

WEEK 2
LESSON GUIDE

FULL BLOOM

BIG IDEA

Jesus understands when we're hurting.

BIBLE

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane:
Matthew 26:36–46; Isaiah 53:1–5

ABOUT THIS WEEK

To keep a garden growing strong and healthy, you'll need to pull up the weeds that can harm the other plants and keep them from growing. This week, we'll hear about how Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane before being arrested. We'll see that we can go to Jesus whenever we feel hurt because

Jesus understands when we're hurting.

LARGE GROUP TIME

Hey, welcome back to *Full Bloom!* Last time, we talked about how Mary showed her love for Jesus with perfume. But guess what? There's more excitement waiting in our garden. Close your eyes and imagine shrinking down, growing wings, and getting extra arms and legs...because today, we're buzzing around like busy bees.

Are you ready to fly to another part of our garden for an amazing story? It's gonna be *un-bee-lievable!*

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Keep Out The Weeds

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you will need beach balls of different sizes. Split your group into two teams and mark a line on the ground using tape between the teams. Have players stand in different parts of your playing area, sitting or standing in place. Each player is a plant, which means there's no walking allowed. Toss a few "seeds" (beach balls) into the playing area. Without moving their feet, kids will try to get the seeds out of their side of the garden and to the other side. At the end of two minutes, see which team has the fewest seeds on their side. Repeat as desired. For smaller spaces, try doing a tabletop version using ping pong balls and straws, where kids will have to blow into their straws to move the balls out of their side of the table and to the other team's side.*

✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Give kids pool noodles, or something similar, to act as "leaves" that can help them reach farther to bump the "seeds" around.*

- Good job keeping those seeds out of your garden because those seeds weren't going to grow a beautiful flower or tree ... those seeds would become weeds! These tricky little plants might look pretty at times, but if we don't pull the weeds, they can hurt the other plants in a garden and stop them from growing.
- Some things in life block our growth or cause us pain, too. Today we'll talk about how we can turn to Jesus whenever we are hurting.

ACTIVITY | Garden Art Harvest

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, gather various fruit and vegetable peels, flower petals, and leaves. If using whole fruits and vegetables, cut larger items into slices. Place the items on a table and invite two kids to play. Set a one-minute timer and have each kid try to make an art piece using as many of the items as possible — like a big happy face or a flower garden. The player who uses the most items wins the round. After, invite two new players up and play as many rounds as time allows.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Hand out lollipops—most will be sweet but have a couple of sour ones. If they get a sour one, their goal is to keep their cool and try not to show a sour face. The group has to guess who has a sour lollipop in their mouth. You can relate it to how we don't have to try to hide our emotions or hurt from Jesus.
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Play a version of Duck, Duck, Goose, except it's Flower, Flower, Bee Sting (or just Bees).
- Art is one way people like to express themselves. With a little imagination, we can make incredible art pieces out of really interesting materials. You could make a happy face from a potato or create the sun from a dandelion.
- But as cool as this is, we don't need to make works of art to express what we are feeling to Jesus. Jesus already knows because Jesus knows what it's like to feel hurt. We'll learn more about that in our Bible story.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 26:36–46 (Jesus Prays in Gethsemane)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Invite kids to sit on the ground on top of picnic (or regular) blankets as you share today's Bible story.
- Gardens are often a peaceful place. People stroll around gardens to appreciate nature, breathe in that fresh air, and even spend time with God. In today's Bible story, Jesus goes to a garden with a few of his close friends ... but he's not quite at peace.
- **Let's read Matthew 26:36–39 to find out what's happening.**
 - Jesus and his disciples had just eaten before coming to the Garden of Gethsemane. Their stomachs may have been full, but for Jesus, his heart was extra heavy that evening.
 - Jesus told his disciples—Peter, James, and John—that he was in a lot of pain and asked them to stay awake with him while he prayed. Then Jesus prayed to God to take away “this cup” if it was possible.
 - **What do you think that meant?** Was Jesus holding a cup filled with something inedible?
 - Jesus knew what was about to happen. Jesus knew that in a matter of moments, he would be captured by soldiers and taken away. He would face all sorts of pain and eventually die. Jesus asked God if there was any way to avoid this suffering.
 - But even as he prayed this, Jesus wanted to follow God's plans.
- **Let's keep reading Matthew 26:40–42.**
 - Jesus was so overwhelmed, but when he returned to his friends, they were asleep! They most likely did not understand the amount of pain Jesus was in. Perhaps if they did, they wouldn't be able to sleep either and could stay awake to be with him.
 - Jesus wasn't going to give up on them, though. So he woke them up and asked them to keep watch again while he prayed the same prayer once more.
- **Let's read Matthew 26:43–46 to see what happens next.**
 - Even though his friends did not realize it, these were their final moments together before Jesus was arrested. If they had known, maybe they would have stayed awake. But the time

had come when Jesus would face the most challenging moments of his life on earth.

