

THANK YOU

This prayer experience has been designed to help educate individuals participating in the Insomnia experience about the needs of orphans and vulnerable children around the world as well as specific ways individuals can pray for Sweet Sleep's ministry.

DIRECTION

Copy each direction of every numbered card on heavy card stock. This prayer experience can be set up in a variety of ways. First, Play soft music in the background, helping students focus in a mind of worship and reflection. Using lit candles around the room to create ambiance will help student's focus on this meditation time of education and participation. Have 8x10 pictures of orphans lying around, posted, or displayed around the room so students can focus on the faces of children who do not have a bed to lay their heads each night.

Feel free to set up chairs in rows the area where students will be, or set up chairs in random places around the room. On each chair, lay a copy of one of the prayer cards so that as students come into the room, they may choose a chair and participate in that prayer focus, spending as much time as needed on the prayer card in the chair. One may also desire to put up numbers around the room, 1-19, and then post the specific prayer experience card with the appropriate number.

1. Sit silently and read the following prayer as you say your own prayer to God.

“Dear Jesus, send your Spirit on us so that we will be taught to pray. Prayer is hard, requiring great effort, but when undone, effortless. I confess I have never liked to pray. Prayer is too much like begging. So I have to pray that your generous spirit will teach me to beg. I beg you to help all of us discover that our lives are constituted by prayer, so that we may be in your world one might, joyous people. Make us rested by such prayer, so content to be your people that we kill no more. (Stanley Hauerwas)

Take some time and pray for those orphans and vulnerable children you have seen pictures of who have to daily beg for survival essentials. Ask God to be the Almighty Provider for all of their needs.

2. Place your hands over your ears and pray that you would be able to hear what God says to you tonight about how you can get involved in the lives of orphans and vulnerable children through Sweet Sleep around the world.

3. Hold your right hand in front of you palm up. Then think of five things for which you are thankful for. As you think of each, close that finger as you begin to form a fist with your hand. Then spend 30 seconds saying thank you to God for allowing the message of salvation be shared with orphans and vulnerable children all over the world. When you are finished, take a deep breath and exhale as you release your fist, continuing to give thanks to God as you move to another station.

4. Bow your head and read this prayer to yourself in a whisper. Focus on one picture of an orphan or vulnerable child near you as you pray this prayer. Find me here. Speak to me. I want to feel you. Orphans around the world long to know the love of you Jesus. They need to hear you. You are the light that is leading them to the place where they can find peace again. You are the strength that keep them walking. You are the hope that keeps them trusting. You are the life to my soul. You are their purpose. You are their everything. And how can I stand here and not be moved by you? Would you tell me how could it be that I and these orphans are in your hands? You will not let either of us fall. You are able to still the heart of a child and take their breaths away. Would you take them in? Would you take them deeper now? And how can I stand here with you and not be moved by your work in the world? For those who are homeless, fatherless, motherless, lonely, afraid. Because you Jesus are the only thing they need. You are everything. Everything.

(Modified from "Everything" by Lifehouse from the album No Name Face)

5. In the Old Testament God is often known as the great "I am". He is the one who was, who is, and is to come. He is the Lord of the past, the present, the future. Stand up and face the back of the room and think about the pasts of the orphans and vulnerable children you've been introduced to tonight. Those who have needs, concerns, and need encouragement. Let your standing toward the back of the room symbolize you taking on the role of an orphan and pray for the ways, even be thankful for the ways God has provided for these children in their pasts. Pray to God asking Him to remind these children of how faithful He is to them and that He would be faithful to them in the future.

6. Pray this prayer through the mind and heart of an orphan or vulnerable child, and add your own prayer at the end. My Lord God, these children have no idea where they are going. They do not see the road ahead of them. They cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do they really know themselves. Help them to follow your will. Help me to follow your ways for me and that I would follow with obedience to what you ask of me to help these children. God...(use your own words). Amen.

