



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Be OK

Be Content/Paul in Prison
Philippians 4:11b-13

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

When is it hardest to be content?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God can help you be content.

MONTHLY 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, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Contentment—Learning to be okay with what you have

HOST SUPPLIES

- List of exercises
- Energetic Small Group Leaders

STORY SUPPLIES

- Large Appliance Box
- Box cutter

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Just for Fun
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- NOVEMBER - SERVE DAY RECAP

- Possible Video
- Stats to come late

- GIVING HIGHLIGHTS

- We give at MISSION to help those in need
- It goes to help local organizations meet the needs of hundreds of families
- You can give TIME, ENERGY, and MONEY
- Talk with your family about how you'd like to SERVE with us this month to make even more of an impact in our community

MONTHLY WORSHIP LINEUP:

- Week 1 – The Best Is Yet To Come & Holy Spirit Come
- Week 2 – Might Get Loud & Way Maker
- Week 3 – Real Love & Holy Spirit Come
- Week 4 – This Is Living & Graves Into Gardens

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN



WEEK
ONE
NOVEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Be OK
Be Content/Paul in Prison
Philippians 4:11b-13

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

When is it hardest to be content?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God can help you be content.

MONTHLY 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, Nlrv

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Contentment—Learning to be okay with what you have

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter

WORSHIP LEADER:

AUDIO: The Best Is Yet To Come

AUDIO: Holy Spirit Come

Host enters . . .

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to Mission. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening (*Clifford the Big Red Dog*), a viral video on YouTube, holiday (National Cook For Your Pets Day, National Sandwich Day, National Doughnut Day, National Nachos Day, National Play Outside Day), etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "Welcome, everybody! It's great to have you here! Now, you could've rolled a number of directions when you left this morning, but all of you managed to roll up to the best place in town, Mission. Thanks for joining us!"



WEEK
ONE
NOVEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES 10 MINUTES

“Before we get started, I need an obvious answer to an obvious question. All of you know we are in month of November! What’s the next holiday coming up on the calendar? *(Pause for response)*”

NOTE: For our international partners, the following works for Christmas as well. Just edit the next line to say “The correct answer is Christmas!”

“To whoever said National Nachos Day, that would be correct but not the holiday I was looking for. The correct answer is Thanksgiving!”

“For a holiday known for lots of good food, what’s the best thing we can do in anticipation of its approach? Sure, investing in stretchy pants is an option, but a better choice is exercising.”

“And that is EXACTLY what we are going to do today in the form of a game called THE COACH!”

SLIDE: GAME TITLE

“To play this game we will have all of our small groups sit in a circle while I give you a specific exercises to perform. Your Small Group Leaders will be yelling words of encouragement to motivate and inspire you toward a perspiring victory! If your group isn’t being properly coached or your group isn’t working hard, which is also a coaching issue, your entire group will be eliminated from our game called THE COACH. By the time we are finished, we will have found THE GREATEST COACH OF ALL TIME! Make sense? Great! Let’s play THE COACH!”

AUDIO: UPBEAT GAME MUSIC

Each round, Host changes the exercise. After 15 seconds into each round, Host stops group and eliminates group(s) for ambiguous reasons. Final round should have 2-4 teams left. The rounds could include exercises such as:

- *Air Cycling (lay on your back and air pedal)*
- *Paper route tosses (stand up, reach across your body, and fully extend arm in the other direction)*
- *The Uphill Climb (stand up with arms extended like holding handlebars and jog in place fast)*
- *Dodge the Limb (stand in a squat with arms extended like holding handlebars and bob back and forth)*
- *Crash & Recover (stand up with arms extended like holding handlebars and feet jogging in place. Fall on ground, bounce back up into the standing position, and repeat this pattern.)*

“Wow! Wow! Wow! I am completely impressed! Every single group worked incredibly hard . . . except that group *(pointing generally in an area)*. Regardless, only one group can possess THE GREATEST COACH OF ALL TIME! Let’s give a huge round of applause for our winners of THE COACH! *(Pause for response)*”



WEEK
ONE
NOVEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters dragging an appliance box as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: "Hey, everybody. You know, when I was little, I loved boxes! With a handful of markers and a bit of imagination, boxes could easily be turned into forts, castles, or really fast race cars. Does anybody in this room know what I'm talking about? *(Pause for response)* Days and days of fun have been found playing inside a box!"

