

LESSON 2: JESUS COMMITS TO GOD'S WILL

Leader Guide for Grades 5 & 6

Classroom: Deeply Rooted

 Matthew 26:36-46

08/30/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 26:36-46
- In This Passage: Jesus knows he's about to be arrested and killed. He goes to a garden to pray. He asks that God would take this cup of suffering away from him but prays, "I want your will to be done, not mine." Jesus is willing to do hard things to help promote God's plan.
- Bible Point: Jesus does hard things...
- Application: ...so we're willing do hard things.
- Summary Verse: "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus does hard things*. Nobody *wants* to do hard things, and that includes kids! Hard things for kids could be as small as eating their broccoli or cleaning the bathroom, or they could be more significant trials in life. Use this lesson to help kids know that Jesus can sympathize with not wanting to do the hard things, but he also showed how to willingly obey even when we don't want to.
- Think About: What's something you've been putting off because you don't want to do it? Talk to God about that.

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that kids will develop spiritual grit by doing hard things and embracing hard times.

Quick Tip

- If you're interested in learning more about this topic for yourself, check out *Spiritual Grit* by Rick Lawrence. You'll learn how the hard things we go through develop stamina and endurance that we need!

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids prepare for a balloon pop, feel tugged back and forth, and fill a cup with “suffering.”

Supplies

- Bible
- inflated balloon
- straight pin
- cups of water (1 per child)
- salt (individual packets will be easiest to distribute)



OBJECT LESSON

Kids catch candy from their elbows.

Supplies

- individually wrapped candy (1-3 pieces per child)
(we used fun-size chocolate)



DEEPER BIBLE

Kids explore how hard times bring about good things.

Supplies

- Bibles
- bubble gum (2 individually wrapped pieces per child) (see Tip)



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids play a blend of Tag and Hot Potato.

Supplies

- ball or beanbag (the “hot potato”)
- upbeat music
- music player



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids step forward for hard things they’ve done and end up losing the game.



CRAFT

Kids use paint-dipped string to make pictures.

Supplies

- Bibles

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

- disposable cups
- water-based paint in a variety of colors
- string
- scissors
- craft sticks
- plain white paper (several pieces per child)
- wet wipes
- Pour a different color of paint into each disposable cup. You'll need about ½ inch of paint per cup.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids experience the feeling of sweating while praying about hard things.

Supplies

- warm water
- paper towels (1 per child)

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids high-five three of their friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say “happy birthday” in the voices of their favorite cartoon characters.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’re going to learn that Jesus does hard things, so we’re willing to do hard things.**
In our story, we’ll see that Jesus went to a garden to pray, and his friends who went with him fell asleep!

Share

- Tell kids about a strange or funny place *you’ve* fallen asleep.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share strange or funny places *they’ve* fallen asleep.
- After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group.

Summarize

Open a Bible to Matthew 26, and say: **We’ve fallen asleep in some weird places! While Jesus’ disciples were sleeping, Jesus was facing the hardest decision of his life. Let’s see what happened in the Bible, God’s special book. The Bible is one way God shows us how to do hard things. Plus here’s something about God that can help you in hard times: He’s here right now, ready to talk with you! Let’s talk with God now.**

Pray, praising Jesus for showing us how to do hard things.



Supplies

- Bible
- inflated balloon
- straight pin
- cups of water (1 per child)
- salt (individual packets will be easiest to distribute)

Talk About It

Say: **Today we're going to learn that Jesus does hard things. In a little bit, we'll see how Jesus was willing to do something *really* hard that he *really* didn't want to do.**

Ask: • **What are some things you've had to do that you *really* didn't want to?** Share your own example first. Kids may say things like getting a shot, eating vegetables, switching houses between divorced parents, moving, doing homework, or going to bed on time.

• **What have you done to avoid doing those kinds of things?** Share your own story first.

Say: **In our Bible story, Jesus didn't avoid what he had to do, even though he didn't want to do it. Jesus does hard things. Let's see what happened.**

Pop a Balloon

Say: **Before we read from the Bible, you need to know *what* the hard thing Jesus had to do was. It didn't happen in the verses we'll read today. But Jesus knew what was coming, and in today's story, he was really stressed about it.**

Hold up the balloon and a straight pin.

Say: **It's kind of like if I push this pin into the balloon. It hasn't happened yet, but you know what will happen if I do that.** Inch the pin closer and closer to the balloon, giving time for kids to brace themselves, cover their ears, or whatever else they may do to prepare for the pop. Finally, pop the balloon.

