

## Rotation.org's @Home Lessons on the Lord's Prayer

"Untying knots" is a great visual metaphor for the word "forgiveness" which means "to loosen," "let go," "unbind." Quite literally, the tying and untying of the knots is a wonderful kinesthetic activity (movement), and the added bonus in this activity is that we are helping one another untie each other's knots!



## The Lord's Prayer: "Forgiveness: Untying the Human Knot"



### Summary of Activity

This is a "knotty" activity to drive home the meaning of "forgive us our debts..." The Greek word which we translate as "forgive" is an action word that means "letting go, freeing, loosening." It's a rich visual metaphor that you will drive home in this "knotty" family team-building activity. As you teach the meaning of forgiveness and ask questions, you will be helping your family overcome the challenging grammar and potentially confusing theology of "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." (See the [Bible Background](#) if you want to dig deeper into a word study of this verse.)

### Scripture for the Lesson

[Matthew 6:5-13](#) (NRSV)

### What You Need

A long rope or clothesline (about 3 feet of length per person)

## Start your Bible devotion family game time!

### 1) Introduce the Lord's Prayer

Jesus taught and did many wonderful and amazing things. One of the most important things Jesus taught his disciples was a prayer that helps us know HOW and WHAT to pray to God. We call his prayer "The Lord's Prayer."

Where do we usually pray this prayer? (in worship)

Let's pray it now. (Encourage everyone to recite the prayer, providing hints as needed.)

## 2) Scripture reading

Let's take a look at the time Jesus taught his friends to pray. Find and read Matthew 6:5-13.

It doesn't sound exactly like the way we just prayed it, does it?

Let's think a little bit about the word "hallowed" and also about what it means to forgive debts as we work together to play a game.

## 3) Set up the game with the following introductory circle activity and comments

**Say:** Let's form a "**Family of God**" **Hallowed Circle**. This circle is the way that God WANTS us to relate to each other—as a family, as the children of God. (Hold hands.)

Turn to the person on your right and left and say, "Hi brother/sister, how are you today?" Then ask, "How can I help you?" And "Can you help me?"

Now waive across the circle at someone and say out loud, "I'm here for you, too!"

Now turn to the person on your left and pat them on the back saying, "God loves you."

Now turn to the person on your right and shake their hand saying, "You're not perfect but that's okay, neither am I."

Now ask everyone if they have noticed what **SHAPE** the family of God is standing in? (circle)

Do you know what is often drawn in the shape of a circle? A halo!

Do you know what a halo means? (It means Hallowed! Holy!)

**Say:** In the Lord's Prayer we bless God's name as holy and hallowed, and through our prayers, God blesses us in return, by sharing his holy presence and making us "holy" or "hallowed" too! (Making us special, set apart, beaming for God). Prayer prepares us to **GLOW** and **SHINE** with God's love in this world.

But here's the problem: **SIN**. Our bad and selfish behaviors keep trying to break our halos. Our sins tie our halos into knots. Asking for God's forgiveness in prayer helps **UNTIE** them.

[**Tie overhand knots in the rope** about three feet apart as you talk about "sin" putting knots in our hearts and relationships. There should be one knot for each family member participating. Don't forget yourself!]



## 4) Play the game

Put the knotted rope on the ground in a circle (halo).

Have each person select a knot on the rope and stand by it, on either side of the rope.

Each person should grab the rope on either side of his knot with one hand. Some people will grab further out from their knot than others, but that is okay.

Now have everyone work together to untie all of the knots and restore the circle (halo, hallowed family) without moving the hand that is placed on the rope (you may use only your free hand to untie knots).

[Usually, it will take some time to figure out how to untie the knots. You may end up with more knots before you figure it out! Take time to solve the challenge; and if necessary, let go of the rope to retie it and start over again.]

## **5) Close with prayer**

Prayer is one of the best tools we have for fighting sin and restoring relationships. When we ask God to forgive our sins and ask for God's help with forgiving those who have sinned against us, we are both recognizing and restoring the "holy"—the halo, the honor/respect—that God blesses all his children with and wants us to share.

**Pray the Lord's Prayer together**, holding hands in an unbroken, unknotted circle.

Adapted from [this lesson](#) by the Rotation.org Writing Team

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