



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Series: Jesus Is the King  
Winter Year 1, Lesson 35

# In Difficult Times, God Trains Us to Trust Him

**Primary Scripture:** 1 Peter 1:7

**Key Verse:** 1 Peter 1:7b, "...Your faith is more precious than gold, and by passing the test, it gives praise, glory, and honor to God."

## **How does this address a need in our kids' lives?**

Kids are in the process of spiritual growth. This means they are learning how to trust Jesus as their Savior and let him fill their lives with his presence. This spiritual growth requires training. God uses times of temptation or trial as training times. In difficult times, God trains us to trust him more. When we say yes to God and no to sin, we grow as Christians.

## **How does Jesus fill this need?**

**Jesus for us:** Jesus took up his cross and went all the way to Calvary for us. Though tempted by Satan to not complete this vital mission, Jesus considered it a joy to endure the hardship and complete it.

**Jesus in us:** Jesus fills our lives with a desire to take up our cross and follow him. When we say yes to him and no to sin, we give him more room in our lives to work. We are growing as Christians.

**Jesus through us:** Jesus testified that we would have trials and even suffering in this world. We can face it joyfully and persevere. We can be joyful even in times of temptation, trials, or persecutions. This is a witness to others.

## Stamp of Excellence:

*Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.*



## Worship

### Invocation:

*Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

### Attention Grabber:

*Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.*

*Supplies:*

- candy bar
- soda
- child previously prompted to not join in the soccer practice and eat candy and drink soda
- whistle
- soccer ball

In advance, enlist four kids to do an impromptu skit. Assign them their roles. Explain that all of the actors except one will be pretending to train for a big soccer game. One of the players will be resistant to the training. This player might be more interested in taking a nap, drinking a soda, or eating candy on the sideline. The player should express that he believes training is hard and not necessary.

The large group presenter will appear as a soccer coach with whistle and ball in hand. He interacts with audience members as follows, calling some to train for the big game. Have the selected actors come forward and give them a soccer ball to practice with. After they have made three or four passes with the ball, the large group presenter calls attention to the player who is completely inactive.

**Do you know what it means to train to be ready? For example, when you play sports, you must practice or train so you will be ready to play the game. In today's lesson we are talking about training. Sometimes training is hard, but it is worth it.**

Invite the three children forward who will do soccer drills and the one child previously prompted to do something else, to come forward.

**Now let's start with our training to get ready for the big soccer game.**

As you are working with the ball and players, have a conversation with the "lazy" player. Allow the actor to respond with his beliefs that training is not necessary.

Then say to the large group:

**When we train for an athletic event, we say yes to exercise and eating right. We say no to junk food and sitting around. Do you think the person who doesn't train will be ready for the big game? No, of course not.**

**Did you know that as we worship we are also training? When we worship God, we are saying yes to God and no to sin. We say yes to him in worship by telling him that we love him. We say yes to him when we listen to what he says to us in his word. We say yes to him when we trust Jesus as our Savior.**

**Let's go into training by worshiping God now. When we do, let's say yes to God and no to sin.**

## **Songs of Worship:**

*Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!*

## **The Power of the Cross:**

*Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.*

*Supplies:*

- *coach's whistle*
- *cap*
- *clipboard*

Refer back to the coaching story told at the beginning of the lesson.

**When we are training as a Christian, we say yes to God and no to sin. Who will help us do that? Who will be our trainer? When players train for a game, they have someone helping them. What is that person called? A coach. Now you tell me what makes a great coach. Have any of you had a great coach?**

The best coaches are the ones who know just what it's like to be a player and how to be a great one. For example, in soccer it helps when the coach can teach you how to kick a ball by doing it himself. And a great coach can help you when you make mistakes.

Remember the game we are training for is *Saying Yes to God and No to Sin*. Who is our coach? Yes, it's Jesus. Did Jesus ever have to say yes to God and no to sin? Of course he did. When he lived here on earth, he had all the temptations and trials that anyone would ever face, but he always said yes to God and no to sin.

God told Jesus to do something very difficult, something that was very hard for Jesus to say yes to. Do you know what it was? It was dying on the cross. But Jesus did say yes. He died on the cross so he could pay for all the punishment that our sin deserves. Because of that, God will forgive us if we make a mistake. Through Jesus, God will help us do better next time.

Jesus wants us to remember he knows how hard it can be to always say yes to God and no to sin. He understands us. This is what it says in the Bible in Hebrews 4:15 (NIV).

*"For we do not have a high priest (Jesus) who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*

Let's pray.

Dear God, we want to say yes to you and no to sin. But we haven't always done that. We are thinking right now of the times we have said yes to sin and no to you. Maybe we disobeyed our parents. Maybe we were mean to another person. Maybe we took something that wasn't ours. Maybe we haven't prayed to you when we were worried or troubled. We need you to forgive us. For Jesus' sake, please forgive us. Jesus lived a perfect life in our place. He died for our sins. Now we open our hearts and ask that Jesus would live in us through the power of your Holy Spirit. Help us say yes to you and no to sin. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## **Song of Response:**

*Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.*

## **Offering:**

*Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.*

Make special note of those children using offering envelopes. Talk about how it is wise to plan what you give before you come to church on Sunday. It is God's way to set aside the first part and the best part of the money you have. When we give our offerings regularly, we are saying yes to God and no to sin.



# The Word

## Learning Game:

*Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.*

*Supplies:*

- *spoons for players*
- *marshmallows*
- *trash can*

**Learning Objective:** *To help teams understand that with practice and training they can improve their score. So it is in the Christian life. We need training to grow as Christians.*

### **Marshmallow Training:**

Divide the children into even lines for relay teams. Give each child but the last in line a spoon. The object of the game is to pass a marshmallow from one person to the next using only a spoon until the last person in line is fed the marshmallow.

