

# LESSON 5: CHILD LABORERS

## LESSON OVERVIEW

1. SHARING: observations and reactions to Lesson 4 home activities
2. TEACHING: large group teaching and DVD segment
3. FAMILY PROCESSING: Pathfinder booklet page 10
4. FAMILY PRAYER: child laborers prayer cards
5. SIMULATION: Hitting the Bricks
6. WRAP-UP and PREVIEW HOME ACTIVITIES: Pathfinder booklet pages 11-13

## MAIN LESSON MATERIALS

- Red Card DVD
- TV/DVD player
- “Child Laborers Script” (pages 3-6)
- “Child Laborers” poster (Lesson 5\ClassPoster)
- “Child Laborer Stories” (pages 7-9)
- white, 14 x 22-inch poster board
- memory verse posters from Lessons 1-3
- “God’s Heart Verses” (page 10)
- prayer cards on child laborers
- scissors or paper cutter
- black permanent marker
- white board or chalkboard
- dry erase marker or chalk
- pencils and pens

## SIMULATION MATERIALS

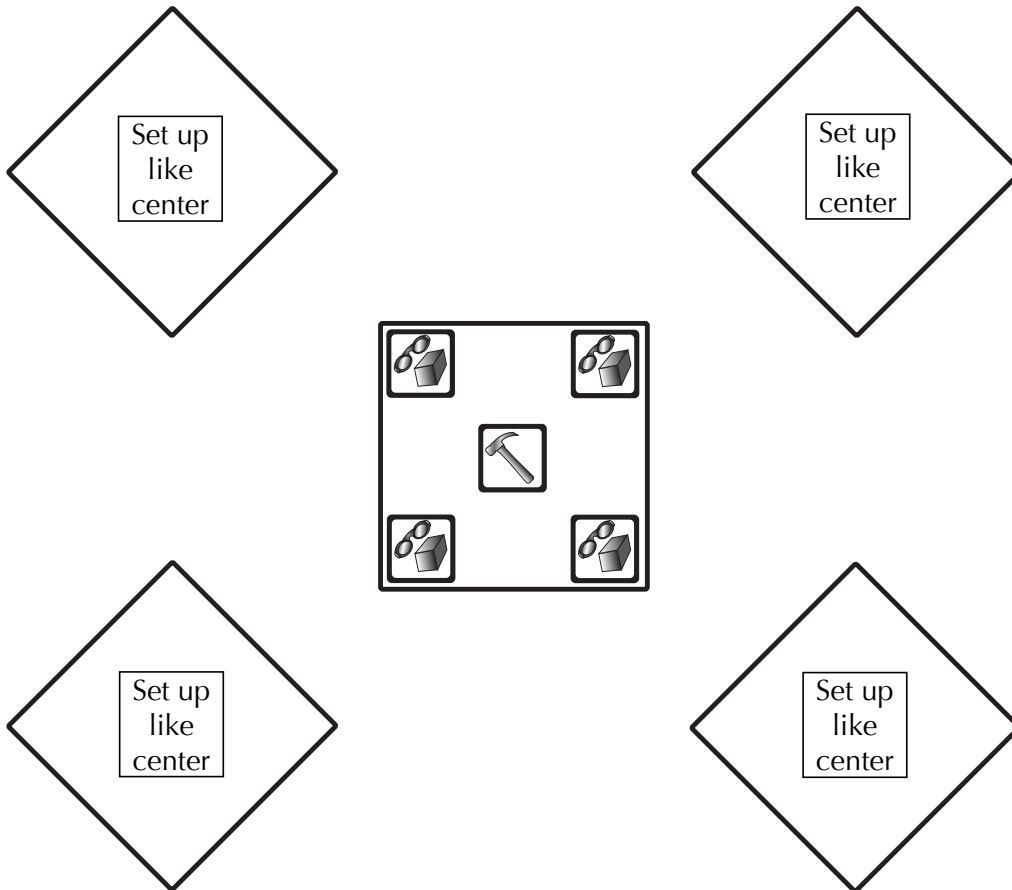
- brick for every two children
- hammers (ask each family to bring one)
- plastic sunglasses or swim goggles for each child
- 35 cents in coins for each family unit
- plastic sandwich bags
- glass or clear plastic jar
- box of uncooked rice
- toy (Frisbee®, soccer ball, etc.)
- three 5 x 7-inch index cards
- black marker
- table
- plastic tablecloth for every 4 children
- old blankets or quilt for every 4 children
- three adults from class to man the “store”

