

Lesson 30 ~ Easter

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Objectives

STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Identify how Jesus felt the **WEIGHT** of sadness
- Explain how Jesus prayed to his **FATHER – GOD –** by calling him **ABBA (DADDY)**
- Explain that we can pray to God **ANYTIME** no matter how we are feeling – God loves to hear from us

Supplies

- Blanket, teddy bear, book, and other bedtime items
- Book bag & weights (books, blocks, cans, etc.)
- Bibles / Storybook Bible
- Construction paper & stickers for the **Prayer Craft** (at the end)

Review
TRANSFIGURATION
to PETER

Gathering Activities

- Playdough: with trees & flowers cookie cutters (to help the children think about a garden)

Introduction

Tell the children that you want them to **GO, GO, GO** until you say the words “**WAKE UP!**”...then, you want them to stop, lie down, and pretend to sleep. Next, do various activities that will keep the children moving, like running in place, jumping jacks, arm circles, and other calisthenics. Again, stress the idea that they should not stop. Keep them going and going until you say **WAKE UP!** Then, have them stop, fall down, and even pretend to sleep. Keep this lively – going from one activity to the next – then, periodically saying “**WAKE UP!**”. After a brief time of “sleeping” you can say “**GO GO GO!**” and have them do more exercises.

Lesson

GO GO GO...

- Whew! That was a lot of work, wasn't it? We just kept going and going and going.
- And what do you like to do if you have such a long day and keep going and going?
 - What if you were at the beach all day in the hot sun: playing, running, swimming. At the end of the day, after getting all cleaned off and getting something to eat – what do you feel like doing? Discuss.
 - I like to get in my PJ's and get my teddy bear and snuggle up in bed with a book.
- As you say all of those things, get out your props. Get all cozy; yawn and stretch. **After a long day doing anything – working, playing, doing chores – I want to just curl up and go to sleep.** Pretend to start going to sleep.
- **BUT WAIT! I need to WAKE UP! There is still more to do.**

Today we are going to look at the time when Jesus needed his disciples to stay awake after a **LONG** day. But he did not want them to stay awake just to talk or play a game. He wanted them to stay awake in order to **PRAY**.

PRAY PRAY PRAY...

- Talk about how **AFTER** the Passover Feast (where Jesus served his disciples by washing their feet), he led them to a special garden outside of Jerusalem called the Garden of Gethsemane.

- When Jesus went to this garden – this place where olive trees grew – he wanted to pray, pray, pray to his Father. He wanted to do this because he was feeling a lot of SADNESS...like a heavy WEIGHT on him.
 - Have you ever felt so sad it was like a WEIGHT on your back?
 - Get the backpack out and place it on one of the children.
 - Explain that Jesus prayed THREE times – going back and forth between praying and checking on his disciples. Each time he went, he got sadder and sadder – as though the WEIGHT was getting heavier and heavier.
 - Instruct the child to walk back and forth between two points three times. Mark one place as the spot to KNEEL. When the child kneels, place an object in the bag (like another can of soup). Ask the child how it feels to walk with heavier weights.
- Let's read what happens. **Read Mark 14:32-42.**
 - Jesus felt sad – with a lot of WEIGHT on him because he knew he was going to go to the cross and die. So, Jesus went to his father 3 TIMES to ask him to take away this thing he had to do.
 - Each time he checked on his disciples, hoping they would be praying for him. But, guess what? They were tired...he kept finding them SLEEPING!
- You can also use the **Jesus Storybook Bible** to tell the story – but make sure you emphasize that Jesus went to pray 3 times and called God ABBA (Papa)!

ABBA ABBA ABBA...

- Talk about the word/name ABBA:
 - That's a funny word. Let's all say it together: ABBA.
 - Abba was the word in Jesus' language that means DADDY. Jesus called His Father, God, DADDY. That is how close he was to God.
 - He loved God like a Daddy and knew God loved him like a dearly loved Son. That is why, in the end, Jesus knew what he had to do...AND wanted to do...go to the cross to die!
 - He wanted to do this because he knew how much God His Father loved him...and how much he LOVES US!!! And because of JESUS, WE can go to God as OUR DADDY too!

Conclusion

GO GO GO...

Sometimes we seem to GO GO GO without taking the time to stop and pray and be with Jesus.

PRAY PRAY PRAY...

When we keep GO-GO-GOING, we need to STOP and PRAY. And when we feel too tired to PRAY, we need to ask Jesus for his help.

ABBA ABBA ABBA...

And when we STOP and PRAY, we know we can come to God as our DADDY who loves us more than we could ever imagine! No matter what we are feeling – sad, scared, even angry – he is HAPPY for us to come to him and talk with him about everything and anything that's going on.

