

Lesson 2: Get Some Confidence

What we want students to learn: That our prayers are made possible and effective through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: To flesh out what it means and looks like for them to seek God in prayer in confidence.

Scripture Focus: 1 Timothy 2:1-6; John 16:7; Romans 8:26-27; Hebrews 10:19-22

Overview:

There has to be some way you communicate with a person you have a relationship with. Even if there's physical distance between you, you call, text, email, Facebook, Twitter, smoke signals . . . you get the point. If you love someone, you'll try your best to communicate with them in some form or fashion. We've defined prayer for your students as talking to and listening to God as we grow in our relationship with Him. So, prayer is a means by which we communicate with God. But what makes prayer possible? What makes our prayer effective? What allows us, as sinful people, to approach a holy God in prayer? In Lesson 1 you helped your students see that God desires to communicate with us through prayer. In this lesson you'll help show them that communication is only made possible because of the work of Jesus Christ.

Teacher Prep Video

The *elements Teacher Prep Videos* are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Prayer Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/prayer-teacher-prep>
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Bible Background

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book, while *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passages are used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **ym360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What's The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

The Details

John

- **Author:** The Gospel of John was written by John, son of Zebedee, a fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus. John also penned the book of Revelation as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- **Purpose:** John's stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his Gospel: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John's goal seems to have been to clearly communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

Romans

- **Author:** Paul is the author of Romans.
- **Time frame:** Romans was probably written from Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.
- **Purpose:** Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive theological teaching on salvation and other implications of following Christ, Paul wrote Romans to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, it was essential that a 'level playing field' be given to all Believers. This is what Paul was advocating for in Romans.

Hebrews

- **Author:** Originally this letter to the Hebrews was entitled "The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews." However, since the Reformation it's been widely recognized that Paul was probably not the writer. There's simply not enough textual or historical evidence to prove his authorship. Early historians suggested the author is perhaps Barnabas or Apollos, though there is no way to know for sure.
- **Time frame:** Hebrews was almost certainly written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD since the author does not mention or give any hint to this catastrophic happening.
- **Purpose:** Hebrews was written to address Jewish converts to Christianity and challenge them to hold fast to their newfound faith. Many of them were resorting back to old traditions and some were even considering merging with certain Jewish sects. Because of increased persecution of Jewish converts to Christianity, many of them were tempted to resort back to old rites and rituals purely to avoid the pain. The challenge from this Hebrew Christian writer to Hebrew converts was to hold fast to their Christian faith and not to slip back to their Hebrew roots.

1 Timothy

- **Author:** Though in the last 200 years or so there have been efforts by some scholars to shed doubt on Paul's authorship of both 1 and 2 Timothy, their arguments aren't very compelling.
- **Time frame:** Most scholars believe Paul wrote the letters to Timothy, his apprentice in ministry, between Paul's first and second imprisonment in Rome. By most accounts, this would place the writing of 1 Timothy sometime around 64-65 AD, though it could be as late as 67 AD.
- **Purpose:** In 1 Timothy, we see Paul passing along his final words to Timothy. It's pretty much a personal note from an old man awaiting his death to a young, son-like figure. It's personal. It's tender at times. It's encouraging. And it's practical.

The Main Point

This Bible study works through three passages of Scripture that build upon each other to paint an inspiring picture of the love and care that God offers us through Jesus. The main point is that Jesus' death on the cross

served as the ultimate mediation between a Holy God and us, a sinful people. Because of that work, when we put our faith in Jesus we are given the Gift of the Holy Spirit and cared for by Him, and we also have assurance that we can enter boldly into the presence of God. Students will be encouraged to try to live into this reality through added intimacy and confidence in their prayer life with God.

Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

The Lead In

- **Goal:** The idea is for students to understand the similarity between strained (and sometimes) broken relationships we have with our parents and the strained (and sometimes) broken relationship we have with God.
- **Set-Up:** A whiteboard to write down some questions.

FIRST, remind your students that you are in the middle of a three-week series on prayer. Clarify that prayer in its most basic form is us communicating with God. Explain that when you're in good relationship with both people and with God, communication is easy. When things are strained or broken, communication is the first to go!

