

LESSON 5
PERSEVERANCE

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us through Hard Things

SCRIPTURE: James 1

GOD'S BIG STORY: James, an early church leader, encourages the church to keep going when life is difficult because God will help them persevere.

WORD OF WONDER: The three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love. —1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIRV)

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Play Stations:
 - I Can Do Hard Things
 - Perseverance Coloring Sheet
- Word of Wonder: 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIRV)
- God's Big Story / Snack
- Circle Time: A Mess of Yarn
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Worshiping through Hard Times
- Game: Race of Life



Walking in Love Preschool Spotify playlist



INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us through Hard Things

SCRIPTURE: James 1

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NirV)

Ever been tempted to quit when something got too challenging? What was the source of that temptation? Why is resisting that particular temptation so hard?

Our enemy knows where we're vulnerable. I remember a time in my life when I faced discouragement at every turn, and I felt as though the season of difficult things was never going to end. I wanted to give in and give up. I wanted to quit.

James 1 might be the most famous passage that addresses facing temptations and trials. But it's also famous for reminding us we have the option to choose our mindset when facing those challenges. Take a few moments now to read James 1.

God provides a source of strength and endurance to help us get past the temptations. According to James, that source is joy.

When I've chosen joy, I've gained strength I didn't know I had and the perseverance to keep pushing through and beyond.

What are you facing in your life that feels too hard and the temptation is to give up or take an easier way out? What truths about God's love and power make it possible for you to choose joy right now?

God is ready to meet you, equip you, empower you, and fill you with all wisdom and understanding so you can have the perseverance to stand the tests and trials. He will help you through.

—Tom Bump

Children's Ministry Leader, Author, and Coach

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

James, the brother of Jesus, is barely mentioned in the Gospels. He doesn't seem to have placed any faith in Jesus until after His resurrection. According to 1 Corinthians 15:7, Christ appeared to James, who afterward became a leader in the early church.

WHAT?

James sounds quite a lot like his brother Jesus, who taught in parables and short sayings. James even uses the same phrasing as the Beatitudes: "Blessed is the person who ..." (James 1:12). His letter is often compared to wisdom literature.

WHERE?

James was based in Jerusalem, where he led Jewish Christians until his martyrdom. James writes to the scattered 12 tribes of Israel (James 1:1). His reference to the scattering, or diaspora, could mean the collective people of God in all places.

WHEN?

James was executed at the direction of the high priest in Jerusalem around the year AD 62. His letter doesn't have a firm date, but it appears to respond in some way to Paul, perhaps in the AD 40s or 50s.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

James reminds followers of Christ to live in a sensible way, making peace with others. He modeled the role of peacemaker when he gave a hand in fellowship with Paul and Barnabas, accepting their ministry to Gentiles, even while he ministered to Jews (Galatians 2:9).

LESSON 5 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us through Hard Things

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Play Stations

SUPPLIES: bowls (3), pony beads (a few handfuls), pom-poms (a few handfuls), chopsticks (1 set), dry spaghetti noodles (several), dry penne pasta noodles (several), tray, coloring utensils, pencils (2, optional), laminator (optional)

RESOURCES: [Perseverance Coloring Sheet \(1 per kid\)](#)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

"Welcome to RBKids! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?"

Play Station: I Can Do Hard Things

Set-up: Set out a bowl of pony beads. In a nearby area, set out a bowl of pom-poms, and set another empty bowl nearby along with a pair of chopsticks or two pencils. Set out some dry spaghetti noodles and dry penne pasta noodles on a tray.

Play: Kids will work to complete three different hard tasks. For the first task, kids will try to stack five pony beads on top of each other. For the second task, kids will use chopsticks (or two pencils) to move pom-poms from one bowl to another. For the third task, kids will try to use a dry spaghetti noodle to pick up a piece of dry penne pasta by sticking the spaghetti noodle through the opening in the penne pasta noodle.

Leader Tip: Kids may get frustrated trying to complete these tasks. That's OK! Life is full of frustrating circumstances. If you find the kids getting frustrated, encourage them to keep trying, and offer them suggestions or help.

Play Station: Perseverance Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a crown.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, tape (prep only), scissors (prep only), paper (optional), coloring utensils (optional)

RESOURCES: [Heart Words Sheet \(1 per SG\)](#)

Print the Heart Words Sheet and cut out the hearts. Hang the hearts in different places around the room.



WORD OF WONDER

The three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love.

—1 Corinthians 13:13 (NirV)

"Can you count to three? Let's practice! Count with the kids. **One, two, three! Great job! Our Word of Wonder reminds us of the three most important things we can have in our heart.**

Let's go on a hunt and see if we can find out what those three things are. Look around and see if you can find a BLUE heart. When you find the blue heart go and sit down next to it. Once all of the kids are sitting by the blue heart, take it down and show it to the kids. **This heart has the word faith on it. Can you say, "Faith"? Invite responses.**

Now let's see if we can find the YELLOW heart. Allow kids to find the yellow heart and sit down near it. **This heart has the word hope on it. Can you say, "Hope"? Invite responses. There is one more heart. Can you find the red heart?** Allow kids to find the red heart and sit down near it. **Great job finding the hearts! This heart says L-O-V-E. Does anyone know what that spells? Invite responses. It spells love!**

Our Word of Wonder reminds us that the three most important things to have are faith, hope, and love. But which of these three hearts is the biggest? Invite responses. LOVE is the biggest! Our Word of Wonder says that too: "The three most important things to have are faith, hope, and love but the greatest of them is love." That is from 1 Corinthians 13:13 in the Bible. Let's do our motions and practice saying our Word of Wonder together."

