

Youth Ministry 2:2
Bible discussion lessons for youth groups
from the Old and New Testaments

Bible 101 – year 1

Philemon and 1 Peter



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FROM SLAVE TO BROTHER

Paul's letter to Philemon

1. Why is it difficult to ask for forgiveness?

2. Who was Philemon? (vv. 1-7)

Who was Onesimus? (vv. 8-25).

Why is this story included in the New Testament?

What reasons did Paul give Philemon to forgive Onesimus?



- Out of love (v.9)
- Paul himself forgave Onesimus (vv. 9,17)
- Onesimus was now Philemon's brother (vv. 10, 15, 16).
- Onesimus had become "fit" for service, to both Philemon and Paul (v.11).
- Paul promised to pay all of Onesimus' debts to Philemon (v.19).
- Philemon owed something to Paul because he had received the good news from him (v. 19).
- To please Paul

3. Why should we forgive those who wrong us?

How can we forgive someone who has hurt us?

4. Is there someone you need to forgive? _____

Do you need to ask someone, or God, to forgive you? _____

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32 NIV).

FROM SLAVE TO BROTHER

(forgiveness – Paul's letter to Philemon)

Significance for Teens:

One of the most important lessons in life is learning to forgive and ask for forgiveness. The consequences of unforgiveness can be bitterness, or broken relationships with friends and loved ones. Many kids have been deeply hurt by parents, relatives and close friends. They need the Lord to help them forgive those who have wronged them.

1. Hook:

Begin with prayer. Then ask, *'Have you ever had a situation where you needed to ask someone to forgive you? Maybe someone would like to share?'* And ask, *'Why is it hard to ask for forgiveness?'* Possible answers: pride gets in the way; we don't know how people will respond, we don't want to make things worse, etc.

2. Book – Philemon

Say, *'Today we are going to read a whole book of the Bible. It is very short - only one chapter, but it is very important because it talks about forgiveness'*

Introduce the story of Philemon, either through the skit (on the next pages) or board game (on the YM 2:2 site).

Read verses 1-7. Ask, *'Who was Philemon (vv. 1-7)?'* Answers: a dear friend of Paul's; a fellow laborer; he had faith in the Lord Jesus and love for all God's people; he had slaves; he was a member of the church at Colossae.

'Who was Onesimus?' (vv. 8-25)

Answers: a runaway slave; went to Rome where he believed in Christ and became like a son to Paul.

Ask, *'Why was Paul In Rome?'* Answer: he was suffering in prison for sharing the Good News of Christ.

Ask, 'Why is this story in the New Testament?'

Explain that it is an illustration of the Good News: we who have sinned against God are like Onesimus. Jesus who intercedes for us with God the Father (like Paul) so that we can return to God (like Onesimus to Philemon) and be forgiven for our sins.

Based on the text, look at the reasons Paul gave Philemon to forgive Onesimus (Have the kids read the answers on the handout).

3. Look:

Ask, 'Why is it difficult to forgive those who have wronged us?'

Possible answers: we don't want to look weak; we don't believe that a person really means it or will change; we think that forgiveness means that what happened didn't hurt us or was OK; we want our offender to feel bad; we don't want God to forgive them; we are still hurting and want to protect ourselves.

Ask, 'Why do we need to forgive those who wrong us?'

Possible answers: God has commanded us to; God has forgiven us (Eph 4:32, Col 3:13); Jesus forgave those who crucified him; unforgiveness can lead to bitterness and health problems; sometimes we do wrong and need the forgiveness of others, etc.

Ask, 'How can we forgive someone who has hurt us?'

Possible answers: pray for him/her; acknowledge they hurt us or that they did something wrong; wish the best for them; don't take revenge; trust that God knows everything about it; be kind (as far as it does not put us back in danger).

4. Took:

At the end, give the kids time to think about whether they need to forgive someone. Or do they need to ask someone,

or God, for forgiveness? They can write a name or just remember it. Finish by reading Ephesians 4:32 and praying for the courage to forgive and ask for forgiveness.

5. Extra Game:

If you have more time, you could play the game, '**What was Stolen?**' (Tie-in:

Onesimus' sin against Philemon was stealing...) The kids are given 15 seconds to look at the items on a tray. Then the kids close their eyes and you remove one or two items. To make it more difficult, the items can be moved around on the tray. The teens open their eyes and tell you which item(s) is missing. The game can be played several times.

