



UNIT 31 | SESSION 5

JESUS SUFFERED FOR US

PHILIPPIANS 2

KEY PASSAGE:

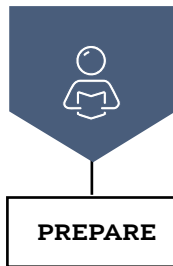
Isaiah 53:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself by coming to earth as a man. Jesus never sinned, but He died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Everyone who trusts in Jesus has forgiveness and life with God forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

In Philippians 2, the apostle Paul expounds upon Christ's humility and its implications for how we live and interact with others. Though we may struggle with the paradox of His infinite power and meekness, Christ's humility serves as the truest example for us to follow as we adopt His attitude so that the world may confess Jesus as Lord.

How does Christ's humility encourage us to follow in His steps? How can we joyfully demonstrate Jesus' sacrificial mindset?

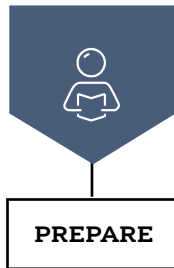
The sufferings of Jesus were rooted in humility as He sought not what was best for Himself, but rather what was for the good of sinful people. His obedience to deny Himself and seek the Father's will demonstrates the same mindset we should have toward one another. The love Christ has shown us through His humble death exhorts us to show this same love to others, trusting that God will use our humble efforts to shine like stars in a dark world. As followers of Christ, we seek to emulate His self-sacrifice, trusting that God is glorified through it and that we, who are in Christ, will one day be exalted with Him. (1 Peter 5:6) Yet as Paul reminds us, we remember that it is God working in us to help us have the desire and the ability to conform more into the image of Christ. (Phil. 2:13)

While being willing to humbly put another's needs above ours doesn't come easy, we can look to Jesus who for the joy set before Him endured the cross—knowing that His sacrificial death would mean everlasting life for us. Though it may seem like rejoicing has no place in humble self-sacrifice, Paul wanted us to see that this fruit of the Spirit is ours for the taking when our eyes are set on Jesus.

Help your kids see that we can find encouragement in Christ's story, just as the early church did. The reality of Jesus' suffering helps us live humbly so that we can exalt His name and will above our own. Just as Christ did not begrudgingly take to the cross, so, too, are we to walk in obedient sacrifice, knowing that our hope is not in vain. He rescued us through His own suffering that we might find His strength amidst our lack. When we trust in Him, we find new life and the forgiveness we need.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

Christ's Humiliation: God the Son left His glorious state and came in the likeness of sinful flesh. He experienced a humiliating death on a cross to rescue sinners. (2 Cor. 5:21)



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ “Decode the Message” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ cups, 15–20
- ☐ timer or stopwatch



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ “Jesus Suffered for Us” video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ “Unit 31, Session 5” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ “Jones Family Photo” printable

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5)” song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ dry erase boards, 2
- ☐ dry erase markers, 2



LOVE

Review & Bible skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ blindfold
- ☐ wooden spoon
- ☐ cooking pot
- ☐ wrapped chocolate candy

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ index cards, 20

Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ “Shine Like Stars” activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Have you ever made a mistake? What are some ways you tried to fix your mistake? Did anything work? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Decode the Message” on the activity page.

SAY “ Jesus humbled Himself when He came to earth as a man, but because of His perfect obedience, God exalted Him. Everyone in heaven and on earth will confess that Jesus is Lord. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: OTHERS-FOCUSED



Form kids into groups of three or four and give each group a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask groups to write down three ways they can be others-focused toward people they know at their school, home, or community. For example, kids may write choosing to let their friend play a video game first or offering to clean up their sibling's room. Allow a few minutes for groups to write down their examples. Then allow groups to share their ideas.

SAY “ We’re naturally drawn to serve ourselves. Yet, Jesus always put others first. Ultimately, Jesus demonstrated what it means to put others first by laying down His life and suffering for our sins on the cross. Today, we will learn more about Jesus’ sacrifice and how we can follow His example to put others before ourselves as we live to glorify God. ”

☐ OPTION 2: UPSIDE DOWN

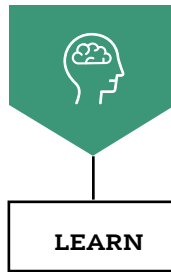
Before the session, scatter 15–20 cups around the room right side up. Form kids into two teams. Explain that teams will compete to see who can turn all the cups upside down the fastest.

On your start, direct the first team to begin flipping the cups upside down. Use a stopwatch or timer to time them. Record their time once all the cups have been flipped upside down. Then turn the cups right side up and begin again with team two.

SAY “ The kingdom of God looks upside down from the ways of the world. When the world tells us to put yourself first and live for your own desires, God’s way teaches us to put others first and live for Jesus. Today, we will learn how Jesus’ life and death displayed humility as He followed God’s plan to die for our sins. He put us above His own interests so that we could be saved from our sins. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so glad you’re here today! If you have your Bibles with you, will you take them out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] We’ve been reading through the book of Acts, but today we will read from Philippians to learn how Jesus suffered for us.

