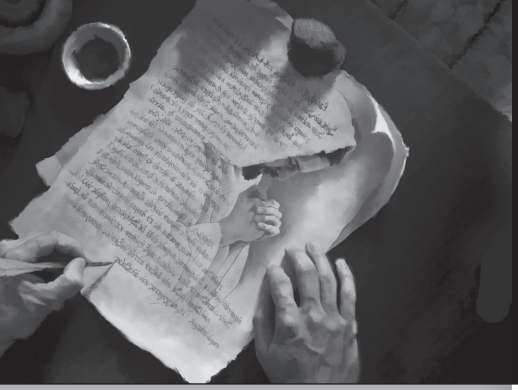


2

Through Thick and Thin

Community
We share Jesus' love with others.

POWER TEXT

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother'" (Zechariah 7:9).

KEY REFERENCES

- Luke 23:26-56
- Matthew 27:45-56
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 78, pp. 741-764
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 105-109
- Student lesson on page 32 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 9, The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ
- No. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ
- No. 12, The Church

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that they care for their friends even in the face of difficulties or death.
- **Feel** willing to take responsibility for meeting the needs of their friends without being asked.
- **Respond** by deliberately seeking ways to meet the needs of their friends.

POWERPOINT

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Despite all His pain and suffering while on the cross, Jesus expresses concern for those around Him: His friends, the soldiers, the thief on the cross, His mother. A few of His friends show concern for Him by being there when He needs them. Some of them also care for His body after death.

This is a lesson about community.

We can show concern for others in our faith community even when we face difficult situations ourselves. By focusing on others, we will receive a blessing.

Teacher Enrichment

"The Saviour made no murmur of complaint. His face remained calm and serene, but great drops of sweat stood upon His brow. There was no pitying hand to wipe the death dew from His face, nor words of sympathy and unchanging fidelity to stay His human heart. While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, Jesus prayed for His enemies, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' His mind passed from His own suffering to the sin of His persecutors, and the terrible retribution that would be theirs. No curses were called down upon the soldiers who were handling Him so roughly. No vengeance was invoked upon the priests and rulers, who were gloating over the accomplishment of their purpose. Christ pitied them in their ignorance and guilt. He breathed only a plea for their forgiveness,—'for they know not what they do'" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 744).

What things consume my thoughts when I am going through a painful experience? What might I gain by choosing to minister to the needs of my junior Sabbath School students rather than focusing on my own pain?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Caring for the Sick* *B. Acts of Kindness*	paper, pencils, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 27. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering box, decorated box for prayer requests
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	 Bibles, paper, pencils
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Caring in Tough Times*	
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:

- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

Caring for the Sick

Have the students conduct a survey with the person sitting next to them about times someone cared for them during a time of illness. Sample questions may include: What kind of help did you need when you were sick? Who was there to care for you? How did you feel as a result of the care you received? How did you respond to the person who cared for you?

Next, students will include on their survey questions about times when they were the caregivers to someone in their family or to a friend. Sample questions may include: What did you do to care for someone who was ill? How did the person feel as a result of your care? How did the person respond to you? How did helping someone make you feel?

Debriefing

Keep track of the answers on the board. Ask: **Did anyone think about someone else's needs when they themselves were sick? How difficult is it to think about others when you're not feeling well yourself? Let's say together our power text, Zechariah 7:9:**

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother' " (Zechariah 7:9).

Let's say the power point together:

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

B

Acts of Kindness

Divide the students into small groups. Ask them to come up with at least four ways of showing how someone can take responsibility for meeting the needs of friends. Allow time for brainstorming. Then they are to choose one of those four ways and plan a short skit to portray it to the rest of the students. After each skit, have the audience discuss what they have seen.

Debriefing

Ask: **Which of these behaviors/actions would you appreciate a friend doing for you? How many do you do on a regular basis? How do you feel when someone cares for your needs?**

Say: **Let's say together our power text, Zechariah 7:9,**

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother' " (Zechariah 7:9).

Today we will be looking at examples of how Jesus thought of others even when He was going through great pain Himself. As our power point teaches us:

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

Prayer & Praise

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"For God So Loved the World" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 43)
"Lamb of God" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 62)
"The Coloring Song" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 61)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use Adventist *Mission* magazine for youth and adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ offering box

Continue to use the offering box suggested last week. Remind students that the offering is a way of recognizing our relationship with others in this world. Even if we don't know the recipient of an offering personally, we are related to them through our relationship with Jesus.

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ box for prayer requests

In a group prayer, give class members opportunity to participate by bringing the names and concerns of friends and family before God.

