

MIRACLES

WEEK 4 // LORD'S PRAYER

HOST READS OUT LOUD:

Welcome back to week 4 of our group. May the fourth be with you...

[The person most likely to be a Jedi reads next.]

Wow. Jedi, huh? Have you had your blood tested for midichlorians? #nerddadjoke #googleit

READ OUT LOUD:

This week we are going to play a little game we call "Self-Aware Superlatives." Before we start, I'm going to assign (***pick someone who looks responsible***) to start a timer and when it goes off, we are done.

To play, I am going to read the "most likely to..." descriptions one at a time. The first person to claim it gets to share a **short story** of why they would get that award. If no one claims it, the group will all point to the person (or type their name in the chat for online) we think fits the award. We will try to get through as many as we can in 10 minutes. Ready? Here we go!

- Most likely to go first (remember to have them share why)
- Most likely to get injured
- Most likely to solve world hunger
- Most likely to forget important dates
- Most likely to find a winning lottery ticket
- Most likely to get a speeding ticket
- Most likely to be elected president
- Most likely to ask to see the manager
- Most likely to quote a movie or TV show
- Most likely to stay up all night

[When the timer goes off, the person who was your timer reads next.]

Nice job. Way to keep us all on track. Let's keep this train rollin'!

READ OUT LOUD:

This week we are going to be talking all about how God uses prayer in miracles, so let's start this week by praying for each other before jumping into our content.

[Take time to hear prayer requests, pray and then continue reading.]

READ OUT LOUD:

We are in week 4 of our series on miracles, and we are exploring the connection between miracles and prayer. As Steve mentioned this weekend, any answered prayer is a miracle because God is stepping into our situation.

Prayer is essentially communication with God. What makes prayer challenging is we can not see or hear God like we can each other. Communication can be tricky enough when we are in the same room with another person. Consider how often a miscommunication can create conflict with the people we care about.

1. What do you think are the biggest barriers to effective communication?
2. In what situations do you find it most challenging to communicate with another person?

[Reading responsibilities goes to someone who seems like a great listener.]

READ OUT LOUD:

Prayer is many things. It is asking, listening, thanking and connecting to name a few. One of the things we often pray for is that God would provide or meet a need in some way.

1. Imagine if your prayers were granted 100% of the time. In what ways might that be dangerous, and how might it impact your relationship with God?
2. If we know we shouldn't get everything we ask for, what are some things we can learn from getting a "no" answer to a prayer?

[The person who seems like a really great talker reads next.]

Remind me later to connect you with my friend, Ted; he'd love to hear one of your talks!

READ OUT LOUD:

In Luke 11:1, one of the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray." In all of the Gospels we have no record of the disciples asking Jesus to teach them to do anything except how to pray (Seem like a missed opportunity to anyone else?). Let's examine some of the things Jesus taught his disciples about prayer.

First let's take a look at Luke 11:5-10. (Ask someone to read it.) Let's all turn there together.

1. What do these verses teach us about prayer?
2. Have you ever had a time when you "kept asking" God for something? What happened?

[The person most likely to bake plenty of bread for everyone reads next.]

Thanks for volunteering to make bread for everyone. I'll have two loaves of pumpernickel, one cinnamon raisin and one country french loaf. #carblover

READ OUT LOUD:

Jesus also taught his disciples how not to pray. We are going to look at Matthew 6:5-8. We are going to start with just verses 5 and 6. (Ask someone in the group to read just verses 5-6 aloud. After they read those verses, stop and ask these questions.)

1. In Jesus' day, religious acts such as prayer and worship were culturally expected and elevated. This created an environment where some would use religion to make themselves look good. In what ways can people be hypocritical in their practice of religion today?
2. In what ways do you see that same hypocrisy in your own life?

[Pass the reading duty back to the host.]

HOST READ OUT LOUD:

Jesus gave his disciples another example of how not to pray. Now let's look at Matthew 6:7-8. (Have the same person read verses 7-8.)

- The pagan view of prayer was they could evoke the gods to action through the right combination of words and practices. How is prayer different for Christians?

Jesus taught his disciples to pray by giving them what we have come to refer to as the Lord's prayer.

[Hit next to see the Lord's prayer.]

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

"This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

- Matthew 6:9-13

HOST READ OUT LOUD:

Note the flow of the prayer is "Your name," "Your kingdom," "Your will," and then "Give us," "Forgive us," "Lead us."

1. Notice this is a focus first on God and then on us. What do the elements that we see teach us about what we should include in our own prayers?

We will close our time by reading the Lord's prayer together out loud.

[Close in prayer by leading the group to pray the Lord's prayer together.]