If a player drops a marshmallow, he is to place it in the “marshmallow graveyard” or trashcan. (Let’s not feed the kids dirty marshmallows.) A new marshmallow starts again at the beginning of the line.

Once the person at the end of the line has been fed, he takes the spoon from the person in front of him and goes to the beginning of the relay and everyone advances. Everyone should get a chance to eat a marshmallow.

There will be tension when marshmallows are dropped. That’s okay. The kids will try harder not to drop them. With practice, they learn. The teams should make note of how often marshmallows were dropped at the beginning and how much they improved as they practiced. Remind them that practicing is like training.

Discuss the learning point.

**With training, did you get better at passing marshmallows?**

**Even though it was uncomfortable and maybe even agonizing for you to send a fallen marshmallow to the graveyard, did it help you learn how to be better passers the next time? Can we learn even in our failures or in our times of difficulties?**

# Bible Lesson 1:

*Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.*

*Supplies:*

- *objects to help demonstrate the refining process of gold (These objects could be a gold ring, a butane torch or a fondue burner.)*

Read 1 Peter 1:7(NIV).

***“These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”***

Show kids the gold refining objects.

**Do you know how people make things out of gold? They have to melt the gold with very hot fire. Can you imagine how hot the fire would have to be to melt this gold ring?**

**When a goldsmith tests gold to see how pure it is, he heats the gold so hot that it turns to liquid. Then if there is any other metal mixed in with the gold, that metal will float to the top. The other metal won't be as shiny as the gold. The goldsmith then scoops the other metal off the top.**

**Metal doesn't have feelings, but if it did, do you think it would like to be put in such hot heat and melted? No, I don't think it would be much fun. But when it's all over, the gold is *pure* gold and that would be worth taking all the heat.**

**The Bible says that our faith is like gold. We go through the fire of temptations or struggles, just like gold goes through the fire to get melted. When we go through these things, our faith can be shown to be pure just like the gold was shown to be pure when it went through the fire.**

**Going through hard times and times of temptation can be like going through the fire. It might feel hot and we might not like it, but afterward we see how our faith has grown. We can say yes to God and no to sin. Even though it is hard, our faith grows and we trust God more.**

Use the following example.

**If everyone was laughing or making fun of someone behind his back, what would you do? Would you say yes to God and no to sin? Would that be harder than joining the crowd and making fun?**

**If you didn't go along with everyone else's teasing, do you think they might tease you as well? Would that be like going through the fire?**

## **Bible Lesson 2:**

*Supplies:*

- *large, bulky cross*
- *Bible*

Read Hebrews 12:2-3. As you are speaking, have a child slowly carry a large, bulky cross from the back of the room toward you. After the reading, continue with:

**This is a picture of Jesus who came to earth to make his way with the cross of Calvary. Along the way, he was tempted to take the easy way out.**

**When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, the devil tried to get him to think about his own needs, like turning rocks into bread. The devil tried to get Jesus to become only a miracle worker by jumping off a building and flying.**

**Then the devil tried to tempt Jesus by offering him power. But if Jesus had accepted, he would have turned away from obeying his Father and would have worshiped Satan instead.**

**Jesus did not turn away from God's plan. During his whole life, he focused on the cross. Today's Bible verse says that Jesus could do this because, even though it hurt and even though it was hard, he could see joy coming. Jesus knew that he would be rewarded with great joy because we would be saved from our sins because of what he did.**

**Jesus loves us that much and knew that we would be able to live with him forever in heaven. It was worth it to him. Each time Jesus was tempted, he said yes to God and no to sin. It was the way he was trained so he was ready to live his life perfectly for the Father.**

By this time, the cross and the Jesus figure carrying it will be at the front of the room.

**We are reminded of Jesus' words in Luke 9:23 (NIV), *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross***



***daily and follow me.***” Jesus was teaching us that when we follow him as our Savior, we say yes to God and no to just what we want.

**The next time you have a hard time saying no to what you want and a struggle with temptation, listen to what else God says in the Bible.**

Read Hebrews 12:7-11. Then say:

**Now let’s think of things that come up in your life that might seem hard, like when you say yes to God and no to just what you want. When you say no to sin and Satan, then you are being trained to be a Christian.**

## **Application Lesson (*Optional*):**

*Supplies:*

- *“The Song of the King” from Tell Me the Secrets by Max Lucado (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993)*

Read “The Song of the King” by Max Lucado. This delightful story is an allegory that tells the secret of going through a journey of trials and temptations.



## **Witness and Tell:**

*Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.*

Let the kids give examples of temptations they face and have them describe how they might say no to sin and yes to God. It might even be appropriate to role-play some of these if time allows.

## **Prayer:**

*Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.*

Pray the Lord's Prayer and give special attention to the section that says, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." Point out that this is the way Jesus teaches us to pray for spiritual protection so we are filled with his power. When we face temptation, we will be ready to say yes to God and no to sin.

## **Blessing:**

*Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.*

## **Song of Sending:**

*Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.*

# Supplies:

## *Attention Grabber:*

- candy bar
- soda
- child previously prompted to not join in the soccer practice and eat candy and drink soda
- whistle
- soccer ball

## *The Power of the Cross:*

- coach's whistle
- cap
- clipboard

## *Learning Game:*

- spoons for players
- marshmallows
- trash can

## *Bible Lesson 1:*

- objects to help demonstrate the refining process of gold (These objects could be a gold ring, a butane torch or a fondue burner.)

## *Bible Lesson 2:*

- large, bulky cross
- Bible

## *Application Lesson (Optional):*

- "The Song of the King" from *Tell Me the Secrets* by Max Lucado (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books. 1993)—order from <http://www.openbiblio.org/isbn/0891077308.html> or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

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