

Riverside Young Vineyard Session Plan

Theme: How To Hear God- prayer Wk 2

MAIN IDEA	Key message: God speaks to us through Prayer - It is a two way conversation Key Verse: Jeremiah 33:3 'Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.'
Game	Follow me <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Get everyone to stand in a big circle2. Ask one volunteer to leave the room3. Once they've left the room, choose someone to be the leader4. The leader starts to do an action (such as hopping on one leg or patting their head) and everyone has to copy them5. The volunteer is called back into the room and stands in the middle of the circle6. The leader can change the action whenever they like and everyone has to copy them but they have to be sneaky because...7. The volunteer gets 3 guesses to work out who the leader is8. Once they've guessed the right person, choose another volunteer to leave the room and play again
Teaching	Need: A small bag or cup of sand A ball Have you ever heard someone talk about someone they are in love with? They talk about them when they aren't with them, they talk to them for hours and they think about them a lot! God loves us even more than this. Look up Psalm 139:17-18 together. The Bible says God has so many thoughts about you they outnumber the grains of sand on the beach. Have some sand they can look at to see how many that would be- try and count the grains! That means millions of thoughts about you. Do you think someone can think about someone else constantly and never talk to them? God is speaking to us all the time. Many of you will have already heard Him in some way. For example, if you've chosen to become a Christian then God spoke to your mind and your heart for you to make that decision. If you've ever read something in the bible and it stood out in a strange way, somehow speaking perfectly to a situation you are facing then that was God speaking. Jesus said in John 10:1-18 (recommend you look up together in the Easy to Read version which can be found at https://www.biblegateway.com). This passage says we will know His voice and that He goes before us guiding us with that voice. God is speaking all the time and we will recognise his voice but why is it sometimes difficult to catch what God is saying? Job 33:13 Why do you complain that God answers none of man's words?

For God does speak – now one way, now another – though man many not perceive it.

(prime 2 helpers before the session to help you for this bit)

Have you ever seen a toddler try and catch a ball? The first time a ball is thrown to them, they don't know they are supposed to catch so their arms just stay at their side *(have the helper pretend to be the child, gently throw them the ball as you would to a toddler making it super easy to catch, but they keep their arms at their side)*. This might happen for a little while, and it's like us, it may have been news to you today that God wants to chat to you all the time and so you haven't ever tried to catch what he is saying. Then the toddler realises that the idea is to catch the ball, except when they try, this happens *(throw the ball gently, to your toddler person and have them fumble and miss the ball)*. That's like us sometimes when we start to try this stuff we don't think we are succeeding. It can be easy at that point to give up and walk away. But a toddler doesn't do that they keep trying and quite quickly things change until *(throw the ball gently and have the toddler person catch the ball)*. After this point there may still be a few dropped balls *(model this)* but it's mixed with some success until *(model perfect throwing and catching)*. At this point we have a two way conversation with God where when we chat to Him, He chats back and we catch what He says. *(have the toddler and yourself throw the ball back and forth, but then have the 2nd helper come in between you and catch the ball)*. Sometimes something gets in the way of us catching from God but... *(ask someone to come and move the 2nd helper out of the way)* Jesus can come in and take that block away.

So how do we catch? God knows we are all different so He chats in lots of different ways:

- He uses the bible (giving you a word or a passage that's in the bible).
- He uses your imagination (pictures in your mind, visions or dreams).
- Words sometimes just pop into your head.
- He uses your eyes, sometimes you see everyday stuff in the room that he uses to send a message (like the burning bush).
- He uses your ears, sometimes you hear something in your head or actually out loud (like Samuel).
- He uses your skin, sometimes it's a feeling on your skin or in a part of your body. (like you get goosebumps or your feel hot)
- He uses your taste buds, sometimes you can taste something in your mouth (like honey).
- He uses your nose, sometimes you can smell something in the room (like a sweet perfume)
- Sometimes another person says something and it just feels like it's God speaking right to our hearts.
- He uses nature, the media, books, and other things.

