

NEPAL

LESSONS FOR MISSION MINDED KIDS

LESSON 5

FAMILIES IN NEPAL



Nepal

Lesson 5: Families in Nepal

Goals for Lesson 5:

- Children will gain an understanding of what it means to live in poverty.
- Children will feel a sense of blessing and obligation that comes from the opportunities they have been given.
- Just as the “Lord hears the cries of His needy ones”, so should we hear their cries and choose to live our lives in ways that will help those needy ones.

Verse for Nepal:

“The humble will see their God at work and be glad. Let all who seek God’s help live in joy. For the Lord hears the cries of His needy ones; He does not despise His people who are oppressed.” Psalm 69: 32-33

Before Class:

- Read through lesson and decide what you will use according to your age group and time allotted.
- Enlarge and print the family pictures, including the cover picture with the cow. Prepare them as slides to be shown to the group, or back them with colored paper for stability.
- Look up the website given at the end of the story. Print the story of Meena and decide how you will use it.
- Decide how you will use the “Memory Verse Scramble” to fit your group of children and prepare according to the directions.
- Decide how you will use the “No More School” activity. For very young children, the concept can be adapted to build compassion in them for the many children in the world who have much, much less than they do.

Lesson Plan:

- Begin your lesson time with prayer. (5 min.)
- Use the “Memory Verse Scramble” to review the verse together. After you are done playing, sit down and talk again about what it means to be “needy”, what the word “oppressed” means, and why the Lord would reassure us in His Word that He will hear the cries and not despise the poor and the needy and the oppressed in the world. Talk about how God’s help brings joy and gladness. (15-20 min.)
- Read the story portion of the lesson, and then read together the story of Meena. (You may want to print enough copies that each child can take one home. If you have good readers in your class, you could take turns reading this story out loud, or have them follow along on their own copies while you read it aloud.) Talk about the similarities and differences in their lives and the typical lives of children living in Nepal. (15-20 min.)
- Use the “No More School” activity as it will best fit your group. (10-20 min.)
- This is a sobering and rather unsettling lesson. Do not shy away from exposing your students to reality. Children cannot appreciate the fact that they are blessed unless they understand how difficult life is for much of the rest of the world. Your goal is to develop a sensitive and compassionate heart in your students that will begin now to live in an unselfish and tender way toward those less fortunate. Spend a lot of time during this lesson and those to come talking about poverty and what our response should be. (5-15 min.)
- End your time together in prayer for the families of Nepal and the small percentage of Christians there who can now legally tell their neighbors about the love of Christ. (5 min.)

Lesson 5 Story: Families in Nepal

If you had been born in Nepal, you would probably be the child of a farmer. (80% of people in Nepal are farmers) From the time you were very young, you would learn how to work in your father's fields, helping your family to grow food and then harvest it. Since the Hindus believe that children are a blessing from the goddesses, you would probably have lots of brothers and sisters, and together you would all work to grow enough rice and vegetables to feed your family. If you could, you might also grow some sugarcane or corn or wheat to sell for money.

When the crops don't need attention, your father might try to find some work to earn some money so that you and your siblings could have shoes and warm clothes. He might be able to go to a nearby village and work at building or transporting goods or working for tourists. If he has to travel far to find work, he might be gone for weeks or months at a time.

Your family might also keep a few goats or sheep for milk, but you might only eat meat a few times a year during special festivals. One of your jobs might be to milk or care for the animals, or find grass for them to eat. You might also cut grass to dry in the sun for the animals to eat during the winter.

You might need to help your mother by carrying water, cleaning the house, caring for your younger siblings or washing the clothing. Many of the people in Nepal have never gone to school (about 57% illiteracy rate), so your parents probably wouldn't know how to read or write. If your family could make enough money for school uniforms and supplies, one or two children in your family could go to school for that year. If there wasn't as much money the next year, there would be no school.

At the following website is a story about a little girl named Meena. It is a well-written and true-to-life story about family life in Nepal. Since it is copywrited, only the website can be linked to this lesson. However, if you go to that site, you will be allowed to print the story and anything else you find there for use with your own students. The materials there are free, but cannot be published or sold and must be used only for teaching a single lesson to a small group of students.

<http://www.wholesomewords.org/children/meena.html>

Memory Verse Scramble

****Game Preparation:** Cut rectangles of cardstock paper and write two or three words from the verse on each rectangle. (You may want to count out the words and purposefully make a number of rectangles that will fit with your group size. Also, the more words there are on a card, the easier the activity will be, which may be better for a younger group. See below for suggestions for non-readers.) Include capital letters and all punctuation. Shuffle them well and place them in a pile.

