might remind you of a vacation, or a ribbon might bring back memories of a special gift). Tie a string to each item, put the item into the box, and let the string hang over the edge. Ask some of the students to come forward, one at a time, and choose a string. As you pull each item from the box, make a comment such as: "Oh, that reminds me of the time . . ." Tell your students that each time they pray they will be adding to their own prayer memories.

COORDINATING SONGS

"He's Only a Prayer Away"
 "God Will Take Care of You"

SUPPORT MATERIAL

The Man Born Blind — Palm Tree Bible Series, Concordia

The Beggar's Greatest Wish — Arch Book, Concordia

MEMORY VERSE SONG

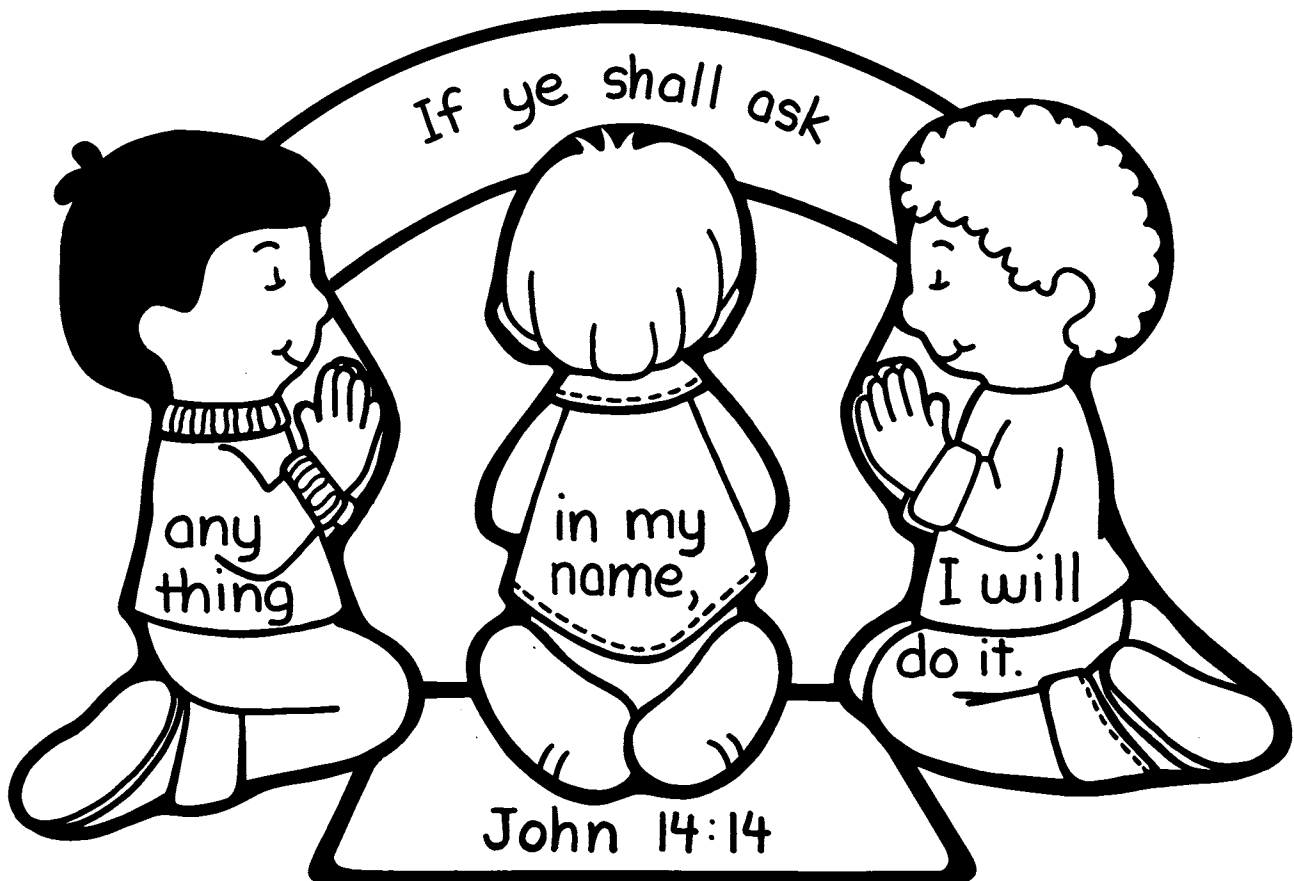


If ye shall ask an-y-thing in my name, if ye shall ask, ask an-y thing.



If ye shall ask an-y thing in my name, I will do it.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Matthew 26:36-46

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that God answers some of our prayers with a No.

MEMORY VERSE My grace is sufficient for thee. — II Corinthians 12:9

God Answers Jesus — No

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

MY — Right flat palm on chest.

GRACE — With right hand about eye-level, flick all fingers toward head.

IS SUFFICIENT — Make a fist with left hand, palm facing right. With right open hand, palm down, brush across left fist to the right several times.

FOR THEE — Point to others.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

This week's memory verse is illustrated by a boy and girl in a raft on a stormy sea. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the three sections as indicated by the heavy black lines. Put the arrangement back together, one section at a time, as your students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Make a large "Road Closed" sign from construction paper. Open your class session by asking your group to pretend with you that you are driving through a mountainous region when you see this sign on a barrier stretched across the road in front of you. Discuss what you should do, and why. Then liken this to times when God answers No to our prayers.

1. Jesus knew that the time was at hand when He would be taken and crucified. He went to a place called Gethsemane to pray.
2. Taking three disciples with Him, He prayed in great sorrow and heaviness, asking His Father if this cup could pass from Him, but adding that it should be according to His Father's will.
3. He came back and found His disciples asleep, so went a second time and prayed the same prayer.
