

# God Understands Me

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** God hears, understands, and answers our prayers.

**Scripture:** Romans 8:28

**Memory Verse:** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. - Romans 8:28

## The Children's Sermon

Today I want to talk to you about prayer. Sometimes when we pray we might think that we said something wrong or that it did not make sense or maybe we could have done a better job, but I want to tell you something. You can't pray in a wrong or incorrect way. In Romans 8:27 it says that "The Spirit intercedes for the Saints in accordance with God's will." Those are a few big words to say that the Holy Spirit hears whatever you say and understands and will make sure that God's will will be carried out. If you make a mistake, or don't pray the same way as someone else it is ok, because The Holy Spirit understands you.

We even see in the passage that the grown-ups will be hearing that there was a man who could not walk and he was asking for money to help him out. In Acts 3:6 Peter replied to him and said, "Silver or Gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." And the man walked.

This man was asking for help with money, but God answered him in a way that he never expected. God knew what he really needed and gave it to him.

Today I want to encourage you to pray, don't be shy, do your best and come to God because he loves to hear from you, you may not consider your prayer to be perfect, but God knows exactly what you need, so ask, pray, and he will understand.

Now, let's talk more about how amazing prayer is. Prayer is like talking to your best friend. You can tell God anything - your secrets, your wishes, and even the things that make you sad. And guess what? God listens to every single word. It's like having a superpower because when we pray, we connect with God, and that's really special.

The Holy Spirit helps us when we pray. Think of the Holy Spirit as a helper who makes sure our words reach God, even if we stumble or can't find the right words. It's like when you're trying to tell a story, and you can't remember all the parts, but your friend helps you fill in the blanks. That's what the Holy Spirit does for us.

Remember, God's will is like a perfect plan for us. Sometimes we ask for things, and we don't get exactly what we asked for, but that's because God has something even better in mind. Just like in the story from Acts 3:1-10, the man wanted money, but instead, he got something much more amazing - he was able to walk!

It's important to know that God always listens and the Holy Spirit is always there to help. Even when we're not praying, God is taking care of us, making sure everything works out the best way possible. Romans 8:28 tells us that "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." That means even when things don't go the way we want, God is still looking out for us.

Praying doesn't have to be hard or complicated. You can pray anywhere, anytime. You don't need fancy words. You can pray when you're walking to school, before you eat, or even as you're getting ready for bed. God is always listening, ready to hear what you have to say.

And remember, when you pray, you're never alone. The Holy Spirit is right there with you, helping you talk to God. It's like having a conversation with your best friend who always understands you.

Sometimes, you might not know what to pray for, and that's okay too. You can simply tell God, "I'm not sure what to say, but I want to talk to you." And that's a beautiful prayer because it shows that you trust God and want to be close to Him.

Prayer can also be thanking God for the good things in your life. It's like saying "thank you" to a friend who gave you a gift. You can thank God for your family, your friends, the food you eat, and so much more. Being thankful is a big part of prayer too.

So, let's remember the important things about prayer: You can't do it wrong, the Holy Spirit helps you, it's about talking to God like a friend, and it's okay to tell God anything. God's will is the best plan for us, and even when things are tough, God is working to make things good for us.

Next time you pray, remember the story from Acts 3:1-10. Just like Peter helped the man walk, God can do amazing things in your life. Your prayers are powerful, and they connect you to God in a special way. So, keep praying, keep talking to God, and always remember how much He loves you.

Prayer is a gift, and it's something we can do every day. Let's use this gift to talk to God, thank Him, and trust in His plan for us. Remember, no matter what, God is listening, the Holy Spirit is helping, and God's will is always the best way.

## Bible Memory Verse

**And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. -**

### **Romans 8:28**

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Stickers with positive messages

Get Ready:

- Gather all materials on a table where children can easily reach them.
- Cut the construction paper into strips long enough to make into bracelets.

Do This:

1. Ask each child to choose their favorite color of construction paper strip.
2. Encourage them to write the memory verse, or part of it, on the strip with markers or crayons.
3. Let them decorate their verse bracelets with stickers.
4. Once everyone is done, help them tape the ends of their bracelets together so they can wear them. Remind the children that just like the bracelet surrounds their wrist, God's love and purpose surrounds them in everything they do.

# Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large poster board
- Markers
- Sticky notes
- A Bible or printed copies of Romans 8:28

Get Ready:

- Write Romans 8:28 on the poster board in large, readable letters.
- Place the poster board in a visible spot in the classroom.
- Distribute sticky notes and markers to each student.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Romans 8:28 aloud together: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."
2. Ask each student to think of a time when something didn't go their way, but it turned out to be good in the end. Have them write or draw this experience on a sticky note.
3. One by one, invite students to come up, stick their note on the poster board, and share their story if they feel comfortable. After each story, discuss how it reflects the truth of Romans 8:28, emphasizing that God hears, understands, and answers our prayers, often in ways we might not expect.