Communicator steps inside box.

"However, in life, you might find yourself in a moment where you FEEL like you are being put inside a box. When that happens, it's doesn't feel so great. Now, I'm not talking about a literal box, but these are the experiences when life isn't going your way and there is no escape. You want to leave. You don't want to remain trapped in the situations, but you can't find a way to get out. Often we don't see these moments approaching like parents getting divorced, moving to a new town, or breaking an arm."

Communicator tells a personal story about a time life did not go his/her way such as the following story that happened during the height of COVID restrictions.

"Each year, I play basketball in the adult city league. For the past three years, my team has placed second in the league. I refer to the placement as the first loser! So let's just say it's been a rough few years. At the start of 2020, things were looking up. The reigning champions didn't enter into the city league and my team started off 3-0. As our team started to hit its stride, COVID entered the picture! As the virus spread, we were ordered to shelter in place. This meant no team practices, no games, and no championship trophies. The entire season was cancelled. The very last place I wanted to be was stuck at home. As the shutdown continued, the more my house felt like it was shrinking. Not an exciting fort or castle. Rather, my house felt cramped and confined. My inability to fix or control the situation made it like feel like I was stuck in a tiny box with no breaking away."

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "Has this ever happened to you? Have you ever felt like you were cramped and confined in a box? I have no doubt you felt this during the pandemic! When you wanted to play with your friends but couldn't you probably felt trapped! When you longed to return to school, as odd as that may sound, you probably felt stuck. When the only thing you wanted was to give your grandmother a hug but couldn't, you might have felt like you were alone."

"In the moments when we are unable to get what we really want, how should we respond? How do you respond? This is not a question I can answer for you, but its' something for you to think about for yourself. With no way of getting what you want, how do you react inside the box? Dissatisfied? Angry? Frustrated? Annoyed? And if these aren't the best responses? What's the better way to respond?"

"How we respond in these difficult situations where we want more or aren't satisfied with what is going on is important. To help us discover a great option, let's check out some words found in the New Testament that Paul wrote to encourage others when they felt trapped in a box. The crazy part of the story is the fact that Paul was trapped in a box, of sorts, when he wrote it."



WEEK
ONE
NOVEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Before we jump into Paul’s letter, let’s catch everybody up. You might be wondering who Paul is and why we’d listen to him anyway. Paul was one of the followers of Jesus. He traveled all over the Roman Empire sharing the story of Jesus and starting churches. BUT long before he did all of that, Paul, who was sometimes called Saul, was an important and influential Pharisee. This meant he knew the Old Testament teachings of the Bible really, really well, and also believed that following Jesus was a threat to the Jewish faith. Paul would stop at nothing to prevent followers of Jesus from gathering or speaking about Jesus. As a result, Paul hated Jesus followers so much he would have them arrested and confined in a small space—kind of like me in this box.”

“While traveling on a road to capture more followers of Jesus, Paul had an encounter with none other than Jesus Himself. And this encounter changed Paul’s life forever. No longer was he taking believers away in shackles. Paul began teaching others about Jesus. Paul’s new belief in Jesus upset both the Jewish leaders and the local Roman leaders who were afraid he would cause trouble. Regardless, Paul refused to allow opposing leaders to box him in and prevent him from sharing Jesus to anyone willing to listen.”

“With a new mission, Paul began to plant brand-new churches. To keep in touch with the new believers at these churches, Paul wrote letters that were hand-delivered all across the region. Because travel was difficult and dangerous, it could take weeks or months for letters to arrive. Plus, writing supplies like ink and papyrus were expensive. So any time Paul wrote a letter, he wasted no words. Everything he wrote mattered for the people who received them.”

