

Confidence in Prayer

By Nance Keyes

for use as

STEP 1

**Lesson 11****Focus:**

Don't be surprised when God answers your prayers.

Lesson 11**Bible Basis:**

Acts 12:1-19

Lesson 11**Memory Verse:**

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. —James 5:16

Students will watch a video about unexpected surprises as they explore praying with confidence and expecting answers.

Materials:

Internet access

Wherever we are, in the Sunday school classroom or at home with the family, God hears and honors our prayers. He offers us His ear as we pour out our hearts to Him. In response to our prayers, He blesses us by changing our lives even if we do not see the exact answers we expected. Today, we may not be in the place we expected to be on a Sunday morning, but be assured that this did not come as a surprise to God. He is with us now, waiting to hear and answer our prayers. As a class or as a family, let's focus on coming before God boldly, knowing He is listening. As you work through this lesson, pray expecting answers in the form of great things that will bring God glory.

May is usually a month filled with graduation ceremonies and the accompanying parties, gifts, and other festivities. This year has been very different. Diplomas have been issued without the pomp and circumstance that usually surrounds the season due to the quarantine restrictions of COVID-19.

Allow preteens to share about any disappointments having to do with family or friends' graduations this year. Be prepared to share your own experience if you have a story to tell.

Even in years past, graduations haven't always been what everyone hoped for—some take place when a loved one is ill or absent due to an unavoidable situation such as a military deployment. Let's watch a compilation of graduates who were going through graduation without someone important—until something unexpected happened!

Share the following video [full length of the video is 6:07; feel free to stop video after watching a few of the scenarios if time is an issue]:

9 Graduation Ceremonies That End with the Unexpected
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPguF8Xq9I0>

➤ **Have you ever been in a situation that ended unexpectedly in a good surprise? Tell us about it.** (Answers will vary; students may mention surprise visits or trips or gifts. Accept all reasonable answers.)

Today we're going to talk about a time when Peter and his friends had an amazing experience with prayer—they were totally surprised at the big, unexpected answer God had for them during a very troubling time. Let's see what happened.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

upper elementary



Lesson 11 / May 24, 2020

Confidence in Prayer

for use as
STEP 4 

Lesson 11

Focus:

Don't be surprised when God answers your prayers.

Lesson 11

Bible Basis:

Acts 12:1-19

Lesson 11

Memory Verse:

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. —James 5:16

Materials:

- Internet access
- Envelope or container
- Index cards or scrap paper
- Pens/pencils
- Markers or crayons
- Optional: various decorative stickers or craft items, file folder or notebook

Read the following instructions and explain them to the students or to the family, depending on your circumstances. As a class or as a family, make or set up a prayer request container.

As a class or as a family, this activity involves making a container for prayer requests and using it as a tool to reinforce that we can pray with confidence and expect God's answers. If you are meeting in the classroom, each student can use and decorate a large envelope. Ask the students to write the memory verse somewhere on the envelope. If at home with the family, involve everyone —young and old. Find a container (shoe box, oatmeal box, a big jar, etc.) to decorate or to use as is. You may want to write the memory verse and place it near or on the container.

If working on this in the classroom, invite the students to decide if this is going to be a personal prayer tool or one they will share with their families. If it is personal, the students will write requests as they occur, put them in the envelope, and take them out as daily prayer prompts. If working as a family, family members can write requests on index cards or scrap paper and place requests in the container during the day. Urge your preteens to help younger siblings who are unable to write clearly. As a family, take the requests from the container at a designated time each day/evening, and pray specifically about each one (or a determined number of them, making sure each person's request is represented).

Be sure to take the requests that have been answered and move them to an answered prayer praise wall. This can be a closet door, a wall in the house, the refrigerator, or whatever works in your home. If there is no space for this, put them in a file folder or notebook that gets opened daily during prayer time. The idea is to see the answers and be reminded that God answers prayer; as you continue to pray, you will know more and more to expect answers. When the family (or the student who chooses to do this alone) prays, take time to thank God for the individual items on the answered prayer wall and thank God that He can be counted on to answer the requests that you are continuing to bring before Him.

Even though we know God answers prayer, sometimes we are very surprised when and how He answers our prayers. Let's open our hearts to the opportunity to pray with confidence and expect to see God's answers to our prayers.

Distribute index cards or scrap paper and pens or pencils. Give preteens an opportunity to fill out some prayer request cards to place in their prayer container. If they are having difficulty thinking of things to pray for, you might suggest some of the following.

- What would you like God to help you stop doing?
- What would you like God to help you start doing?
- What would you like God to help you understand about Him?
- Write the names of those who need to know Jesus as Lord and Savior.
- Who needs healing?
- In what way would you like God to make you more like Him?

Put the requests in the container and encourage students or family members to add to the container daily as requests occur to them. Keep the note cards or scrap paper and pens or pencils near the prayer request container, so requests can be added throughout the day.

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