Philemon

Props: 1. A box. On one side it says, "SILVER".

2. A scroll.

Roles: Philemon, Onesimus and the Apostle Paul

Scene one:

Philemon: Onesimus! Hey, Onesimus!

Onesimus: (*Entering the room, speaking to the audience*) Oh no! Again! (*to Philemon*): Yes, sir. What do you want?

Philemon: You didn't clean the stable yesterday. Clean it. Hurry up!

Onesimus: (*without enthusiasm*) Yes, sir.

Philemon: Don't forget to bring water and water the cattle.

Onesimus: Is that all you wanted, sir?

Philemon: No. When you're done, I want you to go down to the grocery store and get some more figs. We're having company tonight. (*Philemon leaves*)

Onesimus: (*alone*) I'm fed up! It's time to get out of here. (*Pause*) If I only had some money. I know... I'll just help myself to the family silverware. It's a good thing it's already boxed up! (*Takes the box labeled "silver" and sneaks out of the room*).

Next scene: in Rome

Paul enters. Then Onesimus enters from the other side carrying the box labeled, 'Silver'.

Onesimus: Hey buddy! Wanna buy some knives and forks? I'm selling them for next to nothing.

Paul: No, my son. I'd rather talk about your soul.

Onesimus: How about a salad spoon instead? Pure silver.

Paul: Did you know that Jesus died for all your sins; past, present, and future?

Onesimus: I've got an engraved gravy ladle!

Paul: Look, I'm talking about repenting and being baptized. Making Jesus the Lord of your life.

Onesimus: There's no way my sins could ever be forgiven. I'm a runaway slave and a thief!

Paul: Yes, they can. Jesus died for you, my son. My name is Paul. What's your name?

Onesimus: Onesimus.

Paul: Onesimus! Your name means 'useful.' Why not invite Jesus into your life, and you will really become useful? (*Paul and Onesimus leave*)

Next scene:

Narrator: A few months later:

(Paul enters).

Paul: Onesimus! Oh, Onesimus!

Onesimus: *(enters)* Yes, Paul.

Paul: I have something I want you to do.

Onesimus: I will do anything for you, Paul. You have shown me the Way of Life.

Paul: *(Pulls out scroll)* I want you to take this scroll to your master, Philemon.

Onesimus: Not that! Do you know what they do to runaway slaves when they catch them! First, they ... they cut off their ears and then they take their hair and...

Paul: *(interrupting)* Onesimus! Your master Philemon is a Christian and won't do any of that stuff to you. He is your master, but now...he is also your brother.

Onesimus: But I stole his family silverware!

Paul: Yeah... that is serious. But take back what you haven't sold, and let me pay Philemon the difference.

Onesimus: Would you really do that? ... And Paul, do you think Jesus would want me to go back?

Paul: Yes, Jesus would want you to apologize to Philemon and do whatever it takes to make things right. And He would want Philemon to forgive you.

Onesimus: Okay, I'll go, but can we do one thing first?

Paul: What's that?

Onesimus: *(nervously)* Let's pray...

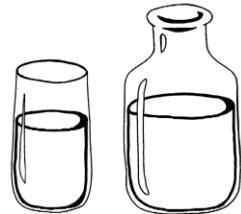
Paul: Of course!

The End

Drink Your Milk!

1 Peter 2:1-3

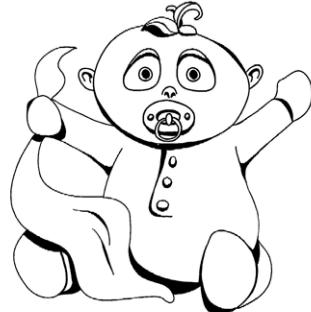
1. What's the difference between a newborn baby and an adult?



Newborn	Adult

2. Acting like a 'big baby' (v. 1)

- Malice:
- Deceit (Treachery):
- Hypocrisy:
- Envy:
- Slander (Backbiting):



How does a person 'grow up' spiritually? (v.2)

Why is it important to mature in our salvation? (v.3)

3. Can a young person be a mature Christian? Can an adult be immature?

4. Consider each 'big baby' behavior (see question 2) and rate yourself on each one:

I always do that (5); often do that (4); sometimes do that (3); rarely do that (2); maybe once a year do that (1); never do that (0).