****Game Directions:** Choose the variation that best fits your group's size and ages.

For a group of readers or a mixed group of readers and non-readers:

- **If you have a smaller group** (less than 10 kids), give each student 2 cards (one for each hand) and have them make a line across the front of the room. (A circle figure may enable them to see each other's cards better.) They will need to work together as a team to put all of the cards together in the correct order. They will need to trade cards and also stand in the correct order to make them read correctly from left to right. See if they can do it without any help from you, as this builds teamwork and cooperation skills as well as helps them to learn the verse. When they think they have it right, have them read the verse together out loud, reading from each other's cards from left to right. Any mistakes will become evident, and they will be able to correct them by switching cards around. Read it correctly at least once straight through.
- **If you have a larger group**, give one card to each child and follow the directions above, or choose a group of volunteers who will hold one card in each hand. The extra children will work one or two at a time to rearrange cards and children so that the verse reads correctly from left to right. Mix up your group so that each child will have a turn at holding cards or rearranging the verse. Each time a group finishes a correct order, say the whole verse out loud as a whole group. Repeat the process as many times as necessary so that everyone gets a turn to participate.

For a group of young non-readers:

- Use the same symbols and pictures from your visual verse poster to make the rectangles "readable" for your young students. You can expect even your youngest non-readers to be able to memorize this verse. They just won't be able to play this game with words. They will need to see the symbols and pictures in order to be able to put the pieces of this puzzle together. Your young children will also not be mature enough to possess the teamwork and cooperation skills of older students. They will need a little more guidance from you to make the activity go smoothly. Use volunteers to hold the cards and others to work together to put them in order. Once the group has put the verse symbols together correctly, say it together as a group. If your students are interested, repeat the process, allowing different children to hold the cards and rearrange them.

“No More School” Activity

Read through the entire activity and decide how it will work with the number and ages and maturity of the children in your group. This is a very difficult lesson, but sheltering American children from the realities of poverty allows them to take for granted the abundance they have. Treat this activity sensitively, but don't overlook the urgency of educating our children about what life is like for many, many children their age. Take your children through it slowly, helping them to feel the impact of what you are saying. It will be hard for them to identify with these ideas, so take the time to discuss and explain what children in Nepal (and many areas of the world) can expect out of life.

****Begin by telling your students that you have great news. Ask for one or two volunteers (about one for every 10 kids). Have the volunteer(s) stand against the wall apart from the group for the rest of the activity. Now tell the group that the volunteer(s) are the only ones who have to go to school any more. All the rest are free. Have the kids stand up in a circle and clap to celebrate.**

****Now have the children count off in fives. Tell every number 2 and 3 to sit down. Explain that two out of every five children in the world dies before the age of five. In some places, children aren't even named until they have reached their fifth birthday.**

****Select about one third of the remaining group of children. Tell them that they feel very fortunate today. A man visiting their village will take them to the city where he has great jobs for them. He pays your parents money in advance to let you go along and promises that you will be able to send money to them. Since your parents have other children to feed at home, they believe the man and take the money to let you go. When you get to the city, you find out that your job is to work all day long in a sweatshop or a factory or a farm. You can't send any money back to your parents until you have worked off the money the man already gave your parents. Since you are making only a tiny bit of money each day, it will be a very long time before you actually earn anything for yourself or your parents. Tell this group to sit down. (*You don't have to explain the sex slavery that many of these children are forced into, but help them to understand that this “buying” of children in poverty is indeed slavery, and would be a horrible existence. Most of these children die at a very young age and never see their families again. This slave trading is rampant in the poor villages of Asia and there are now 27 million people enslaved worldwide, more than double the number of Africans forced into slavery during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Research this subject and educate yourself.*)**

****Select half of the group still standing** (making sure you leave at least one girl and one boy standing). **Tell this half that they get to start their own business to help out their families. Since they have very little schooling, and very few skills, they will have three choices: 1) to pick through the garbage around their village every day to find things to eat or sell, 2) to travel alone to the largest city in their country to beg for money in the streets, or 3) become a thief and steal things from others to help their family to live. Tell them to sit down.**

****Tell all of the girls left standing that they have been selected to get married!** (In Nepal and many other countries, girls as young as 6 are given in marriage to much older men in exchange for the “bride price”, which might be two goats or a cow, that would help the remaining family members to stay alive. The girls are expected to work for their husband as slaves until they are old enough to bear children for him.) **Have the girls sit down.**

****The boys who remain standing will get to travel and see the world! They get to join their country’s military, even though they are young and not well equipped to fight against grown men. Have them sit down.**

****Now everyone is sitting, except the original volunteer(s) who will go to school until they have finished the highest grade offered and then get a good job that requires an education and will pay enough to support their family. Ask how many of those seated would rather go to school than accept the situation they have been given. Help them to see how few children their age get to go to a school. (It costs money to buy a uniform and the necessary supplies and many parents cannot make enough money to feed and clothe their children, let alone send them to school or pay for medical attention.) Help them to see why learning as much as they can in school can enable these privileged children to break the chains of poverty in their families and in their village.**



Members of the Dalit caste, the historically traditional "untouchables," still face extreme discrimination and poverty in rural Nepal. Villages are structured so that Dalit families like this one are the farthest from the central amenities of the village such as water pumps, health centers, and schools. They have no electricity or running water, and many times not even an outhouse.



The girl holding the baby was sold when she was 9 years old to work as a household slave for a school teacher and his wife. Her family got \$50 from the sale to help support and feed the rest of the children.