NEXT, tell your students you're going to lead a short discussion about how they communicate with their parents. Ask:

- **Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like an issue had caused a distance between you and your parents?**
- **If so, how well did you communicate or not communicate during this episode?**
- **Did it get resolved? Were you able to feel like the relationship was close again?**
- **In the future, what could you do in order to improve your communication?**

Depending on your group, you might not get much participation. That's OK. Be prepared to talk about a time when you experienced a similar situation with someone and how it was resolved.

THEN, make the connection that this line of questioning reflects a cycle we experience in our relationships, especially with our parents. Many students find that something causes conflict with their parents. But explain that the issue is often worked out and the relationship is on the right track again. The result is better communication with our parents. Ask if this is something they've experienced in their own lives.

FINALLY, say something like:

- **We're going to jump into our Bible study and see a similar pattern of reconciliation like the one we just described. This pattern we experience with our parents happens on a cosmic scale in our relationship with our heavenly Father. Don't believe me? Let's take a closer look.**

The Main Event

- **Goal:** The idea is for students to understand that while God does love us, there was a conflict between God and us that could only be resolved by Jesus.
- **Set Up:** No set up is needed.

FIRST, ask for anyone to can review what you learned in the last lesson. Use the following bullet points to help if need be:

- **You learned that prayer is an essential component of a personal relationship with God.**
- **You challenged them to overcome the obstacles in their prayer-lives keeping them from drawing closer to God.**

NEXT, instruct your students to turn to 1 Timothy 2. While they're finding it, fill in some of the context of the book using the Bible Background. Read or have a student read 1 Timothy 2:1-6. When they're finished lead students in a brief discussion. Ask:

- **Describe the kind of prayer life Paul mentions here. What can you take away from this?**
 - Answers will vary, but the idea is that we get a glimpse that our prayers aren't to be just for ourselves. We should pray for others including our elected officials.
- **The real heart of this passage as far as we're concerned is verse 5. How does Paul describe Jesus?**
 - *Answer:* Jesus is the one "mediator" between God and man.

Hit pause for a moment, and ask anyone if they know what a mediator is. (If your students don't know, you might have to ask a student to look up the definition on their phone.) Your definition should be similar to this:

- **A negotiator who acts as a link between parties**
- **One that reconciles differences between disputants**
- **A person who mediates especially between parties at variance.**

Resume your discussion by asking:

- **OK, now that we know what a mediator is, what do you think Paul is saying Jesus' role is? What do you think Jesus does as a mediator?**
 - *Answer:* Jesus is the go-between between God and us. Explain to students that because of His sacrifice on the cross, Christ can represent us in God's presence. God hears our prayers and concerns because of Jesus.

Explain that this is an amazing thing, one we take for granted. Say something like:

- **Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth and died for your sins. He arose from the dead and is sitting in heaven right now. And what He is doing, among other things, is bringing our prayers and concerns before God the Father on our behalf. Your name is on Jesus' lips. He is the peacemaker and representative of you before God. Let that sink in . . .**

THEN, ask if anyone has anything else to add. If not, instruct your students to turn to John 16. While they're finding it, provide some of the context of the book using the Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read John 16:7. When they're finished lead students in a brief discussion. Ask:

- **Does anyone remember the context around what's happening right now?**
 - *Answer:* Jesus is telling His disciples about what will happen when He is crucified, arises, and returns to Heaven.
- **What is Jesus talking about specifically? Who is the Counselor?**
 - *Answer:* The Holy Spirit.
- **What did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit?**
 - *Answer:* That it was good He was leaving because once He did, the Holy Spirit would come and indwell God's people.

Instruct your students to hold that thought for a moment while they find Romans 8:26-27. Read the passage aloud while they follow along. Then, ask:

- **OK, let's put these two together. Jesus said that all Christ-followers will have the Spirit, the Counselor, living inside them. What does Paul say here in Romans that the Spirit does for us in vs. 27?**
 - *Answer:* The Spirit intercedes for us when we don't know what to pray.
- **What does the word intercede mean? Even if you don't know, can you gather some clues from the context of the verse?**
 - *Answer:* Simply put, to intercede means to intervene on behalf of someone else.

