

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



BE WILLING

Luke 22:39-46 Jesus prays alone

Each child will need:

→ Pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

→ A pack of cards

→ Pens/pencils and paper

This session links with Candidates Sunday.

Start It

Play a couple of quick-fire games.

Higher/lower

Using a pack of cards, shuffle and show the first card. Ask the children to guess if the next card will be higher or lower. Show the next card, and those who guessed correctly can guess again for the next card, and so on. Play until only one child remains.

Follow the leader

Ask one child to leave the room temporarily. Choose one child to be the leader and instruct them to perform a series of actions. Everyone else must copy the leader. The child who has left returns and must guess who the leader is. Repeat with another leader and guesser.

💡 **Say:** In our first game, our ability to win was purely chance. The next card could have been any other in the pack and we had no control over the outcome. In our second game, everyone had to follow the one leader and the guesser had to work out who the leader was by observing carefully.

💡 **Say:** In our session today, our theme is 'be willing'. Will is about having a fixed desire, about being prepared to do something. In contrast to our silly games which were about pure chance, our lives have been carefully planned by the greatest leader – God – who loves and cares for us and wants us to follow his will for each of us.

Sing It

Let's put our trust and hope in the Lord with this song partly based on Isaiah 40:31.

'Everlasting God' (2 mins 27 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqkd8EZWzqw>

Tell It

💡 **Say:** This story takes place in the week leading up to the death of Jesus and his resurrection. Jesus is God's son and we believe that when he came to Earth he was fully human and fully God. Jesus knew what God had planned. Jesus knew he had to die.

Ask: I wonder how Jesus would have been feeling?

Video

Watch the video *Jesus in the garden* by Superbook (39 secs)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80lidgJCAuU>

Bible reading

Read Luke 22:39-46 (ICB). You may wish to screen share.

Jesus prays alone

'Jesus left the city and went to the Mount of Olives. His followers went with him. (Jesus went there often.) He said to his followers, "Pray for strength against temptation."

'Then Jesus went about a stone's throw away from them. He knelt down and prayed, "Father, if it is what you want, then let me not have this cup of suffering. But do what you want, not what I want." Then an angel from Heaven appeared to him to help him. Jesus was full of pain; he prayed even more. Sweat dripped from his face as if he were bleeding. When he finished praying, he went to his followers. They were asleep. (Their sadness had made them very tired.) Jesus said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray for strength against temptation."

Discuss:

- What stands out to you and why?
- Do you have any questions?
- Jesus was talking to his Father, God. He prays, 'Father, if it is what you want, then let me not have this cup of suffering. But do what you want, not what I want.' What do you think Jesus is saying?
- Why was Jesus 'full of pain'? Are there times where you have been hurting and prayed?
- Did Jesus find it easy following his Father's will? How might Jesus' response help us understand how we respond to God?
- 💬 **Say:** We all have things we want to do. What God wants is for us to do his will, to follow his plan. Jesus chose to be obedient to God the Father, even though he found it hard. When we choose to follow God's will, God doesn't say it will be easy for us. We will never be able to perfectly follow God's will for our lives, but we can seek to do so.
- 💬 **Say:** We have to have faith and trust God. God doesn't let us down in the way people do. However, we don't always understand what God has planned. We may only see part of the plan, whereas God sees the whole plan. Trust that God's timing is the best!

Action It

- 💬 **Say:** In the Bible we learn more about the ways people through history have encountered God and how they have grown in relationship with God. We start to understand that the struggles and questions we have are similar to the struggles and questions that others have had. And so we learn more about how God desires us to live.
- 💬 **Say:** We sometimes read or hear people in the Bible being called heroes. But in every story, the true hero is God. It is the power and wisdom of God which allows his followers to accomplish what seems difficult or even impossible.

Ask: Does anyone have a favourite story from the Bible?

Screen share the question and let the children annotate with their responses.

(Depending on the stories shared, use these to prompt discussion with children about how those in the story followed God's will for their lives, and draw out the challenges that they overcame.)

- 💬 **Say:** When we choose to follow God, he finds ways to direct our path. For children and adults, we believe following God's will is not something we achieve and complete, but a choice always to seek God's desires for us.

Ask: Can you remember some of the ways we discussed last week about how God speaks to us?

[We believe there are various ways God speaks to us. These include:

- through verses and stories in the Bible;
- through others;
- through thoughts, feelings and our inner voice;
- and through our personal circumstances.

Through continued prayer and listening, we can learn to distinguish God's voice from our own. Some things you can do to help you understand this is consider:

- Is what you heard agreeing with the Bible?
- What do other people think about it?
- Does it honour God?]

Prayer activity

🗨 **Say:** Fold a sheet of paper in half and half again. In each box, write: today, this week, this year, my life. In each box, write things you want to do.

Invite the children to share their responses and use as prompts to discuss that there are many things we do which God does want for us. But there are also things we choose to do that are not honouring of God, or things that we have missed because we are still learning God's will for us.

You can also remind children that we do not always understand what God has planned. We may only see part of the plan, whereas God sees the whole plan. Trust that God's timing is the best!

Pray It

Ask: Would anyone like to share a time where they have chosen to do God's will and not their own? How did you know you were following God's plan and not necessarily your own?

🗨 **Say:** We can encourage and support each other as we grow in our relationship with Jesus and seek his will for our lives. We are going to have a time of 'conversational' prayer. Each person can pray as often as they want, but keep prayers short to a word or a few words. You can share whatever is on your heart: your hopes, your fears, the things you want to say thank you or sorry for, the things you want God to help you with.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.