



Session 3

ALWAYS WITH US

FOR THE
LEADER

Romans 8

Building on his prior teaching, Paul assured the Romans that once they were reconciled to God, they would choose a new way of life. That new life comes through the Spirit, who guides believers and warns of sin. Following the sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection, God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell people. The Holy Spirit provides victory over the old sin nature and leads to a new nature that desires the things of God.

Paul began this chapter by offering the dichotomy of our flesh versus the Spirit. Paul shared that the flesh is that part of a human that desires things that are contrary to God's desires and wishes. The Spirit expresses characteristics that line up with the will of God and seek to do His will. Paul told the Romans that God sent His own Son in human form. The difference in Jesus and other humans, as Paul had already addressed, was that Jesus lived a sinless life and fulfilled the law.

The law was something the people were very familiar with. The *law* referred to the rules set down by God, through Moses, of how people should act in their relationship between God and others. Paul said that because of Jesus' sacrifice, the people were now free from the burden of the law. Obviously, Paul did not mean that because of Jesus' death and resurrection, people could now live any way they wanted. Paul meant that believers now do not measure their righteousness to the standard of keeping the law but to the standard of faith in Christ.

While believers are still tempted by the flesh, the Spirit provides release and guidance to submit to God's will instead. God provided the Holy Spirit to help believers know when their choices and actions do not line up with God's will. Sensitivity to the Spirit enables believers to grow closer to God and to seek His will above their own. God is always with us, and God has a great plan. All of God's plans are good, and God works His plans for good to those who live according to His will.

SESSION FOCUS

TEXT TRUTH

God is always with us.

BIBLE STORY

Romans 8

BIBLE VERSE

Romans 8:39

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

The book of Romans affirms that we became sinners through one man, Adam, and we will be saved through one man, Jesus. Through Jesus, sinful man is reconciled to holy God.

BIBLE SKILLS: Babies and toddlers will . . .

- Hear that the Bible includes poems, songs, letters, and stories.
- Hear the names of Bible books.



CONNECT WITH FAMILIES

Provide these weekly resources to help families explore the Bible together.

- Explore the Bible at Home (Printable: Music & Print Extras)
- Diaper Bag Card
- Preschool Family Card



SESSION ACTIVITIES

BABIES EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Babies are sensory learners and they are relational. They learn best when teachers engage them through conversation and play. Prepare two or three activities for babies to enjoy as they explore the Bible.

First hour–

- Play Hide & Find
- Spin a Toy
- Discover Bibles

Next hour–

- Repeat activities with babies in the next hour.

TODDLERS EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Toddlers are on the go and ready to learn. They learn best through playful exploration and discovery. Offer three or more multisensory activities to lead young preschoolers to discover and learn Bible truths.

First hour–

- Draw on a Box
- Deliver Mail
- Stamp Letters
- Match Ribbon Colors

Next hour–

- Move to Music
- Match Postcard Puzzles
- Match Bibles to Outlines

PLUS Circle Time!

TEXT TRUTH

God is always with us.

BIBLE STORY

A Reminder of God's Love
Romans 8

**BIBLE VERSE
PARAPHRASE**

Nothing can keep God's love
from us.
Romans 8:39

PACK ITEMS

3 Story Picture: A Reminder
of God's Love

A REMINDER OF GOD'S LOVE

Romans 8

- *Paul taught people about God.*
- *Paul said that God loves people and helps them.*
- *Paul helped people know that God is always with them.*

EXPLORATIONS

PLAY HIDE & FIND

Tools: Bible, baby blanket, small toy or baby doll

- Hide the toy or doll under the blanket. Leave just enough toy visible for a baby to see.
- Invite the baby to find the toy. Guide his hand to tug at the towel.
- When the baby discovers the toy and plays with it, say: "I'm glad you came to church with your family. Families learn about God and the Bible at church."
- Play hide and find again, this time hiding the Bible. Remark: "We learn about God from the Bible. We learn that God is always with us. Nothing can keep God's love from us."
- When an older baby tries to hide the toy, clap your hands to celebrate!

SPIN A TOY

Tools: Bible, several spinner toys or tops, Story Picture: A Reminder of God's Love

- Lay the Story Picture on the floor near the play mat. Surround the picture with several spinner toys.
- Show a baby a toy. Talk about the colors. Encourage the baby to hold the toy.
- Spin a toy near the Bible so the baby notices both.

