



Faith Adventures for Children Together



*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource
and how to use it as a launch pad for your
engagement with children and families, please
use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

1 Thessalonians 5: 13a - 19

Theme: Ways to live (Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil)

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

Today, we are looking at The Lord's Prayer and 1 Thessalonians 5:13a–19. The scripture is often titled "Final Instructions" or "Christian Living", and that's exactly what they are: a set of clear, heartfelt instructions from Paul on how we are called to live as followers of Christ.

This passage might seem simple at first glance, but within these few verses, we are given deep wisdom about how to live a life that honours God. Paul reminds us to live in peace, to rejoice always, to pray continually, and to give thanks in all circumstances. These are ways of living that shape our hearts and direct our paths.

Yet they aren't easy instructions, we are asked to "Rejoice always" even when things don't go the way we planned. Rejoicing is an active, deliberate choice to find joy in God's presence—no matter what our circumstances look like. This kind of joy is not shallow or temporary; it's deeply rooted in trust, that God is with us, that he is working through all things for our good, and that his Spirit strengthens us daily.

Paul continues by urging us to pray continually, staying connected to God—keeping our hearts open and our minds tuned to his guidance. Prayer keeps us close to God and far from temptation, and through the Holy Spirit, we're given the strength to turn away from what's wrong and walk in what's right and echoes The Lord's Prayer "lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."



We hope this session helps you and those gathered to open their hearts to what God wants to show to them about turning away from the wrong things we do, and turning instead to a life filled with joy, continual prayer, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,

Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.

Amen

Active game - Temptation tug of war

Resisting temptation can sometimes feel like being in a tug of war. A part of us wants to do something wrong, like say something mean back when someone is mean to us or taking something that isn't ours if we think we can get away with it or tell a lie if we think it will stop us getting into trouble.



Our conscience, where God keeps their spirit, will tell us to do the right thing. It “tugs” on us. But sometimes we want a bad thing, or to do a bad thing, and we have to resist. Temptation tugs at us too.

What you need:

A rope or twisted bed sheet

A ribbon or similar to tie in the middle of the ‘rope’

Masking tape/pavement chalk (to mark the goal lines)

Divide children into two equal teams (balance size and strength).

Each team stands on opposite sides of the rope.

Mark a centre line on the ground and two goal lines (about three-five metres from the centre).

The rope should have a marker (like a ribbon) at the centre.

Teams pull the rope to get the centre marker across their goal line.

The first team to pull the marker over their goal line wins.

An adult gives a signal (like a whistle) to start pulling.

Players must keep both hands on the rope at all times.

No sitting, lying down, or letting go of the rope.

Ideally, this game should be played outside on grass or, if inside, on carpet – but, if the teams are evenly balanced, there should be little risk.

Quiet game - ‘No licking’

This game is about resisting temptation. Can participants eat a sugar-coated doughnut without licking their lips or their fingers?

What you need:

- Enough doughnuts for everyone
- Extra granulated sugar (in case the doughnuts don't have enough on!)
- Bibs (particularly if you're using jam-filled doughnuts)

Empty some granulated sugar onto a saucer and dip the doughnuts in so that they are liberally coated. Participants must eat their doughnut without licking their lips or their fingers. They must finish what is in their mouth before taking another bite.

If they lick their lips or fingers they are ‘out’ (but they can still finish their doughnut!).

Alternative: If you have participants who can't eat doughnuts for dietary reasons, you can substitute ‘fruit pastilles’ with the aim to eat a fruit pastille without chewing.

Experience

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

For this story we recommend using the Easy-to-read version:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%205%3A%2013b-19&version=ERV>

Where can I find the story online?



Under fives: Gizmo's Daily Bible Byte - 159 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - Always Be Joyful!
<https://youtu.be/UTzxWW3KiAk>

Five to elevens: The Rizers- 1 Thessalonians 5:15-18 (Wrong for Wrong)
(A song reflecting the bible passage)
<https://youtu.be/rgOYArq1FY8>

Songs to support the story

Under fives: I've Got The Joy Down In My Heart - Wesley's Wuppets
<https://youtu.be/H7GbECIZ2hQ>

Five to elevens: Be Happy (I'm going to jump up and down) – Duggie dug dug
<https://youtu.be/rXXKJrxoChU>

Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new story to share

You will need:

- a number of flower pots
- beads, marbles or buttons to represent seeds



As part of The Lord's Prayer we are exploring 'Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil' finding the right way to live. Turning away from the wrong things we do and turn to God to do the right things.

The passage has some suggestions for how we should live, explore as you begin your session what the passage has to say about the right way of living. Discover some of the things that the people of Thessalonica are encouraged to do and ways to behave, in Paul's letter. Write or draw these out on individual pieces of card.

Do these words relate to today and how we are in Church, in school, in society? What might you add to your cards?

Using your flowerpots label each one with the different things you came up with on your cards and give everyone some of the beads, buttons or marbles to represent things they would like to grow or are growing in their church. Encourage everyone to rate the way things are done in the church by adding a 'seed' to the relevant pots. Where do they think good things are growing and flourishing?

When you have finished count up how many 'seeds' are in each pot and talk about what this tells them about church.

Are there any surprises?

What might they want to change?

You could repeat this for school and society.

Modern parables



Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



My Way to Good Choices by Elizabeth Cole

<https://youtu.be/uIK70okMEbc?si=psfDkYJ0ykSRvkv2>

In the bible reading we are encouraged to make changes to help us to make good choices, Melissa finds out what it means to make good choices in this book.

- I wonder when you have had to make good choices like Melissa?

Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

- How can you turn your thinking from negative to positive?
- What one way of living do we feel is most important?
- How can we be joyful when we don't feel it?
- What does it mean to never stop praying?
- What rules don't make sense when we are at school/ home/ church?

Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder what tempts you?
- I wonder what brings you joy?
- I wonder whether there are ways to live missing from the Bible reading?
- I wonder how we can be thankful when we don't get what we want?

What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing "what's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). You could tap the top of the box twice after the word 'box'. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- A selection of snacks (a range of healthy and sweet snacks) – which snack would choose? Is it a healthy choice?
- A list of simple rules (include things like having fun, sharing, listening, tidying up) – talk to the children about how rules can help us to be the best we can be.
- A set of double-sided cards with images like good/bad, happy/sad, right wrong – talk to the children about how the bible story help us to flip from bad to good etc.
- A heart – God want us to love each other and live in the best way.
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (A cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)



Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

Prayers - God is always with us pins

You will need:

- Safety pins or nappy pins
- Small beads
- Ribbon

This is a prayer idea to remind us that God is close to us when we are tempted or when we are in danger, wherever we are and whatever we're doing.

Talk about times we face during the day that can be difficult and tempting and when we'd really like to know God is with us. Perhaps when we feel lonely or scared. God is always there, but sometimes it's hard to remember that when God can't be seen!

Take a safety pin and decorate it with some beads and ribbon. Get everyone to hold their pin in their hands and pray together

Dear God,
Lead us not into temptation.
May this pin be a reminder that you are always with us
wherever we are.
Amen

Place the pin somewhere on your clothes as a reminder that God is always with you and keeps you safe. You might prefer to put it somewhere where no-one can see it or you might have it on show as a talking point!



Spoken prayer

Dear God, (fold hands in prayer)
Make me a helper of Your peace. (stretch hands out like giving)
Where there is hate, (cross arms in front)
Let me show love. (make a heart with hands)
Where there is hurt, (rub arm like it's sore)
Let me bring kindness. (give a thumbs up)
Where there is doubt, (scratch head)
Let me bring faith. (point up to heaven)
Where there is sadness, (wipe a pretend tear)
Let me share joy. (smile and raise hands)
Help me to forgive, (hands on heart)
And not to fight. (shake head "no")
Help me to give to others, (pretend to pass something)
And not just want for me. (point to self)
Help me to love, (hug self)
Just like You love me! (point up and then to self)



Amen.

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Doves

You will need:

- White card
- White paper
- Small triangle of yellow card
- Thread
- Glue



What you do:

Draw a dove shape on card by placing your hand with the fingers together and the thumb stuck out at right angle.

Cut out, glue on a yellow triangle to make a beak. Make a small dot for an eye.

In the middle of the card carefully cut a slit, this is where the wings will go.

Take a piece of paper, roughly A5 and lay it flat in front of you. Fold over a piece about 1cm wide. Turn the paper over and fold again. Keep going until all paper is folded.

Push it through the slot in the card. Use a small dot of glue to join the wings at the top and then fan them out.

If you want to hang the dove punch a hole at the top of the wings and tie through a length of thread.

As you create your dove, think about the bible story and how we can bring peace to the world by living the way God wants.

Stem activity – Resist

Pour some water onto a shallow plate or bowl. Sprinkle pepper on the top. Talk about what might happen if oil was introduced to the water. Dip a finger into the oil and place on top of the pepper. What did happen? How does this experiment help us understand today's theme? After some discussion finish by saying that the oil is God, with God at the centre we can be stronger to resist temptations which is represented by the pepper.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:



- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you what they find hard to say no to.
- What do we see in our school, playground, community, homes which help encourage us to live well. I wonder if you agree or disagree with them? Are there any missing? Do they align with God's ways of living?

We hope you enjoyed exploring the passage **living well** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **sharon.loyd@urc.org.uk**

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group bit.ly/FACT_FB

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **EMOTIONS**

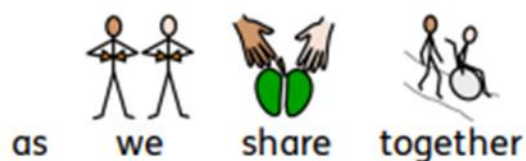




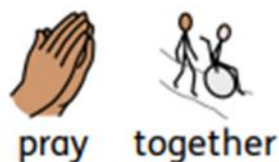
Jesus our friend,



be with us today



as we share together



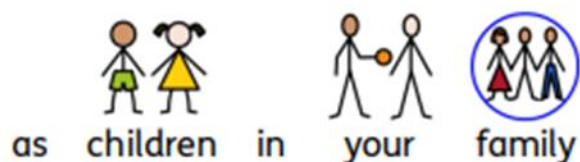
pray together



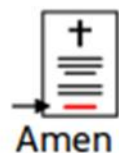
play together



and get to know you better



as children in your family



Amen

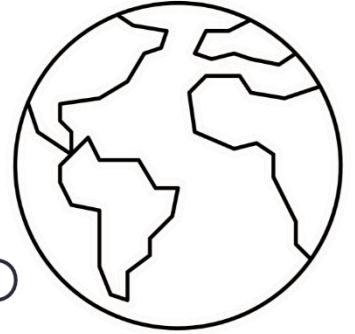


Alternate hands back and forth





Our **Father** who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy **kingdom** come.
Thy **will** be done
on earth,
as it is in **heaven.**



Give us this day our **daily**
 **bread**


and **forgive us** our trespasses,
as **we forgive**
those who trespass against us,
and **lead us** not into temptation,
but **deliver us** from evil.

Amen.



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