



JOY | WEEK 2 | JUNE 9, 2024

Elementary Lesson

Over and Over

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

Bible Story: Over and Over (Feast of Booths) • *Deuteronomy 16:13-17*

Key Question: How can you remember to be joyful?

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: How can you remember to be joyful? There's nothing better than getting together with other people and celebrating everything that God has done—in your life and in the lives of the people around you. We hope this question allows kids to share ideas and think about ways they can make joy a part of their everyday lives.

In week 2, we see how God set aside times and rhythms for the Israelite people to reflect on and remember everything God had done for them. In *Deuteronomy 16:13-17*, we read about one celebration in particular called the Feast of Booths. We see in Scripture how God's people celebrated this feast on several important occasions throughout their history.

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: 5th SUNDAY FUNDAY) GUESS WHAT?! This month is extra special because it had a 5th SUNDAY FUNDAY! It’s also the last day in your grade before you move up to the next one. It’s going to be a party! You and your friends don’t want to miss it – so be sure to invite them and their families to come with you.

(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)

TOES, NOSE

(No Supplies)

We are continuing the Party that we are having all summer and having a JOYful time doing so!

(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 tumbleweed in a deserted town in the Old West 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: GAME SLIDE)

HOW TO PLAY:

- **GET INTO SMALLER GROUPS:** This is an all-play. Break the room up into smaller groups. There should be 6-15 kids per group. They don't have to be the same size. Have the kids stand in a circle facing inward.
- **EXPLAIN:** When you say 'TOES', everyone must pick one person in the circle (not themselves) and look at their toes. When you say 'NOSE' they must look up at that person. If they are both looking at each other, they have to dramatically die and are out. Each round, kids need to choose a new person to look at. Each round should only last 5 seconds as you rapidly move between 'TOES' and 'NOSE'.
- **END:** Keep going until either everyone in a circle is out or you run out of time. To keep interest high, consider playing a few games so those who got out quickly can play again. End the game after 3 minutes.

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

WORSHIP (6-7 Minutes)

(VIDEO: START THE PARTY, ALIVE)

BIBLE STORY (12 Minutes)

(No supplies)

It's great to see so many smiling faces. I'm going to make an assumption—the reason there are so many happy kids today is because school is officially out . . . or *really* close to it!

"Long-gone are the days of complicated math, group projects, and reading long chapter-books. Here to stay are lazy days by the pool, playing ball at the park, late bedtimes, and movie nights. Summer break gives us all kinds of reasons to celebrate!

"Like many of you, I loved summer break as a kid. As soon as school let out, my friends and their families celebrated the end of school in different ways. Some of my friends would go immediately to the shaved ice stand and order a large drink with the cream on top. Usually, a group of kids from my class would head to a matinee movie. There's nothing like seeing a movie in the middle of the day!

"I'm curious. What does your family do to celebrate different milestones and holidays? Maybe you celebrate another year older by drinking a giant birthday milkshake with sprinkles and sparklers instead of a birthday cake with frosting and candles. For another holiday, some of you might celebrate the day by going to your town's parade or watching fireworks.

The doses of joy we receive from milestones and holiday parties are not daily occurrences, unfortunately. They happen only a few times a year. For many in this room, difficult life experiences happen more frequently than these celebrations. Our siblings get on our nerves because they never share the TV remote. In class, we get in trouble for talking too much. At home, we lose tech privileges because we mess up. We learn quickly life isn't always a party.

“This reality does make me wonder if it is possible to have joy even when we aren’t celebrating a milestone. Or if it’s possible to have joy for no reason at all. Is there something we can be reminded of that will help us to have joy even when we are facing frustration in life? Can we turn joy into a habit or regular experience?”

“I love good questions, and these are some doozies. More than good questions, I love good answers—and we can start digging to find those answers in the Bible. Remember, the Bible is basically a library filled with all sorts of writings: history, biography, poems, letters, and wise teachings. Everything was written by real people who experienced God—God’s goodness, love, and power—in their lives. God inspired them to write about what they experienced so other people like us could experience God for ourselves! Let’s head there now!”

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY 6 MIN)

Today, we still celebrate the joyful news that Jesus came to earth for us! And when we look back at the history of Israel, we can see how God wanted them to spend time celebrating—not just what God is doing presently but also what God has done leading up to now. The parties not only served as an opportunity to reflect on all God had done but also the opportunity to fill their lives with joy. These celebrations were to be done regularly so the people would be in the *habit* of looking for joy.

“Likewise, God’s love for us is deep, and God longs for our lives to be filled with joy regardless of the circumstances we face. Mowing the yard, going to the doctor or dentist, washing the dishes, or cleaning the bathroom are all not-so-fun things to do. However, if we spend time thinking about joyful times, times when God was amazing, those not-so-great times won’t seem so not-so-great.

“God wants us to get in the habit of pausing to look for joy.

“Even though a lot of our everyday experiences will not look like a party, there are still plenty of reasons to have joy! God has done *so much* for each of us. Although we don’t need to build a booth or take seven days to celebrate, it is important to look for places in our everyday lives to celebrate and find joy!