4. Again He found them asleep, and went the third time and prayed the same prayer.

Climax: God answered Jesus' prayer with a No, and Jesus was taken and eventually nailed to a cross where He died for us.

Conclusion: God said No to His own Son for the blessing and benefit of the entire human race. If He had said Yes, there would have been no way we could be saved. Sometimes God must also say No to our prayers, either for our good or for the good of others.

Response: Your students will be able to describe Jesus' prayer and tell how that prayer was answered. They will recognize that sometimes God must answer No to our prayers, and will tell some of the reasons why this might occur.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are very few recorded instances in the Bible where God said No when one of His children made a request in sincere, earnest prayer. The sinner cannot be assured of answered prayer unless it is a prayer of repentance. Those who are lukewarm or backslidden may hear God say: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3).

We might wonder, though, why God would ever say No to His own child, especially if it was a good thing that was being requested. The No is the result of God's wisdom. He who knows the end from the beginning and knows the individual better than that one knows himself, sees that the desired thing would not be for His child's good. A wise parent knows that many times he must say No to his child in order for that child to learn certain lessons, or to develop maturity; and God knows His children better than we know ours. Often it is difficult for the parent to say No; it may really pain him, but he knows it is necessary.

Think how it must have pained the heart of God to have to say No to His only beloved Son. It certainly was not for disciplinary measures — another reason for God's saying No. But there is yet a further reason why God may say No to those who are wholly committed to Christ and wholly submitted to Him: for the blessing and benefit of another. God said No to His own Son for the blessing and benefit of the entire human race. Had He quickly responded to the cry of His beloved Son to "Let this cup pass from me," there would have been no redemption possible for fallen man. Aren't we glad God said No?

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prepare enough of the MOM WOULD SAY NO cards for your whole class (see Patterns). Have the students

fill in the blank spaces with their answers. Write some of their answers on a chalkboard. Discuss a few of the things to which God might say No, and why.