7. For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me you will find me when you seek me. I will be found by you, says the Lord. We trust God because he is the Lord of the past. We have faith in him because he knows the future of these orphans and vulnerable children. Stand, point your finger toward the future, and pray for God's direction for the lives of orphans and vulnerable children in Uganda. Pray for the plans He has for these children, and as they seek him, they would find Him.

8. The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of God's glorious standard. In other words, all of us mess up. Even orphans. Think about the potential people who might share the message of salvation with these children. Spend 45 seconds praying for those who will travel to Uganda with Sweet Sleep to share the gospel of Christ with these children. Pray that these children could be able to understand the truth that will change their lives forever.

9. There are approximately 153 million orphans and abandoned children around the world. In the old days, Monks would chant a very simple prayer to God. They would repeat a short phrase over and over again until it had sunk into their heads and hearts. Bow your head, close your eyes, and repeat this prayer 20 times silently to yourself. Pray and slowly allow God to help you focus on each of the words of this prayer, as well as the person to who it refers.

“God, have mercy on me.”

“God have mercy on the orphans and vulnerable children of Uganda.”

“God have mercy on the orphans and vulnerable children of the world.”

10. The Bible says that “if we confess our sins to Him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all things done wrong.” What sins could you list in your life that keep you from focusing on ways you can make a difference in the life of an orphan or vulnerable child? Stand up, with your arms outstretched and palms up, asking God to help you let go of those things that keep you from being engaged in this ministry to these children of the world.

11. Close your eyes and picture one of the faces of an orphan or vulnerable child you’ve encountered tonight who needs the love of Jesus. Pray for their spiritual healing, their comfort, and their salvation. Spend some time praying specifically for the child you have encountered tonight, even though you may not know his or her name.

12. Gather 3 pictures of orphans around the room. Look at their faces, their activities in the photo. Ask yourself, “What might this child need from ME?” Touch their faces with your finger as you pray for each of them.



PRAYER EXPERIENCE

13. If you were born on an even numbered day, kneel and read this prayer aloud where others can hear you.

“Breathe in me Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may be holy. Act in me that I am your servant. Work in me, that I may become holy. Draw my heart Holy Spirit, and strengthen me. Guard me that I may always be holy. Amen. ”

If you were born on an odd numbered day, stand and read the prayer aloud:

“O Divine Love, do not conceal yourself. Reveal yourself to these children who suffer are not responsible for their pain.. Make us obedient people. Shatter our hopes and dreams that have nothing to do with being your hands and feet to these helpless children of the world.”

14. “Your eye is a lamp for your body.” Matthew 6:22 Place your hands over your eyes and pray those people who will see the needs of these children in Uganda face to face in the coming months. Pray for them as they minister to their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

15. Bow your head and read aloud. Pray for orphans and vulnerable children who live in Africa.

O Divine One! I give thanks to you, the One who is near to the brokenhearted, afraid, lonely, needy, hungry, without a place to sleep. You are as near as my next breath. Let your wisdom become one with this vessel as I lift my voice in thanks for your love.

(Traditional African prayer)

16. Place one hand over your lips and meditate on this scripture:

"...may your words be an encouragement to those who hear them." Ephesians 4:29

What words could you pray right now to God to encourage those children of the world who have no place to sleep tonight?

17. Place your hand over your heart and read this scripture: Above all else, guard your heart for it affects everything you do. Proverbs 4:23 What heart alignments do you need to make right now, in your own life, to align your heart and your priorities to be like Christ and help those in need?

18. *(This one needs various maps of different countries)*

The Bible clearly tells us to submit to the government and pray for our leaders. Pick a map of a country near you. Pray for the leaders of that country, that they would be wise in choosing leadership. Pray for decisions that are made that affect the children of the world who do not have advocates for them. Pray that these country leaders would have wisdom and courage to make difficult decisions for their country that affect each person who lives there.

19. Stand and read this prayer aloud:

A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere Lord! For you O Lord are our light and protector. You give glory and grace. No good thing do you withhold from the one who does what is right. Happy are those who trust in you! (Psalm 84) Pray for one child you know who needs protection and light from the Lord tonight. Ask God in His infinite wisdom to help guide, lead, and protect these children like only He can.