

The potential of prayer

John 17.6-19 Easter 7

Before his arrest, Jesus prays for his friends that they may be one as he is one with the Father. He asks that they may be protected in the uncertain times they face and made holy – i.e. set apart from the world's unbelief – by the truth about who Jesus is.

This week we explore Jesus' prayer for his friends in uncertain times.

Prepare your young people's session

Read Bible notes on [WEB](#).

When do you pray? Where do you pray? How do you pray? Take a bit of time before the session to reflect on your answers to some of these questions.

The ROOTS resources take account of people's different spiritual preferences. These preferences were described as 'spiritual styles' by Canadian theologian and practitioner David Csinos. The four styles, Word, Emotion, Symbol and Action, describe the way we interact differently with each other, why we prefer different styles of worship and what helps us to perceive and connect with God. Exploring the idea that there are different ways of praying and connecting with God may help the young people to grow in their relationship with God.

Thy Kingdom Come 13-23 May, see [WEB](#) for resources.

Find more ideas opposite. Go to www.rootsontheweb.com for links, templates, images, tracks.

GATHER

Emoji expressions 5 mins ES

You will need: a sheet of emojis (see [WEB](#)).

- ▶▶▶ Play the track 'I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever', Delirious? on *Walk & Worship*, as the young people gather.
- Show pictures of emojis: point out one or two that you use a lot. Indicate an emoji that represents how you are feeling.
- Encourage members of the group to point to one that represents how they are feeling.
- Remind them that God knows how we feel when we pray.

First impressions [WEB](#)

You could also use the image and following questions to help introduce the theme.



- What are your first impressions as you look at this image?
- How does prayer help you in uncertain times?
- How would you describe the potential of prayer?

SHARE THE WORD

RCL Easter 7 Year B: Acts 1.15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5.9-13; **John 17.6-19**

Relationships in prayer 10 mins WE

You will need: printouts of the passage, three different coloured highlighter pens.

- Provide each member of the group with a copy of **John 17.6-19**.
- Invite the group to highlight everything referring to 'I' or 'me' in one colour, everything referring to 'you' in a second colour and everything referring to 'they' or 'them' in a third colour. Explore the idea that prayer is about developing a relationship with God.

EXPLORE AND RESPOND

Conversation ball game 5 mins WES

Illustrate prayer as a conversation

You will need: a ball.

- Invite one young person to make a statement while holding the ball. They then throw the ball to someone else who replies to that statement and throws the ball to someone else.
- Play a second round with the statement: 'I think we should pray for...because...'

Styles of prayer 15 mins WESA

Explore different approaches to prayer

You will need: information on spiritual styles (see [WEB](#)), large sheet of paper, marker pens.

- Share the articles on spiritual styles with the young people, printed or digitally. Explore the idea of having different spiritual styles and ask what the young people feel about this.
- Discuss together if they have any preferences for connecting with God/praying. Write ideas on the paper.
- Talk together about prayer being personal and the importance of finding a way to pray that works for the individual.

You, me, them prayers 5 mins WESA

Reflect on the themes of the passage

You will need: stones, crosses, heart shapes.

- Explain to the group that the stones represent God, the crosses represent Jesus and the hearts represent the members of your group.
- ▶▶▶▶▶ Play the track 'Falling Into You', Hillsong Young & Free on *Youth Revival*. Invite the young people to take one of the symbols and use it as a focus for prayer, e.g. the stone could be a focus for praise of God, the cross could be used to bring concerns to Jesus, the heart could be a focus for a personal prayer.

[WEB](#) Check-in: Connecting faith with everyday, real-life issues.

GO WITH GOD

Consider together what you have explored, what that means for each of you and how it might influence your daily lives.

- Place a bat, a ball, a map and a candle in front of the group. The bat symbolises things that have struck you, i.e. made you think. The ball – things you want to throw out, i.e. make a change in your life. The map – something you want to find, i.e. think about more. The candle – something that needs light, i.e. something you want to pray about.
- Encourage the young people to stand by each of the objects in turn and consider their own responses.

Go with God 24/7

Set aside five minutes at the same time every day to think and pray about a particular person or issue. Ask God to be present in that situation and show you how to respond. **ESA**

As you finish, give out the **ROOTS at home** resource [WEB](#) to encourage faith at home.