As we’ve been learning about the early church, we have seen how they cared for one another and sought to help one another. They were willing to set aside their own interests to make sure every person had what they needed. Today, we will learn how Jesus is our ultimate example of what it means to be a servant as He laid aside His rights and died for our sin. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

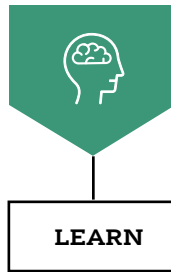
SAY “Today’s Bible story perfectly fits with our big picture question: **Why did Jesus become human?** Do you remember the answer? [Allow responses.] **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.**

In the book of Philippians, Paul helps us understand why Jesus came to earth as a man. Even though Jesus is God, He chose to leave heaven and set aside His rights to save us from our sin. He put our needs ahead of His own so that we would not have to face the punishment our sin deserves. He suffered in our place and rose again so we could live with Him forever. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Before Jesus went back to heaven, He instructed His followers to go into all the world and share the good news that He had come to save sinners. The apostles and other believers were obedient to this command, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, the church began to grow—even when faced with persecution. Like the early church, we are also commanded to share the good news of Jesus with others. Today, our Bible story reminds us of why Jesus came to earth and why the gospel is such good news for every person. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Philippians 2. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Suffered for Us.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS SUFFERED FOR US

“**Paul, a follower of Jesus, was living as a prisoner in Rome.** The Jewish people had tried to kill him because he believed and taught that Jesus had risen from the dead.

While Paul was waiting to meet with the emperor of Rome, other believers visited Paul or sent him gifts. **The Christians in Philippi sent a gift to Paul, and he wrote them a letter to thank them. Paul told them to be humble like Jesus and to love one another, working together and taking care of one another because Jesus suffered for us.**

Paul wrote, “**Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus. Jesus is God, but He set aside His rights and honor to come to earth as a man. He came as a servant and obeyed God’s plan by dying on a cross.**

“**This is why God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name so that out of honor for Jesus, everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth will bow down to Him. And every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This brings glory to God the Father.**”

Jesus suffered and died for us, and He rose from the dead and is alive! Because of Jesus, we must follow and obey God. **God is at work in us, changing us to be like Jesus. Paul wrote, “Do everything without grumbling and arguing so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a world full of wickedness. In this way, you will shine like stars in the world.”**

Christ Connection: Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself by coming to earth as a man. Jesus never sinned, but He died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Everyone who trusts in Jesus has forgiveness and life with God forever. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Invite a guest: Invite a guest to come and tell the story dressed as the apostle Paul.

Define humility: Tell kids that *humility* is defined as an attitude of obedience to God and gentleness toward other people. Remind kids that the humble person is willing to help others and put their needs first.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The Bible tells us that when Jesus came to earth, He humbled Himself. How did Jesus humble Himself? Look at Philippians 2:6-8. **[Choose a volunteer to read aloud Philippians 2:6-8.]** Jesus is God, but He left His throne in heaven to come to earth and live as a man. He became thirsty and hungry. He got tired. He was even tempted but unlike us, He never sinned. He became a servant and was obedient to God even when it meant He would suffer and die on the cross.

When Jesus became a human, He made Himself low, like a servant. He was obedient to His Father’s plan to rescue sinners. What did God do in response to Jesus’ perfect obedience? Look at Philippians 2:9-10. **[Choose a volunteer to read aloud Philippians 2:9-10.]** God highly exalted Jesus above every name on heaven and earth. Jesus’ humble obedience resulted in Him being raised up to be worshiped and praised forever. Everyone will one day confess that Jesus is Lord.

Anyone who trusts Jesus as his or her Savior receives forgiveness of sins and life with God forever. Those who are saved are given the Holy Spirit to help them live as followers of Jesus. How does the Bible say we are supposed to live as followers of Jesus? Look at Philippians 2:14. **[Choose a volunteer to read aloud Philippians 2:14.]** Believers are representatives of God to the world. We are called to look different from the ways of the world, like a light shining in the darkness. We show others what Jesus is like by the way we treat others, how we trust the Lord, and by sharing the gospel.

Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners. Anyone who trusts in Jesus as Savior and Lord receives forgiveness of sins and eternal life with Him. Like the early church, we have good news to share with the world. We must go and tell! ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself by coming to earth as a man. Jesus never sinned, but He died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Everyone who trusts in Jesus has forgiveness and life with God forever. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 31, Session 5” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Who was Jesus before He became a man? Why did Jesus become a man?
2. How can you follow the example of Jesus and serve others?



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Jones Family Photo” as you tell the kids about the missionaries.