In which area would you like to mature? _____

To get rid of _____, crave the _____

DRINK YOUR MILK!

(spiritual maturity = unselfishness) 1 Peter 2:1-3

Significance for Teens:

Adolescents are moving from childhood to adulthood. One minute their behavior is mature, and the next it's downright childish and selfish. They need to accept that a truly spiritually mature person puts others first. With God's help, it is possible to develop godly maturity even at a young age.

1. Hook:

Start by playing the game, "**Who's the baby?**" Ask the teens to share their baby pictures with you. Maybe parents can get them for you. Show them to the group and have them guess whose pictures they are.

Then pass out the handouts and ask the question, "*What is the difference between newborns and adults?*" Use their answers to fill in the chart with contrasting traits:

Possible answers about babies: eat baby food; can't talk; can't read; small or weak; think only of themselves; can't drive; depend on a caregiver for everything; not expected to do more for themselves, etc.

Possible corresponding answers about adults: eat solid food; talk; read; bigger; see another's point of view; drive a car; make decisions; etc.

2. Book – 1 Peter 2:1-3

One big difference between babies and adults is that adults think not only about themselves, but also about others.

Babies cry to demand what they need or want (sleep, eat, drink, play, etc.).

We call a person who always has to get what they want and grumbles if they don't a 'big baby'. It is normal to expect adults to behave differently, to sacrifice their desires, time, money, etc. for other people, or to help and encourage them.

The apostle Peter says we are to grow up in our salvation and become spiritually mature people. Read 1 Peter 2:1-3.

Peter begins with the actions of a big baby – 'me first'. Read the list of these characteristics and ask the kids what they mean:

Malice: to desire to see another suffer

Deceit (treachery): to trick someone into believing something false

Hypocrisy: to pretend to be something you aren't (ex. religious at church but not in life)

Envy: to want something another person has and to resent them for it

Slander (backbiting): to damage someone's reputation by lying about them.

Ask, '*According to verse 2 how does a person grow up spiritually?*'

Possible answer: they 'strive for the pure milk of the spirit,' i.e., the Word of God. They want to understand and obey it.

Ask, '*According to verse 3 why is it important to grow in our salvation?*'

Answer: "You have tasted that the Lord is good." He has done so much for us; He wants us to do the same for others.

3. Look:

One sign of a person's maturity is selflessness: doing something for another person, even when it is inconvenient for you; putting others first.

Ask, '*Can a young person be spiritually mature? How?*'

Possible answers: God helps; Jesus gives us his example; we can live for the sake of others; think of others.

Ask, '*Can an old person be immature?*'

Do we have adults who are ‘big babies?’
Why?’ Possible answers: they want things their own way; they never learned to put others first; they don’t want to feel responsible for anyone else.

The immature person sees themselves as the center of the universe, while the mature person can see and care about others’ needs and feelings.

4. Took:

Consider the five behaviors of the “big baby” (part 2) and rate yourself on a scale or 1-5:

I always ... (5),
often...(4)

sometimes... (3),
rarely... (2),
maybe once a year... (1),
never... (0) ...act like that.

To get rid of selfishness (where ‘I’ come first), one must crave – strongly want – the ‘milk’ - the Word of God.

Fill in the blanks: To get rid of me first, crave the milk/ Word.

In which area would you like to mature? You don't have to have the kids confess their sins, but have them think about where they need to grow. Finish by asking God to help all of us to put others first.

Living Stones

Being a "Chip off the Old Block" 1 Peter 2:4-8

1. What are some ways we use rocks?

When are rocks a nuisance?

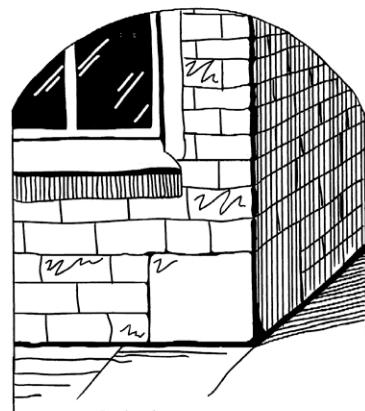
2. What is a "cornerstone"?

