



JOY | WEEK 1 | JUNE 2, 2024

Elementary Lesson

Lost and Found

Monthly Virtue: Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

Bible Story: Lost and Found (The Story of the Lost Sheep) • *Luke 15:1-7*

Key Question: What does God being called ‘the Good Shepherd’ mean to you?

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so I have value.

Memory Verse: A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up. *Proverbs 17:22 (NirV)*

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

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: What does God being called ‘the Good Shepherd’ mean to you? Preteens have greater access to technology than ever before. Because of this, they’re often bombarded with negative messages, and joy can seem hard to find. That’s why we’re starting the month by helping our preteens think about what joy is . . . and where true, lasting joy really comes from.

We start the month with *Luke 15:1-7*, where we find Jesus telling a parable about a shepherd who goes to find his lost sheep. Jesus explains that the shepherd cares so much about the missing sheep that he leaves the other 99 sheep to go look for it. After the shepherd finds his sheep, he invites his friends to help him celebrate!

Pre-Service Check List

- HUDDLE AS TEAM → You're in this together! Pray together and talk about the activities for the day.
- PLAY MUSIC
- PUT OUT TOYS → A welcoming environment is important! We want it to be obvious from the moment kids walk in that they belong HERE!
- PUT ASIDE DISTRACTIONS
- ENGAGE WITH KIDS

Morning Flow

Doors Open
9:15/11:00

Large Group Starts
9:35/11:20

Small Group Starts
10:05/11:50

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN AND WELCOME (3 Minutes)

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN, SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS)

LGL: “Welcome everyone! I’m so glad you are able to come hang out with us in KidCity today. My name is [INSERT NAME]. We are going to have a lot of fun today, but before we do let’s go over these announcements/KidCity Expectations.

(SLIDE: BAPTISM) *(Said on the fourth weekend of the month only)* “Today are baptisms at Hope. Baptism is a way of telling the world that you love God and have made the decision to follow Him with your life. It’s a big deal! Is there anyone here who is getting baptized today? *(Pause and if someone is, go ahead and give them a high five and get the kids to clap).* Awesome!”

(SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS) “Now, let’s quickly go over our KidCity Expectations (rules) so we can make sure that we make the most of our time today: *(Don’t dwell on these too long, but make sure you review them briefly so we can set everyone up for success.)*

1. Be Kind
2. Be Safe
3. Have Fun

LARGE GROUP GAME (5 Min)

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE - BIBLE EDITION

(No Supplies)

It’s a brand-new month with a brand-new monthly virtue – which is something to celebrate! In fact, that’s what we are going to be doing all summer long – having a party! Parties and celebrations of any kind bring me so much JOY! And did you know that everyone can have joy? BUT – when we have a right relationship with God it *unlocks* a different kind of joy. And THAT’S what we will be talking about all this month.

(SLIDE: VIRTUE) Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing.

Even when things are darkest, Christians – those who follow Jesus – can always have joy because we can always remember how much God has done for us! Check out our monthly verse...

(SLIDE: MEMORY VERSE) “A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up. *Proverbs 17:22 (NIRV)*

Oh man, I don’t want to be like a dry crusty piece of toast on the inside! I want to choose to have joy no matter the circumstance. We will talk more about that later, but for now, let’s play a game!

(SLIDE: TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE - BIBLE EDITION)

(SLIDES: SLIDES #1-7)

HOW TO PLAY:

- **EXPLAIN:** This is an all-play. You will show a slide that has 3 different stories from the Bible. However, one of them is a LIE! Kids will have to try to guess the lie. (stories listed as 'A, B, or C')
- **SHOW:** Demonstrate how to hold your arms in the shape of an A, B, and C. Kids will choose the one that they think is the lie. When they've all made a choice - reveal the answer.
- **PLAY.** Go through the slides one by one. There is a question-and-answer slide. Keep the game play relatively fast.

"That was so fun! Now everyone stand up and let's worship God!"