## PREPARING TO TEACH

1. Preview “Child Laborers” on the Red Card DVD. Set up the TV/DVD player. Preview the Pathfinder activities for this lesson. Familiarize yourself with the lesson script. If possible, practice with your co-teacher. For more background, read Introduction to Child Laborers (Lesson 5\TeachBackgrnd).
2. Copy and cut out the three “God’s Heart Verses” (page 10). During the week before the lesson, invite a family from the class to read the verses during class. If they agree, e-mail the “God’s Heart Verses” to them to practice at home.
3. Copy and cut out the “Child Laborer Stories” (pages 7-9).
4. Print out and hang the “Child Laborers” poster in the teaching area. Put the prayer cards on child laborers in the teaching area.
5. Locate the memory verse posters from Lessons 1-3. Turn the new poster board lengthwise. Use the black permanent marker to print the Lesson 4 memory verse: Lamentations 2:19b – “Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint from hunger at the head of every street.” Put the memory verse posters in the teaching area.

6. Visit a local brickyard or landscaper and ask if they will donate bricks for the simulation. Ask for the softest bricks they have.
7. Set up the “Hitting the Bricks” simulation. Put 35 cents in each plastic bag, one bag per family (NOT per person).
8. Pour a box of uncooked rice into the jar. On one index card, print “Rice 10 cents.” On a second index card, print “Rent 25 cents.” On the third index card, print “Toy 5 cents.”
9. Place the jar of rice on a table and set the price sign in front of the jar. Place the rent sign on the table near the jar of rice. Place the toy and the price sign on the table.
10. Fold the quilts or blankets double and place them on the floor of the simulation area. Leave enough space between blankets for children sitting on the corners to be able to swing hammers. Spread out the plastic tablecloths on top of the quilts or blankets. Place one brick and pair of sunglasses or goggles on the four corners of the tablecloths.
11. When you send out the weekly e-mail to the class, ask each family to bring a hammer to class. As families arrive for class, direct families with hammers to drop them off in the simulation area.

Note: The “Hitting the Bricks” simulation gets loud. Notify classes near or beneath you about what will be happening.



## CHILD LABORERS SCRIPT

### Sharing

**1:** Welcome to our session of Red Card. Let's take some time to share about home activities from our Pathfinder booklet.

- Did anyone observe kids in your area and compare their activities with what street children like J.R. do? What kinds of things struck you most?
- Who created their own toy? [Allow participants to come to the front and show their toy to the group.]
- Did anyone make a "Jesus Cares" bag? Where did you put it afterwards?

**2:** Let's say our journal verses that reflect God's heart.

[Use the memory verse posters to review Mark 10:14b, Proverbs 19:17, Psalm 68:5, and Lamentations 2:19b.]

### Teaching

**1:** This week we're talking about child laborers.

[Show the "Child Laborers" poster.]

**2:** Oh, you mean doing chores or having a part-time job after school? When I was little, my main chore was \_\_\_\_ (describe a chore you did as a child). What kind of chores do you do around your house?

[Invite some of the younger children to respond. Repeat their answers so the group can hear.]

**1:** When I was in high school, I worked \_\_\_\_ (describe a summer or after-school job you had) – and I got paid for it. What are some part-time jobs you have held?

[Invite some of the youth or adults to respond.]

**2:** In the United States, laws permit children who are 15 and older to work as long as jobs do not risk their health, safety, or moral development and do not interfere with their attending school. In some other countries the beginning age for work is 14.

**1:** These laws reflect the idea that children should not spend most of their time working at jobs designed for adults. Children should concentrate on going to school, learning, playing with friends ... and just having time to be kids.

**2:** Child labor is not like taking out the garbage or working at a fast food restaurant after school to earn spending money. It's very different.

**1:** Currently, more than 200 million children between the ages of 5-15 are working up to 14 hours a day instead of going to school.

**2:** 14 hours a day?! Those children work really hard. They must be making lots of money!

**1:** Not really. We're going to watch a movie about child laborers. You'll see Minnie, a young girl in Bangladesh who works long hours. Guess how much money she makes in a day. Keep your guess to yourself. In the back of your journal is a Notes page. Write down your estimate.

[Watch the "Child Laborers" video clip (5 minutes).]

**2:** How much money did Minnie make each day? (35 cents.) Raise your hand if you guessed that Minnie

made one dollar or less?

**1:** I don't get it. Why would anyone pick a job where they get paid 35 cents a day?

**2:** Child labor is not a choice. Street kids like J.R. work to survive. They take whatever job they can find just to eat. Families like Minnie's are so poor that the children have to work to provide part of the family income. Out of desperation, some families borrow money just to buy food or pay rent. Until they can pay back their debt, they allow the moneylender to take their child and keep him as a worker. This is called bonded labor.