- From the moment Adam and Eve made a mistake in the Garden of Eden, God had a plan to save all of us, and that plan was all about God's son, Jesus. Jesus knew that what was coming next would be the most challenging thing God had ever asked him to do. Jesus was ready for it, though.
- Even if it hurt, Jesus was ready to do whatever was needed to help save us. This was a part of God's plan to bring our relationship with God into *full bloom*!

BIG IDEA | Jesus understands when we're hurting.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Cut out the flowers in the [printable](#) provided. Gently fold the edges of each flower toward the center. Take a large bowl filled with water and place each flower into the bowl. As they absorb water, the flowers will slowly begin to unfold and "bloom." Pass the bowl around for kids to see. Consider creating more than one bowl for larger groups. Hang the Big Idea flowers to dry using clothespins on a line. Check out [this tutorial](#) to see how this works.*
- There are more flowers blooming in our garden! Let's take a look at which Big Idea these flowers can show us.
- Let's say it together: **Jesus understands when we're hurting.**

STORY | A Time When You Were Hurt

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story about a time when you were hurt in elementary school. You can talk about a minor injury, not making a team, or a time when someone was unkind to you. Help kids start to think about the hurt in their lives and how Jesus can help them through it.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Look back on the story you are sharing with your preteens. If you could see where Jesus was in that situation, where would he be? Did Jesus protect you from getting a larger injury? Did Jesus come in the form of a friend or family member comforting you? Go a little deeper and see if preteens can see where Jesus might have been during a time they were hurt.*
- **Have you ever felt hurt before?**
- There have been so many times in my life when I've felt hurt, and there will be *more* times when I feel hurt in my life. But when I feel hurt, I know there is someone who gets it because he's been hurt, too.
- **Jesus understands when we're hurting.**

ACTIVITY | Bug Hotel

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, have kids work together to build a mini bug hotel ([like this](#)). For larger groups, divide kids up into small groups and have each small group build one. Collect materials like cardboard boxes, spare pieces of thin cardboard, empty paper towel rolls, markers, scissors, pinecones, twigs, and [fake moss](#). Use glue dots or craft glue to secure items in place.*
 - *Cut the paper towel rolls in half and glue them inside the box towards the top or bottom.*
 - *Use the spare pieces of cardboard and glue to make different sections of the hotel around the cardboard tubes.*
 - *Glue the moss, pinecones, and twigs throughout your hotel.*
 - *Add some [toy bugs](#) to complete the bug hotel.*
- What great homes we made for our bug friends. We can appreciate them in nature, but when they start getting into our homes, it can become a problem.
- Whenever something bugs us, we can take it to Jesus, who will house it away from us. We won't need to worry about it again because Jesus gets what we're going through and can handle our hurt.
- **What are some things that might be bugging you today or have been recently?**
- Jesus knows about all the things that bother us or hurt us. We can pray to God and give our hurts to Jesus because he wants to help us grow. We can trust him because **Jesus understands when we're hurting.**

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 53:1–5

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read or paraphrase this Scripture for kids.*
- When things got messy in the very first garden, God made a plan to save us. For years and years, people waited for a savior to be born to help us bloom and get things back to how it was in God’s garden.
- Isaiah was one of God’s special messengers called a prophet. God gave Isaiah a vision of the person who would save us, and it looked a whole lot like Jesus. Isaiah did not know Jesus by name, but God helped him get a description of the kind of savior God would send.
- That night in the garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus prayed for God’s help, he knew God’s plan. Jesus knew that the savior would not enter the world and declare himself king. He would arrive humbly, “*like a tender shoot and a root out of dry ground.*” What’s more, he would go through so much suffering, which would make him “*familiar with pain.*”
- Jesus became human and “*took up our pain and bore our suffering.*” In doing so, he knows what it’s like to feel hurt. The things that hurt you now are things Jesus has felt with you.
- Jesus chose to feel our pain so that we could have a new relationship with God. Now, we can go to Jesus any time we feel hurt and hand those feelings over to him. He will take it from us so we can be free to grow closer to God.
- **Jesus understands when we’re hurting.**