Pretend to be driving down a beautiful road when suddenly you have to detour because of a "Road Closed" sign. The sign doesn't say why the road is closed but you must obey anyway. Up ahead there may be a rock slide or perhaps the road is washed out. Compare this to our lives in that only God knows what is ahead. So, if He says No to any of our prayers we should obey Him and not try to get our own way.

To help the children understand why God said No to Jesus' prayer, give each of them a copy of the YES, NO, WAIT coloring sheet (see Patterns). Supply the crayons, and have the children color Green in all the YES spaces, Yellow in all the WAIT spaces, and Red in all the NO spaces. When they have finished they will see a red cross in the middle of the page. Explain to the children that Jesus obeyed God because He loves us.

For a fun reminder of this lesson, make a Twist-N-See for each of your students (see Patterns). Copy the patterns onto the front and back of 3-inch circles cut from tagboard. (Be careful to center the starburst on one side and to center the NO on the other side.) Punch holes at the 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock positions of the circles where indicated. Insert one 8-inch length of string in each hole and tie a knot. Twist the strings between your thumbs and forefingers while holding the strings taut. The Twist-N-See will twirl rapidly and the word NO will appear to be inside the starburst.

Bring pictures from magazines of things that God says No to: cigarettes, beer, liquor, drugs, stolen goods, etc.

QUESTIONS

What does it mean to "pray for God's will"?

Give some reasons you think Jesus prayed this way.

How do you think Jesus was feeling at this time?

How did God choose to answer Jesus' prayers?

What was Jesus' response to God's answer to His prayer?

What would have been the result if God had not said No to Jesus?

How should we respond when God says No?

Do your parents ever tell you No when you ask for something? Why?

Think about a time Jesus told you something that He wanted you to do (i.e., take a stand, make a restitution, etc.). Even though it was hard to do, do you think Jesus would change His mind about your doing it? What would He do to help you go through with it?

What are some reasons why God might say No to one of our prayers? Is He being unjust? Why or why not? Explain.

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Make a paper-bag Prayer Puppet for each child (see Patterns). Cut out a copy of the pattern, fold on the lines as indicated, and attach to the bottom of a lunch-sized paper bag. Impress upon the children that even if God answers No to one of their prayers they can still be happy. They can know that God gives the answers that are best for them.

Prepare a NO Apple for each student (see Patterns). Cut the leaf from dark green paper and the apple from red (or light green) paper. Put the tab of the leaf through a slit just below the stem and attach it in the back. This covers the worm so the children can't see it until they lift the leaf. Help them to read the front of the apple. Explain to them that many times they may pray and ask God for something without knowing that it really is not good for them to have, just like the apple. But God knows and when He answers No, they can believe that there was a very good reason, like the worm.

The thought on this lesson to emphasize to preschoolers is how much Jesus loves them. He doesn't want anything to happen to them that would hurt them. Give each child a picture of Jesus and the children and let them color their copy as you teach the lesson (see Patterns). Compare Jesus' love to the love of protective parents who watch out for their children. Mommy must sometimes say No — no, you can't play in the street, no, you can't play with matches, etc. She tells us this because she loves us. Jesus does the same thing if we ask for something that is not good for us.

REVIEW IDEAS

Use the overhead to show some things that we might want that wouldn't be good for us: a mountain of candy, five puppies, to stay up all night, Christmas every day, etc. Just as we can recognize the wisdom of saying No to these things, God knows when it is best to tell us No.

