

Making Pearls

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: God's Love

Scripture: Romans 5:3-5

Memory Verse: Romans 5:3-4, 'Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.'

The Children's Sermon

Sometimes, things happen in our lives that make us feel really sad or hurt. It's like when you fall and scrape your knee—it hurts a lot at first, right? But then, something amazing can happen if we let it. God can bring something good out of our pain. He has a special kind of love that can help make the hurt feel a bit better. It's like when you get a hug from someone you love when you're feeling down. That hug doesn't make the scrape go away, but it makes you feel better, doesn't it?

This idea of finding something good in the bad is what we call "Rejoicing in Suffering." It might sound strange to think about being happy when something hurts, but it's not about being happy that it hurts. It's about being able to see the good that can come out of it, with God's help.

For example, if you've ever had to miss a fun day because you were sick, that's suffering, right? But maybe during that time, you got to spend special time with someone who took care of you, read a great book, or learned a new game. That's finding something good in a tough situation. That's "Rejoicing in Suffering."

God's love is super powerful. It can take the most painful things in our lives and turn them into something beautiful. It's like when you plant a seed in the ground. The seed has to be buried and go through the dark, cold soil before it can grow into a beautiful flower. Our hurts and pains can be like those seeds. With God's love, they can grow into something beautiful in our lives.

When we talk to God about our hurts, He listens. He wants to help us see the good that can come out of tough times. This doesn't mean the hurt goes away right away, but it means we're not alone in it. And sometimes, God helps us see how we can help others because of what we've gone through. Maybe you learn to be a really good listener because you know what it's like to feel sad. Or maybe you learn to be really kind because you know what it's like to feel left out.

"Rejoicing in Suffering" also means we remember that God is with us, even when things are hard. It's like having a best friend who is always there, no matter what. This friend doesn't run away when things get tough but stays and helps you find the light in the darkness.

Sometimes, we might wonder why bad things happen if God loves us. That's a really big question, and even adults struggle with it. But one thing we know is that God's love is bigger than any hurt or pain we can face. And sometimes, the hard things help us grow stronger, kinder, and more loving people. It's like how a muscle gets stronger after you exercise it, even though it's a bit sore at first.

So, what can we do when we're feeling hurt or sad? We can talk to God about it. We can ask Him to show us the good that can come out of our pain. We can look for ways to

help others because we understand what it's like to hurt. And we can remember that God's love is always with us, helping us grow into beautiful flowers from the seeds of our suffering.

Dear Lord, thank you for always being with us, especially when we're hurting. Help us to see the good that can come out of tough times and to remember that Your love can turn our pain into something beautiful. Help us to be lights in the dark for others, showing them Your love. Amen.

Remember, "Rejoicing in Suffering" doesn't mean we have to be happy about the bad things. It means we trust that God is with us, and with His love, we can find hope and joy even in the tough times. It's like looking for the rainbow after a storm. The rain might have been cold and the thunder scary, but the rainbow reminds us of the beauty that can come after the rain. And just like the rainbow, the love and good things that grow out of our suffering can be a beautiful reminder of God's love for us.

Bible Memory Verse

Romans 5:3-4, 'Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.'

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into strips long enough to make a paper chain.
- Write one word of the memory verse on each strip of paper.

Do This:

1. Mix up the strips of paper and challenge the children to arrange them in order to form the memory verse correctly. This can be done individually or in small groups for collaboration.
2. Once the verse is correctly arranged, have the children link the strips together with tape or staples to create a paper chain. Each link in the chain represents a part of the process of developing perseverance, character, and hope as mentioned in the verse.
3. Encourage the children to decorate their paper chain with markers and stickers. As they decorate, discuss how each part of the verse (suffering, perseverance, character, hope) is connected and how God uses our challenges to grow our faith and character.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large roll of paper (enough to create a path)
- Markers or paint
- Stones (big enough to write on)
- Permanent markers
- A Bible or printed copies of Romans 5:3-5

Get Ready:

- Cut the large roll of paper into a path that can be laid out on the floor, leading to a designated "finish" area.

- Write different challenges or hardships (e.g., "struggle with homework," "argument with a friend") on the stones with permanent markers.
- Prepare a reading area with the Bible or printed copies of Romans 5:3-5.