Further Discussion
(for 8-11's only)

One of the questions that comes up a lot from children and young people when we do this is, 'how can I know what I just heard was from God'? There are some simple things you say. We can test if what we hear and see is God. We can ask ourselves:

1. Is it encouraging?

God loves you so His thoughts towards you are loving. He's not going to say anything nasty to you. If He does correct us He does it in a loving way.

2. Is it in line with the Bible?

God says things that reflect the themes of scripture. For example, He isn't going to say "keep hating someone" when Jesus told us to forgive others as God has forgiven you. He may say give £2 to that homeless person. That would be in line with the bible because Jesus says whatever you do for the least, you do for me.

3. Is there a Christian I trust who can help me decided if this is God?

Ask a Christian you trust, who you know is wise and ask them to pray with you about it.

4. God can you repeat that?

It's ok to ask God to say it again so you know it's Him. Many people in the Old Testament asked God to repeat Himself three times so they could be sure of His message. Just keep yourself open to Him speaking in other ways once you've asked. Sometimes God has used three or more different ways from the list we just looked at to give me the same message till I hear it and act upon what He is saying.

5. Does it feel right?

If something that has been said makes you feel deeply uncomfortable because it doesn't seem right then it should be dropped and forgotten. If it's God and it's something He wants you to notice He will keep repeating it anyway till He gets through.

Craft

Prayer hands

These are to help us remember what we can pray for at home

You will need:

- Coloured paper
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Scissors
- Items to decorate such as stickers/sequins (optional)



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw around your hand (you may need a friend to help) and cut it out 2. Write the following words- one for each finger (Praise / Confess / Thanks / Others / Me) 3. Decorate the hand however you like <p>Leaders: explain the 5 words as you are decorating your hands- explain that when we pray, these are the areas we should cover</p> <p>Praise - Give praise to God for who he is (not what He has done for us but simply because He is worthy of our praise)</p> <p>Confess - confess our sins- Sin isn't doing something wrong in the eyes of the world (or your parents) Sin is when we go our own selfish way instead of God's way</p> <p>Thanks - thank God for what he has done for you and/or others- thank Him for His many blessings (even if the only thing you can think of is that you are alive!)</p> <p>Others - pray for one another/ the world around you/ your family/ friends/ teachers</p> <p>Me - Ask God to help you/provide for your needs/ teach you</p>
<p>Prayer/ Activity</p>	<p>Discuss- who has heard God speak to them before? Where/ when/ what did He say? How did He say it (pictures/ bible/ friend etc)? How did you feel? How did you know it was God?</p> <p>God can speak to anyone no matter who they are- all they have to do is learn how to listen- this can feel difficult at the start but with practice it can become easier (like the toddler learning to catch)</p> <p>Let's practise now...</p> <p>Ask everyone to find a space in the room and close their eyes- this helps us to focus on God and not get distracted. Speak out the following and ask the kids to listen</p> <p>Take a deep breath- breathe in through your nose and gently let the air out through your mouth. As you do this, turn your attention to God. Know that He is here and He wants to talk to you. Breathe in.... Breathe out...</p> <p>Imagine in your head a TV screen. At the moment it is turned off. In a moment we are going to turn on the TV and see what God puts there. It may be a picture, a sound, some words, a feeling.</p> <p>Father God, thank you that you are here with us now. We long to hear your voice. Please show me something that you want to tell me.</p>

When you are ready, in your head, switch the TV on and 'watch' what appears.

Leaders: After a little while, ask people to put their hand up if they have seen/heard something. Keep going a little longer if needed- you may want to encourage them to 'change the channel' in case God wants to say more to them. When you think enough time has passed, ask the kids to gather together again and share what they saw/heard. Ask them what they think it means and who they think it is for.

Thank God for everything he spoke to you today. Challenge the kids to do this at home every day and see what happens- it may feel like a toddler trying to catch a ball at first but it will get easier the more you do it.