Ask: • **What did you do to prepare yourself for what you knew was coming?**

• **How do you prepare yourself when you know something bad is going to happen in your life?**

Say: **We know that a balloon pop is unpleasant—it's noisy and usually unexpected. We might tense up or cover our ears if we know it's coming. What Jesus knew was coming was much worse than a balloon pop. Jesus knew he was going to be beaten, be nailed to a cross, and ultimately die. And he knew he'd be dying for what everyone else in the whole world had done wrong. He'd even be separated from God for a little bit while he took on all our punishment. That's really scary! But Jesus does hard things. Let's see what he prayed about when he was preparing for this hard thing.**

Play Tug of War

Have kids form pairs and sit facing each other with their feet touching. Their legs should be straight out in front of them, although they may bend their knees slightly if needed. Then have them hold on to each other's wrists, as shown.



Say: In our story, Jesus experienced a kind of Tug of War in his heart. There was what he *wanted* to do and what he was *willing* to do.

The partner sitting closest to me will pull to show what Jesus *wanted* to do. The other partner will pull to show what Jesus was *willing* to do. You can try to resist being pulled forward; just remain silent so you can hear the Bible story.

Read Matthew 26:36-46 as partners pull each other back and forth.

Ask: • **When have you felt a Tug of War in your heart?**

Say: Jesus really, *really* didn't want to go to the cross. He asked God to take that suffering away from him. But he also said he wanted God's will to be done and that he would do it. Jesus does hard things, so we're willing to do hard things. Let's think about hard things we might need to do for God.

Make Salt Water

Give each child a cup of water, and distribute salt packets. (If you don't have salt packets, set out saltshakers to share.)

Say: Jesus called what he had to face a "cup of suffering." Let's use cups to imagine what kinds of hard things we could do for God.

Right now, your cup just has fresh, tasty water in it. Allow time for kids to take a sip. **That's refreshing! But it won't be so good to drink after we add some salt to it.**

Have kids share hard things God might ask them to do, such as befriending someone who is unpopular, telling someone about Jesus, standing up to a bully, or going to another country as a missionary. As kids share their ideas, everyone will add a little salt to his or her water.

Ask: • **Imagine that if you drank your salt water, someone in another country (who you don't even know) would be healed from a disease. How do you feel about drinking your water now?**

Say: I'm not going to make you drink your salt water if you don't want to. And it wouldn't really heal anyone. But the way you feel about drinking yucky salt water is just a tiny picture of how Jesus felt about going to the cross. Even though he didn't want to suffer, he was willing to do that for us because he loves us and that was the only way to heal our friendship with him. Jesus does hard things for God.

God won't ask us to die on a cross, but he may ask us to do things we're not comfortable with. Jesus does hard things, so we're willing to do hard things. When Jesus was faced with something hard, his response was to talk to God about it. He was honest about his feelings but was committed to doing what God wanted.

Let's try that now. Think about one of the hard things we named as we added salt to the water. Hold the cup near your mouth and silently talk to God about doing that hard thing. When your prayer is over, you can choose to take a sip of the salt water if you want.

Allow about a minute for silent prayer.

Pray: Dear God, none of us wants to do hard things. But we're willing to do hard things if that's your will for us. We pray like Jesus prayed, "I want your will to be done, not mine." Give us the strength to do hard things for you. In Jesus' name, amen.



OBJECT LESSON

Sweet Reward

[10 min]

Supplies

- individually wrapped candy (1-3 pieces per child) (we used fun-size chocolate)

Place Candy on Elbow

Say: **Are you up for a challenge? It may be hard at first, but if you succeed, you'll enjoy a sweet reward!**

- Give each child one piece of candy.
- Demonstrate by bending your elbow and holding it up so the knuckles on your hand almost touch your shoulder. Your forearm should be parallel to the floor. Have kids do the same.
- Have each child place a piece of candy on his or her elbow.



Catch the Candy

Say: **Here's the challenge: You need to catch the candy before it drops to the floor. If you do, you get to eat it! Watch this!**

- Quickly drop your arm, causing your open hand to snap forward, and try to catch the candy.
- Encourage kids to practice until they catch the piece of candy. Once they do, they can eat it!
- If time allows, have each child stack two pieces of candy on his or her elbow and try to catch both at once.

Talk About It

Ask: • **On a scale of one to five, how hard was this challenge?** Have kids show you by holding up their fingers. **Why did you respond that way?**

Say: ***Inertia* helped us catch the candy. Since objects at rest like to stay at rest, even when our elbow moved out from under it, the candy hung in the air for a bit. If we move our hand fast enough, inertia gives us just enough time to catch the candy!**

Ask: • **How was catching the candy like doing something hard?**

Say: **Hard things can frustrate us, but they often result in something good. Jesus does hard things. He was willing to die on the cross so we can be friends with God. Jesus did a hard thing that led to a sweet reward for all of us—forever life with him! Jesus helps us do hard things. We might not see a reward right away, but we trust that hard things help us grow in character and bring about good in us.**



Why Can't We Just Skip Hard Times?

