



## WEEK FOUR – JANUARY 2025 – KINDER/FIRST

**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.

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

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**Opening Activity**

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

**What You Need:** N/A

**What You Do:**

- Invite kids to sit in a circle.
- Challenge the kids not to laugh as they play the following game.
- Instruct one kid in the circle to say, “ha.”
- Direct the kid to their right in the circle to say, “hee.”
- Instruct the next kid in the circle to say, “ho.”
- Continue this pattern around the circle twice.
- When kids recite “ha,” “hee”, and “ho” smoothly, add a challenge by guiding them to say each sound twice, like this:
  - The first kid says “ha, ha,” the kid to their right says “hee, hee,” and the next kid says “ho, ho.”
- Play additional rounds and add more challenge and fun by increasing the number of times kids say the sounds.
- As you play additional rounds, encourage the kids to “pass” the words faster or in different voices: high, low, mouse, robot, etc.
- Play as long as time and interest allow.
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**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!”

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

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**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.

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

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**Get Back Up**

**[Live For God | Application Activity]**

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

**What You Need:** Plastic eggs, Play-Doh®, and stickers

**What You Do:**

- Gather kids together in your group space.
- Remind kids that Paul and Silas trusted God no matter what! Because they trusted God, they could choose joy even when life was hard!
- Set out the plastic eggs.
- Invite each kid to pick a plastic egg.
- Explain that resilience is getting back up when something gets you down. Paul and Silas had resilience!
- Set an egg on its base, then tip it over.
- Ask: “What do these eggs need to help them ‘stand up’?”
  - Encourage ideas by saying, “Good thinking!” or “Tell me more.”
- Tell kids the eggs need something outside of them to hold them, or something INSIDE to help them get back up!

- Ask: “What will happen if we put something heavier than the eggs inside them?”
- Give each kid a lump of Play-Doh®.
- Invite kids to compare the weight (or heaviness) of the dough to the weight of the egg.
- Instruct kids to open their eggs.
- Ask kids this question:
  - If we want the eggs to stand up, where should we put the dough? (*On the inside of the egg on the bottom.*)
- Guide kids to press the dough into the bases of their eggs.
- Encourage trial and error.
- If the egg doesn’t stand upright, ask open-ended questions to help the kids find solutions, like:
  - Why do you think the egg keeps falling over?
  - What do you think we could try to get the egg to stand upright?
- Share with kids the science behind the egg standing up.
  - Simpler explanation: The Play-Doh® is heavier than the egg. Since the heavy part is being pulled by gravity, when you push the egg, it always tries to stand back up.
  - Deeper explanation: When you add weight to the bottom half of the inside of the egg, the base has a much higher density than the top. This makes the center of mass very low. When you push the egg, the center of mass is on the other side of the pivot point (where the egg is touching the ground). Gravity pulls the egg back to its original position.
- Invite kids to use stickers to decorate their eggs as they choose.

**What You Say:**

*“On our own, it’s hard to get back up when life gets us down. (Take an empty egg, set it on its base, and tip it over.) But when we follow Jesus, we can have joy no matter what! God’s Spirit lives with us and can help us choose joy!”*

*“Also, think about how God promises us everything will be made right in the end. So when your sibling upsets you (push the egg and wait for it to rebalance), when*

*someone you love is sick (push the egg again), when you feel lonely (push the egg), when you feel scared (push the egg), or when life feels hard or confusing (push the egg), remember, [Bottom Line] God can help you choose joy!”*

## **God Can Help**

### **[Hear From God | Memory Verse Activity]**

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

**What You Need:** Bibles marked at Psalm 31, and “Psalm 31:24 Signs” Activity Pages

### **What You Do:**

- Encourage kids to sit in a circle.
- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up this month’s Memory Verse, Psalm 31:24 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:
  - ***Finding verses with kindergartners:*** Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word *Psalm* at the top of the page as you say “Psalm” aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 31 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 31 for the little 24; 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 “Old Testament.” You can help by telling them that Psalms starts with the letters P-S. 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.

- Collect the Bibles.
- Demonstrate the motions for the Memory Verse using the “Psalm 31:24 Signs” Activity Pages as a guide.
- Lead kids to say and sign the verse with you.
- Explain that you will play “pass” the verse.
- Guide one kid to begin the verse by saying the first phrase and making the first motion.
- Then, prompt the next kid in the circle to say the next phrase of the Memory Verse and do the corresponding motion.
- Continue around the circle, repeating the verse several times.

**What You Say:**

*“Friends, it’s not always going to be easy to choose joy. Some things will make us angry, but even when it’s hard to choose joy, it’s so worth it! It’s all about choosing to look to God and trust God no matter what. God has promised to be with us all of the time, and also to make everything right in the end for those who follow Jesus, and that’s good news! So remember, **[Bottom Line] God can help you choose joy!**”*

***As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show off their egg from the Get Back Up Activity and share this week’s Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] God can help you choose joy.*****