

The Gospel Project for Adults, Summer 2015  
Extended Instructional Approaches for Session 8

**Point 1: *Tell a purposeful joke.***

Tell this silly joke to the class and use it to start a discussion around the question below.

Three preachers sat discussing the best positions for prayer while a telephone repairman worked nearby. "Kneeling is definitely best," claimed one "No," another contended. "I get the best results standing with my hands outstretched to Heaven."

"You're both wrong," the third insisted. "The most effective prayer position is lying prostrate, face down on the floor."

The repairman could contain himself no longer. "Hey, fellas," he interrupted, "the best prayin' I ever did was hangin' upside down from a telephone pole."

[Source: Charles and Frances Hunter, *Healing Through Humor* (Lake Mary, Creation House, 2003), 68.]

Ask the question "How does need and desperation change our prayers?"

**Point 2: *Challenge your group with a story from church history.***

Use this story about Martin Luther's dog. After reading the story to them, ask your group members if they are as devoted and consistent in their prayers as the dog is in the meat:

*When Luther's puppy happened to be at the table, he looked for a morsel from his master, and watched with open mouth and motionless eyes; he [Martin Luther] said, "Oh, if I could only pray the way this dog watches the meat! All his thoughts are concentrated on the piece of meat. Otherwise he has no thought, wish or hope."*

[Source: Martin Luther, *Table Talk*, vol. 54 in *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 37-38.]

**Conclusion: *Close with reflection.***

Share this common children's mealtime prayer with your group and have a discussion about the simple yet profound implications of this prayer.

*God is Great, God is Good;  
Let us thank Him for our food.  
By His hands we all are fed,  
Give us Lord our Daily Bread.*

Point out the following truths:

- God is great—His power is above all else;
- God is good—everything we see as good should correspond to God's goodness in some way;
- Thank Him—this great, good God deserves our gratitude because His hands feed us;
- Give us daily bread—after we acknowledge the truth about God, we then ask for the bread that we need for today.

Such deep theology in a simple presentation! Remember that we ask for things from God only because of the truth we know about God. If we ask not in accord with God's character, will, and purposes, we are more likely to slip into selfish prayers.