WORSHIP (6-7 Minutes)

(VIDEO: READY SET MOVE, START THE PARTY)

BIBLE STORY (12 Minutes)

(No supplies)

When you consider your life and all the people in it, who are the people who bring you joy? It could be a baby cousin who has the chubbiest cheeks in the Midwest; maybe it's a coach who knows exactly how to encourage you after a tough game. Or you may have a friend who is always a party waiting to happen. If you have someone who brings you joy and you're willing to share it with the group, raise your hand. *(Pause and get a couple of responses)*

"I think we can all agree that life is better because we're surrounded by awesome people who encourage us, laugh with us, and are just plain fun to be around. We love playing on their teams, sitting in their classrooms, hanging out with them after school, or receiving their hugs after a long week. I want you to consider a question concerning all the people who put a smile on your face.

"What happens when they aren't around? Like, what about those times when we're by ourselves, in a hard situation, or faced with a tough decision or circumstance and those people are nowhere to be found?

After all, we can't bring an entourage of joy-giving people with us everywhere we go! You might face seasons in life when your favorite people are hard to come by. What happens then?

"When your encouraging coach is out for the week and you're really unhappy with the game you just played, you could feel a little lost. Some of you love art, but when your art teacher isn't around this summer and you take on an ambitious art project, you may feel a little lost without their direction. When your parents tell you it's a 'no technology day' and your favorite uncle or your friends aren't around to play catch, you could feel a little lost, bored, lonely, or all three.

"What happens when your friends become a bit less friendly? What do you do then? Where do you go to find joy?

“These are great questions that we get to explore today. Fortunately for us, the Bible spells out the source of our joy! The great news is joy can still be found even when our favorite people aren’t around, and we feel a little lost. Check out our story for today...

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY 6 MIN)

Jesus had a way to make everyone pause and think. I love this parable because it speaks of God’s great love for all. Each one of us is like the lost sheep sometimes, right? When we believe we can take on life without God, we end up lost and in a hot mess. All of us are guilty of being separated from God because of sin. On our own, we can’t fix this sin problem. We are like the helpless sheep without a shepherd.

“Thankfully, there is hope for all of us found in this parable. God will look for you and won’t stop until you’re found! God will *be* with you and will *walk* with you through every hard thing to get back to the flock, back to the lush fields, and back to safety. God will do this regardless of your past, present, or future. There is no mess or trouble we can get into that’s too big or awful for Jesus. His love for you is unconditional and never-ending. This reminds me of our Basic Truth...

(SLIDE: BASIC TRUTH) ‘I am made for a purpose so I have value.

“You never have to wonder or doubt if you matter. Not only did God create you exactly the way you are for a reason – which is wonderful – but He also values you so much that He wants a relationship with you. That’s an incredible thing to reflect on. The Creator of the Universe chases after us when we are far from Him. That’s why we sometimes call God ‘The Good Shepherd’.

“Joy can be found in remembering and thanking Jesus for the times He rescued us and for the times He will rescue us again. For many in this room, you’ve already decided to follow Jesus for the rest of your life, and we think that is awesome! If you’ve never told Jesus you want to follow Him—that you want Jesus to be like your shepherd—and you want to talk with someone, let your Small Group Leader know today. We’d love to set aside some time to talk with you about what it looks like to be sought after and cared for by a fantastic shepherd, Jesus.

“In the parable, Jesus pointed out that the neighbors and friends celebrated the return of the lost sheep. Likewise, we get to celebrate the ways God is at work in the world and in the lives of those around us! Joy can also be found when we see our friends and family are found by God’s love and grace.

Let’s wrap up today by asking our Key Question.

(SLIDE: KEY QUESTION) ‘What does God being called ‘the Good Shepherd’ mean to you?’

Have kids turn and talk to their shoulder partner for 60 seconds. Your KQ slide on Playlister will keep track of time for you. While kids are talking, walk around and listen in to what they are saying and give prompts if needed. Don’t try to resolve anything, kids will have a further discussion within their small group time.

“Ok friends, come back together in 3, 2, 1...