What does it mean that God is building us into a "spiritual house"?

to be a "holy priesthood"? (v. 5)

In what ways is Jesus precious? (vv. 6, 7)

When is this stone a stumbling block? (v.8)



3. Why do so many people reject Jesus?

What other foundations do people build their lives on besides Jesus?

Why are these not good foundations?

4. Is Jesus the cornerstone of your life?

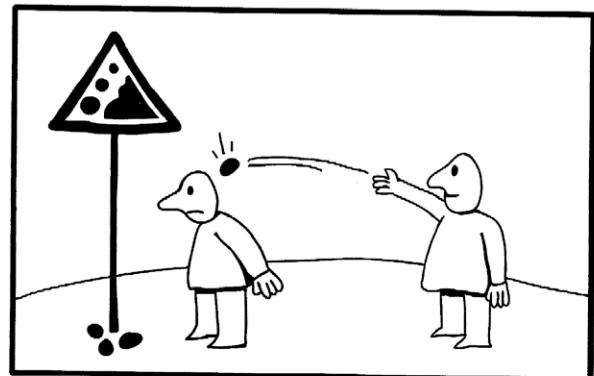
The “Stone” Game

1. I am the era when tools were made of stone.
2. You are lucky if you can kill two of us with one stone.
3. Whoever is without this can cast the first stone.
4. I am the most important stone in the building.

5. I defeated a giant with a stone.

6. I'm a professional wrestler and actor known as “The Rock.”

7. I like to play, but I am afraid of paper.



8. An angel sitting on a rock told people I wasn't there.

9. I gather no moss, and I am also Mick Jagger.

10. I am inside a person and cause them great pain until I pass.

11. My name was Simon until Jesus gave me another name.

12. I am a circle of prehistoric rocks in England.

13. Jesus prophesied that soon, not one of my stones would stand on top of another.

14. I am a stone that will rest on your head, but you will never see me.

LIVING STONES

(Jesus is the cornerstone of life - 1 Peter 2:4-8)

Significance for Teens:

Teens' lives usually revolve around their friends and activities, grades and educational goals, or social media and gaming. But these foundations are shaky and can collapse at any moment. The only solid foundation for life is Jesus Christ.

1. Hook:

Start with the "Stone Game." (Answers: 1. the Stone Age; 2. birds; 3. sin; 4. cornerstone; 5. David; 6. Dwayne Johnson; 7. rock – paper - scissors; 8. Jesus; 9. a rolling stone; 10. kidney stone; 11. Peter. (See John 1:42 – "Peter" is Greek for "rock"); 12. Stonehenge; 13. the temple in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1-2); 14. gravestone or tombstone.

Ask: "*What are some ways we use rocks?*" Possible answers: for building; as foundations; to strengthen a road; to defend against animals or the enemy; to make a sculpture, etc.

Ask: "When are rocks a nuisance?"

Possible answers: in the yard; if they are thrown at us; if they are lying on the road or make holes in our tires, if they are tripped over, etc.

2. Book – 1 Peter 2:4-8

The Bible compares Jesus to a rock. For those who believe in Him, He is useful (the foundation of life), but for those who reject Him, He can be a nuisance or even destructive.

Show the skit, "The Cornerstone".

Ask, "*How is Jesus like the rock in this story?*"

Possible answers: Jesus is the best foundation to hold up someone's life; some people think He is not strong enough or impressive enough to do that; they want their life based on something tangible or

something they can control; some reject Jesus while others accept him; the best way to find out He is reliable is to try Him; etc.

Then read 1 Peter 2: 4-8. Ask, "*What is a cornerstone?*"

Answer: In modern times, a cornerstone is like a plaque, or decoration placed at the corner of a building after it's built that gives information about how or why or when the building was built. The building doesn't really rest on it.

See the picture of a cornerstone on the handout.

In Bible times, however, the cornerstone was critical to the whole building. It was a stone with perfect angles placed at the corner of the foundation right from the beginning, ensuring the building would be built at right angles. Without a reliable cornerstone, the building would be crooked or so unstable it could collapse.

Ask, "*What does it mean that God is building us into 'a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood' (v.5)?*" (This may be too abstract for some younger teens).

The same idea is expressed in another way: The church is the "body of Christ." All believers make up Christ's "house" – His Kingdom, His Body. When people look at His church, God wants them to see Christ. By making believers His holy priests, God intends their lives to bring others to Himself.

