



WEEK THREE – SEPTEMBER 2019 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *Steel Bars* • Genesis 40; Genesis 39

Bottom Line: *When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.*

Memory Verse: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding.” – Proverbs 3:5 (NirV)

Life App: *Trust—Putting your confidence in someone you can depend on.*

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

Summary: Next, we find out what happens to Joseph in Egypt. In Genesis 40 we discover that while Joseph was thrown into prison for a crime he didn't commit, God helped him interpret a couple of dreams that came true. He thought this was his chance to get out of jail. Instead Joseph was forgotten and stayed in prison several more years. Even though God was with Joseph, he must have been confused at what was happening to him.

PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITIES

1. Early Arriver Idea

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

What You Need: Whiteboards

What You Do:

- Invite kids to place their offerings in the container.
- Explain the concept of a cupbearer (or wine taster, in NIV): it's a person who tasted drink and food before the king did to make sure he wasn't poisoned.
- Tell kids to pretend they're the king's cupbearer.
- On the whiteboard, make two lists:
 - Things kids would LOVE to taste for the king
 - Things kids would HATE to taste for the king

2. Silly Sentences

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

What You Need: "Silly Sentences" Activity Pages, scissors, clear tape

What You Do:

- Give each kid an Activity Page. Let them take turns reading the sentences out loud.
- Acknowledge that the sentences don't quite make sense.
- Give each kid a pair of scissors, and set out the tape.
- Encourage kids to cut the sentences apart on the lines.
- Challenge them to then cut each sentence apart in one place and rearrange the pieces to create sentences that make sense. (*Note: You can let kids figure out where to cut, or you can tell them to cut after the "and" in each sentence.*)
- Let kids read the new sentences aloud.

What You Say:

*"Those were some silly sentences at first! They didn't make a whole lot of sense. But then you figured out how to make them make sense. [Transition] **Let's go to Large Group, where we'll hear about what to do during other times when things don't make sense.**"*

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Bottom Line: *When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.* From not being able to understand something in school to a family situation you never expected, what's happening in our life won't always make sense. We pray that no matter what kids face, they'll trust that God is in control and they can trust Him to get through it.

SMALL GROUP

1. An Emotional Story**[Bible Story Review]**

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

What You Need: “Bible Story” Activity Page, dessert-sized paper plates, markers

What You Do:

- Give each child three or four plates, and set out the markers.
- Tell kids to think of three or four emotions the people in today's Bible story might have felt.
- Instruct kids to use the plates and markers to make emojis for each of those emotions.
 - *Note: Kids don't all have to make the same emotions. Let them each pick the ones they want. If they need help thinking of some, suggest anger, confusion, fear, sadness, etc.*
- Explain that you will read the Bible story aloud, and kids should hold up an emoji plate in front of their face when someone in the story would have felt that emotion.
- Read the story aloud from the Activity Page while kids use their plates to show emotions.
 - *Note: We don't suggest reading the story directly from the Bible, due to the nature of the situation with Potiphar's wife.*

What You Say:

*“Sometimes bad things happen—even when you haven't done anything to deserve it and it simply doesn't make sense. Joseph's own brothers sold him to be a slave. Then he was taken to Egypt. And then he was thrown into prison for something he didn't even do! How do you think Joseph probably felt when all of this happened to him? (Allow for responses.) You might think that if God was really with Joseph, only good things would have happened to him. But that's not the way life works. Bad things happen because we all sin, and the things we do sometimes affect people who didn't deserve it. But even [Bottom Line] **when life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.** He is always in control, even when we can't see it. Joseph knew it, and we can know it too.”*

2. Good Reason or Not?

[Application Activity]

Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Guide kids to line up side by side at one end of your space, while you stand on the opposite side.
- Explain that you'll call out an instruction, and kids need to follow it.
- Their goal is to make it across the room to you.
- Start calling out instructions (see below for examples).
 - There should be absolutely no rhyme or reason to why sometimes kids move forward and sometimes they move back.
 - But in general, most of the instructions should entail some type of moving forward, so the game will progress.
- Once a kid reaches you, you can start the game over if you have time and kids have interest.
- Sample instructions (and/or make up some of your own):
 - If you're wearing red, take three steps forward.
 - If you have blue eyes, take one giant step forward.
 - If you have a sister, take two steps back.
 - If your last name starts with A, B, C, or D, take two tiny hops back.
 - If you are in second grade, take two steps forward.
 - If you have a dog, take three tiny steps forward.
 - If your first name has four letters, take one step back.
 - If you have a brother, take one step back.
 - If you had cereal for breakfast, take one giant leap forward.
 - If you rode a bike this week, take two steps forward.
- If you're ready to end the game and nobody is close to you, say: "If you heard a Bible story about Joseph today, skip to me!"

What You Say:

*"That game didn't always seem fair, did it? Just like in this game, some things aren't fair and don't make sense. However, in the game, I didn't have a good reason when someone had to step back, but God ALWAYS has a reason, even if we might never know it. We can always trust He's with us, even when it doesn't make sense. We won't always know WHY bad things happen. Sometimes life just doesn't make sense. There are times when God lets us feel pain and heartbreak and loss. But **[Bottom Line]** when life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you."*

3. Trust in God

[Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bibles, “Trust in God” Activity Pages, pencils

What You Do:

- Instruct kids to look up Proverbs 3:5 and say it aloud together several times.
- Hand out the Activity Pages.
- Tell kids to look up two of the verses/passages, read them, and think about how even though the people didn’t understand God’s whole plan at that time, they still trusted Him.
- Instruct them to choose one of the verses/passages and write down how God’s plan turned out for that person or how that situation ended up being good in the end.

What You Say:

“In all of these situations, God asked someone to do something that might have seemed a little crazy, or He allowed something to happen that seemed really bad. But we know how their stories ended, don’t we? We know how they ended for those men, and we know how they all ultimately led to Jesus coming to earth to save us. Has anything ever happened in your life that seemed crazy or really bad at the time, but then later you saw God’s plan? Let me give you an example.

[Make It Personal] (Tell kids about a time when your life didn’t make sense, but you trusted that God was with you. Explain how you now see God’s bigger plan for that situation. Make sure to keep your example age-appropriate. Try to convey the confusion you felt, but without making the conversation too sad or heavy.)

*“For you, maybe you had to move to a new city or state, and you had to leave your friends behind. You couldn’t see how that could EVER be a good plan. But now you’ve settled in to your new house, and you’ve made amazing new friends, and maybe you even live closer to your cousins or grandparents, which is awesome. Or maybe your dog died—the dog that had been in your family even longer than you had been alive. You didn’t see how that could be a good plan AT ALL. But then your mom reminded you that your dog was old and had been in a lot of pain before he died, and that had made you sad. And then your family got a new puppy, and he’s the cutest thing ever! (If you have time, let kids share some similar stories. Make sure to not let them go on too long, and guide the conversation as needed.) Remember, [Bottom Line] **when life doesn’t make sense, you can trust God is with you.**”*

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need: Kids' emoji plates from the “An Emotional Story” activity

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has his or her plates from the earlier activity.
- Tell kids to use the emotions from their plates while they say a prayer similar to the Bottom Line.
- For example, they might say:
 - God, when life doesn't make sense and I feel sad, mad, or scared, I will trust You are with me.
 - God, when life doesn't make sense, I trust You are with me—when I'm afraid, angry, and even when I'm happy.

What You Say:

[Bottom Line] “When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you. He's with you when you're sad. He's with you when you're angry. He's with you when you're anxious. And He's with you when you're happy. No matter what is happening in your life and no matter how you feel, God is there. You can trust in that ALWAYS.”

As adults arrive to pick up, tell them to ask kids to retell the Bible story on the way home while using their emoji plates.