



Faith Adventures Youth Resource

Embedded in Faith Adventures: Children Together, this youth resource is intergenerational in nature and designed to foster God-connection in church, home 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/How-To-FAYR

1 Thessalonians 5: 13a - 19

Theme: Way of living (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 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

Let's start our time with God and each other well

If used in a mixed-age group, then young people can support younger ones in using the gathering prayer in Faith Adventures: Children Together. If used in a youth group, you could use this opening prayer or encourage young people to open the session with a prayer of their own.

All mighty God,

Be with us as we learn more about you through stories and people in the Bible.

Help us to walk in your way and follow your path.

Be with us as we make decisions that affect our lives, and the lives of those around us.

Amen

Active and quiet game

See this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together for suitable games for this theme.

Experience

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

Research different versions of this reading on www.biblegateway.com
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Watch: Book of 1 Thessalonians Summary: A Complete Animated Overview

<https://youtu.be/No7Nq6IX23c>

Paul writes to the Thessalonians encouraging them to keep growing.

Questions for discussion

- What does the letter to the Thessalonians say about a 'way of living'?

Explore

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

A new way to explore the theme

You may wish to use the explore section from this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together to guide your exploration of the theme this week.

You will need:

- a number of flowerpots
- 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.

You may prefer to write a letter to the Church expressing what you have learnt and how you feel the church rates, with suggestions on how you might like to see it change. These could be individual letters or a group one, or even an article to submit for the church magazine should it have one. The letters should be approached from a sensitive viewpoint.

Modern parables

This section includes references to TV programmes, films, books, TED talks, TikTok etc aimed at this age group that will have been widely seen, or where a clip is available to use as a stimulus for discussion. You may also enjoy the picture book recommended for Faith Adventures: Children Together and explore the relevance of the story to the theme of the session in more depth – young people and adults are often well tuned in to the deeper meanings in materials aimed at younger people and the authors are often very aware of the adults reading the books to or with younger ones.

How are we influenced?

Here are two ways you could talk about this:

Watch this <https://youtu.be/JQyJ-cl6S3A?si=0stWJiAyVtCoAmix> How targeted ads work by consumer reports.

Then discuss how algorithms, cookies and your phone settings enable technology to see what you interact with and then feed you more of the same.

Or

You could watch these two commercials and then as a group compare and contrast them, discussing which is the most influential and to whom:

https://youtu.be/bLLo0JHq79Q?si=LHyQLPOa55r_i2MG

Elvive Hydra Hyaluronic Plump ft Kendall Jenner Dove by L'oreal Paris South Africa

<https://youtu.be/JNYjRmNCu9o?si=UqhE0EalqBkX9luU>

#RealBeauty Is Universal | Celebrate all types of beauty - Dove by Dove PH

As a group consider how you or society are influenced, do the group watch influencers? How do they feel they are influenced? Is this influence good or bad?

Talking together: Going deeper

- How do you manage to do what is good for all people?
- Does the Bible verse ...'Be sure that no one pays back wrong for wrong' mean we should be monitoring that? How would we do that?
- Is there a difference between a rule and a law?

Conversation starters

- I wonder what influences the way you live your life?
- 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?

Express

How do we respond to what we've discussed and express our faith personally?

Praying together

Prayer Respond to the theme by writing or saying a short prayer. Alternatively use the creative prayer from Faith Adventures: Children Together for this session, or use the prayer activity below. Alternatively light a candle and play some music while you listen and talk to God together.

Participants could take it in turns to read a sentence.

God, sometimes it's hard to know where to start, but we want to be peacemakers.

Help us to be the ones who speak kindly, even when it's easier to argue.

Show us how to support our friends when they're feeling down.

Give us courage to stand up against bullying and hate, even when it's tough.

Teach us to forgive those who hurt us and to say sorry when we've messed up.

Help us to be peace in our homes, by helping out without being asked, and to be peace in our schools, by including people who feel left out.

Help us to be peace in our communities, by listening and showing respect.

When we don't know what to do, remind us that small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

Loving God, help us to be known as people who bring peace wherever we go.

Amen.

Responding together

This is an opportunity for a social justice challenge, some research, craftivism, or a craft or STEM activity. You may have a specific activity chosen but free choice is also an option. Here are some suggestions for this week's theme. See Faith Adventures: Children Together for a craft and a STEM activity which may also be appropriate. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

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.

Challenge

Discipleship doesn't stop when you walk out of the church door – it is a part of everyday life. Take a challenge with you and try to make it part of your week.

You may think of your own suggestion of what you as an individual or a group might do in the coming week in response to what you have explored today? If not here are some suggestions:

- Use one of the "conversation starter" questions or the question below to talk with someone of a different generation or from a different setting and share your questions, thoughts, insights together. **I wonder what your biggest temptation is?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT, Resources (jpit.uk) *Commitment for Life* cforl.co.uk
- Could you take some time this week to look for a Youtuber or podcast which can help you to live God's ways?

Thank you for exploring the **Thessalonians** passage with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk or by sharing it on www.bit.ly/FACT_FB