Ask, "*In verse 5 what does it mean to offer spiritual sacrifices?*" (see also Hebrews 13:15-16).

Possible answers: offer praise to God; with words; glorify His name; do good works, etc.

Ask, "*How is Jesus precious to us?*" (v.6.7)

Possible answers: He died for us; He put our lives before His own; we could never pay for what He has done for us; He loves us like no other and forgives us and is patient.

LEADER'S GUIDE

Ask, "For whom is this stone a stumbling block?"
(v.8)

For those who have trouble believing or don't want to believe in Him.

Ask, "*Why do they stumble?*"

Possible answers: they do not understand or obey His Word; they try to live life in their own strength and abilities, etc.

3. Look:

Ask, "*Why do so many people today reject Jesus?*"

Possible answers: don't know the truth about Him; want to run their own lives; too busy to think about Him, they think of themselves as good already and don't want to need a Savior etc.

Ask, "*What foundations do people build their lives on besides Jesus?*"

Possible answers: good education; job; family; fame; money and possessions; pleasure; not hurting others; etc.

Ask, "*Why are these not good as a foundation?*"

Possible answers; they are only for this life; they can be taken away; they may not be attainable; etc.

Say, "*If we look at Jesus, we see that He is a sure foundation for this life and the next. He can never be taken away. And He is available to all*".

4. Took:

Say, "*Is Jesus an essential cornerstone in your life, or is He just a decoration? Does everything else depend on Him?* (See the description of modern vs. ancient cornerstones).

Any other foundation can crumble. But Jesus is a solid foundation for all eternity. Ask Him to be your foundation or reaffirm that He is your foundation".

Let each one pray for himself, and then you will close.

The Building Block Skit

Three characters: a boy (1), a construction site foreman, (2) and a man (3)

For a rock you can come up with a fake big rock or just pantomime it.

Boy: *(to himself)* Wow! Look at this stone. It's beautiful. It's so perfect.

Foreman: *(to himself)* Boy, this building is going to be tough to build. It's so complex.

Boy: *(to Foreman)* Hey, I've got the perfect stone for your building.

Foreman: Beat it, kid! We've got a tough project going on here. *(to himself)* Let's see... we'll put the restrooms over there.

Boy: No, I'm serious. This rock would be great to use as a foundation stone... and I'd let you use it for free.

Foreman: Free? Well... let me see it. *(looks rock over)* It's not very pretty and it has holes in it.

Boy: But it's the perfect size for your foundation.

Foreman: A lot of people are going to see this building. We need something really showy. Something that costs big bucks.

Boy: You don't have to spend a fortune. Just try it out and you'll be satisfied. It's the last foundation you'll ever need.

Foreman: I don't think I can risk it, kid. What if I use all my materials on this rock and it won't support them.

Boy: It will. I know it will.

Foreman: I'm sorry. Look if nothing else works, I'll get in touch. Don't call us. We'll call you.

Boy: *(Walks away dejected and then sees a man)* Hey, I've got the perfect stone for your building. *(Shows the man the stone)*

Man: Wow! Where did you get that! That is the strongest and most beautiful stone I have ever seen. It's perfect. Let's talk about it.

(The boy and man walk off together talking)

Aliens!

1 Peter 2:9-12

1. Imagine you are a tourist in India.

What differences would you notice (ex. food, clothing, traditions, language, music)?

And what would Indian tourists notice in your country?

	Observations of a foreigner in India	Observations of a foreigner in your country	Characteristics of God's People (as 'foreigners')
Food & Drink	Spicy cuisine, main food is rice; eaten with hands; street food; sweets		
Clothes	Walk barefoot; wear saris, turbans, etc.		
Traditions	Hindu gods, different holidays, arranged marriages, caste system, etc.		
Language, Speech & Relationships	Unfamiliar letters, many languages, very respectful towards older people or people higher than you in society, etc.		
Music, instruments & Songs	National instrument is the sitar; singing style;		

2. According to verses 9-12, what are God's people called?

Why are God's people called foreigners and exiles in this world?

According to John 15:19, what kind of relationship should we have with the world's culture?

3. Name the distinctive characteristics of God's people - the wanderers - in this world

(fill in the fourth column in the chart).

