



[**Author Note:** Send this to leaders and parents to inform them about this series.]

Prayer is important. Many argue that prayer's **the** most important thing. One Christian put it this way: “*There’s not one item on your calendar that prayer shouldn’t trump.*” The majority of Christians would agree prayer is important.

When many of us think of prayer, we think of a one-sided conversation with God. Let’s use the analogy of a “suggestion card” at a restaurant to help us.

Dear restaurant, thank you for the food you’ve provided my family for years. I enjoy your burgers, but I suggest you start using free-range, grass-fed, GMO-distant, farm-raised, organic, gluten-free, prayer-based beef in your burgers. It’d help my stomach, my family, and my stool. Could you switch by tomorrow night at 7? Thank you!

Biblical prayer is much more than that. Prayer is how we communicate with God. In Philippians 4:6, Paul encourages us to lift our requests to God. We can give the Lord our petitions, but with a right posture, recognizing that prayer is not one-sided but rather a conversation.

We see this with God and Job. Job suggests certain things, and then God speaks back. They commune in conversation. It’s not a one-sided prayer.

Students will learn what prayer is and what it isn’t, and they’ll be introduced to four creative ways to converse with God. Prayer can take on all sorts of forms, with lots of practices to creatively support communing with God.

Series Title: Let’s Pray: *Creatively Communing With God*

Series Overview: Introduce students to four famous Psalms and to a variety of creative prayer practices to help nurture their prayerfulness.

Goal: Students will use the Psalms to learn how to pray in ways that foster intimacy, closeness, and a relationship with God.

Series Breakdown: Focus on four primary prayer practices and four of the most well-known Psalms.

Week 1 | Lectio Divina: Psalm 103

Students will learn this practice and experience it with Psalm 103. In his book *Sacred Fire*, author Ronald Rolheiser defines it this way:

Lectio Divina (Latin for "Divine Reading") is a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's Word. It does not treat Scripture as texts to be studied, but as the Living Word.

Week 2 | Imaginative Prayer: Psalm 23

Imaginative prayer is a way to use and cultivate the amazing imagination that God's given us to experience intimacy with Him. This practice allows us to sit with a passage, putting ourselves in the story as though we are there. We'll use Psalm 23 ("*The Lord is my shepherd*") as the Psalm for students to imaginatively enter into as though they are actually lying down in His green pastures.

Week 3 | Written Prayer: Psalm 51

Many people in Scripture wrote their prayers to the Lord—David, Solomon and more. Writing our prayers can be a helpful way to be with Christ. We'll use Psalm 51, which is a prayer of confession that David wrote after God took His Son. Students will then write their own prayer of confession as David did.

Week 4 | The Examen: Psalm 139

This is a way to look back over our day to say "thank you" for things which have gone well and to say sorry for things that have not. By doing this daily, we'll become more aware of what God's doing in our lives.

God searches our hearts. He knows us! Psalm 139 reminds us of this and closes with this famous prayer.

Psalm 139:23–24 (NIV)

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Students will be led through The examen prayer after being reminded of Psalm 139.

Final Thoughts: Let's help students cultivate a life of prayerfulness.