[Write "bonded labor" on the board.]

Many times these kids are locked inside their places of work, hidden away from the rest of the world, trapped in jobs they never chose, with no way out.

**1:** Forcing kids to work. Isn't that like slavery?

**2:** Yes, debt bondage is a modern form of slavery.

[On the board, add to the phrase "bonded labor" so it says "bonded labor = modern slavery."]

Sadly, some employers take advantage of moms and dads who hope to provide a better life for their children. Parents sometimes sell or give away their child to a boss who promises to educate their son or daughter in exchange for work. These children become domestic servants in homes, doing jobs that are too difficult for their small, growing bodies, or tasks that no one else would want to do. Sadly, they never receive the promised education.

**1:** What other kinds of labor do children do?

**2:** Let's have some child laborers speak for themselves. We need four boys and four girls to volunteer to come up here, and we'll give each of you a short story to read. (Use adults as needed.)

[Distribute the eight "Child Laborer Stories" to volunteers. Direct the volunteers to come to the front and stand.]

Audience, your job is to listen carefully for what is similar in these stories. Afterwards, we'll talk about common themes.

[Have the eight participants read their stories loudly and clearly.]

**1:** What were some recurring themes? When does work become child labor? (Have the other teacher record answers on the board. Here are some things to mention: children are too young or small for the task; work is too dangerous or difficult for a growing body; hours are too long; pay is too low; work is physically, mentally, or emotionally harmful; children are not free to choose whether or not to work; work prevents children from attending school on a regular basis).

**2:** This is not God's intention for how children should live. Let's read Luke 2:52.

[Invite a child to come to the front and read this passage loudly and clearly.]

For your reference:

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:52

God put this section about Jesus' childhood in the Bible for an important reason. It reveals God's plan to give children the time they need to grow physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually.

- 1: Child laborers are being forced to become little adults. It's like someone pushed the fast forward or skip button on the remote. These kids miss out on the many years of childhood that God intends for them to have. Because they are small, weak, and easily manipulated, employers take advantage of children in ways they never could with adults.
- 2: God brings strong judgment against people who mistreat and take advantage of children. Listen to what God said to Israel when they were exploiting the poor and weak.

[Invite an adult to come to the front and read Amos 2:6-7a.]

For your reference:

"This is what the LORD says: 'For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed.'" Amos 2:6-7a

- 1: Wow, God does not turn a blind eye to the mistreatment of child laborers. He hates unfair laws that allow this to happen. Listen to Isaiah 10:1-2.

[Have an adult come to the front and read the passage.]

For your reference:

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless." Isaiah 10:1-2

- 1: God intends children to grow and flourish in a just society. As the people of God we need to stand against unfair treatment of kids. Because God is looking out for the rights of children, we must also.
- 2: How can we make the situation for child laborers better?
  - 1: Their situation is difficult to change, because poverty and child labor are closely linked. Our first reaction might be to close down the places that use child laborers, but this action does not address the needs of poor families. Families still need to buy food, pay rent, and clothe their children. If a factory or shop is closed down, children laborers who need to earn money will just find another place to work.
  - 2: Education may be one key to change. More parents would send their children to school if education were free or offered at a very low cost. School supplies, uniforms, and books are so expensive that families are often forced to choose between sending their children to school and putting food on the table. If parents are able to send only one child to school, they will send a son. After all, daughters grow up to run a household and raise children. Why do they need to learn to read? Programs that provide student sponsorship and scholarships keep parents from having to make these difficult decisions.

## Family Processing

- 1: The perceived value of education must also change. Living in daily crisis, parents don't think about the future and the long-term benefits of sending their kids to school. Let's take a closer look at how placing a low value on education just continues the problem of child labor. Take out your Pathfinder booklets and turn to page 10. Find the Reflect On It section. With your family, complete the Cycle of Poverty diagram. Then discuss questions 1-2.

[Give families about 6 minutes to work.]

- 2: Let's talk about the Cycle of Poverty diagram. How does poverty lead to child labor? What do child laborers miss out on that could help them escape poverty?

## Family Prayer

[Pass out the prayer cards on child laborers.]

- 2: Let's spend some family time praying for child laborers. You can use the idea on the back of the prayer cards or things you saw in the video to guide your prayers.

[Allow 5 minutes for families to pray at their tables.]

## Simulation: Hitting the Bricks

- 1: In the video, you met Minnie. She worked long hours every day smashing bricks to be used in making roads. We are joining the ranks of child laborers in a few minutes. When you get into the simulation room, please stand quietly and wait for directions. You can leave everything else here in this room. We'll come back to wrap up the lesson.

