

PREPARATION: You will need 5 pieces of blank paper and tape. Using a black magic marker write ONE of the following words in large letters across the top of each page: *trial, persecution, inconvenience, sickness, discipline*

One blank piece of paper with 3 large 'blanks' in the center (this will be for a 'Guess the Word' game, and the word is 'JOY' - one 'blank' for each letter)

One copy each of the 1. *Poem*, 2. *Verses on Suffering*, 3. *Suffering Examples*, and 4. *Romans 8:28, James 1:2-3*.

Cut the Verses and Suffering Examples into strips (keeping them separate).

A copy of the coloring page 'I Love Jesus' for each child in the group.

WELCOME

(Before the welcome time, tape the 5 pieces of paper that each have a 'title' on them, to the wall, close to where you will be sitting and at eye-level for the children)

Gather children together and have them sit down in a circle. Ask them how their week has been, what has happened at school or if they've seen anything or gone anywhere fun. And/OR have them take turns asking ONE of the following questions:

If you had a pet cow, what would you name it?

What is your favorite fun thing to do?

After the children have finished sharing,

SAY: tonight we are going to talk about what it means to trust Jesus, even when things don't happen the way that we would like them to. Has anyone here ever had something happen to you that you didn't like? (Allow the children to share) How did it make you feel when this happened? Is Jesus with us, even when hard things happen to us?

WORSHIP

SAY: For our worship time we're going to read a prayer that is a poem, together (or if children are too young to read you can read it over them).

Hold up the copy of the Poem and read it out loud.

SAY: The hard things that we've talked about that have happened to us are like 'storms' in our lives - 'stormy ways'. (Talk further about words to the song, let them ask questions) Let's stop and pray and ask Jesus to help us understand better that He is always with us and we can trust Him no matter what is happening around us.

WORD

Tell children we're going to play a sorting game that will help us to understand what different kinds of difficult things happen in our lives and how we can trust Jesus no matter what happens to us.

Fold the 'Suffering Examples' strips in half and let the children take turns picking one, and then taping it to the paper on the wall where they think it best fits (under - *trial, persecution, inconvenience, sickness or discipline*)

Ask the children for other examples and write them down under the column where it best fits.

Hold up the Romans 8:28 page that you copied and have everyone read it together. Choose one or two of the 'suffering' examples from the columns and ask the children how God might use this situation for good in the life of the person who experiences the trial (be prepared to 'coach them' a bit on this and offer suggestions) Tape the verse on the wall.

SAY: We can trust God in all things, even the hard things because He promises to use them in our lives for our good, - to make us more like Jesus!
Let's look at some other Bible verses about suffering.

Fold the Bible verse strips in half and let children choose one to read. After each verse is read, talk about the verse with the children.

Then **SAY:** Besides God telling us that He uses everything for our good - even hard things, there is another verse that tells us the way that we should respond when hard things happen to us, and it might seem kind of strange at first! It's in the book of James.

Hold up the James 1:2-3 page and have the children read it together. Talk about this verse with the children. (Is it easy or hard to have joy when things happen to us that we don't like? What does God say that hard things do? - build strength, character, determination..etc Do you think that having joy when things happen that we don't like, shows that we trust Jesus?) Tape the verse on the wall.

Read the verse together again.

Then **SAY:** Now see if you can guess the key word from our Bible verse.

Hold up the page with the 3 'blanks' for letters

Explain to the children that they will take turns guessing a letter, for this 3-letter word. Let them continue to guess letters until the word 'JOY' is spelled-out.

Give each child a marker or crayon and have them take turns writing the word "JOY" on one of the columns of trials. Help them write this is needed.

WORKS

Ask the children how they can pray for each other, what things are difficult for them (make them feel sad or afraid). **Each time a child shares something, stop and ask another child to pray for them. Then you pray** over the children, ask the Holy Spirit to give joy in the midst of hard things and help us to trust Jesus more and more.

As time permits, hand out the I Love Jesus coloring page. Help the children write the word "TRUST" inside the heart.

Be prepared with a quiet game as well such as 'I SPY' or 'Button Button Who Has The Button' in case there is extra time.

Before taking the children back in with the adults, remind them that they need to enter quietly ('like little mice' or 'on tiptoe')

John 16: 33 New Living Translation (NLT)

³³ I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

2 Timothy 2: 3-4 New Living Translation (NLT)

³ Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

Philippians 1: 29 New Living Translation (NLT)

²⁹ For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him.

2 Corinthians 4: 7 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁷ We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure.^[a] This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

Philippians 3: 10 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁰ I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death,

1 Peter 2: 20-21 New Living Translation (NLT)

²⁰ Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you.

²¹ For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered^[a] for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps.

I have a really bad cold and had to stay home when my friends were out playing.

I stole a candy bar from the store and my parents told me to apologize to the owner and pay back twice the price.

I have a disease in my legs and I'll never be able to walk again.

My baby cousin died in an accident and I feel very sad.

My dad told my mom to leave the house because she believes in Jesus.

My teacher gave me a Bible and I hid it under my pillow so my parents wouldn't find out that I'm a Christian. They found it and told me I can't read my Bible anymore.

My dad accidentally started a fire in our house. We had to jump out the top windows and got burned on the way down. Now I'm in the hospital.

I was running and my shoelace came untied and I fell down and hurt my knees.

I was teasing our cat and she scratched me 3 places on my arm.

My grandpa is sick and dying, and I don't know if he's a Christian.

Our computer isn't working right and I can't play games on it anymore.

Some people didn't like us and came and destroyed our church.

We just moved to a house in the country where there's no 7-Eleven or malls.

My uncle smokes in the house and it makes me cough all the time.

**Dear brothers and sisters,
when troubles of any kind
come your way, consider it
an opportunity for great
joy. For you know that when
your faith is tested, your
endurance has a chance to
grow.**

James 1:2-3 (NLT)

**And we know that God
causes everything to work
together for the good of
those who love God and
are called according to
his purpose for them.**

Romans 8:28 (NLT)



Trusting Jesus by E.P.Stites

Trusting trusting every day,
Trusting through a stormy way;
Even when my faith is small,
Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Trusting as the moments fly,
Trusting as the days go by.
Listening for Him when He calls
Trusting Jesus, that is all.