

Philemon 1-7

Share Your Faith! (Compassion Kids Update)

Scripture: Philemon 1-7

Memory Verse: Philemon 7 *“For we have great joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.”*

Lesson Focus: Each RMC kids’ classroom sponsors a different Compassion child. There are various ways in which our RMC kids can contribute to the care of those kids and one way in particular that we wish to highlight in this lesson is writing them letters. Just as the Bible itself is composed of many personal letters of Christians written to other Christians to encourage and support one another, we want to invite the kids in our classrooms to encourage and support their sponsor kids by writing to them. We hope this lesson will raise awareness within our RMC kids of how Jesus loves all of the children of the world.

Schedule: The basic lesson structure will be the same but the main teaching content is shortened a little so that there is more time to have some classroom discussion about your Compassion sponsor kid. We will provide you with letters from each kid to read in your classroom and some ideas on how to encourage the RMC kids to support their sponsor kids.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Kids across the World, Compassion Codebreaker Puzzle
Activity for All Kids: Take Home Letter to Sponsor Kid

Starter Activity: Compassion Video

We will have all of the kids (1st-5th grade) remain in the Summit Room for a quick introductory video. In this video, several kids at a Compassion center/church in Colombia are given GoPro cameras and we will get to observe what a typical day is like for these kids at this center.

We will then ask our kids a few questions about the video to get them thinking about the kids that they have been sponsoring in their classrooms and how they aren’t all that much different from them! *

Finally, we will introduce our Scripture by talking about writing letters. The book of the Bible we are going to study is actually a letter from one Christian to another. We want to encourage the kids to consider writing a letter to their sponsor child either individually or as a group as a response to the Bible lesson (see activities at the end of lesson). *

At this point we will dismiss the 1st and 2nd graders and finish the lesson as usual.

Bible Study:

Philemon 1a: Like any letter you would write today, you would put your name on it so that whoever you are sending it to would know who it is from. *

Q: Who wrote this letter? A: The apostle Paul and Timothy. *

Q: Where was Paul when he wrote this? A: In prison!

Philemon 1b-2: When you address a letter you write “Dear ____”.

Q: Who was Paul’s letter written to? A: Philemon, Apphia and Archippus. Bible experts think Appie and Archie were Philemon’s wife and son. They hosted a small church in their house! **Teachers:** Consider drawing a sheet of paper on the whiteboard and write “From Paul/Timothy, Dear Philemon and Family, etc.” to help the kids better understand what this is.

Q: How were the recipients of the letter described? A: Friend, beloved, fellow soldier. These people CARE about one another! Isn’t that who you write/receive letters with? *

Philemon 3: What a wonderful greeting! As believers in Jesus, they all experience the grace and peace of God through faith in Jesus. But what do “grace” and “peace” mean?

Grace: Freely getting what you do NOT deserve! We deserve punishment because of our sin, but God extends His forgiveness and blessing (grace) to us. We freely receive His favor when we believe and trust in the finished work of Jesus on the cross!

Peace: After we receive God’s grace, this is what we experience as God’s children. For we know that all of our sins, past, present, future, are forgiven! * We are HIS now!

But this greeting doesn’t just apply to them. It applies to ALL believers in Jesus Christ throughout the world, including you and me! It also applies to the Compassion kids in your room. They are learning about Jesus and the Bible just like you. They have experienced the grace and peace of God just like you!

Philemon 4: Let’s not forget where Paul is, in prison!

Q: What is he doing in prison? Giving prayers and thanks to God! Wow! This is what happens when we focus on God’s grace and peace and not on our problems!

Philemon 5: Paul was thrilled about how Philemon was living his life in Jesus Christ. For we learn in v. 19 that Paul was the one through which Philemon believed. *

Q: What did Paul learn about Philemon? A: That Philemon loves and trusts in Jesus and SHOWS it by loving others. Philemon’s invisible faith was made visible by his love for God and others. This is what happens when we get saved. We show our salvation is real by loving God and loving others. *

Philemon 6: Paul prays that Philemon would continue to **share his faith** and that the Lord would empower him to be effective.

Q: What does it mean to “share your faith”?

Q: What are some ways that you can “share your faith”?

A: Telling people about Jesus, praying for them, inviting them to church, helping them, encouraging them, etc.

Philemon 7: And now here is the result of effectively sharing your faith: joy, comfort, and refreshment. *

I imagine Philemon’s house church was a place where people longed to be. They would come to hear the Word, sing praises to God, pray together, share communion or a meal, and then go out and share their faith with their community. It was a place of joy, comfort, and refreshment.

Boys and girls: We want RMC Kids ministry to be like that! We want you to come and be refreshed by the grace and peace of God as you learn from the Bible so that you are equipped and inspired to go out and “share your faith” with others.

Teachers: At this point we will transition into small group time per classroom where you will lead some discussion about the Compassion children in your room and help your kids respond to the lesson. See the materials that we left in your classroom about your child. Below are some ideas to better acquaint the kids with the sponsor child.

- 1) Show the kids the picture and introduce the child by reading their letter(s).
- 2) Highlight where the child lives on the map hung up in your room.
- 3) Read some of the background info that we provided about the child’s Compassion center/church and highlight a few things that are interesting.
- 4) Ask some questions to help the kids better understand what life must be like for those kids.

Q: So how can you be like Philemon and share your faith bringing joy, comfort, and refreshment to your sponsor kid?

A1: You can write a letter to the child.

- Teachers: We provided a blank letter that you can have the kids take home and mail to Compassion. The address that the parents would mail it to is written on the letter. Also consider writing a letter as a group and sending it!

A2: You can give some of your money to them in the giving jars.

- Teachers: If you talk about this, be sure to emphasize that we do not give to EARN God’s love, but we do it BECAUSE God first loved us and we want to respond to what God has done for us!

A3: You can pray for the kids and their families.

- Teachers: I would suggest closing the lesson with prayer as a group. Even encourage the kids to participate and pray out loud for the kid in their classroom!