At the end, Jesus not only knew it was good and right for him to go to the cross...but he WANTED to go because he knew it was the only way for US to have a relationship with God the Father! That's how much he loved us! Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we too can come to God with EVERYTHING!

Let's pray now.

Take time to pray together as a family.

Then you can make a craft:

- Take a piece of construction paper and fold it in half.
- Have the child place his hand near the folded edge – keeping his/her fingers together.
- Trace the hand and cut it out so that when folded it looks like praying hands; when it is opened, it looks like two hands opened, palms up.
- On the front write "I can pray to Jesus anytime!" Inside write "Jesus hears me all the time!"
- Decorate with stickers, drawings, stamps, etc. HAPPY FACES on the outside / HEARTS inside!

A dark night in the garden

The Garden of Gethsemane, from Luke 22, Mark 14, John 18

THE WIND WAS picking up now, blowing clouds across the moon, shrouding the garden in darkness.

"Stay up with me?" Jesus asked his friends. They said yes and waited under the olive trees, but they were tired and soon they fell asleep.

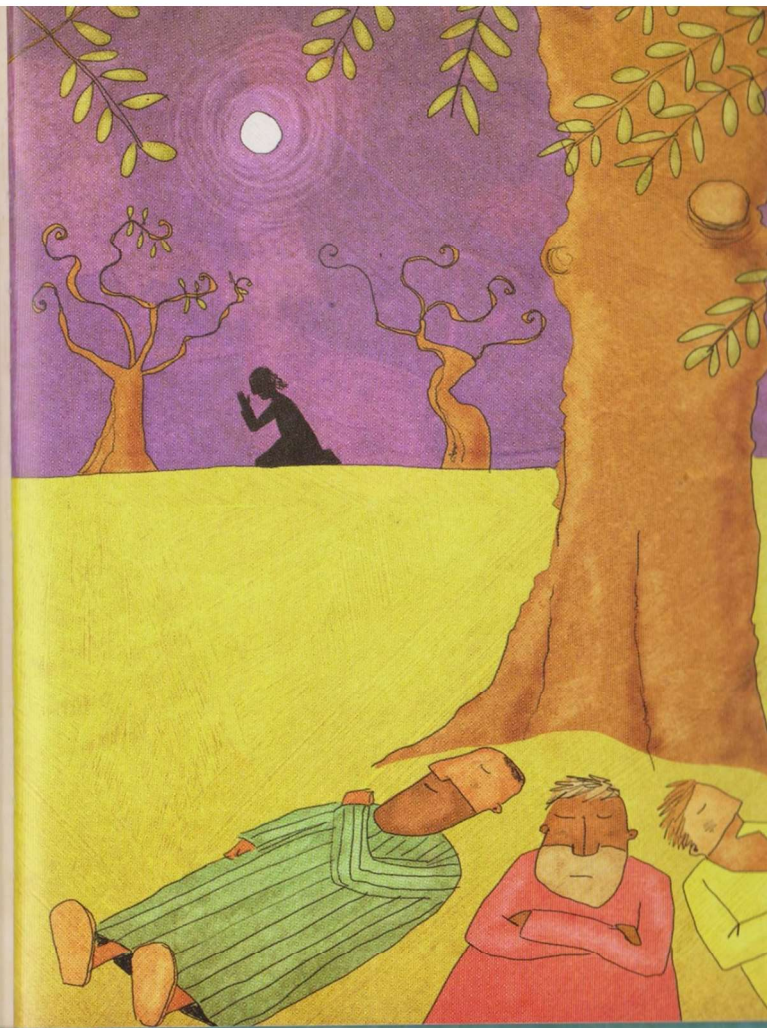
Jesus walked ahead alone, into the dark. He needed to talk to his heavenly Father.

He knew it was time for him to die. They had planned it long ago, he and his Father. Jesus was going to take the punishment for all the wrong things anybody had ever done, or ever would do.

"Papa! Father!" Jesus cried. And he fell to the ground. "Is there any other way to get your children back? To heal their hearts? To get rid of the poison?"

But Jesus knew — there was no other way. All the poison of sin was going to have to go into his own heart.

God was going to pour into Jesus' heart all the sadness and brokenness in people's hearts. He was going to pour into Jesus' body all the sickness in people's bodies. God was going to have to blame his son for everything that had gone wrong. It would crush Jesus.