What is the most difficult thing you find in secular culture to resist?

(Rate yourself on the following common behaviors with a five-point scale)

5 - not difficult to resist; 4 - usually not very difficult to resist;

3 - it is usually a temptation, a struggle; 2 - I usually give in to this temptation, 1 - I can't win

Some common behaviors of worldly people

- Try to be sexy – attract the wrong kind of attention
- Don't make time for God
- Use bad language (to be funny or shocking)
- Listen to songs with dirty or violent lyrics
- Drink or use drugs
- Look at pornography
- Ignore God's word
- Engage in casual sex/sexual activity
- Gossip or put down other people
- Other _____



What help do you need to live a Christian life in a non-Christian culture?

4. We are foreigners and exiles on earth – aliens. What will you do to resist the world's culture and live as citizens of heaven?

ALIENS!

(Worldliness - 1 Peter 2: 9-12)

Significance for Teens:

Most teens live in a culture that is at best spiritually neutral and at worst actively undermines Christian values. Often, Christian teens feel like they don't fit in. If they live by Christian standards, they feel like someone from another planet.

1. Hook:

Ask if anyone in the group has been to a country where the language and customs were different. What was different? How did they feel? (Have the kids share)

"Imagine you are a tourist in India. What differences would you notice (in food, clothing, traditions, language, music)?"
Read the answers in the table and add your own.

Then ask, *"what would an Indian tourist notice as a difference if he or she came to your country?"* Add your answers in the next column in the table.

2. Book – 1 Peter 2:9-12

Say that in New Testament times, Christians lived in a pagan culture, with many values and practices that opposed Christianity. Christians were often persecuted for not fitting in. Peter wrote to encourage Christians and to help them see their persecution as a normal result of living God's way (like citizens of another place).

Ask, *'Based on verses 9-12, what are God's people called?'* Read the verses.

Answers: a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession (9); the people of God (10); foreigners and exiles (11). Some Bible versions say "aliens and strangers".

Ask, *'Why do God's people look like foreigners and exiles in this world?'*

Possible answers: they have different priorities or values; they seek to please God; they belong to God; they speak differently, etc.

Ask, *'According to John 15:19, what kind of relationship should we have with the world and its culture?'*

Read the verse. Answer: we are in the world, but don't belong to it it.

Let's look at what a person who lives in the world but is not of it looks like.

3. Look:

Task: name the distinctive characteristics of God's people - the foreigners in this world.

Fill in the third column in the table.

Possible answers:

Food & drink: don't get drunk;

Clothes: wear more modest clothes;

Traditions: go to church, worship God, read the Bible;

Language: don't use bad language or say mean things to or about others;

Music: songs - no dirty words; etc.

Add the kids' answers.

Then ask, *'What help do we need to live a Christian life in a non-Christian culture?'*
Write down their answers.

Possible answers: The Holy Spirit; a group of believing friends; God's view of the world from His Word; understanding that worldliness leads to destruction, the courage to say no, avoid certain situations, etc.

4. Took:

Remind kids that Christians are like foreigners, aliens and strangers on earth because we are citizens of God's wonderful kingdom.

Ask, "*what will you can do starting this week to resist worldly culture and live for God?*" They can write down their answer or just think about it. Again, if the group is open, some of them may want to share their ideas for applying the lesson to their life. Finish by praying for God's help.

Submission to Authority

(or)

"Who Made You the Boss?"

1 Peter 2:18-23

1. What authorities do you have in your life?

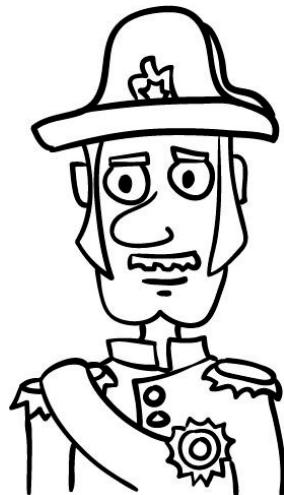
2. People (us): verses 18-20

Obey both _____ and _____ masters - v. 18

Because of God, endure _____ suffering - v. 19

If you suffer for doing good and you endure,

it _____ - v. 20



In your opinion, why would God want us to obey even bad masters?

