



## WEEK ONE – JULY 2024 – PRETEEN

**Bible Story:** *Shepherds + Angels / Luke 2:8-20*

**Key Question:** *Who do you know who could use some joy?*

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

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

**Basic Truth:** *I can trust God no matter what*

**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!

**Key Question:** **Who do you know who could use some joy?** When you think of summer, maybe you think of ice cream, pool parties, sunshine, and friendships, and it leaves you feeling joyful inside. However, not everyone may feel this way. As preteens think through this question, we hope it gives them a baseline to have meaningful conversations with one another and share the joy that they have.

---

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

---

**Opening Small Group Activity**

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

**What You Need:** “Party Charades” Activity Page

**What You Do:**

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Select one kid to go first by choosing a card from the “Party Charades” Activity Page without letting anyone else see.
- Explain that they should act out the type of party that is written on their card, using only actions (not words or sounds).
- Direct the rest of the kids in the group to guess what type of party it is.
- Once the correct answer has been guessed, choose another kid to take a turn.
- Continue until everyone in the group has had a turn, or as time allows.

**What You Say:**

*“You all are amazing actors! There are so many different types of parties because there are so many reasons to celebrate! [Transition] Today, we’ll be having a little Christmas-in-July celebration as we talk about Jesus being born! So Merry Christmas, everyone! Let’s go to Large Group.”*

---

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

---

**Large Group Overview:** We start the month in Luke 2:8-20. While shepherds were watching over their flock, an angel suddenly appeared, bringing great news: Jesus was born! The shepherds rushed off to see Him, telling everyone about Him afterward. Everyone who heard the news was amazed and filled with joy!

---

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

---

### **Discussion Questions**

**[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]**

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

**What You Need:** N/A

### **What You Do:**

- ASK:
  - How did Jesus bring joy to the world?
  - How can you have joy when things aren't going your way?
  - Who do you know who could use some joy?
  - How can you help others have joy?

### **Make It Personal With Prayer**

**[Pray To God | Prayer Activity]**

*Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application*

**What You Need:** Index cards, pens or pencils

### **What You Do:**

- Remind kids that at Christmas time there tends to be a big focus on giving and helping others but that we can and should be doing that all year long.
- Tell kids that today's "Christmas in July" celebration is a great reminder that Jesus brought joy to the world and still brings joy to the world.
- Give each kid an index card and a pen or pencil.

- Encourage them to think of someone in their lives who could use some joy. Tell them to write the name of that person on the index card.
- Ask kids to think about ways they can share joy with that person and list their ideas on the index card.
- Close your group in prayer.
- Challenge kids to take their cards home as a reminder to pray for the person they thought of throughout the week. They could pray for opportunities to share joy with them.

***As adults arrive to pick up the kids, make sure to hand out this month's Parent Cue card!***