LESSON 7: ENEMIES OF PRAYER

AIM: To show the children that there are many obstacles to prayer, and that Satan is constantly at work trying to interfere with the Christian’s prayer life. However, we are able, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to overcome the ‘enemies’.

MEMORY VERSE: “God within us will always conquer the world outside us.” (1 John 5:4)

TEACHER’S NOTE: This lesson is best presented as a drama, either ad lib, with cue cards, mime/narration or memorized.

DRAMA:
Characters:
Child (with schoolbag)
Thief (to take the role of all four thieves)
Mother

Props: Table, chair, something to represent TV, blanket and pillow for bed, screen for thief to hide behind and four labels for thief to wear (Laziness, Self-centredness, Procrastination, Lack of concentration), and a Bible.

SCENE ONE:
CHILD (arrives home from school, shuffles into kitchen, dumps school bag on floor, flops in chair, elbows on table and face in hands - talks to mother.)

“Oh boy, what a day, I’m really tired! I played chasey all lunchtime and then we had maths and science tests this afternoon. I’m really worn out.”

MOTHER “Have you got any homework tonight?”

CHILD “No, I haven’t …. I’m just going to relax.”

MOTHER “How about spending some time in prayer, seeing you got up late this morning.” (Mother exits)

THIEF NO 1 LAZINESS (comes out from behind screen, yawning and shuffling. Comes up to child and sits on table)

“You don’t want to take any notice of your mother. She’s a slave driver. You’ve had a really hard day, you deserve a rest. Anyway, you should only pray when you feel like it.”
CHILD “Yes, you’re right. I do need a rest. I think I’ll go and watch a bit of TV.”

(Exit Thief No 1, laughing behind his hand and then child turns on TV and sits watching.)

SCENE 2 (While CHILD is watching TV MOTHER enters)

MOTHER “I’ve just been talking to Darren’s mother. She said Darren wants you to phone him. (exit mother).

CHILD (gets up and pretends to use phone)

“Hi Darren, it’s ………… here. Mum said you wanted me to call. (Pause) Well, I’d love to come and have a game of cricket, but I have to pray. Sorry Darren, maybe on Saturday. Bye.”

(while CHILD is on phone, THIEF NO 2 leaps out from screen)

THIEF NO 2 SELF-CENTREDNESS “Don’t let a little bit of prayer stop you from enjoying life. It might be raining on Saturday and you won’t be able to play. You could pray then. Go on, have a game with Darren, you’ll probably feel better then. Anyway, Darren might not ask you again, or maybe he won’t want to be your friend anymore. Ring him back before it’s too late.

(Thief No 2 exits, looking very please with himself and CHILD rings Darren).

CHILD “Hi Darren, it’s me again. I will play cricket now, see you in a few minutes.”

(CHILD turns off TV and exits)

SCENE 3 (MOTHER enters, sets table for tea, calls out to CHILD. CHILD enters and sits down for tea)

MOTHER “Did you spend time praying?”

CHILD “No I haven’t had time yet. I’ll do it after tea.”

(CHILD turns on TV and sits down to watch)

MOTHER “Go and pray now.”

CHILD “No, I’d better help you with the dishes. And then I’ve got to fix a puncture on my bike before it gets dark. I’ll pray later.”

(CHILD exits then returns and turns on TV again.)
CHILD: “Yes, every time I start to pray, something else comes into my mind and I get side-tracked.”

THIEF NO 4: “That’s because children are too young to pray. Everyone knows that children can’t concentrate for very long. God doesn’t really expect you to ray properly until you are an adult then your brain will be properly developed and you will be able to concentrate better.”

CHILD: “Yes, I suppose you’re right. Maybe I should go and do my homework while it’s fresh on my mind.”

(Exit THIEF chuckling to himself. Child sits down at table and talks to MOTHER)

CHILD: “Mum I feel terrible. Something is wrong inside. I feel really guilty. Every time I should pray I end up doing something else or putting it off. I really want to pray but I just can’t seem to do it lately.”

MOTHER: “I think I know the problem. Let me get my Bible The book of John tells us some important things about the devil. In chapter 8, verse 44 it says that Satan is a murderer and a hater of truth. In fact, it says he is the father of lies. And then in John 10, verse 10 Jesus said that Satan is a thief.

CHILD: “What is he trying to steal from me?”

MOTHER: “Satan is trying to steal you away from God. He knows that if he can get you to stop praying that you will eventually stop following Jesus, and the way Satan does that is to tell lies.

