

What if... We Thought Like Jesus?

Philippians 2:5-11

PPT Title

What if We Thought Like Jesus?

Main Point: If we think like Jesus, we'll put others before ourselves and live joyfully.

Key Verse: *You should think in the same way Christ Jesus does.* - Philippians 2:5

Props: Letters printed on card stock: W, H, N, O, W, placed face-down in 5 chairs at the front of the stage (you may want to put a sticky note on the back side of the chair with the same letter so the teacher can see them easily):

Newspaper; WWJD bracelet, Sharpie marker; Ladder

W N H O W

INTRO

(The order looking from audience)

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven,
and nature sing.

Lead kids in a Christmas Carol (Joy to the World). Does this song seem out of place today? Why? Well, who can tell me the real meaning of Christmas?

We often think of Christmas as one day a year, or maybe a season of the year, but I'm here to tell you: The truth of Christmas is the center of everything. As followers of Jesus, it is the reality that we live in every single day.

Call on 5 well-behaved kids to come up to the front. Let them know ahead of time that they'll need to sit still for a while. Seat them on the 5 chairs you have set across the front of the stage. (Chairs could be on the floor right in front of the stage.) They should each have a letter, face down, in their lap so that when you tap them they can hold up their letter for everyone to see. At the right time, they will spell out the words WOW, NOW, HOW, and back to WOW. (If one of the kids has a hard time sitting still and holding their letter, feel free to replace them, in a kind way, "I think Jarred has the wiggles today. Let's call another friend.")

WOW

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. - Genesis 1:1

Play Video
From 0:20 until
Shark at 4:15

Show *Planet Earth* Trailer Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAfD2NF6GaM>

We have a word for that. (Have your W O W kids hold up their signs.) **WOW!**
When God created all this, in just 6 six days, it was stunning! Even the angels *oohed* and *ahhed*. The book of Job tells us that when God laid the foundations of the earth, "the angels shouted for joy"! (Job 38:4, 7) Wouldn't you? It was way better than any fireworks show. God spoke and created all of that out of nothing! It was WOW!

The Bible says that God looked at everything He made and it was GOOD. There were no thorns on the rosebushes, no hate in anyone's heart, no jealousy or sickness. God created people to live forever. Wow.

NOW

But is the Earth still like this? If I grab a newspaper and read the headlines, (hold up newspaper) will they say "Everything's awesome." "No bank robberies today." "No

one got sick today.” “We live in a perfect world and everyone is happy and good.”? No. Something happened to the perfect world that God created.

What started out as WOW is very different **NOW**. (Have 1st W put down their letter and have N hold his up to spell NOW.)



Adam and Eve were in that awesome WOW of God's creation. God poured out so many blessings on them. They were living in paradise! Imagine being in the perfect vacation spot that you could live in forever and didn't cost you a cent. God only had one rule. They had thousands of trees with good, healthy, delicious fruit and veggies to eat. But there was one tree that would kill them. God told them, "You must not eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you do, you can be sure that you will die." (Genesis 2: 17)



But along came the devil, disguised as a serpent. And he whispered to Eve. "You can be sure that you won't die," the serpent said to the woman. "God knows that when you eat the fruit of that tree, you will know things you have never known before. You will be able to tell the difference between good and evil. You will be like God." (Genesis 3: 4-5) That sneaky, slithering serpent told a big fat lie to Eve. He wanted her to think that the tree was good for her, and that God was trying to keep something good from her. He wanted Eve not to trust God anymore.

Boys and girls, please hear this. God is good ALL the TIME. He is a GIVER! He's the giver of all good things (James 1: 17). He wants to pour out blessings on you, just like He did on Adam and Eve. If He tells you to stay away from something, it's because it will harm you!



But Adam and Eve did not trust God. They believed that there must be something good in that forbidden fruit, and that God was the sneaky one, trying to keep something good from them. So they ate the fruit. What a TERRIBLE choice! At that moment, sin entered the world. All the stinky stuff that we see in the headlines—stealing, killing, sickness, broken families, death—all came into the world because of that choice. Adam and Eve's children were born with sin (Genesis 5: 3). And every human after them was also born with sin (Ephesians 2: 1-3). Everyone in this room has chosen to sin at some point. We do what's wrong because we don't completely trust God's way.

Adam and Eve were kicked out of the WOW garden. They were separated from God because He is perfect and sin is corrupt. The payment we get for sin is death and separation from God. It's awful and WE can't do anything to undo our sin.

But...God had a plan...

