

# Youth Teaching Resources

June 16, 2019



## Easter Season (April 21-June 2)

### Resurrection Realities

Acts 16:16-34 – “Doubled Deliverance”

## Pentecost Sunday (June 9)

Genesis 11:1-9 – “What Did You Say?”

## Season After Pentecost (June 16-November 24)

### Trinity Sunday

**Romans 5:1-5 – “Imaginary Numbers”**

### On the Road with Jesus

Luke 8:26-39 – “A Bad Day for Pigs”

Luke 9:51-62 – “A Hard Row to Hoe”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

# Imaginary Numbers

*Romans 5:1-5*

## YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

### PARENT PREP

Some days it feels like everything is lined up ready to go and then there are other days when it feels like all our dominoes have been knocked over before we get them all set up. One thing as parents that we can do is help our students learn how to set up the dominoes for the first time, or for the 1,000th time. Helping our students determine the process can be hard, but each step can also be a reward.

### TEACHING THE LESSON

#### Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip “The Most Complicated Trickshot Ever” from *Creezy*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability, and then facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Which part of the Rube Goldberg machine was your favorite part?
- 2) At what point did you think the machine would fail?
- 3) Do you know of anything else like this that relies on one thing to lead to another to make something else happen?
- 4) Does your faith ever feel like everything needs to line up for it to work?
- 5) How do you deal with challenges to your faith?

## Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Romans 5:1-11. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony's commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What are some of the key words in this passage?
- 2) How does each verse build on the verse previous? Can you remove one of these verses and the series still make sense?
- 3) What do you think Paul is trying to get across to the readers of this passage?
- 4) What does Paul say we need to be proud of?
- 5) How are we to be proud?

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) What does it mean to be chosen by God?
- 2) How does hope provide power?
- 3) How is our salvation both present and future?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": Does God cause our suffering?

## Transformation

Conclude your session by leading your group through the spiritual practice of *Lectio Divina*. If you have not led your group through this practice before, familiarize yourself with the practice before leading your group through the discipline. When you have finished leading the group through *Lectio Divina*, allow the students to share what God is leading them to or what they heard God calling them to.

Close with a prayer for God's guidance as we discern what to do next and how we can manage life as we do so.

## Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

**For lack of a better term**—Theologians refer to the three persons of the Trinity as “hypostases,” a word that means “underlying state” or “underlying substance,” as the derivation of the word suggests. Though perhaps more precise, the word doesn’t communicate to most people, so “persons” is commonly used.

**The text**—The Revised Common Lectionary text for the day is Romans 5:1-5, chosen because it is just long enough to reference the deity as God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Verses 6-11 follow naturally from these verses, however, connected by “for” – verses 1-5 set the stage for verses 6-11. Thus, we’ll use vv. 1-11 as our text.

**Chosen by God**—God did not have to save us and bring us into relationship, but freely chose to do so. To illustrate the power of grace and choice, consider an animal shelter where people may adopt unwanted dogs or cats and take them home to become beloved members of their families. Other animals are left to remain unloved until they are “put to sleep.” God has chosen to make a way for *all* people to overcome death and find a lasting home. Unlike pets in the pen at the animal shelter, we also have the option of choosing whether we will accept God’s grace, “this grace in which we stand” (v. 2a).

**Looking forward**—In a book entitled *Surprised by God*, James W. Cox tells a story about a black preacher from Chicago named D. E. King. Someone asked Rev. King why black Christians were always joyful in their worship, even when they faced many difficulties and things were not going well. The pastor explained, “We rejoice in what we are going to have.”

The famed church father Augustine made a similar comment in a written commentary on Psalm 64, a psalm of deep lament in troubled times:

*“Now let us hear, brothers, let us hear and sing; let us pine for the city where we are citizens ... By pining we are already there; we have already cast our hope like an anchor on that coast. I sing of somewhere else, not of here: for I sing with my heart, not with my flesh.”* (“Commentary on Ps 64,” on v. 3, in Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* [London: Faber, 1967], 315).

**Citing the source**—The Spurgeon quote comes from an early publication of Spurgeon’s sermons, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Sermons, Parts 261-272* (Passmore & Alabaster, 1878), 462. I have also seen the quote attributed to “Anonymous” and “an old Scottish preacher.” Spurgeon was not Scottish, and his sermon does not attribute the quote to anyone else, implying that it is original to him, or that he was repeating a commonly known saying.

## Digging Deeper *continued*

**The power of hope**—Can you remember times in your life when it seemed that your very sanity depended on hope? Consider asking the class to share times of personal trial in which a sense of hope helped them to survive – and even to thrive.

**Self-sacrifice**—We sometimes speak of a close friend as someone who “would take a bullet” for us, and that we would likewise risk our lives for them. A spate of mass shootings in recent years has brought with it stories of people who willingly put themselves at risk – and sometimes died – in an effort to save others. Are there many people in your life that you’d sacrifice yourself for? Would you even consider risking your life people you don’t even know, whether you thought they deserved it or not? These could be good questions for class discussion.

**Now and later**—One way to illustrate the present-future dynamic of how Christians experience salvation could be to think of a gift certificate for a purchase or service. When we receive the gift card or certificate, we own something in prospect: it is ours, but we haven’t yet experienced or fully acquired it.

Consider leading the class to think of other ways (such as being named in someone’s will) to illustrate this dynamic between present assurance and future possession.

## The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

The Hardest Question is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

### Does God cause our sufferings?

Paul insisted that we boast even in our sufferings, arguing that suffering can make us stronger. Should that lead us to think he is suggesting that God intentionally brings suffering into our lives for that purpose?

In 2008, pop rock singer Kelly Clarkson had a hit with a song that proclaimed “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger” – and that is possible – but not guaranteed. Whether trouble makes us stronger or beats us down is largely a product of our own attitude and the supportive resources available to us.

Paul believed that enduring difficulty could strengthen those who trust in God for support: “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (vv. 3-5).

This does not mean that Paul believed God was in the business of sending suffering for the purpose of making believers stronger, a variation on the common folk-confession “I believe everything happens for a reason.”

To say we believe God can work in us through the constant love that “has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit,” and that God can bring us out of the experience as stronger people, does not require us to believe that God has targeted us with trouble as a learning exercise.

Note as well that there are no shortcuts in gaining strength from suffering, as Paul speaks of several stages: those who learn from suffering first find a way to endure. Endurance implies holding on over a significant period of time. Such patient endurance contributes to the development of personal character. Those whose character has been seasoned by trials learn to have hope – and as long as we have hope, we will not be ultimately disappointed. The word translated as “disappoint” more commonly means “shame” or “dishonor.” Those who put their hope in God through the power of the Spirit will not be shamed, but can believe they will live in God’s love.