VIDEO | *Full Bloom*, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week’s episode of [Grow TV](#).*

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | Garden Time With God

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Use this time to have kids calm down and think about what they learned today. You can do this as a large group or sort kids into small groups with a leader in each group. You may choose to use an oil diffuser with fragrances like lavender, lemon, or orange during this time. Pay attention to what is being discussed today and talk with your leadership if anything sensitive comes up.*
- ✳ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Create a safe space for kids with disabilities to talk about their feelings and unique. Remind them they don’t need to hide the emotions they’re experiencing.*
- Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Imagine you are in a garden, and the sun is setting behind the horizon. The nighttime bugs are slowly crawling out, and the air feels crisper.
- **Name one thing you feel.**
- As you think about being in this garden, turn your thoughts to God. God created everything in the garden and helped it to grow ... including us. Let’s talk about some ways we can grow today.
- **Have you ever felt hurt when ...**
 - **You had a physical injury?**
 - **Someone was unkind to you?**
 - **You made a mistake?**
 - **Someone else made a mistake?**
- The hurt in our lives may not always look the same, but that doesn’t make it hurt any less. When we are hurting, we can often feel scared or alone.
- With Jesus, we’re never alone! If we’ve been hurt in the past or we feel hurt right now, Jesus is with us and wants to take care of us. We can talk to Jesus about whatever we are feeling.
- **Jesus understands when we’re hurting.**

RESPONSE | Lily Pad Prayers

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a copy of the [printable](#). In the middle, have the kids write how they might pray to Jesus when they're hurting or draw a picture of them turning to Jesus for comfort. For younger kids, have them color their lily pads and then sit on them while reciting the Big Idea.
 - ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Many preteens cry or cry out as a response to frustration and anger more than sadness. They're also undergoing physiological changes and may be unable to explain exactly why they react in certain ways. In addition to reminding them that it's okay to have these feelings, remind them of coping skills they can employ to regulate their emotions, such as deep breathing, self-affirmations, grounding exercises, and talking to someone.
- **Do you know what lily pads can do for frogs?** Lily pads give frogs a place to rest. When a frog sits on a lily pad, it gets all the water it needs while looking for food. Taking a break can help the frog recover its energy before it moves on to the next part of its journey.
- When we are feeling hurt, it's normal to want to keep it to ourselves. But when we share it with the grownups we trust, they can help us feel better and find ways for us not to feel hurt anymore. And together, we can share our hurt with Jesus. Jesus wants us to go to him for comfort.
- And he's the best one for the job because he knows what it's like to feel hurt. He gets it. Talk to Jesus whenever you feel hurt because **Jesus understands when we're hurting.**

MEMORY VERSE | 2 Peter 3:18a (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: [memory verse coloring page](#), [sign language motions](#), or choose from [this list](#) of our favorite memorization techniques!
- **"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."**

PRAYER

- God, thank you for reminding us that Jesus knows what it's like to hurt, to be sad, and to feel alone. When we feel hurt, help us remember we can always turn to you. Jesus understands our hurt and is our best source of comfort. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS**
 - **What did Jesus pray about in the garden?** He asked God to "remove this cup," which was about the pain he was about to go through.
 - **What were the disciples doing while Jesus prayed? What were they supposed to be doing?** The disciples fell asleep. They were supposed to stay awake to keep watch and pray.
 - **Why did Jesus ask them to stay up and keep watch? Who did Jesus know was coming?** Jesus was going through a difficult time. He knew he was going to be betrayed and arrested.
 - **Read Isaiah 53:3a. How does it feel to know Jesus understands our pain and suffering?**
- **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**
 - **Is it easy to talk about how you feel when you're hurting? Who can you talk to or ask for help when you are feeling this way?**
 - **What are some ways you've felt hurt in the past?**
 - **How can you help someone who might be hurting?**

ACTIVITY | Watch Them Bloom

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you will need cotton balls, a bowl of water, plastic sandwich bags, a permanent marker, and packets of bean seeds. Write kids' names and the Big Idea on the bag, and have them dip a few cotton balls in water and place them in their bags. Then, invite kids to add three to four seeds to the bag, making sure the seeds spread out a little. Kids can take their bags home, open them slightly, and tape them to a window. You can tape them on the windows at church if your space allows it.*
- Imagine that these seeds are times you've felt hurt. When we give our pain and hurt over to Jesus, he covers us and gives us what we need. Only Jesus can take the things that bother us and transform them into something better.
- Take your seeds home and watch them bloom into something new. **Jesus understands when we're hurting** and is with us through all of it.