

Lesson #3: Praying Honestly – United in Prayer 2026 – Teen Lessons

Primary Text: 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Intro: This text is a prayer offered by Hannah over the course of many years, and she sincerely pours out her heart to the Lord with the desire to have a son. Through Eli, God hears her prayers and answers her. This son is Samuel, who becomes one of the great prophets of the Lord.

Key Point: Praying with *Honesty* is an important virtue because it brings us into deeper fellowship with the Lord. Praying to God with honesty requires our vulnerability and makes our prayers more personal and less wrote.

READ and DISCUSS: 1 Samuel 1:1-20

- **Verse 10 says Hannah was “deeply distressed” and “prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly.”** What does this show us about what we're allowed to bring to God in prayer?
- Hannah tells God exactly what she wants and even makes a specific vow (vv. 11–12). **Why do you think we sometimes feel like we need to clean up our feelings or requests before bringing them to God?**
- **Eli initially misunderstands Hannah and assumes she is drunk (vv. 13–14).** How does Hannah respond? What can we learn from her about honestly communicating what's happening in our hearts?
- Hannah says, **“I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD”** (v. 15). What do you think it means to “pour out your soul” to God? What might that look like in your own prayers?
- **Hannah doesn't know whether or when God will answer her prayer, but she still brings her request to Him.** What does this teach us about the relationship between honest prayer and trusting God?

READ and DISCUSS: Psalm 13:1-6

- **How would you describe David's emotional state in the first four verses?** What does he feel comfortable saying directly to God?
- David repeatedly asks, **“How long?”** What does this teach us about whether it's okay to tell God when we're frustrated with how long something is taking?
- In verses 1–4, David asks God several difficult questions. **Do you think asking God questions shows a lack of faith? Why or why not?**

- Notice the shift beginning in verse 5: **“But I have trusted in your steadfast love.”** What changed between David's questions and his declaration of trust?
- **David moves from lament to worship without necessarily having his circumstances resolved.** What does this tell us about the relationship between honesty and faith in prayer?

APPLICATION: Practicing Prayers of Honesty

- **When you're hurting, do you tend to pray about it, ignore it, or try to handle it yourself?** What keeps you from being completely honest with God?
- **What emotions are you most uncomfortable bringing to God—anger, sadness, fear, disappointment, jealousy, loneliness, doubt, or something else?** Why do you think you're hesitant to bring that emotion to Him?
- **Hannah and David both brought their deepest pain directly to God instead of pretending everything was okay.** What is one area of your life where you need to stop pretending and start praying honestly?
- **Psalm 13 moves from “How long?” to “I have trusted in your steadfast love.”** How can you be honest about your struggles while still reminding yourself of what you know to be true about God?
- **What is something you're currently feeling that you haven't been completely honest with God about?** What would it look like to “pour out your soul” to Him about it?

Song Suggestions:

- Create in Me
- Father God (Just for Today)
- Trust and Obey
- Give Us Clean Hands
- Sanctuary

Possible Activity: “Pour Out Your Soul” Prayer Prompts

- Give the students a piece of paper and a pencil. Write out the prompts below for them to copy down, then give them 10-15 minutes to write out their own prayers using the prompts:
 - God, right now I'm feeling...
 - Something I'm frustrated about is...
 - Something I'm afraid of is...
 - Something I wish You would change is...
 - Something I don't understand about You or my situation is...
 - God, what I really want You to know is...
 - Even though I don't understand everything, I choose to trust You with...