



WEEK TWO – DECEMBER 2019 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *The Weary World Rejoices* • Luke 1:5–25; 57–80

Key Question: *What’s the most amazing thing you’ve ever seen?*

Memory Verse: *“Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!”*
Philippians 4:4

Life App: *Joy—Finding a way to be happy, even when things don’t go your way*

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

Summary: In Week Two, we head to Luke 1:5–25; 57–80 where we find Zechariah and Elizabeth. They were unable to have children. On top of that, they were older and it seemed impossible that they’d ever have a child of their own. But one day an angel came to Zechariah and told him that he would indeed have a son, and that son would prepare the way for the Promised One, Jesus. Zechariah and Elizabeth learned that anything is possible with God.

PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITY

1. Just For Fun

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

What You Need: Coins

What You Do:

- Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and asking about their past week
- Invite kids to place their offerings in the *For Everyone* box on the wall near the main entrance
- Direct kids to take a coin.
- Instruct them to find the date on the coin. Use the magnifying glass for clarity if needed.
- Help kids figure out how old they were in the year their coin was minted.
- Take turns sharing something they remember from the Christmas of that year, such as a gift they gave to someone, a tradition their family still continues to do, what the coolest gifts were in stores that year, and so on.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Key Question: *What's the most amazing thing you've ever seen? Often, to see past our circumstances, we need a reminder of God's ability to do the impossible. We start with a question that gets preteens thinking about the amazing things they've seen and experienced in their life. We pray the conversation will lead towards celebrating the amazing things they've seen God do.*

SMALL GROUP

1. Bible Story Extension

[Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

- Remind your group that after the angel appeared to him, Zechariah was not able to speak until after John was born.
- Challenge the kids to communicate their answers to the following review questions without speaking.
 - They will have no more than 30 seconds to help the rest of the group guess their answer.
 - Everyone except the person answering the question can speak.
- Questions:
 - What do you think was the best part of today's story?
 - Tell about something happy that happened in the story.
 - Who was your favorite character?
 - Tell about something sad that happened in today's story.
 - When he got home, how do you think Zechariah communicated with Elizabeth all that had happened at the temple?
 - What was the scariest part of today's story?
 - Talk about something that was old in the story.
 - What do you think Elizabeth's reaction was when she finally understood what Zechariah was telling her?
 - Talk about something that was probably loud in the story.
 - How does knowing God can do the impossible help us have joy?
- Give kids their voices back and ask the group to share their answers to the following question: "If you hadn't been able to speak for nine months, what do you think your first words would be?"
- Invite someone to read aloud Luke 1:68, explaining that the words of this verse were some of the first things Zechariah said once he could speak again.
- Ask:
 - What stands out to you most in these words spoken by Zechariah?
 - When we experience God doing something amazing and when we truly believe He can do the impossible, what should our response be?
- If time allows, let the kids take turns reading more of Zechariah's song of praise in Luke 1:69–79 and note the references he makes to God's promises about the Savior.

2. 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:

- What are some everyday ways God shows us how amazing He is?
- Why is it important to know that God can do the impossible?
- If God can do anything—even the most impossible things—why doesn't He do some of the things we ask Him to do?
- What seemingly impossible situation would you like to see God change?

3. Make It Personal with Prayer

[Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Invite the group to use a favorite Christmas carol, such as “Joy to the World,” as a prayer focus.
- Explain that you'll pause after each phrase of the first verse of the song and give them time to respond together in prayer.

What You Say:

“Joy to the world! The Lord has come . . .’ We can have joy because Jesus came into the world to be our Savior and Lord. Let’s ask God to give us joy that goes beyond Christmas gifts or fun celebrations—a joy that finds a way to be happy, even when things don’t go our way.” (Pause for kids to pray silently or out loud.)

“The next part of the song says, ‘Let earth receive her King . . .’ Jesus wants to be the King of your life and help you find the joy that comes in following Him. He waits for you to invite or receive Him. Think about whether Jesus is your King.” (Pause)

“The song continues, ‘Let every heart prepare Him room . . .’ God wants us to give Jesus the place He deserves in our heart—FIRST PLACE. Let’s ask God to show us how to give Him more room in our life and to forgive us when we haven’t been following Him the way we should.” (Pause)

“The first verse ends with the words, ‘And heaven and nature sing . . .’ Imagine every part of creation singing praises to God all at one time. That would be an AMAZING sound. Let’s close our prayer time by giving thanks to our great God and remember that nothing is impossible for Him.”

“Dear God, You are the song of Christmas. Help us to not get so caught up in the lights and gifts that we lose sight of what is most important—YOU. You bring ‘joy to the world,’ and we are so glad You came to save us. Amen.”

As parents arrive, If you choose, wrap up by singing “Joy to the World” with your group. Also, don’t forget to hand out this month’s content overview to each parent!