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Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

Scripture: Matthew 26:36-56

Theme: Jesus obeyed the Father even when it was hard

Nursery (Ages 0-2)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

"God's Love is Always with Us!" "Jesus prayed and said, 'Stay with me, Lord.' God loves us, just like Jesus! He always helps us obey, even when it's hard!" (Repeat softly:) "God is good! God loves you!" Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

God loved Jesus very much, so He took Him to a special place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to His friends, "Let's pray here together."

Jesus asked His friends to stay awake and wait while He prayed. "My heart is sad and full of fear," He said to God. "But You are always with me, and You love me."

God heard Jesus' prayers, and He gave Jesus strength. "Don't be afraid," God whispered. "I am here to help you."

Soon, Jesus felt very tired, but He said, "No, not this time!" He held on tight to God's love.

This story shows that God is always there for us, even when we feel scared or sad. His love is our best friend forever!

--- Why this matters: Jesus knew God's love kept Him strong, just like God loves you! His trust in God shows us we can pray and ask for help too.

Key Verse

Matthew 26:39b , 'My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done.'

Here's a sweet, simple way for little ones: "God loves you so much! He knows what's best, we trust Him always!" (You could also say: "God takes care of us like a big hug, we love Him back!")

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Say: "Jesus prayed, 'Stay with me, even when I'm afraid' (like a love bug always loves you!)"
2. Help each child cut a small black circle from construction paper to glue on the plate as the bug's body.
3. Let them decorate the plate with wings (fold paper) and glue on eyes or glitter.
4. Talk: "God loves you like a love bug, always, always, always!"
2. "Petal Prayer Rocks" (Nature & Prayer)
6. Take a short walk outside to collect small flowers or leaves (ask parents to help).
7. Say: "Jesus prayed, 'Let this cup pass', but God loves us even when we are afraid (like a rock always stands strong!)."
8. Have kids press flower petals onto a rock, then glue it to paper.
9. Write "Jesus loves you!" around the rock and color it.
10. Share: "God is like a rock, always there to hold you!"

Discussion Questions

- What color is your heart when you are sad?
- God loves you even when you are sad. Let's pray together, "Dear God, thank You for loving me."
- Who helps you when you feel scared?
- Jesus prayed to God when He felt scared too. Can you say "Jesus loves you" three times?
- What is your favorite way to pray?
- Sometimes praying means talking to God like you're telling a friend. Let's pray: "God, I love You!"
- What do you think God would say to you if you were with Jesus in Gethsemane?
- God knows you and loves you always. Can we repeat "God is with me" together?

Prayer Focus

"Lord, you love us so much. Jesus prayed to you in Gethsemane, 'Stay close to me, just like you always do.' You hear our little hearts, and you hold us tight. Thank you for loving us, always and forever." (Repeat: "You love us! You love us!")

>> Missions Spotlight

In the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, ancient olive trees still grow , some over 900 years old. Pilgrims from every nation come to pray where Jesus prayed. Pray that every visitor would understand WHY Jesus prayed , and what He was about to do.

-> To the Cross

In the garden, Jesus prayed, 'Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.' He didn't want to go to the cross, who would? But He chose to obey. His obedience is what saves us.