Do this:

1. ****Introduction and Scripture Reading****: Start by gathering the children and reading Romans 5:3-5 together. Discuss briefly how suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope, and how this hope doesn't disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts.
2. ****Path of Perseverance Activity****: Lay out the paper path on the floor, leading to the "finish" area. Scatter the stones with challenges written on them along the path. Explain to the children that this path represents our life journey, filled with challenges but leading us toward hope through God's love. Each child takes a turn to walk the path, and as they step on a stone, they pick it up and say a short prayer related to the challenge on the stone (e.g., for patience, understanding, or strength).
3. ****Reflection and Creation****: After everyone has walked the path, gather the children in the reading area again. Ask them to reflect on how facing challenges can help us grow stronger in our faith and character. Then, give each child a piece of paper and markers or paint. Ask them to create a bookmark that represents what they've learned about perseverance, character, and hope. Encourage them to decorate their bookmarks with symbols or words from Romans 5:3-5.
4. ****Share and Encourage****: Once the bookmarks are finished, invite each child to share their creation with the group, explaining the symbols or words they chose.

Conclude by encouraging them to place their bookmark in their Bible or a book they are reading as a reminder of God's love and the hope that does not disappoint.

Snack Activity: Endurance Cupcakes of Hope

You'll Need:

- Cupcake mix (plus required ingredients like eggs, oil, and water)
- Frosting (white or light-colored)
- Food coloring
- Small decorative candies or sprinkles
- Toothpicks
- Paper and a pen

Get Ready: Prepare the cupcake batter according to the package instructions. Preheat your oven as directed.

Do this:

1. As the cupcakes bake, discuss Romans 5:3-5. Emphasize how suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. Explain that hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured into our hearts.
2. Once the cupcakes are baked and cooled, divide the frosting into several bowls, adding different food coloring to each to represent the stages from suffering to hope (e.g., blue for suffering, red for endurance, yellow for character, and green for hope).
3. Have the kids frost their cupcakes with the colors in layers to visualize the progression from suffering to hope. While they do this, encourage them to think about times they've had to endure difficult situations and how it strengthened their character and hope in God.

4. Finally, on a small piece of paper, have them write a short prayer or affirmation related to hope and God's love. Attach this to a toothpick and insert it into the cupcake. Share the cupcakes together, discussing the importance of hope and God's love in overcoming challenges.

Game Activity: Hope Obstacle Course

You'll Need:

- Cones or markers to outline the course
- Various objects to serve as obstacles (e.g., boxes, chairs, hula hoops)
- A large printout of Romans 5:3-5

Get Ready: Set up an obstacle course in a large, open area using the cones or markers and various objects. Place the obstacles in a manner that requires the children to jump, crawl, or balance to get through. At the start of the course, place the large printout of Romans 5:3-5 where all participants can see it.

Do this:

1. Gather the children and explain that life can sometimes feel like an obstacle course, full of challenges and difficulties. But just like in the game, we can get through these challenges with hope and perseverance, knowing that God's love is with us.
2. Read Romans 5:3-5 together as a group. Discuss briefly how suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character; and character, hope.
3. Have each child start the obstacle course one at a time. Before they start, ask them to say one challenge they've overcome or hope to overcome with God's help.
4. As they navigate the course, encourage them to think about how, with God's love, they can overcome obstacles in their lives.

5. At the end of the course, congratulate them and remind them that just like they completed the course, with faith and hope in God, they can face life's challenges.

Prayer Activity: Hope Bracelets: Praying through Romans 5:3-5

You'll Need:

- Different colors of embroidery floss or yarn
- Beads with letters to spell 'HOPE'
- Scissors

Get Ready: Read Romans 5:3-5 together as a group. Discuss what it means to have hope in God and how suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope.

Do this:

1. Choose four colors of embroidery floss or yarn, each representing a part of the scripture: suffering, perseverance, character, and hope. Cut them to the same length, about 24 inches each.
2. Start braiding the strands together, discussing what each color represents. As you reach the middle, add the beads to spell out 'HOPE', reminding the kids that hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.
3. Finish the bracelet by tying the ends together. Encourage the children to wear their Hope Bracelets as a reminder of God's love and the hope we have in Him through our trials.