Supplies

- Bibles
- bubble gum (2 individually wrapped pieces per child) (see Tip)

Tips

- The harder the bubble gum, the better the experience will go. We found that inexpensive brands like Dubble Bubble and Super Bubble worked well. Bazooka was another good choice. If you use a softer bubble gum like Bubble Yum, you can harden it by refrigerating it prior to the experience.
- If you have some kids with braces, they may not be able to chew gum. You can still have them put the gum in their mouths and try to blow a bubble without chewing the gum at all.

Chew Gum

Say: **We're learning that Jesus does hard things, so we're willing to do hard things. But nobody wants to do hard things! Even Jesus didn't *want* to—he was just willing to do it because he loves us so much.**

So if God is good, why can't we just skip hard times? What if we could have only good stuff happen to us? Let's dig in to that.

Give each child a piece of bubble gum, and tell kids to unwrap the gum but not put it in their mouths yet.

Say: **On the count of three, you can put your gum in your mouth, and we're going to see who can be first to blow a bubble. Ready? One...two...three...go!**

Watch kids and see who's the first to blow a bubble. Continue letting kids chew until everyone can blow a bubble.

Ask: • **What would happen if you tried to blow a bubble before you chewed your gum at all?**

• **Did anyone try to blow a bubble too soon? What happened?**

Say: **You can't blow a bubble with hard bubble gum. You need to chew it to soften it so it's ready for the bubble.**

Think of chewing gum as going through hard times. Sometimes going through the hard times is what gets us ready for the good times! We're learning things through the hard times that we'll need to know in the good times. We can't just skip straight to the good or we won't be ready. It would be like trying to blow a bubble before the gum is ready.

So what can hard times do for us? Let's see what the Bible says.

Dig Deeper

Say: **First, let's think about today's Bible story. Jesus had to do something hard—die on the cross. He didn't want to, but he did it.**

Ask: • **What good came out of Jesus' dying on the cross?**

Say: **If Jesus had just skipped that hard thing, we'd be separated from God forever because of our sins. Jesus had to go through the hard times to bring us hope and eternal life. And going through our own hard times helps grow us, too.**

Have a child read Romans 5:3-4 and James 1:2-4.

Say: **We don't naturally consider troubles an opportunity for joy. That's a big shift in our thinking! But when we think about all the good the hard times do for our hearts, we can rejoice.**

Our next verse talks about how hard things are a way of training us.

Have a child read Hebrews 12:11.

Ask: • **What's something you've trained to do or practiced doing?** Examples would include sports or playing instruments.

Say: **Just like you wouldn't be a great soccer player without training, you won't grow good character without the training that comes from hard times.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time you experienced something good that you would've missed if you hadn't first experienced something bad. Share your own story first.**

Say: **Let's look at one more verse. Before I read it, let me explain the process for purifying gold. You don't find smooth, pretty, flawless gold jewelry in nature. Gold has to go through the fire to be purified, to remove all the dirt and gunk. But in the end, it comes out beautiful! These verses talk about how trials are purifying us like gold.**

Have a child read 1 Peter 1:6-7.

Say: **Jesus does hard things, so we're willing to do hard things. And we can find joy in doing hard things because we know that God is softening us up to blow incredible bubbles!**

Have everyone blow a bubble.

Give kids each an extra piece of gum so they can go home and show their families how trials help us grow.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Hot-Potato Tag

[10 min]

Supplies

- ball or beanbag (the “hot potato”)
- upbeat music
- music player

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today’s lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Play a Blend of Tag and Hot Potato

Say: **From today’s Bible story, we learned that Jesus does hard things—*really* hard things. When we face hard things, sometimes we want to pass them off for someone else to do them. I have a fun game to show you what I mean!**

- Have kids spread out around the room, and invite a willing person to be the first “It.”
- Give It the “hot potato,” and explain that when you play the music, It will try to tag someone to pass off the hot potato.
- When someone is tagged and handed the hot potato, he or she must accept it and then try to tag someone new.
- Once a person has the hot potato, his or her goal will be to hand it off as quickly as possible.
- You’ll play the music for various lengths of time. When you stop the music, whoever’s holding the hot potato is out for the round.
- Rounds end when three people have gotten out, and then everyone who’s out can jump back in the game.
- Play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you do to avoid getting the hot potato?**

• **What was it like to get stuck with the hot potato?**

• **Why do you think everyone gets stuck with “hot potatoes” or hard times in life?**

