



## Lesson for May 5

"What if the  
Hokey Pokey  
IS  
What It's All About?"  
*How we pray...*

# Readings and Devotions for May 6-11

## Monday, May 6 Read Psalm 5

This is what is often called a "Psalm for Deliverance." What are some of the characteristics of this prayer and how would you characterize both the attitude and manner in which the psalmist prays? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ If God is responsive to it, what does this tell you about God?  
How is this like-or unlike- your own prayers? \_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday May 7 Read Judges 6:37-39

Gideon had his doubts and fears and note that God did not hold it against him. We are of course not supposed to test God but why was it alright in this instance? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What does this passage tell us about expressing our doubts and coming honestly before God?  
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## Wednesday, May 8 Read Matthew 6:9-13

Try reading this "Lord's Prayer" in several different translations (try [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) for a wide range of accessible translations) and reflect on the different ways we can understand this familiar prayer. After doing this, try writing this prayer in your own words. How would you sum up what Jesus is saying ought to motivate and guide our prayers?  
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## Thursday, May 9 Read 1 John 5:10-15

Our faith is rooted not in what we can do nor in what God can give us but in who Jesus is and

### *Sermon notes for May 5*

*"What if the Hokey Pokey IS What it's All About?"*

- 1. Our top priority in prayer is accessing God's Will.*
- 2. Such a perspective shapes all our other prayer requests.*
- 3. Our prayers must be shaped by...*
  - ★ ...a desire to be a part of God's plan.*
  - ★ ...a meeting of our needs, not necessarily our wants*
  - ★ ...boldness and trust in God's goodness.*



what He calls us to be. In the first few verses here John reminds us of that on which our faith is based. Now look closely at vv.13-14. Why do we have cause to be bold?

\_\_\_\_\_ How does this knowledge and this faith shape how we pray and for what?

**Friday, May 10 Read James 4:1-10**

Think back on your reading from yesterday and then read vv.2-3 in this passage again. What does this tell us about the things for which we pray and the proper attitude we need to have when we pray? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Though we are right to ask things of God, what role does (or should) the attitudes of our hearts play in these requests?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do we, sometimes, act as if we *deserve* God's answers and gifts? Does that make a difference?

**Saturday, May 11 Read Psalm 63**

If a life of prayer is about a closer relationship with God, what is this psalm saying about the result of such a life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Is your own prayer life enriching and satisfying to your soul? Why or why not?

Discuss this with God today in prayer.

**Some more to think about...**

*"When we pray for another, it is not an attempt to alter God's mind toward him. In prayer we add our wills to God's good will...that in fellowship with Him He and we may minister to those whom both He and we love."*

-Henry Sloane Coffin

*"Our real work is prayer. What good is the cold iron of our frantic little efforts unless we first heat it I the furnace of our prayer. Only heat will diffuse heat."*

- Mother Marbel

*"What is the use of praying if at the very moment of prayer we have so little confidence in God that we are busy planning our own kind of answer to our prayer?"*

-Thomas Merton



## Small Group Study and Leader's Discussion Guide for May 12

### Getting Started:

1. **Read Psalm 5. Read :** This is what is often called a "Psalm for Deliverance."  
**Ask and discuss:** What are some of the characteristics of this prayer and how would you characterize both the attitude and manner in which the psalmist prays? If God is responsive to it, what does this tell you about God? How is this like-or unlike- your own prayers?
2. **Read 1 John 5:10-15. Read:** "Our faith is rooted not in what we can do nor in what God can give us but in who Jesus is and what He calls us to be."  
**Ask what this means to the group:** In the first few verses here John reminds us of that on which our faith is based. Now look closely at vv.13-14. Ask: Why do we have cause to be bold? How does this knowledge and this faith shape how we pray and for what? Have someone read James 4:1-10. How does this impact the things we've already been discussing to this point?

### Going Deeper:

1. **Read Matthew 6:9-13 in several versions and discuss the differences and similarities. If anyone tried the exercise of writing it in their own words, ask if they'd be willing to share what they wrote.**
2. **In light of your readings, discuss the sermon points from last week. What must our prayers be shaped (and preceded) by...(share some specific examples of what this might look like and how it has worked- or not worked and why). Use these note points as a guideline:**
  - A.) ...a desire to be a part of God's plan?
  - B.) ...a meeting of our needs, as opposed to our *wants*?
  - C.) ....boldness and trust in God's goodness.
3. **Read over some of the "more to think about" quotations from page 2 of this guide. Have the group rephrase these quotes in their own words and understandings. Do you agree with these writers? Why or why not? How do some of the scriptures you've read this week verify (or challenge) these quotations?**

### Taking it With You:

Close by reading the Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6, first one line at a time around the group and finally as a collective prayer with everyone.