



WEEK THREE – JUNE 2024 – KINDER/FIRST

Bible Story: *Ezra + Rebuilding of the Temple | Ezra 3:10-13*

Bottom Line: *Celebrate each step of the way*

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: Celebrate each step of the way. Some tasks seem to take longer to complete than others. Whether kids are learning how to ride a bike, bake a cake, solve a math problem, or talk to new people, they learn that each step is important. The same thing is true about our relationship with God. We can choose to trust God and find joy, even when we can’t see the whole picture. We can celebrate how God is working in our lives with every step we take

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

Opening Small Group Activity

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: “J” + “OY” Activity Pages; Butcher Paper; Wall Tape

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Tape the “OY” Activity Page to the center of the butcher paper.
- Hang the butcher paper on the wall with the wall tape at a kid’s eye level.
- Point out the “OY” and talk about what’s missing. The “J!”
- Give each kid a J card from the “J” Activity Page.
- Help the kids roll a piece of tape to place on the back of their “J” card.
- Instruct the kids to line up about five feet away from the butcher paper.
- One at a time, direct the kids to close their eyes, approach the butcher paper, and try to stick their “J” in the correct location on the butcher paper.
 - After their attempt, instruct kids to open their eyes to see where their “J” landed.
- Continue in the same way, allowing each kid a turn.
- If time allows, invite the kids to remove their “J”s and play again.
- This round, establish new parameters for the game, such as: kids are to use their non-dominant hand, spin them around three times first, etc.
- Play as many rounds as time and interest allow.

What You Say:

“In our Bible Story today, we’ll talk about how we don’t have to wait until a specific day or time or party to celebrate. We can [*Bottom Line*] celebrate each step of the way. Let’s go.”

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

Large Group Overview: For Week 3, we head to Ezra 3:10-13. At the time, God’s people were living as captives in Persia, when the new king, Cyrus, allowed them to return home to Jerusalem. However, when they returned, everything was broken down and destroyed. The people got to work rebuilding the temple . . . but before they got far, they stopped to worship God and celebrate the ways that God had helped them.

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

Small Group Leader, May I?

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to line up, shoulder to shoulder, on one side of your group area.
- Stand on the opposite side of the group area with your back turned to the kids.
- Lead kids to play a version of “Small Group Leader, May I?” (like “Mother May I?”)
- Explain that you will call out a name and that kid will ask to take any type of step like, “Take ten baby steps.”
- Before the kids move, instruct them to ask, “Small Group Leader, may I take...?” each time, and then move toward you once you say, “yes.”

- Call out the first name.
 - Periodically turn around, move to the children before they reach you, and stop to celebrate!
 - Lead the kids to cheer and clap.
 - Say: “God is always with you, so we can stop and celebrate!”
 - After a few seconds, return to your original spot, back turned, and call out the next name.
- Continue in the same way until the kids have reached you and celebrate together!

What You Say:

“That was so fun! Normally when you play this game, you don’t celebrate until you reach the end! But the end isn’t the ONLY time we can celebrate! We find joy all along the way, especially when the job is a big one!”

*“When we stop to give thanks for what God has already done, it can give us the joy to keep going! Friends, as you grow, you’ll face big jobs, challenging jobs that require you to work hard and keep going. But the good news is, you aren’t alone! Remember when you follow Jesus, God gives you joy through the Holy Spirit so you can **[Bottom Line]** celebrate each step of the way.”*

***[Make It Personal]** (Share why you come to church each week. Include that being surrounded by other followers of Jesus is a way to stop each week and celebrate what God has done.)*

Memory Verse Hopscotch

[Hear From God | Memory Verse Activity]

Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Bible; “Hopscotch Verse” Activity Pages, and floor tape

What You Do:

- Select a volunteer to open the marked Bible to Proverbs 17:22.
- Read the verse aloud and lead the kids to repeat each line of the verse after you.
- Talk about the part of the verse, “*a broken spirit*” (NirV).
 - Or “*a crushed spirit*” in the NIV.
- Say: “A broken (or crushed) spirit is the opposite of joy. It’s a spirit that’s filled with sadness from the inside. God wants to fill us with joy—the kind of joy that lasts!”
- Lay out the “Hopscotch Verse” Activity Pages in a hopscotch pattern on the floor of your group area and secure with tape.
- Point out the words of the verse as you repeat them with the kids together.
- One at a time, invite the kids to take turns jumping from one page to the next as you say the words.
- Encourage the kids to repeat after you with each jump.
 - Point out the numbers on each page to help kids jump in order.
- Continue until every kid has a turn.

What You Say:

*“I love this month’s Memory Verse! It reminds us that God gives us real joy. When we remember that God is with us and that God loves us no matter what, we can find joy. That’s why we can be cheerful instead of having a broken (or crushed) spirit. No matter what we face—even when it’s a really big job—we can stop and **[Bottom Line] celebrate each step of the way.**”*