Have a skit of a child who is asking his parents if he can go on a trip with a friend. His parents say No. The child prays and asks God to have the parents change their minds and let him go but they don't change. After his friend is gone he gets the chance to work with a favorite uncle and earn extra money for a bike he has been wanting. He is now glad that he didn't go on the

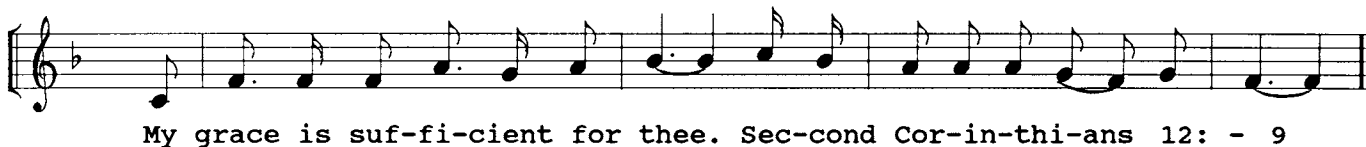
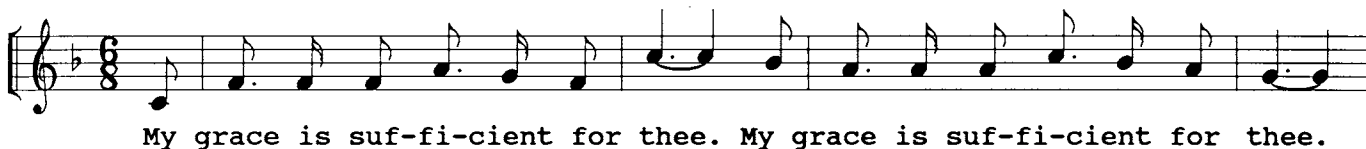
trip with his friend. An alternate skit could have the child wanting to go to a friend's house and is denied, but later learns that the friend has the chicken pox. This shows that God knows the end from the beginning.

COORDINATING SONGS

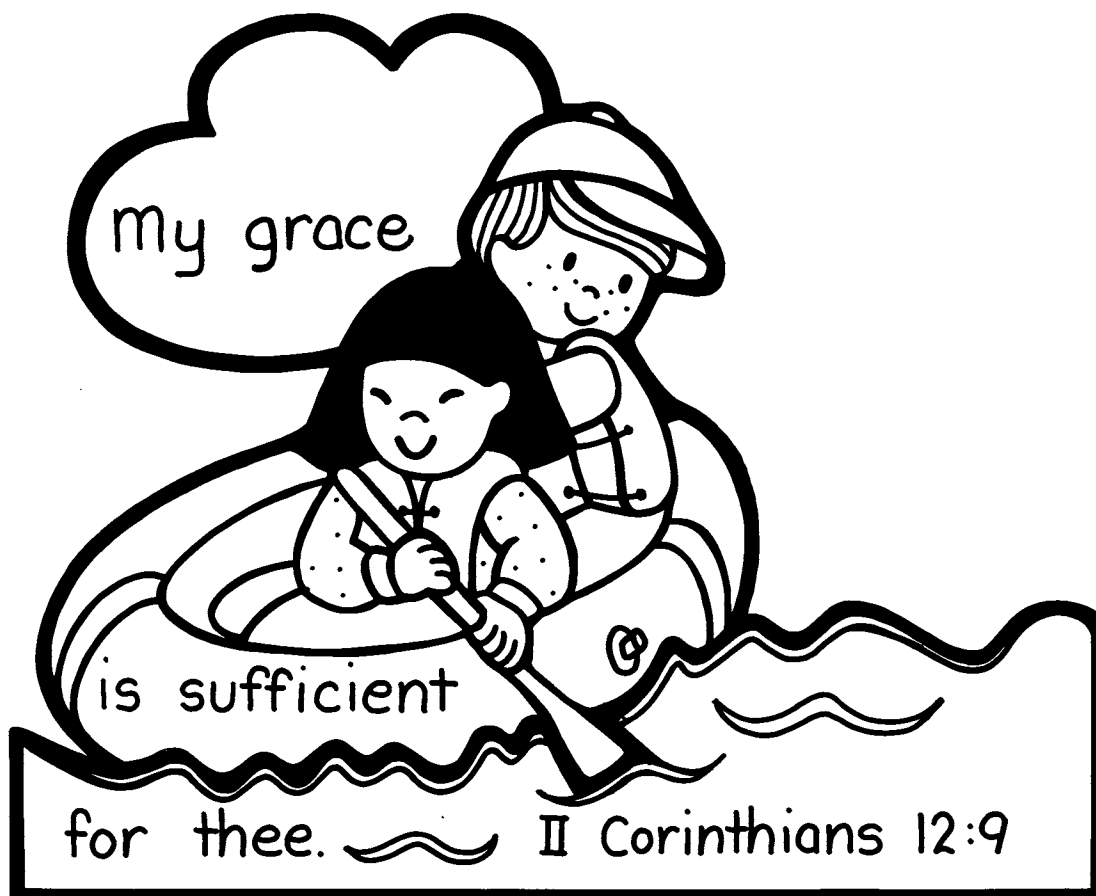
"He's Able"