- As the toy spins, sing (tune “Are You Sleeping?”):
*You are special, you are special, Yes, you are. Yes, you are.
God is always with you, God is always with you.
He loves you. He loves you.*
- Gently take the baby’s hand and tap the Bible. Say: “The Bible says that nothing can keep God’s love from us. God is always with us.”
- Show the Story Picture to the baby and point to people. Say: “Paul told people in some churches that God loved them and was with them.”

DISCOVER BIBLES

Tools: 3 or 4 different Bibles, Diaper Bag Card, shirt boxes and lids

- Show the Bibles to a baby, then put the Bibles on the floor. Cover each Bible with a box or lid.
- Help the baby push over a box to find a Bible.
- Say: “Peekaboo! You found the Bible. The Bible has letters that Paul wrote to tell people about God and Jesus.”
- Help the baby turn pages in a Bible. Say: “Paul taught people about God. Paul said that God is always with people and loves them. God loves you.”
- Show the baby the picture on the Diaper Bag Card. Point to people. Say: “God loved the people.”
- Pray: “Thank You, God, for always being with us.”



NEXT HOUR (MORE EXPLORATIONS FOR BABIES)

- Continue and repeat activities from the first hour. Babies learn through repetition and practice.
- As you cuddle, rock, soothe, and tend to babies’ needs, talk about the Bible. Say Bible words and phrases.
- Use the Bible with babies. Let them see, touch, and turn Bible pages.

TEXT TRUTH

God is always with us.

BIBLE STORY

A Reminder of God's Love
Romans 8

**BIBLE VERSE
PARAPHRASE**

Nothing can keep God's love
from us.

Romans 8:39

PACK ITEMS

3 Story Picture: A Reminder
of God's Love
16 Bible Verse Markers
22 Mailbox

A REMINDER OF GOD'S LOVE

Romans 8

Paul wrote a letter to church friends in the city of Rome. Paul had heard about the people's love for Jesus. Paul knew the people in the churches had taught others about Jesus.

Paul thanked the church people for their work and asked them to keep on telling about Jesus.

Paul said, "Sometimes things will be hard for you because you love Jesus. But God will help you. Don't be afraid. God is always with you. No one can keep God's love from you."

Paul loved the people. He wanted them to remember that God had a plan, and everything that happens is part of the plan. God's plan always brings good things to people who love Him.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

DRAW ON A BOX



Tools: Bible; cardboard box; washable markers, crayons, or chalk; Diaper Bag Card

- Write today's Text Truth on one side of the box. On another side, write the Bible verse.
- Invite a toddler to draw on the box. While he enjoys marking and scribbling, point to the words printed on the sides. Remark that the Bible helps us know that God cares about us and loves us.
- Show the child the picture on the Diaper Bag Card. Tell the Bible story. Say: "Paul wanted the people in Rome and other places to know that nothing could keep God's love from them. God is always with people and cares for them."

DELIVER MAIL

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: A Reminder of God's Love, Mailbox, scissors, utility knife, glue, shoebox, junk mail, a few postcards, small backpack or other "mailbag"

- Cut out and glue the Mailbox picture to the lid of the box. Cut an opening in the mailbox. Place the lid back on the box.
- Show children pieces of mail and ask whether preschoolers receive mail in a mailbox at their house. Some children's families may go to a post office to pick up mail. Ask toddlers if they have received a birthday card or package in the mail.
- Invite toddlers to choose pieces of mail to drop into the mailbox. Or a child could pretend to be a postal carrier and deliver mail from the bag to the mailbox.
- While children play, point out the people in the Story Picture. Say: "Paul sent a letter to people to tell them about God's love."

STAMP LETTERS

Tools: Bible; letter stamps for G, B, L, P; paper; inkpads (washable ink)

- Open the Bible to Romans 8:39 and put it near the paper and inkpads.
- Show a toddler the letter stamps and identify the letters. Connect the letters to today's emphasis. For example, say: "This letter is G. That is the first letter in God's name."
- Connect the letter L to God's love, and remark that the Bible (B) tells us that nothing can keep God's love from people.
- Invite the toddler to use the letter stamps and inkpads to design a picture. While the toddler works, tell her about the letter Paul (P) wrote to the church people in Rome.
- Say: "Paul told the people that God is always with them."
- Point to the verse in the Bible and help the toddler say the verse with you.

