

Pray Continually

By Karen Noal



FAMILY TIME
TRAINING

Teaching Goal: We can talk to God anytime.

Scripture: I Samuel 1 – Story of Hannah asking for a son and having her request answered.

I Samuel 1:12-13a “As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard.”

I Thessalonians 5:17 “Pray continually.”

Ephesians 6:18 “And pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

Materials: Paper and pencil

- I. Play theme song
- II. Pray
- III. Review last lesson
- IV. Lesson and discussion

✓ Words written in **bold** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.

A. **ACTIVITY #1:** As children join you, tap one on the shoulder and point to the paper and pencil, which should be left nearby, making a motion to bring it to you. Do not speak out loud and make it simple, not drawing attention to what you are doing.

I want you to add two numbers together. Tell them the numbers, choosing the numbers based on the age and skill of the children so that it can be done easily in their heads. **How did you do that?** *I did it in my head.* Using the paper and pencil write down the numbers and add them. For younger children, you may want to count out slash marks and count them all to show the process of adding the two numbers together. **Explain to me how you did this in your head?** *I was able to picture it in my mind and add it together forming the answer.* (If child is younger they may need help with the idea of picturing it in their minds and initially say, “I don’t know.”)

We can think in our minds. We can also communicate to others without actually forming and speaking words out loud. When I gestured for you to get me the paper and pencil did I speak out loud? No Did you understand and respond even though I did not speak out loud? Yes

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In the same way that we can do math in our heads or communicate with others without using words, we can pray in our heads and communicate with God. The Bible tells us in I Thessalonians 5:17 to pray continually. Read Ephesians 6:18 too. **How can we do this?** *By praying in our heads whenever we think about it.*

In your own words, tell the story of Hannah from I Samuel 1. **Hannah wasn't speaking out loud but did God still hear her? Yes How do we know?** *The Bible tells us that He heard. In this case he answered her prayer by giving her a son. Even if He hadn't given her the son, we know He still heard her prayer. God hears us even when we don't pray out loud.*

B. **ACTIVITY #2:** Take turns lip reading simple sentences such as "come here" or "I love you" and making simple gestures (i.e. smile, a nod of the head) to communicate what you are thinking. **We are able to communicate without using words. Sometimes when we are in a crowded room and cannot speak; we can still make contact and communicate with lip reading or gestures.** If you see me across a crowded room and I motion for you to come and mouth the words "let's go," you know what I mean don't you? **We can still communicate or pray even when we are busy or others are around, by praying in our heads. God wants us to talk to Him all day long. He wants us to tell Him about what we are doing and wants us to talk to Him about the people we come in contact with during the day. We can do this anytime during the day, in our heads.**

Teach your children "the family squeeze": Tell them that anytime you squeeze their hand or tap them (or do anything) in a series of three, that you are communicating to them a special message without using words. You are telling them I (1) LOVE (2) YOU (3)! Use this in the future to let them know you love them and as a reminder that we don't always need spoken words to communicate.

C. **OPTIONAL:** Play a simple game of charades to reinforce communicating without speaking out loud.

V. Memorize

**We can talk to God any time of day,
In your mind or out loud, either's ok.**

VI. Close in Prayer

A. Lead children in a silent prayer:

1. Ask them to pray for a friend silently – silence as they pray.
2. Have them thank God for something – silence.
3. Ask God for something – silence.
4. Say Amen.

Afterwards, ask them who and what they prayed for during the silence. Reinforce that God hears all our prayers, even those not spoken out loud.

VII. **Pass It On:** Make an extra copy of this lesson and *pass it on* to another family.