"My God Is So Great"

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Genesis 12:1-4; 17:1-4,19-21; 21:1-3

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that God answers some of our prayers with a Wait.

MEMORY VERSE I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. — Micah 7:7

God Answers Abraham — Wait

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

I — Point to self.

WILL WAIT — Rest right cheek in right palm as right elbow is being supported by left palm.

FOR THE GOD — Point up.

OF MY SALVATION — Abruptly move hands away from body, palms down.

MY GOD — Point up.

WILL HEAR — Hand cupped around back of ear.

ME — Point to self.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse for this week is illustrated by two boys and a heart. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the three sections on the heavy black lines. Reassemble the arrangement with your group as each portion of the verse is learned.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Use the In-class Activity utilizing a calendar as your opener for this session. Point out that we have examples in the Bible of times when people had to wait for an answer to their prayers, and this may happen in our lives too.

1. When Abraham was 75 years old, God promised him a son.

2. God also promised Abraham he would be the father of a great nation.

3. Twenty-four years later, God told Abraham he would have a son in the next year, though Abraham and Sarah were too old to have children.

Climax: God answered prayer and a son, Isaac, was born when Abraham was 100 years old.

Conclusion: Even though the answer to our prayers may be Wait, we can have confidence in God because He never fails to keep His word.

Response: Your students will be able to relate God's promise to Abraham, and describe how he had to wait to see that promise fulfilled. They will be able to compare this to circumstances in our lives, explaining that at times we will have to wait to see an answer to our prayers also.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What do you do when God seems slow in answering prayer?

Perhaps you need to pray with more faith. God teaches us to come boldly to the Throne of Grace.

Maybe you need to learn patience. The Scripture says "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Also, "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

God may be using your need to help another believer develop generosity. While you are waiting for an answer to your prayer, God may be telling someone else exactly what you need.

Many times, God uses the generosity of one believer to answer the prayers of a person in need.

God may want you to prove Philippians 4:11-13 in your life. Paul learned to be content whether or not he had everything he felt he needed. Contentment is not automatic for today's Christian child. He is enticed by commercials and by possessions of other children. God says, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Make flip-sided stick-puppets of Abraham and Sarah (see Patterns). Attach a popsicle stick between the front and back of each puppet. First show the children what Abraham and Sarah might have looked like when God first gave them the promise of a son. Then turn the puppets around to show what they might have looked like when Isaac was finally born.

Make a paper chain which has 25 links. Place the chain in a basket or container so the children can't see where the end is. Tear off one link at a time as you tell the story. Tell the children that Abraham didn't know if he would have to wait one year or fifty years or even longer before his promised son would be born. When the last link has been torn away, talk about how happy Abraham and Sarah were. At last, God had given them

their little son, Isaac. If we wait patiently for God's time, we will be happy when He answers our prayer.

Make a set of puzzle squares for each child in your class (see Patterns). Copy each puzzle onto heavy paper, cover it with contact paper, cut it into squares, and store it in a Ziploc bag. The puzzle contains the word WAIT and other words which mean the same. They are paired off according to type style. As the children match each of the words and styles, talk about reasons that God might answer Wait to some of our prayers.