MATCH RIBBON COLORS

Tools: Bible, Bible Verse Markers, tissue box, 2 each of several colorful ribbons (each about 12 ins. long), plastic interlocking bricks or pop beads

- Insert one set of ribbons between the pages of the book of Romans in the Bible. Place the other set of ribbons in the tissue box.
- Help a toddler pull one ribbon from the tissue box. Identify the color. Then lead the toddler to find the matching color of ribbon in the Bible.
- Open the Bible to the ribbon and comment on the Bible text. For example, say: "This is where we read Paul's letter to church people in Rome." Or say: "This is where we read a verse about God's love."
- Challenge toddlers to match ribbon colors to plastic bricks or pop beads.
- Tell the story, holding the Bible open to Romans 8.

LEADER TIP!

Younger toddlers may not recognize letters, but they will learn them over time.

Toddlers are beginning to learn basic colors by now!

TEXT TRUTH

God is always with us.

BIBLE STORY

A Reminder of God's Love
Romans 8

**BIBLE VERSE
PARAPHRASE**

Nothing can keep God's love
from us.
Romans 8:39

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bible
- Music & Print Extras
- picnic basket
- large paper heart shape

PACK ITEMS

3 Story Picture: A Reminder
of God's Love
16 Bible Verse Markers

CIRCLE TIME (2-5 MINUTES)

Your toddlers may be ready for a simple circle time. You decide when and how long to have a group experience.

GATHER

- Put the Bible, Story Picture, large heart shape, and today's Bible Verse Marker in the basket.
- Play music and lead toddlers to follow you to Circle Time. Carry the basket with you.
- When toddlers are seated, put the basket in your lap.
- Ask preschoolers to guess what is in the basket. Take out the heart shape and say: "This is a heart. It reminds me of something important Paul told people. Listen to hear what Paul said."

HEAR THE BIBLE STORY

- Set the basket to the side and get the Bible. Open it to Romans 8.
- Tell the Bible story in your words, then pass the Story Picture around the circle.
- Say: "Paul talked about love, didn't he? Paul said that nothing can keep God's love from us. That is such good news to know."

PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- Call on one toddler to get the final item from the basket: today's Verse Marker.
- While the child holds the marker, lead the group to say the Bible verse and reference together.

PRAY

- Say a simple prayer to thank God for loving us and for sending Jesus.
- Thank God for Paul's letter that reminds us that God is always with us.

NEXT HOUR (MORE EXPLORATIONS FOR TODDLERS)

Continue activities from the first hour or offer these additional activities to help toddlers explore the Bible.

MOVE TO MUSIC

Tools: Bible, Music & Print Extras, Story Picture: A Reminder of God's Love (Pack Item 3)

- Play music and hold the Bible as you move around the room to the beat of the music. Invite toddlers to join you.
- Say: "When I hold up the Bible, stop moving."
- Between songs, summarize the Bible story. Show toddlers the Story Picture and point to the people. Say: "Paul told the people about God's love."
- Continue playing as long as children are interested.

MATCH POSTCARD PUZZLES

Tools: Bible, Diaper Bag Card, 3 or 4 postcards, scissors, paper bag

- Cut the postcards in half and place them in a bag with the Diaper Bag Card.
- Shake the bag to get a child's attention. Invite the child to find picture halves that go together. Give hints if necessary.
- As the child completes the pictures, remark: "People travel to many places to tell about Jesus. Paul traveled to towns to teach people, but Paul also wrote letters. One of those letters is called *Romans*. Paul's letter is in the Bible."
- Turn to the book of Romans and point to Paul's name. Say: "Paul told people about God's love."

MATCH BIBLES TO OUTLINES

Tools: 3 or 4 Bibles of different sizes, poster board, marker

- Before the session, arrange the Bibles on the poster board and draw around them to make outlines.
- Invite a toddler to examine the Bibles. Talk about the differences and similarities among the Bibles. Comment that all of the Bibles tell about God and Jesus.
- Guide the toddler to match the Bibles by size to their outlines.
- Say: "The Bible tells about God. Words in the Bible tell us that God loves people and is always with them. Nothing can keep God from loving us."
- Help the toddler turn to Romans 8:39 in a Bible. Say the words of the Bible verse, then help the toddler say the verse words.

*Look for printable
Next Hour helps in
Music & Print Extras.*