Gather around your box with prayer requests and make available small slips of paper. Encourage the students to write down the names of those for whom they want to pray. Give each student the opportunity to share their concerns as they place the slips of paper in the box with prayer requests. At the end, pray that God will use us to bless others and thank Him for the blessings that He promises when we care for others. Pray also for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

Notes

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Ask the students to share experiences in which they have helped someone whose problems they can understand because they had gone through similar experiences. Be ready to share a story of your own also. Say: **Today we're going to learn about how Jesus cared for others even when He was dying on the cross.**

Experiencing the Story

Share the following information with your students and discuss the questions that follow. Say: **Crucifixion was a common mode of punishment among heathen nations in early times. This was regarded as the most horrible form of death.**

This punishment began by subjecting the sufferer to scourging with a whip of leather thongs with small pieces of metal or bone tied to them. The condemned one carried his own cross to the place of execution, which was outside the city. Before the nailing to the cross took place, a medicated cup of vinegar mixed with gall and myrrh was given for the purpose of deadening the pangs of the sufferer. Jesus refused to take this painkiller so that His senses might be clear (M. G. Easton, *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978], pp. 174, 175).

It seems most likely that first the right and then the left wrists were nailed to the crossbeam with sharp nails or spikes while the convicted criminal lay on the ground. Then the whole was drawn up by ropes and fastened to the upright. One nail fastened the feet to the cross.

Death by crucifixion was usually quite drawn out. The person crucified rarely died before 36 hours. In some cases it stretched to nine days. For that reason the centurion and four soldiers were left as a guard to prevent a rescue.

The pain was obviously intense, as the whole body was strained, while the hands and feet, which are a mass of nerves and tendons, would lose little blood. After a while the arteries of the head and stomach would be surcharged with blood, causing a throbbing headache, and eventually traumatic fever and tetanus would set in (*The New Bible Dictionary* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1962], pp. 281, 282).

Debriefing

Ask: **How would you have felt if you had been there seeing Jesus treated in this manner? What thoughts would you have had if you had been one hanging on a cross? Can you imagine yourself worrying about your friends' feelings at a time like that? Did Jesus focus on His own situation? How did He act toward those around Him? Did He have to be told to be concerned about the needs of others? How do you show concern for others when you are facing difficulties yourself? As our power point reminds us:**

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper, pencils

Exploring the Bible

Ask the students, individually, to find examples of the following in Luke 23:26-56: (1) ways in which Jesus expressed concern for others; (2) examples of how others showed concern for Him.

After they have had time to study the passage, call for their responses. Possible answers would include (1) Jesus' concern for the soldiers who crucified Him, the thief on the cross, and His own mother's welfare; (2) Joseph of Arimathea's offering of his tomb for Jesus' burial and the women's errand to anoint Jesus' body.

Say: **Let's say together our power text, Zechariah 7:9:**

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother' " (Zechariah 7:9).

Let's remember our power point:

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

Scenario

Read the following scenario aloud to your students:

Ram and Nada's father died three years ago. Their mother has managed to hold the family together and support them so far. But today she came home and told them that there have been some layoffs at work, and she has lost her job. She will have to find another one. Until she does, Ram and Nada won't be able to buy anything new, or have money for any school excursions, etc.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think Ram and Nada might respond to their mother's news? What can you tell them based on our lesson today? What kind of responsibility do Ram and Nada have to help their mother? How can they help her? Our power point reminds us that**

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

Caring in Tough Times

Invite students to share with the class what they did during the past week to comfort or encourage someone in need. Ask: **Who had a chance to care for someone who needed to be comforted and encouraged? How did that person respond?**

Ask the students to form pairs. Say: 1. **Share with your partner a time when things were really difficult or stressful.** (Allow 30 seconds to a minute for each one to share.) 2. **Now, share with your partner what you thought or worried about during that time.** (Allow 30 seconds to a minute for each.) 3. **Having heard what Jesus thought about and what He did while on the cross, how might you behave differently the next time you are in a difficult situation?** (Allow each 30 seconds to share.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How many of you might like to do things differently the next time you face tough times? Who is a person who is facing a difficult situation that you can support? How can you be a friend to someone in need?**

Closing

Prayer and Closing Comments:

Say: **We can apply the power point whenever we have the opportunity. Let's repeat once again the power point:**

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.

Reminder to Parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming Up Next Week:

Say: **Jesus' followers tell others about His resurrection. We can share our hope for eternal life with our family, friends, and people in the community.**

Notes

Student lesson

Through Thick and Thin

Is it possible to trust God so much that you can forget about your troubles and show love and compassion to another person?

The story of Jesus being led to His crucifixion is one of trust in God. Jesus had studied the prophecies and He knew He would sacrifice His life to save humanity. Yet He trusted God to guide His life. Even though the immediate circumstances were frightening and agonizing, His trust in God allowed Him to go meekly to the cross, as a lamb. Prophet Isaiah described this beautifully: "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).

Jesus trusted in His Father even when arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. Thoughtful of His disciples' welfare, He asked for their freedom. Even though He had secured their freedom, His disciples ran away, trying to escape. They left their Master at a time He needed them most. Then Peter, one of His disciples, denied Him.