CHILD: “I think Satan has been telling me lots of lies to stop me praying but how do I stop him?”

MOTHER: “Let’s look at James 4, verse 7. It says, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you and draw close to God and He will draw close to you.”

CHILD: “But how do I resist Satan? What can I do?”

MOTHER: “Refuse to listen to his lies. Just tell him to “get lost” in Jesus name and then start to pray. Satan will go and God will give you the strength you need. Let’s go and get started by praying together right now.

(MOTHER and CHILD exit)

**ACTIVITY:**

**A PRAYER OF DAVID** (see page 6) — Photocopy a sheet for each child. Fold sheet to make card so that the psalm is on the inside. Have children write their own name in the blank spaces and then read the prayer together.
MOTHER  “I thought you were going to pray.”

CHILD  “Aw Mum, I’ve got to watch this program, all the kids at school watch it.”

(Child starts yawning)

MOTHER  “Turn off the TV now. It’s time for bed and don’t forget to pray.”

CHILD  ‘Alright. Goodnight.”

(CHILD gets up, turns off TV, and goes to bed)

(Enter THIEF NO 3 PROCRASTINATION)

(CHILD sits up in bed or kneels and starts to pray, “Dear God … (yawn)…)

THIEF NO 3  “Don’t worry about praying tonight. Do it tomorrow. You’ll feel better then. If you try to pray now, you’ll only fall asleep in the middle and that won’t be any good. Get up early in the morning.”

(CHILD lays down, goes to sleep. THIEF waits. Child wakes, looks at watch)

CHILD  “Oh, no! I’ve slept in. I’m going to be late.”

THIEF NO 3  “You won’t have time to pray this morning. You better get up or you’ll be late for school. You can pray tonight before you go to bed. You will have lots of time then.”

(Exit THIEF NO 3)

(CHILD gets up, picks up school bag, rushes off to school).

CHILD  “See you later, Mum, I won’t have time for breakfast. I slept in.” (exit)

SCENE 4  (CHILD returns from school and talks to MOTHER)

CHILD  “Hello, Mum, I’m home.”

MOTHER  “Hello, did you have a good day?”

CHILD  “Not bad. I think I’ll go and pray before I start my homework today.”

MOTHER  “That’s a good idea.”

(CHILD sits on bed and tries to pray but keeps stopping and starting)

THIEF NO 4  “Having trouble praying?”
MEMORY VERSE

Complete the verse from 1 John 5:4:

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w _ _ a _ _ _ _ c _ _ _ _ _

t _ w _ _ _ o _ _ _ _ u _ ."
Psalm 23

A PRAYER

Psalm 23

of David

You are _____________'s Shepherd, _____________ shall not want for anything.
You make _____________ lie down in green pastures, You lead _____________ beside still waters, You restore _____________ soul;
You prepare a table before _____________ in the presence of _____________ enemies;
You anoint _____________'s head with oil; _____________'s cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow _____________ all the days of _____________ life;
And _____________ will dwell in Your house, Lord, forever.

Yes, even though _____________ may walk through the valley of the shadow of death, _____________ will fear no evil;
For You are with _____________, Your rod and Your staff, they comfort _____________.

Psalm 23
PRAY WITH HUMILITY

Pride can be an obstacle
to humble prayer. God does not
despise a broken, contrite heart (Read Psalm 51:17).

Read Luke 18:14. How can you tell if you have a humble heart?

You can be full of faith in every area of life. How full of faith are you?

On the “faith gauge”, draw a needle to show your faith level. God wants us to be dutiful, thankful, watchful, prayerful, and humble. In which area do you need God to fill you with faith?

True Faith
Luke 17:33
PRAY with HOLY HANDS

Use the American Manual Alphabet to solve the puzzle on prayer.

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1 Timothy 2:8
Our Father in h __ __ __ __ __ ,

H __ __ __ is Your Name.

Your K __ __ __ __ __ __ come,

Your w __ __ __ be done

on e __ __ __ __ as it is in heaven.

Give us this d __ __ our daily bread,

Forgive us our d __ __ __ __

as we f __ __ __ __ __ __ our debtors.

And lead us not into t __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

But deliver us from e __ __ __.

For Your’s is the K __ __ __ __ __ __, 

the power and the g __ __ __ __ __.

F __ __ __ __ __ __ and ever. Amen

Fill in the missing words on the above lines from this Word List and write the Lord’s Prayer:

earth  forever  evil  day  Kingdom  glory

Holy  debts  will  forgive  temptation  heaven