



WEEK FOUR – JANUARY 2025 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *Walking On Sunshine* | Acts 16:16-40

Bottom Line: *God can help you choose joy.*

Memory Verse: *“Be strong, all you who put your hope in the LORD. Never give up.” – Psalm 31:24 (NirV)*

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

Series Overview: With every season comes new and different challenges but also the chance to experience incredible joy. Just as seasons come and go, so do our emotions. And how we choose to handle those emotions can shape us and teach us a lot about how God cares for us. No matter what emotion we may be feeling or what we may face, because of Jesus, we can learn to trust that God knows how we feel. Jesus showed us how to face life with resilience, and because of it, we can trust God no matter what.

Bottom Line: God can help you choose joy. Life can sometimes feel like a rollercoaster. There are ups and downs, highs and lows. But even in the midst of a difficult situation, we can have hope and trust that we are not alone. God can give us the strength we need to choose joy — even when it’s hard.

9:00 - 9:15 | 11:00 – 11:15 | OPENING SMALL GROUP

Opening Activity

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

What You Need: “Character Pieces Week 4” Activity Page, safety scissors, glue sticks, and coloring supplies

What You Do:

- Greet kids by name as they arrive to your group.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each kid a “Character Pieces Week 4” Activity Page.
- Set out the safety scissors, the glue sticks, and the coloring supplies.
- Invite kids to choose from different character pieces to create a person who is happy.
- Ask: “What makes you happy?”
 - Prompt them with ideas such as:
 - When your family is heading to the beach
 - When you’re reading a book with your favorite snack
 - When you’re playing your favorite sport, etc.
- Have the kids cut out the pieces that represent someone who is happy and glue them to the middle of the page.
- Direct the kids to decorate their characters with the coloring supplies.
- As kids finish, invite them to share with you how they chose to decorate their character and why.
- As the kids share, try to engage in each kid’s interests.
- Share what makes you happy too!

What You Say:

“That was SO FUN! Watching you play filled me with JOY. *[Transition]* In today’s Bible Story, we’ll hear about two men who found a way to choose joy even in a tough situation. Let’s go learn more!”

9:15 - 9:50 | 11:20 – 11:50 | LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: We close out the month in Acts 16:16-40. While Paul and Silas were preaching the message of Jesus, they were arrested and thrown into prison! All seemed hopeless, but instead of complaining and giving up, they sang songs and worshipped God.

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

Rainy Day Vision Boards

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: “Vision Board” Activity Page, cardstock, markers, safety scissors, and glue

What You Do:

- Invite kids to sit in groups of 3-4.
- Give each kid a piece of cardstock.
- Give each group the pages from the “Vision Board” Activity Page, markers, scissors, and glue.
- Encourage kids to use their imagination to create a rainy day vision board by cutting out images from the “Vision Board” Activity Pages and gluing them on their cardstock.

- Explain to kids that they will have tough days. In the Bible Story today Paul and Silas had been treated unfairly—lied about, hurt, and thrown in prison.
- Remind kids that Paul and Silas chose to look to God and trust God to give them joy. They knew that even if it didn't happen right away, God would make everything right in the end!
- Tell kids that the vision board can inspire them and bring them joy when they're having a hard day.
- Invite the kids to use the markers to draw something they love on their cardstock.
 - Prompt kids with ideas, if necessary:
 - their pet
 - a favorite food
 - a favorite toy
- As kids finish, invite anyone to share their vision board with the rest of the group.

What You Say:

“Look at these vision boards! Awesome job! If you find yourself this week having a tough day, take a look at your vision boards.

[Bottom Line] *“God can help you choose joy, and your board can be a great reminder to look to God and trust God no matter what! Remember, joy doesn't mean you're always smiling. You can choose joy when you're sad, mad, or when something hard happens. Joy is all about trusting that God will make everything right again in the end for those who follow Jesus, no matter what trouble we face!”*

[Make It Personal] *(Share an age-appropriate story about a time you chose joy through a hard time. You may not have been happy, but you chose joy and held onto hope in Jesus.)*

Showing Our Resilience

[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: Bibles

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up this month's Memory Verse, Psalm 31:24, following the Bible Navigation Tips below.
 - ***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd 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 Psalms in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find Psalms, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Psalms. Help the kids find the page. When they find Psalms, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 31. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 24 in chapter 31.*
- Read the verse out loud several times together.
- Encourage the kids to set their open Bibles aside.
- Ask: "Can anyone say the verse on their own?"
- Invite any kid who would like to recite the verse from memory the opportunity to do so.
- Model for kids how to do a plank. (See below)
 - If needed, demonstrate how to do an easier plank with your knees on the ground.
- When you say "Go!", direct kids to get in plank position and attempt to hold their plank while reciting the Memory Verse out loud.
 - Allow the kids to reference their Bibles as needed, but encourage them to recite the verse from memory as much as they can.
- Repeat a few times together.
 - Plank Instructions:
 - Start on your hands and knees, then place your forearms on the ground.

Commented [API]: Added a space here

- Step your feet back to form a straight line with your body.
- Engage your core, keep your body tight, and maintain a straight back while breathing.
- When you're ready to stop, gently lower your knees to the ground.

What You Say:

“Wow, everyone! You all are SO strong! You didn’t give up, and you really pushed yourselves to hold that position. And guess what? The more you practice, the longer you’ll be able to hold your plank. Just imagine how strong you’ll get!”

“Whether you’re trying to make it through a tough game, or a tricky math problem—resilience is all about getting back up when something gets you down!”

*“Just like you can practice your planking, we can practice resilience and choosing joy. That doesn’t mean we won’t face challenges like difficult homework or tough days. It means that when things get hard, we can dig deep, keep trying, and know that **[Bottom Line]** God can help you choose joy.”*

As adults arrive to pick up, invite kids to show off their vision boards! Ask them to point to their favorite thing on the vision board and share why it reminds them to choose joy. Encourage adults to help their kids find a place to put their vision board this week so they can always be reminded to choose joy!