“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.

Developing habits is hard work. It takes time, patience, and practice. The Israelites went through seasons when they failed to set aside time to celebrate God—but over time, God reminded them repeatedly to celebrate. In the process, they found joy despite their difficulties.

“It’s possible for all of us to get in the habit of finding joy! This may look different for each person. As we wrap up our time, I want you to consider this question:

(SLIDE: KEY QUESTION) ‘How can you remember to be joyful?’

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, thank you for the reminder that you've given us so many reasons to have joy. You set up ways for your people to find joy by celebrating what you had done in their lives. Please show us how we can also make a habit of choosing joy today. Help us to see how you're working in our lives in so many amazing ways. When we're tempted to complain or when things don't go the way we expect, help us to make the wise choice and choose joy! 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: How can you remember to be joyful?

(Answers will vary: I can make a list of things God has done and look at it when I feel sad, I can talk to other people, I can make it a habit that whenever I pray for my food, I thank God for one thing, etc.)

CELEBRATE YOUR JOURNEY TIMELINE (K-5th)

(“Milestone” Activity Page, Cut and Fold in Half - 1 set per group, opaque bag)

What You Do:

- Place all of the cards from the “Milestone” Activity Page in the bag.
- Choose one kid to reach in the bag and remove one of the cards from the “Milestone” Activity Page.
- Instruct the kid who chose the card to discreetly look at the picture and text on the card.
- Invite the kid to stand in the front of the group and act out the milestone depicted on their card.
- Encourage the rest of the group to guess the milestone.
- Once the kids correctly guess, ask anyone from the group to share a brief story or memory related to that milestone (if they have one).
- Repeat so that each kid gets a turn to choose and act out one of the cards.

What You Say:

“Great job acting out and guessing all those things! Does anyone realize what all of those cards had in common? *(Invite responses.)* They represent different milestones we've learned to do, or maybe are still waiting to learn to do. I'm impressed with all the amazing things you've learned to do!

“But let’s be real—learning some of these things were more difficult than others, right? Did anyone run into some challenges or setbacks along the way? (*Invite responses.*) How did you conquer those obstacles? (*Invite responses.*)

“When you’re in the middle of learning something new and it feels like you’re struggling, it’s not always easy to feel joyful, right? But guess what? That’s when we can remember to celebrate along the way. We’ve already learned and achieved things that we do every day. Just imagine the endless possibilities ahead. As you grow older, you will learn to do so many new things—like driving a car!

“When we hit the pause button to remember and find joy in all the incredible things God has done and is doing in our lives, it helps us remember that God is always by our side helping us do new things and overcome obstacles. So, let’s [*Bottom Line*] make a habit of choosing joy every day.”

CELEBRATE THE JOURNEY: EXTENSION (2nd-5th)

(No Supplies)

Ask:

- What are some things you know about God’s character that you can celebrate right now?
- What can you do to help you remember what God has done in your life?
- When things don’t turn out as you had hoped, why can you still celebrate?
- Describe a celebration you could have to show thanks to God.

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for the big story you’re telling—where we can see times of celebrations. Help us choose joy every day. When things are hard, help us to remember you are with us and find joy in that. Thank you for teaching us that celebrating is not just for special times, but something we can do every day. It’s medicine to our bodies! That is why we want to make a habit of choosing joy. We love you and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

FINAL ACTIVITY: Biblical Literacy (K-5th)

(“Hopscotch Verse” - 1 set per group, Memory Verse Poster)

What You Do:

- Select a volunteer to open the marked Bible to Proverbs 17:22.
- Read the verse aloud and lead the kids to repeat each line of the verse after you.
- Talk about the part of the verse, “*a broken spirit*” (*NirV*).
 - Or “*a crushed spirit*” in the NIV.
- Say: “A broken (or crushed) spirit is the opposite of joy. It’s a spirit that’s filled with sadness from the inside. God wants to fill us with joy—the kind of joy that lasts!”
- Lay out the “Hopscotch Verse” Activity Pages in a hopscotch pattern on the floor of your group area and secure with tape.
- Point out the words of the verse as you repeat them with the kids together.
- One at a time, invite the kids to take turns jumping from one page to the next as you say the words.

- Encourage the kids to repeat after you with each jump.
 - Point out the numbers on each page to help kids jump in order.
- Continue until every kid has a turn.

What You Say:

That was amazing! King Solomon, the author of this verse, was telling us that being happy is like good medicine for our hearts. It means when we choose to be joyful, it can make us feel better inside. So, when we [Bottom Line] make a habit of choosing joy, it's like taking good medicine for our hearts every day!"

- Read Proverbs 17:22 from the Bible aloud to the group.
- Invite kids to say the first part of the verse together then pause to allow them a moment to reflect and pray as they focus on ways they've seen God's care and love for them this week.
- Invite kids to say the second part of the verse. Remind them that building the habit of choosing joy is most difficult when things are not going our way. That's when we need to stop and remember what God has done for us.
- Encourage kids to ask God to help them with a situation they are facing that is troubling them right now and making it hard for them to feel joyful.