



WEEK ONE - OCTOBER 2018 - PRETEEN (456)

Bible Story: *That's All Right • Philippians 4:11b-13*

Key Question: *What do you do when things don't go your way?*

Memory Verse: *"Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against wanting to have more and more things. Life is not made up of how much a person has.'" - Luke 12:15, NIrV*

Life App: *Contentment - Deciding to be okay with what you have*

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

Summary: In our first week, we start in Philippians 4:11b-13. In this letter, Paul is writing to the church at Philippi to help them understand more about what it means to follow Jesus. Paul shares how they can be content and even have joy regardless of their situation in life. This is something that Paul has had to learn from experience. His example of contentment in the face of difficulty is a lesson we can all learn from.

8:50-9:00 | 10:20-10:30 | 11:50-12:00 - FREE PLAY

9:00-9:10 | 10:30-10:40 | 12:00-12:10 - PRESERVICE ACTIVITY

1. Just for Fun

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Ask students to share their best imitations of a hungry, growling stomach.
- Invite everyone to group together in huddle.
- Choose someone to step away from the group and turn his/her back to them.
- Explain that you will point to someone in the huddle who will then make the sound of his stomach growling for two seconds.
- When the growling stops, let the kids in the huddle rearrange themselves and then let the person outside of the huddle turn around and guess who made the sound.
- Switch students and play again.

What You Say:

*This month we will be finding out what God says about something that doesn't come naturally to any of us the way flinching does. [Transition] **Let's go to Large Group and learn how we can win one of the greatest challenges we'll ever face.***

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

9:10-9:45 | 10:40-11:15 | 12:10-12:45 - LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Key Question: *What do you do when things don't go your way? By their preteens years, kids know that not everything will happen just the way they want. They are still learning how to respond when moments like these happen. We start with this question because we hope kids will learn to identify how they respond when they face difficulty. We pray that kids will make a plan to help them respond with contentment, as they trust God no matter what.*

9:45-10:05 | 11:15-11:35 | 12:45-1:05 SMALL GROUP

1. Take a Snapshot

[Application Activity]

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

What You Need: Half-sheets of paper; pens

What You Do:

- Hand out pens and scrap paper to the students.
- Explain that you will read a situation in which something didn't go the way it was expected to go.
- Ask everyone to write down a number between one and ten based on how easy or hard it would be for them to feel okay with the situation you describe.
 - One = Discontentment: "I'd be in total bad-mood-complaining mode."
 - Ten = Contentment: "I'd figure out how to deal with it."
- After going through each scenarios, let students share their scores and explain why they wrote what they did.
- For later discussion, note the types of situations that are most difficult for each person to handle.
- **PRO TIP: The scenarios listed below are subjective. What is a big deal for one student might seem like nothing to another. Be sensitive to visitors whose stories you don't know and kids whose families are struggling financially, who live in single parent homes, or who are in foster care. Adjust or add scenarios accordingly, but number them for easier discussion at the end.**
- Great Expectations Scenarios:
 - I got a \$25 Amazon gift card for my birthday. I was expecting more gifts.
 - I left my lunch money at home, and I'm STARVING!
 - I expected to play in the last volleyball game of the season, but I sprained my ankle and will miss the whole thing.
 - I expected to be invited to my friend's party, but I wasn't.
 - I expected sunshine and hours at the beach, but instead, it rained every day we were there.
 - I have a flip phone. Enough said.
- If time allows, let students come up with other situations for the group to rate.

2. Bible Story Extension

[Bible Story Review]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: Bibles, pens, scrap paper, "Secret Code" Activity Page, "2 Corinthians 11:23b-28" Activity Page

What You Do:

- Ask someone to sum up today's Bible story from Large Group. (He/she can refer to the passage in Philippians 4:11b-13 if needed.)
- Remind students that Paul didn't learn the secret of contentment because his life was easy and things always went his way.
- Invite the students to discover more of what Paul's life was like by reading 2 Corinthians 11:23b-28 from the Activity Page.
 - When they come to a word written in symbols, have them use the "Secret Code" Activity Page to decipher the word then write it on the scrap paper.
- When everyone is finished, invite volunteers to read aloud 2 Corinthians 11:23b-28 as you compare their answers with the words in bold print at the bottom of this page.
- Discuss:
 - How much did Paul's contentment depend on the things he had or didn't have?
 - If you faced the same things Paul did, what would be the hardest for you?
 - When Paul said he had learned the secret of being content, what do you think that secret was?
 - When your life feels like a hot mess but you really want to be okay with the things you can't change, what's the best thing to do? (Spend time with Him, ask Him for help, talk to Him when you have a bad attitude.)
- Help students understand that being content doesn't come naturally to any of us.
 - Paul **LEARNED** to be content no matter what.
 - The only way he could do that was because of the strength that came from knowing Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit living inside him.
 - Remind your students that if they believe in Jesus, they have that same strength. No matter what happens or where they find themselves, they can always ask for strength and choose to be okay.

3. Discussion Questions

[Application Activity]

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 would you describe a person who is content? Can you think of someone specific?
- If you legitimately have stuff you need (not just want), what are some ways you can choose to be content?
- Since contentment is a skill we learn and not something that comes naturally, how do we go about learning it?
- How much does gratitude impact contentment?
- What's one thing you've learned today about contentment? How can you put that in your life this week?

4. Make It Personal with Prayer

[Application Activity]

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Ask students to come up with as many different extremes or opposites as they can think of in two minutes. (For example, hot/cold; hungry/full)
- Let kids form a prayer around the list of opposites they just created in these areas or other areas in which they need to learn to be more content.
- Invite them to take turns filling in the following sentence prayer, using any opposite adjectives they want to:
- Dear God, help me to be content whether _____ or _____."

What You Say:

"Dear Jesus, thank You for the example You've given us from the life of Paul. Teach us how to be okay with the ups and downs of life. We need Your help to believe that you are always with us and that Your plan is always best. In Your name we pray, amen."