HOW

It's spelled out beautifully in Paul's letter. **HOW** would God take our sin away so we could be with Him forever? (N should come down and H should go up.) Listen to what Jesus did:

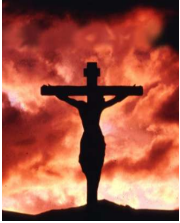


In His very nature He was God. But He did not think that being equal with God was something He should hold on to. Instead, He made Himself nothing. He took on the very nature of a servant. He was made in human form. He appeared as a man. He came down to the lowest level. He obeyed God completely, even though it led to His death. In fact, he died on a cross. - Philippians 2: 6-8

Remember our ladder from last week? We talked about Prince Jonathan. Since his dad was King Saul, everyone figured that one day Jonathan would become the king. So, he started out, about here (climb two steps) a little higher in position than most folks. But when he met David, he loved him and considered him more important than himself. Jonathan deserved to be up here, but he gladly climbed down to let David become the next king. Jonathan didn't cling to the position he deserved.

But what Jesus did was immeasurably more amazing. This passage tells us that Jesus' position was WAY higher than a prince. He is God. He's the King, FAR above every other king. My ladder doesn't go nearly high enough! So if this ladder could reach higher than any of us could even imagine, that's where Jesus would start out - in His rightful position. In heaven the angels worshipped Him day and night! (Revelation 4:8, 5:15)

But Jesus didn't hold onto, or cling to, that position of being equal with God. Instead, He made Himself nothing. It's like He willingly climbed down the ladder of humility. He came in the form of a man; but not just a man - a baby; but not just a baby - a poor baby; but not just a poor baby, a baby whose parents who weren't even married yet. Wow. He brought Himself to the lowest level. He gave up all the praise and adoration in heaven to come here. And you know what happened to Him. Even though He never, ever sinned, He was punished. He allowed people to lie about Him, beat Him, and hang Him on a cross. On that cross, He took all of our sin on Himself.



Jesus was able to do all of this hard stuff because He trusted His Father's plan (Mark 14:36). Jesus knew that after He died and was raised to life, anyone who believes in Him will not be destroyed but will have eternal life (John 3:16). When we believe in Jesus, our sin is gone and we are part of God's forever kingdom!

This is what we talk about at Christmas: the birth of Jesus. It's God's amazing plan. It's **HOW** God made the way for us to be with Him forever. And then what happened?

REWOW



So God lifted Him up to the highest place. He gave Him the name that is above every name. When the name of Jesus is spoken, everyone's knee will bow to worship Him. Every knee in heaven and on earth and under the earth will bow to worship Him. Everyone's mouth will say that Jesus Christ is Lord. And God the Father will receive the glory. - Philippians 2:9-11

The **WOW** is back! (Have kids hold up W O W.)

Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God now. He is praised in heaven and millions of people praise Him on earth. God's kingdom is available to everyone who believes. And one day, in God's perfect timing, He will wipe away ALL sin and His perfect kingdom will fill the earth again. It's the Re-WOW! It'll be awesome! **Thank your volunteers.**

THINK LIKE JESUS

So that is pretty cool. The WOW, NOW, HOW, and Re-WOW.

Remember, Paul was writing all this to his friends in Philippi. And if I know Paul, he has some amazing advice for them—and for us. There's something he wants us to know—a way for us to live more fully. **Look at your Bible for a few seconds.** Oh! Here it is! Here's what Paul wanted to tell us:

You should think in the same way Christ Jesus does. - Philippians 2:5

"Think the same way Jesus does." Well, we know what Jesus did. (Refer to ladder.) He gave up His right to be the King of kings, He climbed down to be one of us, He followed God's plan even to His death. There's an awesome verse in Hebrews that tells us He was thinking:

He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the joy He was looking forward to. Then He sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. - Hebrews 12:2b

Jesus was thinking ahead to the JOY of bringing YOU and ME back to God! He was

thinking that WE were worth saving—no matter how much pain and shame and unfair treatment He had to go through. And through it all He thought, “I can trust God, my Dad. He’ll give Me what I need. He’s got Me.”



So Paul tells us that we can have the amazing JOY Jesus had, if we can just think like Jesus thinks. People used to wear these bracelets: WWJD. What does that stand for? “What Would Jesus Do?” I suppose that’s an okay question, but there’s a better one. (Take Sharpie and write a “T” over the “D”.) “What Would Jesus Think?” In every situation, you should think: “The other person is worth sacrificing for. The other person matters to God. I’ll give up my ‘rights’ for the other person and trust that God will take care of my needs. If we think what Jesus thinks, then we will automatically do what Jesus would do. (We always do what we believe.)

We’ll talk a lot more about this in our Cluster (or Huddle) group.

PPT Main Point

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