

UNIT 35 | SESSION 6

WE ARE HERE TO MAKE MUCH OF JESUS

1 THESSALONIANS 4-5

CHRIST CONNECTION:

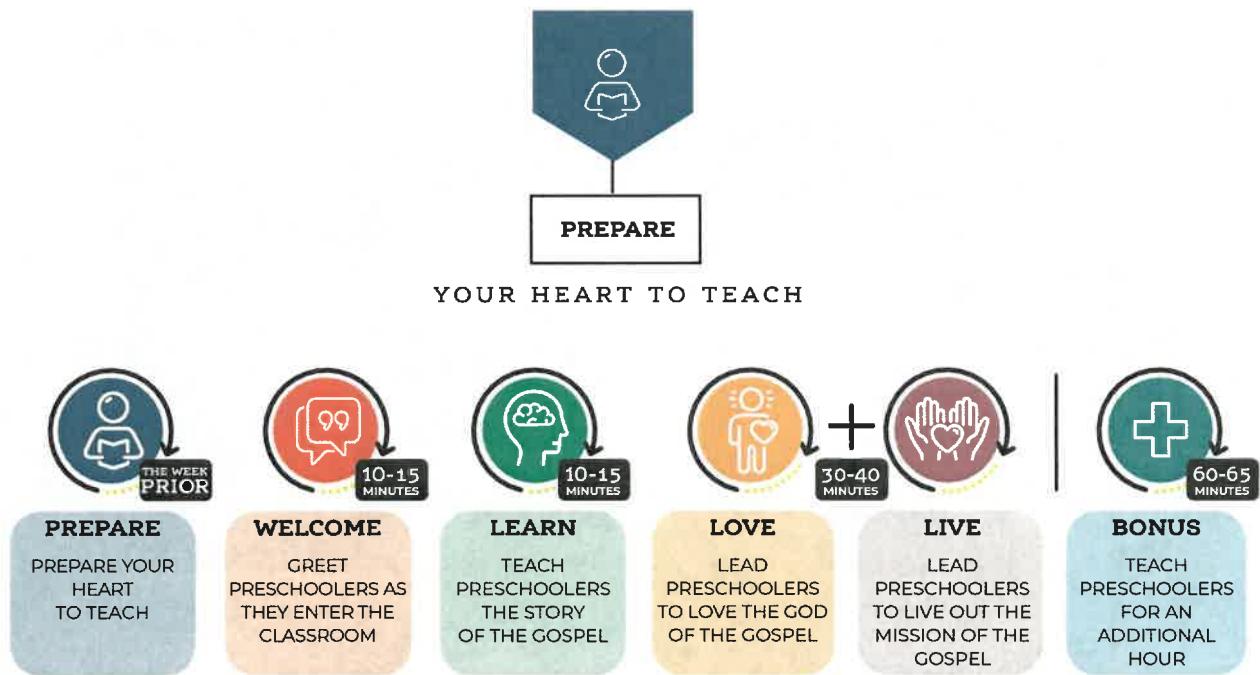
God wants us to tell about Jesus and love one another because Jesus is coming back. One day, Jesus will come back and make all things right.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for all He has done for us.

KEY PASSAGE PHRASE:

Isaiah 25:1



LEADER Bible Study

First Thessalonians 4–5 serves as an encouraging, insightful, and convicting portion of the letters penned by Paul. As evidenced by the compassionate, heartfelt words he shared, the apostle loved his brothers and sisters who belonged to the church in Thessalonica. Because of the deep affection he held toward them, he exhorted them to lean into the special, set-apart lives Christ had called them to as His followers.

What does Paul say is the will of God for his brothers and sisters in Christ—both in the year A.D. 50 as well as in the modern-day church? How are we to accomplish this will according to today's passage?

We often wonder what God's will for our lives may be. Yet we see throughout the pages of Scripture: His will is our sanctification—in sexual morality, self-control, holiness, and honor ... on account of the knowledge of our God (1 Thess. 4:3-5). Paul writes in the next chapter that His will for us is that we would likewise continually rejoice, pray, and give thanks for all He has done (1 Thess. 5:16-18). He calls for a "whole-person" holiness in all parts of our lives: spirit, soul, and body, which only comes through placing our trust in Jesus—which means trusting in what He says is best for our lives.