If you have time, you could hide the hearts around the room again, and when the kids find them, ask them if they remember what the word on each heart is. Repeat the activity as time allows.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **THE THREE**—Hold up three fingers.
- **MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO HAVE**—Make a "check mark" motion in the air.
- **ARE FAITH,**—Make prayer hands.
- **HOPE**—Hold hands out with palms upward.
- **AND LOVE.**—Place hand on your heart.
- **BUT THE GREATEST OF THEM**—Hold up pointer finger as number one.
- **IS LOVE.**—Place hand on your heart.
- **1 CORINTHIANS 13:13**—Hold your hands together in front, palms together, as if opening a book.

God's Big Story / Snack

SUPPLIES: Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of James in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? (*Hands together then opening palms up, like opening a book.*)

God's big story, waiting for me! (*Point to yourself.*)

Let's hear read of God's big story, which comes from the book of James in the Bible.

Read James 1:2–4, and 17–18 from an NIV Bible.

Circle Time: A Mess of Yarn

SUPPLIES: ball of yarn (from Tac the Cat skit), ball

Have kids sit in a circle. If you did the Tac the Cat skit earlier, you could use the same ball of yarn from that. **Tac let us borrow his ball of yarn to play a game. I am going to roll this ball of yarn to one of you, but I'm going to hold on to one end of it. Whomever I roll it to gets to answer a question. Once you answer the question, you'll hold on to part of the yarn and then roll it to someone else.**

Have kids roll the ball of yarn around the circle to create a web of yarn in the middle of the circle. Make sure the kids remember to hold on to the yarn before rolling it to someone else, and ensure they keep holding on to it during the activity. Ask questions as the kids are rolling the yarn.

Once the kids have answered all of the questions, they should have created a web in the middle of the circle. **Sometimes we may feel frustrated or go through hard things, and life may feel messy, but God can help us be strong! Let's see what happens when we put this ball on top of our yarn web.**

Have the kids carefully lift up the yarn web so it's off the floor and then gently place the ball onto the yarn. **Our messy web is strong enough to hold this ball! Even when things get messy, God can help us be strong!** You can let the kids gently bounce the ball on the yarn. If there isn't enough yarn to hold the ball, help the kids continue to toss and cross it until there is enough yarn to hold a ball.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who wrote the letters we learned from today?** (*James*)
- **We learned that as followers of Jesus, we might face what?** (*hard times*)
- **Whom can we trust to help us through hard times?** (*God*)
- **Who helps us to do the right thing when we're tempted?** (*God*)
- **What will we receive after we go through hard times?** (*the crown of life*)
- **What kind of gifts does God give us?** (*good gifts*)
- **Have you ever gone through a hard time? Share about it.**

Even though we may all go through hard times, God helps us be strong! Let's talk to God now in prayer!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and to thank God for helping them be strong through hard times.

Head to Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Worshiping through Hard Times

SUPPLIES: posterboard or large sheet of paper, coloring utensils

RESOURCES: songs from the [Walking in Love Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#)

"We've all faced things that are difficult or frustrating. Let's take some time to think about frustrating or hard things we have gone through. Gather kids around the outside of the posterboard or sheet of paper and give them each a coloring utensil. **You can draw a picture of a time when you were going through something hard. You might have been feeling frustrated or scared or sad.** Allow time for kids to add their pictures to the paper. You could play songs from the [Walking in Love Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#) during this time.

Once the kids have finished their drawings, allow them to share what they drew. Then have the kids each place their hands over their pictures. **Let's pray and thank God for helping us through our hard times.** Take some time to pray with the kids and thank God for helping them through their hard times.

Did you know that we can worship God even when times are hard? Let's stand and sing a worship song together to remind us that God helps us through the hard times. Play a worship song and encourage the kids to stand and worship God."

Leader Tip: For some kids a hard time might be their mom not letting them have a cookie until after dinner, but for others it might be a parent dying, and that's OK. Remind the kids that in the small and in the big hard things, God is always with us and will help us through.

Game: Race of Life

SUPPLIES: chairs, cones, cushions, other items to be used as obstacles; painter's tape
Create a starting line with painter's tape on the floor at one side of your room and a finish line with painter's tape on the other side of the room. In the path, place a chair, a cushion, cones, and other items that could be used as obstacles along the way.

Make It Inclusive! Kids with physical disabilities may not be able to complete the relay. You can give them a small "challenge" to do independently, such as picking up beads or pom-poms with chopsticks or clothespins or stacking cups.

Today we learned that sometimes we will face obstacles (or hard times) in life, but God will help us through! You're going to play a game where you have to race across the room to the other side, but you may face obstacles along the way. You might have to climb under a chair or over a cushion, but use your perseverance to find your way to the other side.

Split the group in half and have kids form two lines at one side of the room behind your start line.

When I say, "Go," the first person in each line will race to the other side of the room. Say, "Go!" and allow the first two people to race to the other side. Repeat with the other kids.

Leader Tip: If you want to crown a winner, you could take the winners from each round and have them compete against each other to see who is the fastest. You could print an extra Crown of Life Sheet and crown the winner.