Explain that, when combined with what you learned about Jesus as mediator, your minds should be exploding right now. Say something like:

- **Let's get this straight. We're sinful people, separated from God because of our sin. Not only does Jesus, God's own Son, come to earth and die for us in order that we might have a restored relationship with God, but He is standing in front of God making peace between God and us, making sure our prayers are heard. And now we find out the Holy Spirit isn't just making sure our prayers are heard, He is actually filling in the gaps, letting God know what we need even when we don't know it ourselves! God shows His love to us in a lot of ways. But this is just amazing. Especially when you consider that we've done nothing to deserve it.**

NEXT, tell students to turn to Hebrews 10. While they find it, give the context of the book using the Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read Hebrews 10:19-22. When they're finished lead students in a brief discussion. Ask:

- **Some of this requires a pretty in-depth look at the Biblical Background of this passage, more than we have time to look at right now. The quick version is that verses 19-21 talk about much of what we've already talked about: that Jesus has made it possible to bring our prayers before God.**
- **What does verse 22 say about how we should approach God?**
 - *Answer:* We can draw near to God; we can do so honestly and fully confident that God loves us.
- **What impact does this have on our prayers? In other words, how does this affect the way we pray to God?**
 - *Answer:* We can be confident knowing that God wants a relationship with us. We can be assured that we can honestly bring our needs to them and He will hear them and answer them according to His will.

FINALLY, transition to The Last Word by saying:

- **We've learned a lot of awesome stuff about our prayers and how God hears them. Let's not lose sight of the fact that this is all thanks to Jesus, who willingly gave Himself up as a sacrifice for our sins. Without Jesus, our sin would prevent us from being in God's presence. Without Jesus, the Holy Spirit wouldn't be permanently with us, and permanently speaking to God the Father on our behalf. When we take all this into consideration, our hearts should burst with thankfulness to Jesus for all He's done for us.**

The Last Word

- **Goal:** Armed with these three incredible truths we want our students to find practical ways to actually live into the intimacy through prayer, that God offers to us through Jesus.
- **Supplies:** Half sheets of paper and pens.

FIRST, ask your students to think back to the beginning of this lesson and the scenario we described with their parents. Make sure they remember that we focused on the fact that when it comes to our relationship with

our parents, our separation gets resolved and we are often brought back into a healthy relationship with good communication. Say:

- **Whenever there is disharmony in our relationships, it's rough, whether some sort of conflict or selfishness causes it, or whether it's something else. But it's nice when it gets resolved. Sometimes in conflicts within the business world, the issue gets resolved through a mediator, someone in the middle to help both sides work it out. Maybe you have someone in your family who acts as the peacemaker. What I hope you've learned today is that Jesus' role as mediator can't be overlooked.**

Remind students that while we may feel like there is distance in our relationship with God, we have seen through these Scriptures that God has done all the hard work, through Jesus, so we can have an intimate relationship with God. God has proven His love, His care, and His openness towards us. But help them know that the ball is in their courts.

NEXT, tell students that while all this information is good to know, it doesn't really matter unless we do something about it. Say:

- **So, instead of listening to me, or talking with one another, we are going to spend the remainder of our time in prayer attempting to live into this reality.**

THEN, pass out the half sheets of paper and pens and give the students these instructions:

- **For the next 5-10 minutes go somewhere quiet by yourself and spend some time in prayer.**
- **On the front side of the paper confess whatever sins you need to confess, so that you can take advantage of the forgiveness and grace that God gives us through Jesus. By confessing our sins, any perceived distance we might feel between us and God disappears.**
- **On the back of the paper let's take advantage of the gift of care and intimacy God gives us through Jesus:**
- **Ask the Holy Spirit to care for you. You know what your deepest places of hurt and need are, you don't even need to verbalize it, just ask the Spirit to intercede.**
- **Pray about and for whatever God has put on your heart, but pray boldly!**

FINALLY, come back together and ask if anyone would like to share about their prayer experience, then close in prayer. Remind your students that this week in their devotionals they will be encouraged to dive deep and pray with confidence as they take advantage of the mediating work of Jesus Christ.

- Don't forget to distribute the "Prayer Lesson 2" devotions to your students. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Facebook, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Consider texting students a couple of times during the week to encourage them to follow through with reading the devotions.

We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.

