



WEEK FIVE – JUNE 2024 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *God Will Give Us Joy | Habakkuk 3:17-18*

Bottom Line: *There's always a reason to celebrate*

Memory Verse: *“A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up.” – Proverbs 17:22*

Virtue: *Joy – Choosing to celebrate what God is doing*

Basic Truth: *I need to make the wise choice*

Series Overview: Choose joy! This may be a commonly used phrase you've heard, but what does it *actually* mean? Joy is more than being excited about the good things that happen to us. Joy is an attitude—a decision to trust God no matter what is going on in our lives. From the very beginning, God had a plan for the world. As we dive into the Bible, we'll discover God's plan for us and how God has been at work through it all. When we see and celebrate what God is doing, we can find true joy!

Bottom Line: **There's always a reason to celebrate.** Even when we face tough challenges in life, we can celebrate because we know that God sent Jesus to be our Savior. That doesn't make our current troubles any less difficult. But it does mean that we can find peace and joy in the midst of them. We can find joy in knowing that God is ALWAYS up to something good—even when we can't see it.

9:05 - 9:20 | 11:05 – 11:20 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

What You Need: “JOY” Activity Page; scissors

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Without kids seeing it, cut apart the “JOY” Activity Page into several puzzle pieces of your choosing so each kid in the group will get one piece.
- If kids are still arriving, cut a few extra pieces.
- Give each kid one of the pieces.
- Talk about how each piece represents just one part of the picture.
- Ask: “What should you do with these pieces to have a complete picture?”
- Instruct the kids to work together to complete the puzzle.
- Once finished, point out the word “JOY” in the middle.

What You Say:

“Great job, friends! Each of these pieces was just one part of a bigger puzzle or picture. Sometimes it’s easier to focus only on what’s happening right in front of us, kind of like looking at one piece of the puzzle. But if we only do that and something bad happens, it can be hard to find joy. *[Transition]* **Today, we’ll hear about a man with a crazy-fun name who learned to trust God and find joy through some really tough stuff.”**

9:20 - 9:50 | 11:20 – 11:50 | LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: We finish the month in **Habakkuk 3:17-18**. Habakkuk wrote these words as God’s people were about to be taken captive. Everything was going wrong in Habakkuk’s world . . . but still, he chose to trust God and choose joy. Habakkuk ultimately found joy because of God’s faithfulness and love that nothing could take away.

9:50 – 10:10 | 11:50 – 12:10 | SMALL GROUP

Trio Challenge

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: “Habakkuk Review” Activity Page; index cards; markers

What You Do:

- Invite kids to pair up.
 - Form one group of three kids if you have an uneven amount of kids in your group.
- Give each pair three index cards and a marker.
- Instruct them to write “A” on one card, “B” on another, and “C” on the last card.
- One at a time, read a question with three answer choices from the “Habakkuk Review” Activity Page.
- Encourage kids to collaborate to guess the correct answer and hold up the card indicating their choice when prompted.
- Reveal the correct answers once everyone has held up their selection.
- Instruct kids to keep track of how many questions their pair gets correct.

- Celebrate the pair with the most questions answered correctly.

What You Say:

“Wow, Habakkuk had a tough time, didn’t he? It seemed like everything was falling apart around him. Despite being upset, Habakkuk did something pretty amazing. Can anyone remember what he did? (Invite responses, like: he prayed and asked God to help.) Why do you think Habakkuk did that? (Invite responses, like: he trusted God’s character, he believed God to do big things.)”

“Despite all of the hard things Habakkuk had going on around him, why did he say he could be glad and joyful? (Invite responses, like: because of what God had done in the past.)”

“When we face tough times, we have a choice to make. Instead of getting lost in what’s going wrong, we can choose to take our focus off our problems and look to God. Even when everything seems to be falling apart, we can find peace and joy, just like Habakkuk did, by asking God for help and remembering that God has helped us in the past. What are some things God has helped you with in the past? (Invite responses.)”

[Make It Personal] *(Share a time you went through something difficult, but you still chose joy. Was it difficult or easy to choose joy? Once you decided to choose joy, how did it change how you saw your circumstances?)*

*“Remember, no matter what, **[Bottom Line]** there’s always a reason to celebrate.”*

Verse Charades

[Hear From God | Memory Verse Activity]

Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

What You Need: “Acting Cards” Activity Page, “Verse Motions” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Review the verse using the motions from the “Verse Motions” Activity Page (same as week 1).
- Put the cards from the “Acting Cards” Activity Page in the bag.
- Choose a kid to pick a card from the bag and act out that word(s) from the Memory Verse.
 - Share that kids can come up with their own action, or use the ones reviewed from the “Verse Motions” Activity Page.
- Repeat until all the words have been chosen from the bag.
- Repeat as time and interest allow.

What You Say:

*“It’s okay to feel upset when things are tough. But, when we choose joy and celebrate God’s goodness, it helps us practice this verse. One way to practice this verse while going through hard times is to remember that **[Bottom Line] there’s always a reason to celebrate.** When we pause and recall all the things God has done for us in the past, it gives us hope for the future. When we’re hopeful, it makes us feel joyful. Having a happy heart makes us healthy.”*