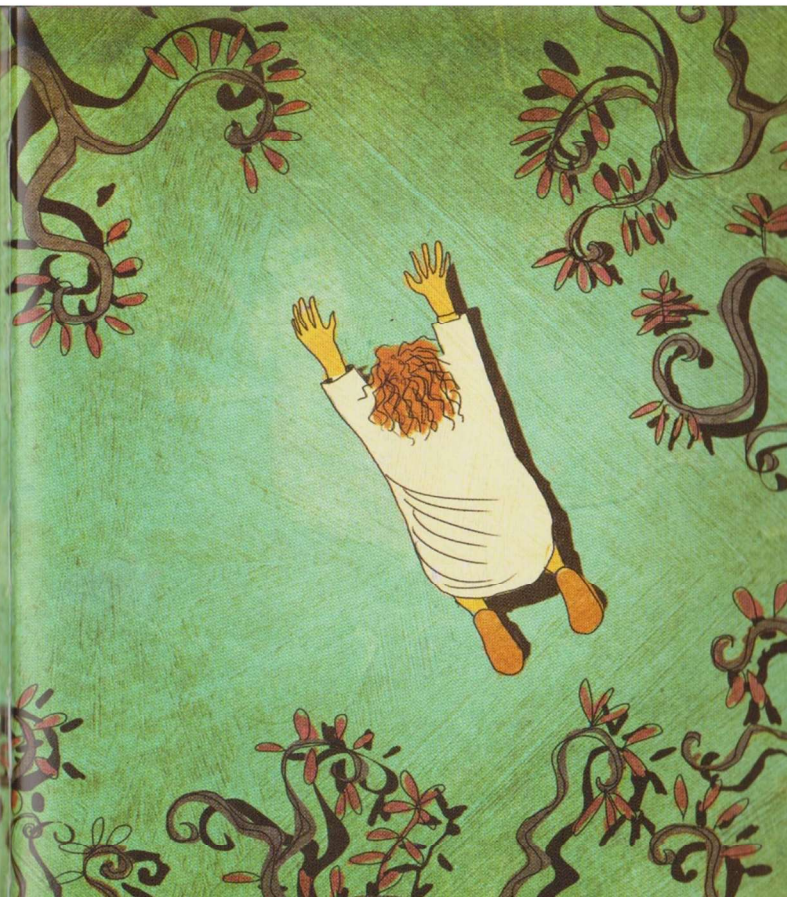
294

But there was something else, something even more horrible. When people ran away from God, they lost God — it was what happened when they ran away. Not being close to God was like a punishment. Jesus was going to take that punishment.

Jesus knew what that meant. He was going to lose his Father — and that, Jesus knew, would break his heart in two.

Violent sobs shook Jesus' whole body.

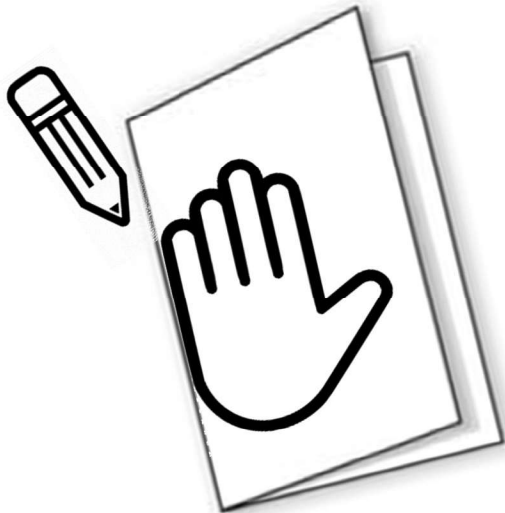
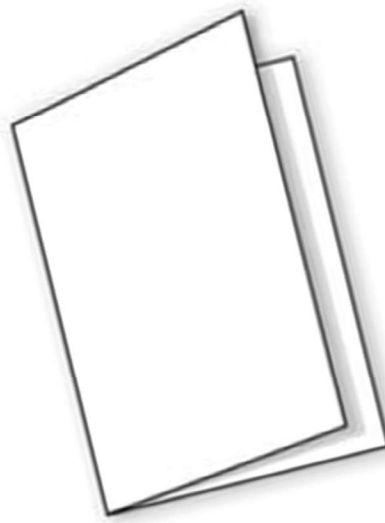
Then Jesus was quiet. Like a lamb. "I trust you, Papa," he said. "Whatever you say, I will do."



Instructions for the craft:

Step 1.

Fold a piece of paper in half.

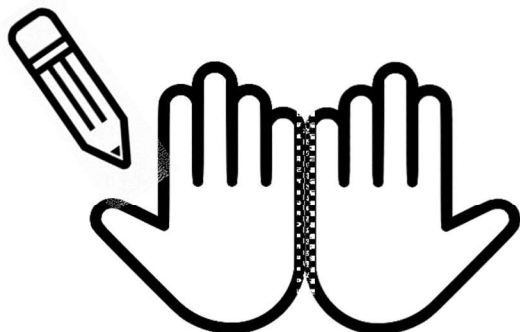


Step 2.

Trace your hand – keeping your fingers together and hand against the folded side of the paper.

Step 3.

Cut out your hand – making sure to keep the fold in the paper (thus ending up with ONE folded “hands”)



Step 4.

Write the message on the front; open up the hands and write the next message. Then DECORATE!