## Snack Activity: Promise Mix

You'll Need:

- A large mixing bowl
- A spoon for mixing
- Ingredients: Pretzel sticks (representing our prayers reaching up to God), Chocolate chips (representing the sweetness of God's promises), Marshmallows (representing the comfort of the Holy Spirit), and Rainbow sprinkles (representing God's promises including Romans 8:28)

Get Ready: Gather all your ingredients and materials on a clean table. Read Romans 8:28 together and discuss what it means to know that God works for the good of those who love Him.

Do this:

1. Start by adding a handful of pretzel sticks to your mixing bowl. As you do, talk about how we reach out to God through our prayers, just as the pretzels reach upwards.
2. Next, add a generous scoop of chocolate chips. Discuss how God's promises are sweet and comforting in our lives, just like these chocolate chips.
3. Add a handful of marshmallows to the bowl, representing the comfort and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
4. Finally, sprinkle a dash of rainbow sprinkles over the top, symbolizing the many promises God has made to us, including the promise in Romans 8:28 that He works all things together for good.
5. Mix all the ingredients together while discussing how God hears, understands, and answers our prayers, working everything together for our good. Each component of the mix represents a different aspect of our relationship with God and His promises to us.
6. Enjoy eating the Promise Mix together, reminding each other of God's faithfulness and the truth of Romans 8:28.

# Game Activity: Pathway to Purpose

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Bean bags
- A large open space (like a driveway or a parking lot)

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a large hopscotch grid on the ground. Each square should represent a part of Romans 8:28. For example, the first few squares could be labeled 'And', 'we', 'know', etc., until the entire verse is laid out across the hopscotch grid. Make sure the squares are big enough for the children to jump into. At the start and end of the hopscotch, draw a large circle and label the start as 'Prayer' and the end as 'Purpose'.

Do this:

1. Have the children line up at the 'Prayer' circle. Explain that this game represents how God hears, understands, and answers our prayers, and how all things work together for good, as mentioned in Romans 8:28.
2. The first child will toss a bean bag onto the hopscotch grid. They must then hop through the grid to where their bean bag landed, picking it up on their way back, but they can only hop on squares that form words from Romans 8:28. If they step on a square that doesn't help form the verse correctly, they have to go back to the start and it's the next person's turn.
3. Once they successfully retrieve their bean bag and return to the 'Prayer' circle, they say a prayer out loud related to trusting God's plan for them. Then, they move to the 'Purpose' circle to signify that they've understood how God's plan works through their prayers.

4. The game continues until all children have had a turn. The activity ends with a group discussion on how the game relates to the scripture and how they can apply this understanding in their lives.

## Craft Activity: God's Promise Puzzle

You'll Need:

- A printout of Romans 8:28
- Cardstock or heavy paper
- Scissors
- Markers or colored pencils
- A small box or envelope

Get Ready: Print out Romans 8:28 on a piece of cardstock or heavy paper. Make sure the font is large enough to be easily read and cut into pieces.

Do this:

1. Read Romans 8:28 together as a class. Discuss what it means to know that God works all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.
2. Color the printed scripture page with markers or colored pencils. Encourage creativity in illustrating the verse or decorating around it.
3. Carefully cut the colored page into puzzle pieces. The number of pieces can vary based on the child's age and skill level, but around 10-15 pieces for fifth graders should be challenging yet achievable.
4. Mix up the pieces and then work to put the puzzle back together. This can be done individually or in small groups.

5. Once the puzzle is completed, discuss how, just like putting the puzzle pieces together to see the whole picture, sometimes we need to trust God and wait to see how He works everything together for good in our lives.
6. Store the puzzle pieces in a small box or envelope. Encourage the children to take it home and reassemble the puzzle with their families, sharing the lesson learned.

## Prayer Activity: God's Promise Lanterns

You'll Need:

- Plain white paper lanterns (one per child)
- Colored markers
- LED tea lights

Get Ready: Pre-purchase plain white paper lanterns and ensure you have enough colored markers and LED tea lights for each child in your class. Set up a crafting area with enough space for each child to work on their lantern.

Do this:

1. Start the activity by reading Romans 8:28 together as a class. Discuss what it means to know that God works for the good of those who love Him, even when we pray and might not see immediate answers.
2. Give each child a paper lantern and markers. Ask them to think about a prayer they have for themselves or someone else. Then, have them write or draw that prayer on the lantern, along with words of hope and faith from Romans 8:28.
3. Once everyone has finished decorating their lanterns, place an LED tea light inside each one. Turn off the lights in the room and light up the lanterns. Lead the children in a prayer circle, allowing anyone who feels comfortable to pray aloud for the requests on their lanterns.

4. Conclude by reminding the children that like the light shining from their lanterns, God's love and promises illuminate our lives, especially in times of uncertainty or when we're waiting for prayers to be answered.