



WEEK TWO – MAY 2019 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *I Won't Back Down • Acts 16:16–40*

Bottom Line: *You can choose joy when life gets hard.*

Memory Verse: *“But those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.” – Isaiah 40:31 NIV*

Life App: *Perseverance – Refusing to give up when life gets hard*

Basic Truth: *I need to make the wise choice*

Summary: Next, we head to Acts 16:16–40 to discover what happens when Paul and Silas were arrested. They could have given up their calling to spread the message of Jesus. However, even in the middle of this difficult situation they decided to worship God. And when the time came, they had the right words at the right time and helped the jailer and his family start a relationship with Jesus.

8:50–9:00 | 10:20–10:30 | 11:50–12:00 – EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITIES

1. Early Arriver Idea

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up.
- Invite kids to place their offerings in the *For Everyone* box on the wall near the main entrance
- Ask kids about songs. Are there songs that automatically make them happy when they hear them? Are there songs that make them sad? Why? What’s the story behind it?
- If appropriate and kids are willing, let them sing a few lines of a song that has meaning to them.

2. Can’t Stop Smiling

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Encourage kids to find a partner.
- Explain that they will be competing against their partner to see who can keep a straight face for the longest time without laughing.
- They can make faces and funny sounds, but the winner is the person who lasts the longest without laughing or smiling.
- After each round, encourage kids to find a new partner and try again!

What You Say:

[Transition] *“Was anybody able to keep a straight face the entire time? (Allow time for conversation and responses.) That is much harder to do than it sounds! I love that as hard as we tried, we couldn’t help but smile. [Transition] Today in Large Group, we are going to learn about two people who decided to have joy even though they were faced with some pretty hard circumstances.”*

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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

OVERVIEW:

Bottom Line: *You can choose joy when life gets hard.* We will all face times when life is hard. How we respond to those situations matters. We hope that kids start to understand that when they choose joy, they can point others to Jesus.

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

1. Story Songs

[Application Activity]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through reenactment

What You Need: Bibles; Paper; Pencils

What You Do:

- Divide kids into three teams. Give each team some paper and pencils.
- Assign each team a set of verses from today's Bible story:
 - Acts 16:16–24
 - Acts 16:25–34
 - Acts 16:35–40
- Tell teams to write a 6–10 line song or chant that summarizes their verses.
- Explain that they can make up their own tune, or they can use a familiar tune, such as “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” “Jesus Loves Me,” or a favorite worship song.
- Give teams a set amount of time to write and rehearse, and then allow teams to perform their songs for the rest of the group.

What You Say:

*“Those were some great songs! I wonder what songs Paul and Silas sang to God in the jail. Maybe they were songs that told stories they knew from the Bible. Maybe they were songs of pure worship. We don't know for sure. But we do know that God loves it when we worship Him, and we know that when Paul and Silas worshiped, God performed a miracle! And because of that miracle, other people came to believe in Jesus. Paul and Silas chose to have joy even in the midst of a hard situation. **[Bottom Line]** You can choose joy when life gets hard, too.”*

[Make It Personal] *(Tell kids about a time when your life was very difficult, but you chose to have joy in the midst of it. How did God work in that situation?)*

2. Jesus, Others, You

[Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Introduce the JOY acrostic: Jesus / Others / You.
 - Talk about how when you need to persevere and choose joy, first you focus on JESUS and who He is and what He has done.
 - Then you focus on OTHERS and what you can do for them.
 - And finally you think about how YOU won't give up in the situation.
- Challenge the kids to use their bodies to (individually) create the letter J on the floor.
- Give kids this scenario:
 - Your dad gets a job in another state across the country, and your family has to move a month before school is out for the summer.
- Ask kids what they know about Jesus that could help them in that situation.
- Instruct kids to use their bodies to create an O on the floor.
- Ask kids how they could focus on others in order to have joy in the middle of that situation.
- If you wish, repeat the J and O steps above with more scenarios, such as:
 - Your brother is really angry with you for messing up his game console. It has been a week, and he still refuses to forgive you or speak to you.
 - Your grandparents have always watched you after school until your parents get home from work. But your grandma got really sick all of a sudden, and not only are you really worried about her, but you also now have to go to daycare after school.
- Tell kids to use their bodies to create a Y on the floor.
- Ask them to think about something they need to persevere through right now. Encourage kids to share their situations if they're comfortable with it. Talk through how they can focus on Jesus and others in the midst of that situation.

What You Say:

*“Sometimes it can be really, really tough to persevere when you're going through a hard time. But **[Bottom Line]** you can choose joy when life gets hard. Remember our acrostic from today: JESUS, OTHERS, YOU. Focus on Jesus first. Then focus on others. And finally, think about the fact that you won't give up on the situation because God is always with you.”*

3. Pray and Dismiss**[Prayer Activity]**

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Tell kids to take a few moments to ask God to give them strength to choose joy when life gets hard.

- If they wish, they can do one of the physical activities from the memory verse activity while they pray.
- Close with a prayer similar to the one below.

What You Say:

*“Dear God, thank You for being so awesome. And because you are so awesome and are with us ALL the time, we can have joy in the midst of even the worst of circumstances. We praise You for that, Lord. Help us all to remember that we can always have joy because of what You’ve done for us. In Jesus’ name, amen. Remember, **[Bottom Line]** you can choose joy when life gets hard.”*

As adults arrive to pick up, tell them to ask kids what the letters JOY stand for.