Jesus' trust in God did not waver even when He was being insulted, mocked, falsely accused, and twice tortured by the scourge whip!

After the second whipping, the cross was put upon Him. He had not taken any food or drink since the Passover meal with His disciples. In addition, the scourging had drained Him of His energy. Being too weak to lift up the cross, Jesus fell. Again the cross was placed upon Him, and again He fell under its weight. Still, Jesus continued to trust His Father.

The crowd that followed and watched as Jesus fell, bleeding and in terrible pain, showed no compassion. They yelled and taunted Him, saying "Make way for the King of the Jews!"

A Cyrenian man by the name of Simon saw what was happening and stopped in astonishment. Seeing his compassion, the soldiers grabbed him and forced him to carry the cross for Jesus.

Women in the crowd who had seen Jesus fall under the weight of the cross began to wail and cry loudly. Though they were expressing pity for Him, Jesus knew they did not believe in Him as the Son of God. Desiring to lead them to the Father, He took one last opportunity to warn them of the coming destruction of Jerusalem: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Luke 23:28).

Jesus was able to look past the moment of torture, past the coming destruction of Jerusalem, and see the final destruction of the world. He said, "Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"'" (Luke 23:30; Hosea 10:8). Even at that trying time, right before His death, Jesus reached out in love and warning, "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Even on the cross, as the nails were piercing His hands and feet, Jesus thought of His persecutors. He did not protest; He desired no vengeance. Instead, He pitied them for the consequences that would result from their rejection of Him. He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34). What a magnificent evidence of the depth of Jesus' care, love, and forgiveness for those who tortured Him. Jesus not only taught but showed in the deepest sense what it means to love our enemies. In that He is our supreme example.

Crucified with Him were two thieves, one on each side. Both heard the scorn and ridicule of the priests. Both heard Jesus pray forgiveness for His persecutors. Both witnessed His peaceful submission to unjust torture. As one thief joined in taunting Jesus, the other was convicted that Jesus was the the Son of God. With him Jesus shared words of forgiveness, promise, and hope: "Assuredly, I say to you today . . . you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

Finally, Jesus looked down at His heartbroken mother. In His dying hour He committed her to the care of His trusted disciple John. What a remarkable evidence of filial love!

Jesus is our perfect example. Even in His hour of dying, He was still pleading for forgiveness for others; still lovingly offering salvation to a sorrowing thief; still ministering to those needing care. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every Christian followed the example of Jesus? "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

KEY REFERENCES

- Luke 23:26-56; Matthew 27:45-56
- *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 78, pp. 741-764
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 105-109
- Our Beliefs, nos. 9, 14, 12

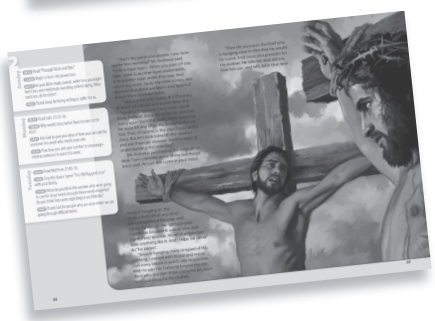
POWER TEXT

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother'" (Zechariah 7:9).

POWER POINT

Like Jesus, we can care for others even when we face difficulties.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 19.

Sunday

READ Read Luke 23:26-43 and this week's story, "Through Thick and Thin."

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Zechariah 7:9.

THINK How would you feel if one of your close friends were dying? How would you reach out to that person?

PRAY Thank Jesus for being willing to suffer for us.

Monday

READ Read Luke 23:44-49.

THINK Why did Jesus accept the path of suffering and humiliation that led to His sacrificial death on the cross?

PLAN Plan ways to encourage someone this week.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for ideas of how you can reach out and encourage someone today.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 27:45-56.

SING Sing the hymn "The Old Rugged Cross" at worship.

THINK What did people recognize when they saw the unusual things taking place in nature when Jesus died?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the people who are close to us when we are going through difficult times.

Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; and John 19:19.

THINK What is the significance of the sign that was placed at the top of Jesus' cross?

ASK Ask an adult to share about a time someone who was hurting cared for others.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for friends who reach out to you. Ask God to help you reach out to those who hurt.

Thursday

READ Read Luke 23:50-56.

THINK What risks did Joseph of Arimathea take in asking for the body of Jesus?

DO Do what you planned on Monday to comfort or encourage someone this week.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for wisdom to carry out your plan.

Friday

READ Read 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

ACT Act out the Bible story for family worship.

SAY Repeat the power text by memory.

THINK Do you think the thief on the cross knew about Jesus beforehand, or believed in Him because of His conduct while being crucified?

PRAY Ask Jesus to give you the strength to do His will even when you are in distress.