



WEEK THREE – JULY 2024 – KINDER/FIRST

Bible Story: *Be Joyful with Others / Romans 12:15; Acts 2:42-47*

Bottom Line: *You can help others find joy*

Memory Verse: *“Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!” – Philippians 4:4 (NIRV)*

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

Basic Truth: *I should treat others the way I want to be treated*

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: **You can help others find joy.** Can you think of a time when you went through something difficult, but someone was there for you during that? What about when you received the best news ever? During the ups and downs, knowing someone was there for you helped to make that situation so much better. The same is true the other way around. We have a chance to be there for others and help them experience joy too.

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: N/A

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Guide kids to sit in a circle.
- Choose one kid, move closer to them, and say, “I promise to help you smile.”
 - Try to make them smile by doing: funny faces, silly dances, weird noises—anything at all!
- When you succeed in making them smile (or when enough time has gone by), direct that kid to turn to the kid beside them and continue the game.
 - Share ideas with the kids if they don’t know what to do such as singing a silly song, making a funny face, or another action suited to their personality.
 - Join in on the silliness if they don’t want to be doing it alone!

What You Say:

“You guys did a GREAT job helping each other find your smiles! *[Transition]* In Large Group we’ll hear about something else that’s important to help others find. Let’s go discover more.”

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

Large Group Overview: For Week 3, we head to Romans 12:15. Paul wrote to the church in Rome about what true love looked like. Part of sharing the love of Jesus means showing empathy and being sad with others who were sad or joyful with others who were joyful. When we do that, we can help others to see not only our love, but the love of Jesus too.

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

Mirror, Mirror

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: “Mirror, Mirror” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to get into pairs.
 - If you have an odd number in your group, pair yourself with a kid.
- Direct the pairs to sit or stand facing each other.
- Give one kid in each group a “Mirror, Mirror” Activity Page.
- Instruct that kid to imitate each emoji face on the “Mirror, Mirror” Activity Page, holding each expression so their partner can mimic them as if they were a mirror.
- Encourage kids to switch roles and play again.
 - Make sure kids who did not start with the “Mirror, Mirror” Activity Page do so for this next round.

What You Say:

“Great job reflecting how your partner was feeling back to them! In the book of Romans, Paul wrote about what loving others can really look like. He said: Be joyful with those who are joyful. Be sad with those who are sad (Romans 12:15, NIrV). You can use your imagination to think about how you would feel if what happened to someone else happened to you. Sometimes we call that ‘putting yourself in someone else’s shoes.’ It’s also called empathy, and it can help you be a really good friend! It can also show others God’s love.

“So, when might someone you know be happy? (Invite responses, like: when they go to camp, celebrate a birthday, get a new toy, get to the next level on a game, etc.) When might someone you know be sad? (Invite responses, like: when they lose a game, get sick, when a pet dies, etc.) When someone is happy, practice celebrating with them. You can give them a fist bump, cheer them on, or say, ‘Good job!’ When someone is sad, practice listening and being with them. You can even say, ‘I’m sorry that happened to you. I’d be sad too.’

*“The more you learn to ‘put yourself in someone else’s shoes,’ the more you’ll be able to show God’s love to others. It’s like Paul wrote: Be joyful with those who are joyful. Be sad with those who are sad (Romans 12:15, NIrV). Because when you are, **[Bottom Line]** you can help others find joy.”*

Help Others Find Joy

[Hear From God | Memory Verse Activity]

Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: Bibles; playdough; paper plates

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up the Memory Verse, Philippians 4:4, using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

- ***Finding verses with kindergartners:*** Guide kids to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word *Philippians* at the top of the page as you say “Philippians” aloud. Then guide kids to find the big number 4 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 4 for the little 4; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.
 - ***Finding verses with 1st graders:*** Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Philippians in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that Philippians starts with the letters P-H. When the kids find Philippians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Philippians. Help the kids find the page. When they find Philippians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 4. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 4 in chapter 4.
- Read the verse out loud to the group.
 - Invite anyone else who would like to read (or repeat) the Memory Verse to do so.
 - Ask kids to share some ways they can find joy—even if they don’t feel joyful in that moment.
 - Prompt them with ideas, as needed, like:
 - Think about the people who love them and help them.
 - Think about how much God loves them.
 - Think about places that make them feel safe.
 - Give each kid a lump of playdough and a paper plate.
 - Instruct the kids to sculpt something that reminds them of one of the joyful examples mentioned.
 - Invite kids to share their creations with the group.
 - Alternatively, guide kids to form the letters “JOY” with the playdough.
 - Collect the playdough and dispose of the plates.

What You Say:

“Our Memory Verse reminds us to always be joyful. God knows that it’s not always easy to be joyful. That’s why it’s important for us to help others find joy.

*“One way you can help others be joyful is by putting yourself in their shoes. Does that mean you ACTUALLY put on someone else’s shoes? No! ‘Putting yourself in someone else’s shoes’ means using your imagination to think how YOU would feel if what happened to them happened to YOU. It can help you be a really good friend! It can also help YOU help OTHERS find joy. So this week, remember: **[Bottom Line] you can help others find joy.**” Let’s pray:*

Dear God, thank You for showing us that when we use our imaginations to think about how others feel, we can show them how much You love them. This week, help us practice celebrating when someone else is happy and listening and just being with them when they’re sad. Help us show others Your AMAZING love, and help us help others find joy. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

*As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to say today’s Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] you can help others find joy.***