



What does it feel like to pray?

Faith in the Nexus – Animation & Discussion on Collective Worship & Church
Questions for discussion for children, parents, schools & churches

How to watch and discuss

When you use this animation as a stimulus for discussion, be aware that there are opportunities for people to disclose in a personal way that may require some care and sensitivity. How you introduce the animation will depend on your gauging how well the group knows each other and the extent to which they are likely to trust each other.

Watch the animation first (in class, as a group of parents, in a school INSET session or church group) without any comment. Then watch it again, asking the group to note down the children's words that seem particularly important to them. You may suggest they first make a word cloud on their own, or, if you do the exercise as a group, a mind map may help explore the deeper meanings of the words in a free discussion. Use the following questions to explore these words.

For each group, a pair of Year 5/6 children's quotes from the animation introduces the topic, followed by questions (or a task) relevant to each of the audiences – children, parents & school/church.

Scan or tap to watch
the animation
bit.ly/nexus-01



1. Several children say prayer is like talking to someone you can trust and rely on. Is it?

"It's kind of like just you & God talking to one another, not having any distractions from your siblings or your parents or any family member or your friends."

"Like you know it's someone that's actually listening to you and caring what you say."

"You always know he's going to hear you."

Children

- If someone asks you what praying is like, what words would you use to describe it?
- What difference does it make to know you can trust the person you're talking to?

Parents

- What can we as parents learn about prayer from our children?
- How would you describe to your child what praying is like for you?
- Why and how does trust play such an important part in the way we pray?

School/Church

Individual teachers/support staff:

- How do/might you help children to pray in school?
- How might prayer support a school culture of positive relationships?

School & Church leaders:

- In what ways do/might you model prayer to teachers & parents?

2. What do you feel when you pray about something bad that's happened?

"If you've done a bad thing and you're asking for forgiveness, you feel better, like a weight's been lifted."

"When I pray, it's like a weight's been lifted off my shoulders. I've shared and been open with God and it makes me feel I can share it with other people."

Children

- What does it feel like when someone really forgives you?
- How can praying make you feel better, do you think? If you have felt like that, how would you describe it?

Parents

- What can we learn from our children about prayer when needing forgiveness?
- Do you find it surprising how much emotional burden our children carry around with them?
- How can we help them unburden themselves through prayer?
- How can we demonstrate confession and forgiveness in prayer to our children?

School/Church

Individual teachers/support staff:

- What part does/might prayer take when talking with a child who has misbehaved (e.g. by hurting someone physically or verbally, by lying or stealing, or being unkind)?
- How does/might prayer help in restoring relationships that have been fractured?

School leaders:

- Why do/might you want prayer to be central to your school culture? What steps might you take towards getting there?

3. How does praying change the sort of person you are?

"It keeps us calm and reminds us that God's always there for us, and that we can always rely on him and trust him. But as well as that, we must trust him and know (that) to forgive others and good Christians."

"When I'm praying, I feel happy because I'm praying to a very holy person. So, then I'm connecting with him so I feel like I'm special as well."

Children

- How do you think prayer might change the way you behave?
- What do you think the boy means when he says he feels special when he's praying to God?

Parents

- In what ways do you think prayer can help children develop as they grow up?
- How can we as parents encourage a child's prayer life?

School/Church

Individual teachers/support staff:

- What qualities do you think can praying help to develop in children?
- How might/do you encourage children in feeling 'joyous,' 'special,' 'calm,' 'happy,' 'trusting,' 'free'?

School & Church leaders:

- Many of the children's comments reflect their understanding of who God is. What picture of God's character do these comments give you? How close is it to the God presented in your school or church?

Finally: What Next?

How might you use this animation and discussion to change, improve, adapt, or strengthen what you currently do in class and school, at home and in church?

Authored by Mr Nick Taunt 2024

National Institute For
Christian Education Research
Canterbury Christ Church University
nicer@canterbury.ac.uk
www.nicer.org.uk



**Canterbury
Christ Church
University**