

ONE WITH THEM

CHILDREN'S LESSON

Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 12:26

Big Idea: I have a part to play in God's family

PREPARATION

The lesson below is meant to introduce children to the reality of Christian persecution. It is also designed to help children understand that they are part of God's family which includes believers from all over the world. This is an important reminder when we realize that there are millions of Christians who are mistreated because of their faith in Jesus.

Use the below lesson as you see fit. You can learn and memorize the lesson as is or you can add from your knowledge and understanding of the children you serve to strengthen the lesson.

While there is a scripture reading from NIRV, the lesson does not rely on using that translation.

We do recommend that you continually bring each part of the lesson back to the big idea so that by the time the lesson is done, the kids will know that "I have a part to play in God's family."

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever heard of Christians who are mistreated and bullied because they are Christians? We often call that persecution. Unfortunately, this happens a lot in our world. Today we're going to talk about some of these Christians, we're going to hear a Bible story and play a game. Does that sound fun?

OPENING GAME: Blindfolded Taskmaster

For an opening game, you'll need kids to partner up. You can have everyone play the game or just a couple of groups up front.

- 1) Have kids pair up and blindfold one of the partners.
- 2) Have the blindfolded partner complete a task by receiving instructions from the non-blindfolded partner. Here are some examples of tasks: 15 piece puzzle, connect the dots picture, complete a maze, find a different coloured marble in a large group of other marbles, or even a small obstacle course. 2
- 3) The non-blindfolded partner is only allowed to talk. They can't touch their partner or the task.
- 4) When the task is complete, ask participants to talk about their experiences.

Connect the game to the Big Idea by saying something like this:

It's harder when you can't use all your body parts, isn't it? But it would be almost impossible for only one of you to complete the task – you had to work together. This reminds me of today's big idea: I have a part to play in God's family.

LEARNING ABOUT PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

HELPFUL HINT

Make the lesson interactive.
When you ask questions,
allow the kids to yell out
answers and respond to the
answers appropriately.

Kids love to feel heard and
allowing them to participate
helps them to connect to
you and your lesson.

Many Christians around the world are bullied or persecuted because they believe in Jesus. This bullying can happen in different ways. Some Christians are kicked out of their homes, some are beat up, some are arrested and put in prison. Unfortunately, some are even killed. All because they choose to follow Jesus.

Ask: How old were you when you first heard about Jesus? Who told you?

Explain: Did you know that if you lived in a different country, you might not have heard about Jesus from your parents? In North Korea, it's so dangerous to follow Jesus, that parents must be careful about telling their kids about Jesus. They often wait until their kids are teenagers, so they know they won't accidentally tell their teacher or a friend. Because if someone finds out that you and your

family are Christians in North Korea, you'll all be sent to prison. Life can be very tough for Christians in North Korea – they are treated very badly. Can you imagine if your parents had never told you?

BIBLE LESSON

You might be wondering – what this has to do with you?

The Bible teaches us that the church is like a body. Each person has a role to play. One person might be the hand, and another foot. Both are important and both are needed.

Just as each part of the body is needed, when one part of the body is hurting, the rest of the body is affected.

ASK – Has anyone here ever been injured? Ask for a few examples.

The Bible tells us that when one part of the body suffers, we all suffer with it. It's kind of like an injury.

When a person breaks their foot, their whole body is affected. They can't do things the way they normally do, so their body has to move differently. Their eyes have to pay greater attention to what's around them to avoid further injury. They put more pressure on their arms and hands to use crutches. They can't exercise, so their brain is experiencing differences too.

It's the same way with the body of Christ. When one part is suffering, the worldwide church feels it.

So when we talk about Christians in North Korea being bullied because they are Christians, that affects us as Christians here. We suffer with them. What's happening to them means that as part of the body, we need to respond differently than normal.

Because we are part of the body, we have to help. Because you are part of the body, you have a role to play in God's family.

That's our big idea: I have a part to play in God's family.

Since we are talking about Christians being persecuted or bullied for their faith, I want to tell you about the role that you can play in the body. They are hurting, and we need to respond.

The number one role we can play to help Christians who are persecuted is to pray for them. It's the number one thing they ask for. Our prayers can help them to have courage when they face difficulties. Our prayers can help them find strength when they are weak. Our prayers can make a huge difference for them!

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Today, I want us to start to play our part in the body of Christ by praying for Christians who are bullied or persecuted. Let's pray.

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