

Kids Praying a Difference



Photo courtesy of
Massimo Casulini

Description:

Stories with a prayer game and a craft

Aim:

Children will pray for those who haven't heard about Jesus in a way that they can understand.

Audience:

Kindergarten through grade six

Country/Area:

Chile (Easter Island)
Colombia
Papua New Guinea

Minimum Time Requirements:

Main lesson	8 minutes
Bracelet story	1 minute
Praying for "U" story	3 minutes
Closing prayer	1-2 minutes

Scripture to Study:

Colossians 4:3-4

Materials:

- Copies of photos from pages 11, 12 on paper or overhead transparencies or in PowerPoint slides
- Chalkboard and chalk *or* whiteboard and marker *or* overhead projector with transparencies and marker *or* computer with digital projector
- Bible
- Lantern (if telling the story "Praying for 'U'")
- "Pick and Pray" or another prayer game (optional)
- Book *From Akebu to Zapotec: A book of Bibleless Peoples*

Pre-class Preparations:

- Check the website <http://guide.gospelcom.net/resources/populationticker.php> in order to find the estimated number of people in our world and the estimated number of those people who have not had a real chance to hear the Gospel.
- If using PowerPoint slides to display the numbers of people, prepare these in advance.
- Prepare copies of the photos on pages 11, 12.
- Prepare the “Pick and Pray” game from page 6 or select and prepare a “Prayer Game” from *Bright Ideas, Grades 1-6*, available at www.wycliffe.org/kids/curriculum.aspx (optional)

Classtime:

Greet the children and introduce yourself. Tell them a little bit about who you are and how you are involved in missions.

Ask,

How many of you know who Jesus is? Raise your hand if you know who Jesus is?

After taking some time to count all of the hands out loud, say,

Wow! A lot of you know about Jesus! That is wonderful. Now, how many of you know that God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son Jesus so that whoever believes in Him can have eternal life with God?

Pause for children to raise their hands.

That is wonderful! I am thankful that so many of you know who Jesus is and that He is the only way to be with God in heaven some day! Are you glad that someone told you about Jesus?

Continue,

Can you guess how many people there are in the world? Raise your hand if you have a guess.

Allow several children to give their guesses, then write the actual number (from the website) on the chalkboard or overhead or display it on the PowerPoint slide. Start from the right and just keep adding digits until you have written the whole number! Then read the number to the children. Exclaim,

That is a lot of people! I can't even imagine how many people that would be! Hmm, some of those people have probably never heard about Jesus. How many people do you think that that would be? How many people have never really had a chance to believe in Jesus? Any guesses?

Take several guesses, and then begin writing again. This time

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk *or* whiteboard and marker *or* overhead projector with transparencies and marker *or* computer with digital projector

write the number of people who have not had an adequate opportunity to hear the gospel. Read the number to the children before commenting,

Wow! That is amazing! About half the people in the world have never heard that Jesus is the way to God. Let me show you what that means.

Invite one child to the front to represent each billion people. (For about 6 billion people in the world, invite 6 children to the front, etc.) Explain,

Let's pretend that these are all the people in the world. According to what we have just learned, half of all people have never heard that Jesus died for their sins. They don't know that they can have eternal life if they believe in Jesus.

Separate out one child for each billion people who have not heard an adequate presentation of the gospel. This will be about half of the children. Round the numbers as needed to make the illustration work. (If you need half of a person, consider asking one child to turn sideways between the two groups.) Continue,

That means that out of all these people, this many do not even have a chance to believe in Jesus!

Point to the children who represent the unevangelized people of the world.

Did you know that so many people have never had a chance to know Jesus? They really don't have a choice to believe in Jesus. How does that make you feel?

Point to the other half of the children.

This many people have heard about Jesus. But...

Separate about one-third of the "evangelized" children from the others.

...only about this many of the people who have heard about Jesus believe in Him. That means a *lot* of people do not know Jesus! We have a big problem! What can we do about this problem?

Allow the children to make some suggestions. If no one suggests prayer, add that suggestion to the list. Continue,

You have some fantastic ideas about what you can do to help people who haven't believed in Jesus! I hope that you will try some of those things. One of our ideas was to pray. Do you think your prayers really make a difference?

Read Colossians 4:3,4.

Paul said that he needed prayer so that he could tell people about Jesus in a way that they could really understand.

God answers prayer. Children can make a difference by praying. Let me tell you about how God answered the prayers of one child.

