

JESUS PRAYS WHEN HE IS SAD

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

PRAYER PRAY SAD ANSWER WORRIED

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Matthew 26:36-46

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children learn to pray when they are sad or worried.

MEMORY VERSE

"I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer" (Psalm 17:6, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Prayer guides us to success. There is no spiritual life apart from frequent prayer, engaging in God Word and disciplined lifestyles. Through prayer, we participate in the Holy Spirit's transforming power, both for ourselves and for our neighbors. The Holy Spirit both prompts our prayers and fills us with God's presence (Luke 11:13). The Spirit becomes the master intercessor in our praying since we do not know what we ought to pray for (Romans 8:26-27). By deepening our relationship with God through prayer, we experience the Holy Spirit's guidance and find greater measures of spiritual growth and direction. However, it is clear that the Spirit's invitation to prayer, as an expression of God's grace, must always have an intentional response from us because we battle against many distractions, and our adversary does all he can to turn us away from prayer. This struggle in prayer is a spiritual battle and benefits our growth in grace. We must learn to pray as we live, because we live as we pray.

Since children often think that Jesus never had problems, this lesson may surprise them. Knowing that Jesus also sometimes felt distressed by circumstances will comfort them to know that he understands how we feel when things are not going well for us. After all, he experienced the same feelings as us: sadness, anxiety and anguish.

Elementary children face more and more fears. They have passed the stage where their home was their little world and their parents were the main people. Even the smallest children go through situations that are out of their control and frighten them.

Elementary-aged children are afraid to face new situations, to be rejected, to get lost, to be alone, to change their routine or to fail. Therefore as a teacher, you have many opportunities to show them that they must surrender their fears to God, just as Jesus did.

By teaching them about God's love and care, it will give them the security they need to confront complex situations.

In this session, your children will also understand that sometimes God does not free us from difficulties, but gives us the strength to face them. By learning to submit to the will of God, they will understand that God wants the best for them.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

This lesson on Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane shows us both his humanity and his divinity. The road that leads to death is one that we all must travel. Jesus was on that path and, in Gethsemane; he realized how close he was to the end of his earthly life. The Son of God was not a mysterious ghost who was not affected by circumstances. On the contrary, he was God incarnate, the one who experienced the greatest human suffering and pain.

Knowing what awaited him that night; Jesus felt the need to strengthen himself through prayer. Therefore, leaving eight of his disciples outside of the garden, he entered with Peter, James and John.

The impact of the cross began to weigh on Jesus. Mark describes it very clearly: "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch" (Mark 14:34). Jesus' prayer shows his anxiety as a human being, as well as his love for God and submission to the divine will. As a man, he wanted to escape the cross and the separation from the Father that this would cause; but as the Son of God, he knew that he must fulfill the plan of salvation for humanity.

How often do we look for ways to avoid God's will to follow our own desires! This lesson reminds us that God calls us to strengthen ourselves in prayer and to fulfill his will, which is holy and perfect.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

My prayer book

Distribute the prayer books to your children. Ask them to write the words from Psalm 120:1 and draw a picture to illustrate it.

Tell them that prayer is how we talk with God about our sadness and troubles. Review the prayers they wrote during the unit, and give them time to finish the drawings or fill in the missing information. They should take the books home after the meeting today.

TEACH THE LESSON

Jesus took his disciples to a very special and peaceful place called the Garden of Gethsemane. When they arrived, he said, "Sit here. I will go to pray. Peter, James and John, please come with me."

As they walked, Jesus began to grieve and be restless. Then he told his best friends, "My heart is so sad that I feel like I'm going to die. Stay here and pray with me." Then, he walked on a little more to pray.

Some people frown when they are sad; others cry, and some do not want to talk to anyone. When Jesus was sad, do you know what he did? He knelt on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, I do not want to suffer. But, if it is not possible, let your will be done."

Jesus knew that soon he would suffer a lot. He did not want to, but he knew it was the only way to save people from their sins. So he prayed, "Father, your will be done. Do what is best for everyone."

When he finished praying, he returned to where his three friends were. And what do you think they were doing? Were they waiting and praying as Jesus had told them? No, they were asleep.

"Could not you stay awake for an hour?" asked Jesus. "Pray that you can resist the temptation."

Jesus again left his disciples and went away to pray. After kneeling, he said, "My Father, if it is not possible to remove this suffering from me, may your will be done."

When Jesus returned to where his disciples were, he found them sleeping again. Although they tried to stay awake, sleep had overcome them. Jesus let them sleep and went to pray to the Father, just as he had done before.

When he returned and found his disciples still asleep, he told them, "Sleep now and rest. Soon the suffering will begin."
Finally, he said, "Get up, and come on. The man who will deliver me to my enemies is coming."

CONNECT THE LESSON

Your will be done!

After distributing Student Activity Sheet #193-A and #193-B for this lesson, ask the children to fold the page along the dotted line to remember what Jesus did when he was sad.

Then, help the children fill in the blanks to review the memory verse.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Prepare a contest in which your children show their ability to memorize and say the full verse. Have simple prizes to stimulate them to continue learning the Word of God.

Option: Ask the pastor to allow your group to participate in the worship service to recite the memory verse they learned.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Allow the children to tell their prayer needs. Pray for each one, interceding for their family, studies, health, and above all, for their spiritual growth. Pray also for the sick and those who did not attend the meeting.

Encourage

Distribute all the work they did during the unit. Thank the children for all their contributions to the group.

Invite

Remind the children that in the next session they will begin to study the unit on the Bible. Encourage them to come with friends.