SAY “ The Jones family has served as missionaries in Leipzig, Germany, for over four years. Casey Jones encourages anyone interested in going on a mission trip to consider coming to Germany. Leipzig has a university where teens and young adults have opportunities to meet people their age and tell them about Jesus. Kids can also be involved in missions through kid-friendly events hosted by their church at a local park. These events help the people of the church get to know their neighbors and provide an opportunity to invite their neighbors to church. ”

Explain that another way we can help the Joneses in their ministry is to give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® for International Missions. Tell kids that these offerings go to support missionaries and help them share the gospel with others. Remind kids that we can also support Casey, Amy, and other missionaries through prayer. Close in prayer, asking God to strengthen the Jones family as they share Jesus with the people in Germany.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:5 together.

SAY “ Our key passage reminds us that Jesus suffered for us. Jesus came to rescue people from their sins. Anyone who trusts in Jesus receives forgiveness and will live forever with God. ”

Write the key passage on two dry erase boards, leaving blank spaces for 8–10 words. Form kids into two teams and provide each team with a dry erase marker. Direct teams to send kids one at a time to their board to fill in the missing words. The first team to correctly fill in the missing words wins.

Lead kids to sing “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

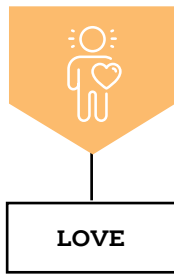
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. Thank You for providing forgiveness and eternal life to anyone who trusts in You. Help us share this good news with others. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Philippians 2. Explain that the book of Philippians is a letter the apostle Paul wrote to a church in the city of Philippi (C5). Tell kids that Paul wrote to churches and individuals to encourage and challenge them in their walk with the Lord.

Consider comparing the New Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where this story took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Kavala, Greece.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Philippians 2:5-8.

SAY “Through His life and death, Jesus modeled for us what it looks like to perfectly love God and others. He lowered Himself to become a man and suffered in our place. As Jesus’ followers, we are called to live as He lived. We can obey God by seeking to put others first and lay down our desires in order to serve so that others see Jesus in us. When we do, we show our love for God and people.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “How did Jesus show humility?”

Tell kids that humility is an attitude of obedience to God and gentleness toward other people. Remind kids that the humble person is willing to help others and put their needs first. Discuss how Jesus humbled Himself by leaving His throne in heaven to come to earth as a man and die for our sins. Tell kids that He was completely obedient toward God and also showed great love toward sinners.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:3.)

SAY “Why is obedience to God important?”

Remind kids that our obedience to God does not save us but it does show our love for Him. Tell kids that only Jesus perfectly obeyed God and only faith in Him saves us from sin. Discuss how we obey willingly, without grumbling, out of love for the Lord and thankfulness for all He has done.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:12-15.)

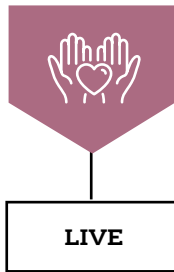
SAY “How can we shine like lights in a dark world?”

Discuss how following Jesus’ example of humble service and obeying God’s Word makes us stand out in the world. Remind kids that the world’s ways often mean self-exaltation, yet God calls us to humble ourselves and exalt Jesus. Tell kids that when we are willing to put others first we are glorifying God.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 5:14.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ **OPTION 1: HIT THE POT**



Tell kids that in Germany, a common kid's birthday party game is called Topfschlagen (Tohpf-SHLAH-gehn), translated "Hit the Pot." Blindfold a volunteer and give him a wooden spoon. Place a cooking pot somewhere in the room, flipped over with wrapped chocolate candy underneath. Tell the kid that he must crawl around the room while tapping his spoon on the floor, trying to locate the pot. Explain that once he finds the pot, he can take off his blindfold and turn the pot over to uncover the gift.

Continue playing until each kid has had a turn to locate the pot. For larger groups, consider placing two pots around the room and allowing two kids to locate a pot at the same time.

SAY “ The best gift we can ever receive is the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus. Let's pray for the people of Germany to hear and believe in the good news of Jesus. ”

☐ **OPTION 2: LAST TO FIRST**



Before the session, write the words from the big picture answer on 11 index cards and place them at the front of the room. Create two sets. Form kids into two teams and direct each team to line up. Lead kids in a relay race by sending the last kid in each line to grab an index card, run back to their team, and stand first in the line. Continue sending kids at the back of line until all kids have gone. Then lead teams to pass their cards to the last person in line, who will assemble the cards in the correct order.

SAY “ Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners. He humbled Himself and was willing to suffer on the cross to save us from our sin. Philippians 2:9 reminds us that God has exalted Jesus above every name because of His perfect obedience. The Bible also teaches that like Jesus, when we show humility, God will exalt us. We can trust that when we seek to glorify Jesus and follow His ways, God will honor us. ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to rescue us from our sins. As time allows, lead kids to complete "Shine Like Stars" on the activity page.