[Dismiss families to the simulation area.]

- 2: We have bricks and hammers and protective eyewear. Each child will get a turn to try breaking bricks. When you are using the hammer, you must have on the protective eyewear. If you're watching, please stand up and step back from the brick-breaking area to keep your eyes safe. Please keep the bricks on the tablecloths when you hit them.

- 1: When you have finished breaking your brick into small pieces, raise your hand for someone to inspect your work. If you do a satisfactory job, your family will receive your day's earnings – 35 cents. How happy you will be to get paid. Your family is running low on food, and the rent payment for your house is due. If you do not pay the rent today, you will lose your home and be out on the street tonight.

[Point out the table where the store is.]

After your family has 35 cents, come over to the store to shop for what you need.

[Assign children to a tablecloth. Distribute protective eyewear and hammers. As children finish, give each family unit one bag of coins (35 cents) and direct them to the table. Have two or three adults at the table take money. You may enlist parents for this task. These helpers should continue to insist that the rent be paid today or families will lose their home.]

- 2: Let's begin getting ready to go back to the other room.

## Wrap-up and Preview Home Activities

- 1: We only broke bricks for a little while. How would your body feel if you had to continue this activity for 14 hours? What kinds of decisions did you have to make at the store? (Allow responses.)
- 2: In your homework this week, you'll meet a child laborer named Raj who works in a carpet factory. Spend some time working on the journal activities together and praying as a family. Make sure to look at the Take A Stand section on page 11 of your booklet to see how you can stand up for the rights of child laborers and help them.

# CHILD LABORER STORIES

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**#1 – boy:**

I'm 7 years old and I work on a coffee plantation in Kenya. I have to reach up high to pick the ripe, red coffee beans off of the plants. To keep away bugs, the farmer sprayed the coffee plants with poisonous chemicals called pesticides. About four million Kenyan children just like me are forced to work in hard, dangerous jobs.

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**#2 – girl:**

I live in Pakistan and I'm 10 years old. Like other girls my age, I carry heavy bags of wool on my head as I walk down the city street to the carpet factory. The load is so large that it hangs out over my shoulders. I can barely see where I'm going. In my country, 11 million children work in factories.

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**#3 – girl:**

My name is Rosa. I'm 11 years old and I live in Mexico. Every day, I work outside in the fields. I pick tobacco leaves used in making cigarettes and cigars. Like many of the other girls and boys working on this farm, I dropped out of school so I could work more. Where I live, 8 out of 10 children don't go to school.

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## Child Laborer Stories

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### #4 – boy:

I live in Bangladesh. I'm 8 years old. I work with other boys in a balloon factory. Do balloons make you think of fun times like birthdays? Well, making balloons is not fun. We heat rubber in metal barrels over a fire. When the liquid is bubbling, we mix the hot rubber using long bamboo sticks until it's smooth. In my country, thousands of kids are forced to work to help earn money for their families.

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### #5 – boy:

I'm 9 years old and I live in West Africa. Every day, I stand in a river with muddy water up to my knees. I sift water, mud, and rocks through a kind of screen, looking for diamonds. It's hot work and my back aches from bending over for so long. In Africa, many children like me work for more than 12 hours without breaks. We are often separated from our families.

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### #6 – girl:

My name is Maria. I'm 10 years old and I live in Texas. I work on a farm to help my family earn money. One of my jobs is picking onions. I don't go to school very much during planting or fall harvest. About 500 thousand kids in the United States work on farms for little pay. Many of us miss months of school each year so we can work.

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## Child Laborer Stories

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**#7 – boy:**

**My name is Daniel and I'm 11 years old. I live in Paraguay, South America. Every day, I sit on the sidewalks of the city with my shoeshine kit, waiting for people to stop. I will shine their shoes for 33 cents. I get lots of customers. One of every four children under age 14 works in the streets of Paraguay.**

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**#8 – girl:**

**I live in Afghanistan and I'm 9 years old. My younger brother and I have a job at a carpet workshop. We sit on the floor in front of a loom for up to 14 hours a day. You should see our fingers fly as we tie knots in the yarn at the edges of the rugs. People in my country are so poor that children are forced to work in adult jobs.**

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# **GOD'S HEART VERSES**

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**Child:**

**Luke 2:52 “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”**

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**Parent:**

**Amos 2:6-7a “This is what the LORD says: ‘For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed.’”**

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**Parent:**

**Isaiah 10:1-2 “Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.”**

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