Say: **It’s okay to not want to do something hard or to even wish someone other than you could do it. Jesus asked God if the hard thing he had to do could be taken from him, but it was a job God had just for Jesus, so Jesus did it. Jesus maybe didn’t want to, but he was willing. Jesus does hard things, so we’re willing to do hard things. And Jesus is always with us to help us!**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Hard Way Forward

Take Steps Forward for True Statements

Say: **Today's Bible story shows us that Jesus does hard things. Even when he didn't really want to do the hard thing that was coming, Jesus did it anyway. Let's play a game about stepping forward and doing something hard.**

- Have everyone line up along one wall of the room.
- The goal is to *not* get to the wall on the opposite side of the room. If kids get to the opposite side of the room, they'll lose. You'll call out a statement about a hard thing, and anyone who's ever done that hard thing will take a big step forward.
- If a person has never done the hard thing you call out, he or she can stay in place.
- Call out statements until everyone has moved to the opposite wall or you finish the list.
- Call out the following statements, pausing after each one to allow steps forward.
 - You had more homework than you thought you could possibly get done.
 - You apologized for hurting someone.
 - You kept practicing a sport you didn't feel very good at.
 - You read a *really* long book filled only with words and no pictures.
 - You switched schools.
 - You had a best friend move away.
 - You faced a bully.
 - You had a surgery.
 - You helped take care of younger kids.
 - You baked something or made a meal all on your own.
 - You had to clean up a giant mess in your room or house.
 - You had to turn off the TV in the middle of a show or movie because your screen time for the day was over.
 - You obeyed rules you didn't want to obey.
 - You had to talk to a friend about something he or she did that hurt you.
 - You had to throw away something you love because it was broken or worn out.
 - You had to talk in front of a bunch of people.
 - You practiced until you learned to play an instrument.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What made it hard to step forward when I called out something that was true for you?**

• **Tell about one of the things you stepped forward for. Why was it hard?**

Say: **Doing hard things is, well, hard! But we can be willing to do hard things because Jesus does hard things, and we can always ask Jesus for help. We don't have to do the hard things alone because our friend Jesus is always with us.**



Supplies

- Bibles
- disposable cups
- water-based paint in a variety of colors
- string
- scissors
- craft sticks
- plain white paper (several pieces per child)
- wet wipes

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.
- Pour a different color of paint into each disposable cup. You'll need about ½ inch of paint per cup.



Make String Art

Show kids the sample craft you made. Set out the supplies to share, and have kids follow these directions to make string art.

- Lay a piece of white paper on the table so it's ready for your string.
- Cut a piece of string about 3 feet long. (Don't worry about being too precise.)
- Lower the string in a coil into a paint cup, holding on to one end.
- Use a craft stick to press the string down so everything but the end you're holding gets paint on it.
- Lift the string out of the cup, lightly running it between your fingers over the cup to get extra paint off.
- Make a doodle by laying the string on the white paper. Arrange it so the unpainted end sticks off the paper. Then clean off your fingers.
- Lay another paper on top of the first one. Then put a Bible on top of that.
- While pressing down on the Bible, pull the end of the string slowly until the whole string comes out.
- Throw the string away.
- Clean any paint from your fingers before touching the Bible again. Then remove the Bible and pull the papers apart.
- Your messy string will have made a beautiful pattern!
- You can add more colors to your artwork by repeating the process with a new piece of string.
- Make as many colors of string art as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Describe how your string looked when you first laid it on the paper.**

• **Describe what your string art ultimately looked like.**

• **How does string art remind you of what “ugly” times in life can turn into?**

Say: **Jesus does hard things, so we’re willing to do hard things.** Sometimes hard things look like the mess of painted string you laid on your paper. Maybe you couldn’t even arrange it quite how you wanted it. But in the end, it made beautiful art. God can take hard times and turn them into good. Jesus knew his death would be hard but would result in good for all humankind. We can also trust that God will use our hardships for good.

Have kids take their string art home and show their friends and families the beauty that can come from doing hard things.



Supplies

- warm water
- paper towels (1 per child)

Sweat and Pray

Say: Jesus does hard things, so we're willing to do hard things. One thing that happened while Jesus prayed in the garden was that he was sweating a whole lot. His sweat was like blood! Let's imagine how he felt as we pray about the hard things we have to do.

- Have kids each dip a paper towel in warm water and then close their eyes.
- Have kids hold the warm paper towels against their foreheads as they talk to God about hard things they have coming up in their lives.

Wrap Up

Pray: Jesus, thank you that you were willing to do the hardest thing ever so that we could be your friends. Help us do hard things for you, too. In your name, amen.

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.