Use Prayerful Puppy to help you explain that we should continue to pray and wait patiently for our prayers to be answered (see Patterns). Let the children take turns reading the verses and adding the body parts which help Prayerful Puppy to grow. Explain that prayer and patience will help all Christian boys and girls to grow for Jesus.

To introduce, on a child's level, the subject of "waiting," bring a calendar to class. Show the children where Christmas comes. Elaborate a bit on what a happy, exciting time the holiday season is and how difficult it is to wait for it. Show how many squares (days) must go by until Christmas is here. But emphasize that we know it is coming! Just so, we can be sure God will answer our prayers in His own time and in the way He sees is best.

QUESTIONS

Ask the children to name some things that they have had to wait for — Christmas, birthday, new brother or sister, new toy, etc.

Does it take more faith to wait for God's answer than to have an immediate Yes or No? Why?

What was God's promise to Abraham?

What would have happened if Abraham had doubted God's promise?

Sometimes we do things our own way because we think God is taking too long. How do you think God feels about this?

Talk about how God knows the future — the road up ahead that we will travel. Waiting for an answer may be necessary.

Talk about testimonies of people who had to wait for Jesus to answer a prayer (healing, etc.).

How should you wait?

Tell about a time when God did not answer your

prayers right away. How long did you have to wait?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Make a copy of the road scene (see Patterns). Using a little car, let the children go on a pretend trip to Grandma's house. Tell them they must obey the traffic lights before they cross streets, they must watch out for pedestrians, they can't just go through people's yards, etc. They will eventually get to where they are going but they have to be patient and wait.

Tell the children they will get a treat if they wait patiently while you teach the lesson. Sometimes we have to wait for something good. Be sure to give the treat!

Show the children an egg with a chick inside (see Patterns). Tell them that they have to wait for the egg to hatch before a cute chick is born. If they try to help it out of the shell, the little chick won't live. God's timing is best.

REVIEW IDEAS

To illustrate why sometimes it is necessary to accept waiting, put on a skit or puppet show involving a child who wants to have his birthday party right now rather than waiting until the actual day given on the invitation. Have his mother reluctantly agree, but then show the results: his friends are unable to come because they had other plans, his mother had not yet purchased a present for him, she had not baked his cake yet, there were no games prepared, no decorations put up. How much better if he had waited until the proper time!

Prepare the transparencies for an overhead review on God's promise to Abraham (see Patterns). Following is a sample dialogue to go with the picture series (you fill in the needed details).

1. God wanted Abraham to go to another country. He said, "Abraham, you will have many children. You will become a great nation."
2. Abraham was seventy-five years old when God told these things to him. But, he and his wife Sarah packed their things and traveled to the new country.
3. When Abraham was ninety-nine years old, he was still waiting for the son God had promised him.
4. Abraham was reminded by God that he would become a great nation. God said, "Sarah will have the promised son and you will name him Isaac."
5. God said He would bless Abraham's other son named Ishmael. But the promise would be for Isaac.
6. When Abraham was 100 years old, his promised son, Isaac, was born.
7. Wow, twenty-five years is a long time to wait for a promise to be fulfilled!
8. God will answer Wait to some of your prayers. What are some things you may have to wait a long time

for? Maybe you wish you could drive a car. How long will you have to wait?

9. Perhaps some of you want to get married someday. What age do you want to be? How long will you have to wait?

10. Or maybe you can hardly wait for vacation to begin. You won't have to wait quite as long for that prayer to be answered as some, but still you must wait.

11. Some things don't require such a long wait. You usually wait just a short time to find out if you get dessert, or if you can stay up past normal bed time, or if you can sleep late in the morning.

12. Whatever your prayers are for, be patient and know that God will answer.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day"

"They That Wait Upon the Lord"

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Abraham, Sarah and the Promised Son — Arch Book, Concordia

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