For the church of Thessalonica to pursue God's will for their lives would be entirely impossible if not for the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They had to trust in the Lord to help them obey, believing in Christ's perfect life and sacrifice as the basis of their faith.

As you take steps toward teaching this session, consider the ways you've been faithfully following Jesus. Be encouraged by all that He has done in your life to help you look more like Jesus through the power of His Spirit. Help kids see that they, too, can trust God's character and goodness, which means that we can believe that His will for our lives—this call to sanctification—is good.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

Christ's Exaltation: Christ was exalted when God raised Him from the dead and when He ascended to the Father's right hand. He will be exalted by all creation when He returns.



PREPARE

YOUR HEART TO TEACH

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Wherever we go

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ globe
- ☐ Bibles with maps, several
- ☐ sticky notes
- ☐ map of your state
- ☐ transportation toys: cars, planes, trucks, boats, etc.



LEARN

Introduce the Bible story

- ☐ envelope

Review the Bible story

- ☐ dry erase board or large paper

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker
- ☐ rhythm instruments, 3



LOVE

Taste Bible times food

- ☐ napkins, 1 per child
- ☐ small plates, 1 per child
- ☐ cups, 1 per child
- ☐ water
- ☐ several bite-sized foods: dates, pita bread, honey, hummus, grapes, etc.

Play a matching game

- ☐ "Paul Tells About Jesus Game" printable, 2 copies



LIVE

Play instruments

- ☐ rhythm instruments, several

Missions Activity

- ☐ "Jeri Whitfield Photos" printable, 1 copy
- ☐ pool noodle

Snack and transition

- ☐ snacks
- ☐ Activity Page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards For Families, 1 per child



BONUS

Story points

- ☐ Bible story points on paper
- ☐ envelope

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Tell about Jesus

- ☐ illustrated Bibles, several

Make a Bible bookmark

- ☐ cardstock, cut into strips
- ☐ hole punch
- ☐ ribbon
- ☐ stickers



WELCOME

WHEREVER WE GO

SAY “ I am so glad you came today! Did you walk or come in a car or airplane? Today we have many ways to travel! Missionaries take the story of Jesus all over the world! We have been talking about Paul. He wrote a letter that told people who believe in Jesus how to live. That letter is in our Bible so we can read it too. Our big picture question asks, Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for all He has done for us. Jesus loves us! ”

worship songs
* When I Look
* God keeps His Promise



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Show a Bible to the preschoolers and remind them that the Bible has two parts. Ask them to name the two parts (Old Testament and New Testament). Comment that the last few weeks we have had Bible stories about Paul from the book of Acts. Tell them Acts is in the New Testament. Comment that our Bible story today is from another New Testament book, 1 Thessalonians. Say that 1 Thessalonians is one of two letters that Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica, a city where Paul had started a church. Ask the kids to guess the name of Paul's second letter to Thessalonica if the first one is called 1 Thessalonians. Show an envelope to the preschoolers.

SAY “You are learning so much about the Bible! Paul’s letters to the churches were probably written on papyrus and rolled up. Papyrus was a plant that was cut into strips, soaked in water, dried, beaten, and glued together to make writing paper. Sometimes we get letters in envelopes like this one but they are written on paper, not papyrus. The churches who received Paul’s letters read them and shared them with other people. Some of the letters Paul wrote are now in our Bible so we can read them, too.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY *video*

Open your Bible to 1 Thessalonians 4-5 and tell the following Bible story.

WE ARE HERE TO MAKE MUCH OF JESUS

SAY “Paul had started a church in Thessalonica (THESS uh loh NIGH kuh). As Paul traveled on, he wrote letters to send to the church.

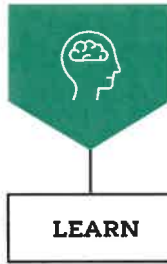
In his first letter, Paul told the church how to follow Jesus. Paul wrote, “God wants you to be holy. Live in a way that pleases Him.” God can help Christians do what is right and good, like Jesus did. Paul encouraged them to work hard and be helpers, too.

Paul said, “Show love to one another like brothers and sisters.”

Then Paul shared some happy news: When Jesus comes back, people who believe in Him will be together with Him forever.

Finally, Paul told Jesus’ followers to be thankful and to pray. “Keep praying,” Paul wrote. “Give thanks always. This is what God wants for you.”