Easter Island

Invite two children to come forward to the front. Ask them to hold up the pictures from Easter Island so that everyone can see them as you tell the following story,

Every Sunday Sam and his family did something very important. They prayed for people who still didn't have a chance to know about Jesus. One day when Sam was just five years old he asked his parents if the people of Easter Island had heard about Jesus. His parents said that they didn't know, so Sam began to pray.

Sam prayed for the people of Easter Island every week. His parents were amazed because he just kept praying.

Then, one day Sam's family got a letter from a leader in Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe helps to give the Bible to people in their own language so that they can learn about Jesus. Even though the leader didn't know about Sam's prayers for Easter Island, his letter carried exciting news for Sam. The letter said that someone had just been assigned to begin translating the Bible into the language of Easter Island! The people of Easter Island were going to hear about Jesus in their very own language! God had answered Sam's prayers.

Isn't God great?! He answered Sam's prayer and sent someone to Easter Island to help the people there learn about Jesus in their own language! That is exciting! Do you remember how old Sam was when he started praying?

Accept answers until someone says that he was five years old. Continue,

Yes, he was only five years old, and God answered his prayers for the people of Easter Island. Will He answer your prayers, too? Yes, he will. You may need to pray for a long time, but God will answer!

Materials:

- Bible
- Pictures from pages 8 and 9

Tell one of the stories below and then close in prayer.

Bracelets, Bookmarks, and Prayers

God used bracelets and bookmarks to link kids together in a powerful prayer team for the Chami [chah-MEE] people of Colombia, South America. It all started when around 30 individual students put on colorful, hand-beaded bracelets, and stuck the little bookmarks in their Bibles. The bookmarks listed facts like these: approximately 20,000 Chami people live on mountain slopes in Colombia, they have lots of sickness and little medical care, they need to know Jesus as Savior and Lord, very few Chami can read, and they don't have the Bible in their language.

This 30-kid team began to pray. When they opened their Bibles, they saw the bookmarks and prayed. When they noticed their bracelets, day or night, they shot up quick prayers again. Within a month, they heard back that God had answered in a powerful way. One young Chami man who read some newly-translated Bible verses accepted Jesus as his Savior! Thirty kids made an impact on one man's life a whole continent away. Just thirty kids linked together with bracelets, bookmarks and the power of God flowing through them! What will God do next for the Chami?

Praying for "U"

Before you tell this story select four to six volunteers from the audience. Place half of the volunteers at one side of the stage area and the others on the other side. Place a lantern and a Bible near the second group.

In 2002 children began reading *From Akebu to Zapotec: A Book of Bibleless Peoples*.

Hold up your copy of the book for the children to see and continue,

The children began praying for the Bibleless people groups listed in the book. They prayed for people groups whose names started with each letter of the alphabet, including U for the Umeda people of Papua New Guinea.

Indicate the first group of children, those without a Bible.

By Christmas of 2003, God was clearly answering their prayers.

In 2001, God provided the New Testament for the Umeda's neighbors, the Amanab people.

Materials:

- Lantern
- Bible
- Book *From Akebu to Zapotec: A book of Bibleless Peoples*

Point to the group with the Bible and lamp. Continue,

In 2003, just one year after children began praying, the Umeda people sent some of their own people to visit the Amanab.

Encourage two members of the first group to approach the second group before continuing,

The Umedas asked if someone from Amanab would come live with them, start a church and teach them about God.

Encourage the second group to gather around and bow their heads and then tap one of their group on the shoulder. Continue,

The Amanab church spent time without eating so they could pray about this request. Then they chose a man named Simai to go and help the Umeda.

Hand the lamp and Bible to the selected child and say,

Simai's church didn't have much to give him, but they did send him off with a few things, including a Bible and a lantern.

"Simai's" home group should wave as he walks back to the other group with the visitor.

So he went to teach the Umeda about God.

By Christmas 2004, Simai had begun a church among the Umeda people. A young Umeda man named Willie helped him. God answered the prayers of children who prayed for the Umeda!

It will be exciting to find out how He answers their prayers for the peoples listed for the other 25 letters of the alphabet. We may not hear about some of them for a long time, but be sure, God keeps working, even when we do not hear about it. Would you like to join the prayer team for these Bibleless people groups?

Play "Pick and Pray" or another prayer game or close with prayer for Bibleless peoples.



Photo courtesy of Massimo Casullini



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