“I heard some great thoughts floating around. You are going to have more of a chance to talk about this in small group time, but for now let’s pray.

“Dear God, you bring us joy every day. You’ve shown us over and over again that we can trust you no matter what. Thank you so much for the joy we have in Jesus! This story Jesus told about the lost sheep shows us how valuable each person is to you. You sent Jesus to rescue us, because you LOVE us. Help us to remember that always—and to find joy in knowing how much we matter to you. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen

DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

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Kids learn best through play and through conversation. Both are equally important, so be sure to give time to both!

KEY QUESTION (K-5th)

(No Supplies)

Spend some time coming together and talking about the Key Question. There aren’t any right or wrong answers but use this time to help kids have a discussion about what they just learned and encourage them to grow in their faith. Try to keep the conversation spiritually based. Why does what we are talking about matter in light of what God has done for us?

Key Question: What does God being called ‘the Good Shepherd’ mean to you?

(Answers will vary: I know I belong with Him and that He's going to protect me, when bad things happen, I know that He will guide me, etc.)

HAVE JOY (K-5th)

(“Have Joy” Activity Page – 1 per kid, Writing Utensils)

What You Do:

- Pass out the activity pages and writing utensils
- Point out the top line. Read it out loud and have kids fill in the blank
 - “We can have JOY because of JESUS.”
- SAY:
 - No matter our circumstances, we can have joy because we can remember what Jesus did for us by dying on the cross and creating a way for us to have a right relationship with God again.
 - Optional: Fold paper in half for youngers so they don’t get confused on what they are working on.
 - Let’s list things that make us *happy* in the first box with the pizza.
 - *These should be things like ‘a warm slice of pizza, opening gifts on my birthday, a kitten/puppy, etc. They shouldn’t be spiritual...yet!*
- DO:
 - Help kids list out things that make us *happy*. Don’t spend too much time on this section.
 - *For K/1st: They can draw pictures or you can all work together.*

- SAY:
 - These are all great things! But what happens when those things go away or never happen? How do we feel? (*sad/angry*)
 - It's not wrong to feel bad when things sometimes don't happen the way that we had hoped, but the thing is - **things like getting a good grade on a test only give us happiness for a moment.** Or, when they don't happen at all our world is shattered. It's just not lasting. We need to remember things that ARE lasting so we can choose to have JOY.
- DO:
 - Brainstorm together things that fill us with joy and fill out the box.
 - Things that fill us with joy are things that have come from God - what He's done for us and what He has given us.
 - Some examples could be: Jesus dying on the cross, God giving us a loving family, God giving us enough food to eat, being able to go to church to learn about God and hang out with friends, **knowing that God made me exactly how I'm supposed to be, knowing that I am loved by God no matter what, and knowing that I have a purpose in God's Big Story.**
- SAY:
 - When the things that generally make us happy let us down, we can stop and remember what God has given us and **choose joy.**
 - Look at the bottom of the page. It has our Basic Truth for today. Let's fill in the blank. **"I am made for a purpose so I have VALUE." Even if you fail a test - you still have value to God. No matter the result of your circumstances, you still have value to God!**

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for being a good Shepherd, always watching over us. We know that when we go the wrong way, you come looking for us with love and joy in your heart. Thank you for sending Jesus. Even when we make mistakes or feel lost, thank you that Jesus is there to guide us back to you. Help us to trust that we can have joy because of Jesus. We love you and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

FINAL ACTIVITY: Biblical Literacy (K-5th)

(Memory Verse Poster, "Memory Verse Fill in the Blanks" - activity page precut)

What You Do:

- Review the Memory Verse together.
- Tell kids that they are going to do something a little silly to memorize the verse. They will say the verse (reference first) and then when they get to the end they have to say, 'but a broken spirit dries you up LIKE A...' and then finish the sentence with something silly. For example:
 - *"Proverbs 17:22 - A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up LIKE A... dry crusty piece of toast."*
- They can either come up with their own prompts or pull one of the prompt slips.
 - Keep the prompts face down so it will be a surprise when they pick it up and read it out loud.