Christ Connection: God wants us to tell about Jesus and love one another because Jesus is coming back. One day, Jesus will come back and make all things right



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Comment that Paul wrote letters and traveled to many different places to tell about Jesus. Ask how we can tell others about Jesus. Write the children's answers on a dry erase board or large paper as the children name ways to tell about Jesus. If time allows, let a child illustrate each thing they name such as giving offerings and praying for people who don't know about Jesus. Leave room between the answers for the children to draw.

SAY 🗨️ Paul started several churches including one in Thessalonica. He wrote letters to the churches to encourage them to keep learning and serving God. He told them to show love to others. God wants us to show love to others and tell about Jesus, too! 🗨️

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

"Praise, praise, praise the Lord.
We will praise the Lord.
Joyfully, joyfully, joyfully, joyfully.
Sing praise for all He's done!"

* You army God video

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the key passage phrase marker at Isaiah 25:1. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Provide three rhythm instruments such as rhythm sticks, a triangle, and a small drum. Give the instruments to three children and direct them to tap the instrument once for each word of the key passage phrase. Ask the children with instruments to share the instruments with three other children and repeat the key passage.

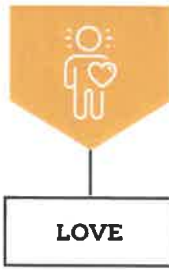
SAY 🗨️ We used instruments to sing praises to the Lord. We can use them as we say the key passage phrase, too! 🗨️

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for sending Jesus and asking Him to help us tell others about Jesus like Paul did.

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





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 **DRAW WAYS WE SHOW LOVE**



Cut sheets of paper into hearts and encourage children to draw a way they can show love on each one. Label the children's drawings with their name and how they can show love. Tape the heart shaped drawings near the doorway so parents can see what their children are learning.

SAY We drew pictures of ways that we can show love to others. Paul wrote a letter to the Thessalonians to tell them to show love like brothers and sisters. He encouraged them to work hard and do what is right and good. Paul told the people to tell about Jesus and to love one another. We can do the things that Paul told the Thessalonians to do in his letter.

2 **TASTE BIBLE TIMES FOOD**



Post an allergy alert outside the room listing foods you will be tasting. Avoid foods that you already know a child is allergic to. Let children help give out napkins, small plates, and cups. Pour a small amount of water in each child's cup. Serve the foods from Bible times such as dates, pita bread, honey, hummus, and grapes and talk about each one. Be sure that the foods are cut into small enough pieces to not be choking hazards. Let the children dip the pita bread in the honey and hummus. Comment that Jesus and Paul may have eaten foods like these. Say that people in Jerusalem still eat these foods.

SAY Thank you for handing out the napkins, cups, and plates! Helping each other is important. Helping shows we love each. Paul wrote to the people in Thessalonica to love each other like brothers and sisters. Jesus will come back one day! We will live with Him forever.

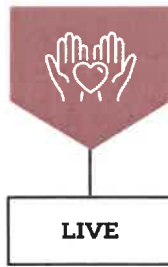
3 **PLAY A MATCHING GAME**

Print and cut apart two copies of the "Paul Tells About Jesus Game" printable. Spread one set of the pictures out so the children can see them. Describe each one and let a child pick it up. Say things like: "Agabus told Paul people would tie him up if he went to Jerusalem." "Paul stood in front of the leaders and told about Jesus." "Governor Felix sent Paul to prison." "Paul was in a boat in a scary storm." "Paul told people who visited his house in Rome about Jesus." "We can show love to others." After the children identify the pictures, mix both sets up and lay them face down. Guide the children take turns turning over two cards and looking for matches. For very young preschoolers, you may choose to hide one set of cards and let children find them and bring them back to match to the cards on the floor.

SAY Paul told many people about Jesus as he traveled, even when it was hard. We can tell people about Jesus just like Paul!

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





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 **PLAY INSTRUMENTS**

Display the instruments used in group time and several others, include instruments with a variety of different sounds. Name the instruments and play each one briefly. Let children take turns choosing an instrument to play as you say the key passage phrase. Sing a praise song and let the preschoolers play the instruments.