Jesus: verses 21-23

Jesus suffered and we follow in His _____ - v. 21

He was _____ - v. 22

When He was insulted, He did not speak evil _____ - v.23

What did Jesus do when He suffered unjustly?

What would have happened if Jesus had stood up for His rights?

3. Is there ever a time when we *should* stand up to authority?"

What are some situations where a teen may be punished, and deserve it? at home? at school?

How could a teen be punished unfairly? At home? at school?

4. There will be times when we will have to suffer unjustly at the hands of those in authority. Remember: Obey authority (v. 18), Bear unjust punishment (v. 19), Know it pleases God (v. 20).

SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY

(Unfair Punishment - 1 Peter 2:18-23)

Significance for Teens:

A very important lesson for believers of any age is how to respond to unjust treatment by authorities, whether it is because we are Christians or simply because they don't like us.

1. Hook:

Begin with prayer. Ask, *“What authorities do you have in your life?”* Write down their answers and also write down the roles the kids play in these relationships. Possible answers: teacher and student; parent and child; government and citizen; God and Christian; boss and worker, etc.

2. Book – 1 Peter 2:18-23

The apostle Peter wrote this letter to believers who were considered dangerous by their authorities, the Roman Empire, and were subjected to very unjust and cruel punishments—even death. There are two parts to this passage: the first is about how we should respond to those in authority, and the second is about how Jesus responded. Read verses 18-20, fill in the blanks and discuss the questions under number 2.

Part One: About Us

Read verses 18-20. What should we do?

Obey both good and bad masters - v. 18; Because of God, endure unjust suffering – v. 19;

If you suffer for doing good and you endure, it pleases God - v. 20.

Ask, *“Why do you think God wants us to obey bad masters as well as good ones?”*

Possible answers: so that people have no reason to speak badly of Christians; to overcome evil with good; so that we do not add evil to the world; to

maintain order/prevent anarchy (authorities change – the next one might be good).

Part Two: About Jesus

Read verses 21-23. What did Jesus do?

Jesus suffered and we follow in his footsteps - v.21; He was innocent - v.22; When He was insulted, He did not speak evil in return - v.23.

Ask, *“What did Jesus do when He suffered unjustly?”*

Possible answers: He had no desire for revenge; He made no threats; He trusted in God.

Ask, *“What would have happened if Jesus had stood up for His rights?”*

Possible answers: His disciples would have gotten involved in the fight; he would communicate that problems are solved by force; He would not have died for us.

3. Look:

Ask, *“Is there ever a time when we should stand up to authority?”*

Possible answers: when the situation is dangerous such as sexual or verbal abuse; when we see an injustice in society; when the authority is asking us to do something illegal or sinful, etc.

We as Christians are called to overcome evil with good. There are times when we should not submit to authority.

There are also times when we are punished by these authorities. Sometimes we deserve it and sometimes not.

Ask, *“What are some situations where a teen may suffer a punishment and deserve it?”* (See the list of authorities in the first part of this lesson).

Possible answers: getting a failing grade for not doing homework; being grounded for missing a curfew; being sent to the principal for insulting a teacher, etc.

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Now the opposite: “*How might a teen be punished unjustly? At home? at school?*” After a few examples, role play some situations where a person suffers unjustly. The kids should show how Christians should respond in such situations.

Use situations from the kids' answers to the previous question or the following situations:

1. Your mother unfairly accuses you of stealing money from her purse and does not allow you to go to a friend's birthday party as punishment.
2. Some students have vandalized the schoolyard, and your class has to clean it up.
3. The police stop you and accuse you of something you didn't do.
4. Your non-Christian dad won't let you go to church camp.

After the roleplays ask, “*What was right in how the kids responded to authority?*”

Possible answers: they explained their position in a respectful voice and manner; they didn't insult the person or call names; they submitted but hoped the person would change their mind; etc.

4. Hook:

In closing, tell the kids that there may be a time when they will have to suffer unjustly at the hands of those in authority. In that situation, they should act just as Christ did: obey (v. 18) and suffer the punishment (v. 19). This is pleasing to God (v. 20).

Say, “*This may happen to us but there are Christians in many countries such as China, North Korea, Iran and others where Christians are daily mistreated, put in prison and denied basic rights. They are being punished unjustly for the name of Christ. We also need to remember them*”.

Finish by praying for members of the group and people in other countries who are right now suffering unjustly.