SAY “ Instruments like these make me want to play them! Which one did you like playing? [Allow responses.] You all remembered our key passage very well! It reminds us to praise Jesus for all He has done for us. ”

2 **MISSIONS ACTIVITY**



Show preschoolers the “Jeri Whitfield Photos” printable. Point out the picture of Jeri riding the motorbike. Comment that Jeri would often ride a motorbike through Thailand telling people in remote villages about Jesus. Invite children to take turns “riding” the pool noodle around the classroom like a pretend motorbike.

SAY “ You were super fast on that pretend motorbike! Jeri Whitfield would do whatever it took to get the gospel to the people, including riding on a motorbike through the mountains of Thailand. ”

3 **SNACK AND TRANSITION**



Post an allergy alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ connection.

SAY “ God wants us to tell about Jesus and love one another because Jesus is coming back. One day, Jesus will come back and make all things right. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute the big picture cards for families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 STORY POINTS

Before the session, copy the Bible story points onto a paper. Fold it and place it into an envelope. In group time, show the envelope and letter. Invite a child to take the letter from the envelope. Remind the children that 1 Thessalonians is a letter that Paul wrote teaching the people in Thessalonica about how God wanted them to live. Read the Bible story points to the children.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Thessalonians 4-5 and tell the following Bible story.

WE ARE HERE TO MAKE MUCH OF JESUS

- Paul started a church in Thessalonica (THESS uh loh NIGH kuh). When Paul was away, he wrote letters to the church.
- In his first letter, Paul told the church how to follow Jesus. Paul wrote, “God wants you to be holy.” God can help Christians do what is right and good, like Jesus did. God wants us to work hard and be helpers too.
- Paul also wrote, “Love one another like brothers and sisters.” Then Paul shared some happy news: When Jesus comes back, people who believe in Him will be with Him forever.
- Paul wrote, “Pray and say thank You to God. This is what God wants you to do.”

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song below to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

“Praise, praise, praise the Lord.
We will praise the Lord.
Joyfully, joyfully, joyfully, joyfully.
Sing praise for all He’s done!”

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the key passage phrase marker at Isaiah 25:1. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage together. Congratulate preschoolers on learning the key passage. Encourage preschoolers to shake a friend’s hand or give them a high five as they say the key passage.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God that we can praise Him and tell others about Him.





BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities



6 DECORATE JESUS' NAME

Use a black marker to write Jesus in large print on a piece of paper for each child. Give the children markers or crayons and suggest several ways they can decorate the paper. Tell them they can make a rainbow name by tracing Jesus' name with several different colors, or they can draw lots of faces around Jesus' name because He loves everyone, or they can make a stained glass window by coloring shapes all over the page.

SAY  How did you decorate your paper? We praise Jesus' name by learning to read it and spell it and especially by telling others about Jesus. You can put your paper up in your room or on your refrigerator to remind you that Jesus loves you and that He wants you to love other people. Paul told the people in Thessalonica to follow God's rules because Jesus was coming again! 



7 TELL ABOUT JESUS

Look at several Bibles with illustrations of Jesus. Talk about the things that Jesus did. Comment that Paul told people about Jesus and that he wrote letters to churches to remind them that they needed to continue to do the things Jesus told them to do. Pass a doll around the group and encourage the children to tell the doll something important about Jesus.

SAY  We come to church to learn about Jesus. The Bible tells us what He did and how he wants us to live. I am so happy that you are learning to love others and help them like Jesus did! You remembered many things that Jesus did! Jesus helped people and told them about God. We can live like Jesus wants us to live. Jesus is coming back to earth and we will live with Him forever. 

8 MAKE A BIBLE BOOKMARK

Cut cardstock into fourths, making four bookmarks per page. Punch a hole at the top of each bookmark. Guide the children to decorate the bookmarks with markers and stickers. If possible, use heart stickers, cross stickers, and stickers with pictures of Jesus. Write 1 Thessalonians on the back of the bookmarks. When the children finish decorating their bookmarks, let them choose a ribbon to tie through the hole in the top.

SAY  We made a bookmark to take home and put in our Bibles. Our story today is from 1 Thessalonians so I wrote that on the back of your bookmark. You can ask you family to help you find Thessalonians in your Bible. Paul wrote to the people and reminded them to remember the stories he had told them about Jesus and to love each other. When you open your Bible to the bookmark, you can remember the stories you know about Jesus and you can remember to show love to others, too! 

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church's security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.