“One of those churches was located in a city called Philippi. This church shared a special relationship with Paul. They often found ways to encourage him on his mission. As a result, Paul wrote the Philippians to thank the church and to encourage them in their faith. Something Paul wrote connects to this whole idea of wanting more or something different in our life. Check it out.”

Open the Bible to Philippians 4:11b-13 (NirV) and read.

“I have learned to be content no matter what happens to me. I know what it’s like not to have what I need. I also know what it’s like to have more than I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough. I can do all this by the power of Christ. He gives me strength.”

“Contentment. Have you heard that word before? Cool. Contentment can be defined like this: Learning to be okay with what you have. We might not have contentment right away in every situation, but it’s something we can learn over time. See, Paul wanted the church to know God can help us be ok in any situation, no matter what we face. No doubt these words would have been a welcoming encouragement to any of the original listeners.”

“Some of you may be thinking that it was easy for Paul to say to be content in all situations. After all, Paul was God’s ‘chosen instrument’ to carry His name to both Jews and non-Jews! Surely Paul’s life was easy so he could share Jesus with others, right? Absolutely not! Consider for a moment all that Paul endured AFTER his encounter with Jesus on the old road to Damascus. Paul was whipped, stoned, and shipwrecked three times. He survived bandits, went without food and water, escaped murder plots, and faced angry crowds, earthquakes, and much more. On top of all that, the religious leaders greatly opposed Paul’s new, outspoken beliefs so much he was arrested numerous times!”



WEEK
ONE
NOVEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

"Paul truly understood what it was like to face difficult situations of every kind. When you evaluate the totality of Paul's hardship, it gives instant credibility and inspiration to his words. Paul found contentment after he was bitten by a snake! Contentment was found when his ship ran aground and broke against the rocks! Even when he was staring down an angry mob, Paul was content! In fact, when Paul wrote these words of encouragement to the church in Philippi, he was under house arrest, unable to leave the place he was staying. Paul was in a box."

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "One of the reasons I love reading Paul's letter to the Philippians in the New Testament is because of where Paul wrote the letter. Here's the thing, it's great to encourage contentment and praise God when everything is going well in your life, but it's an entirely different situation to praise God and give God thanks when life is difficult."

"Let's read Paul's words one more time. As I read, remember he was under house arrest awaiting trial when he wrote this letter."

Open the Bible Philippians 4:11b-12 (NirV) and read.

"I have learned to be content no matter what happens to me. I know what it's like not to have what I need. I also know what it's like to have more than I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough."

"Paul endured much in his life, but through it all, he learned how to be content."

"Your situations in life will look very different from Paul's. You might not endure multiple shipwrecks or a venomous snake attack. Nonetheless, it's certain you'll experience hardships. You may struggle to succeed in a certain class at school. A loved one may become sick and need to stay in the hospital. You could be cut from the sports team you love more than any other. Each of those experiences won't be easy."

"It's important to remember that we don't always get to choose what happens to us, but we can choose how we react. The secret to finding contentment in all situations is having a relationship with God. Paul wrote in Philippians 4:13 . . ."

Open the Bible Philippians 4:13 (NirV) and read.

"I can do all this by the power of Christ. He gives me strength."

"When we place our trust in Jesus, we no longer have to rely on ourselves! We can rely on God to give us the strength when we're not feeling content. Even when our lives are a complete disaster zone, Jesus can help us find contentment!"

"God loves you so much! When you find yourself in a box because something didn't go the way you wanted, talk to God about it. Ask Him to help you see your situation in a new way. Ask Him to give you contentment even in situations that seem impossible. Another option is to seek the advice of a Christian older than you who has walked a similar road. God is able to speak through others like your Small Group Leader who has faced hardships in the past and has learned from those experiences."



WEEK
ONE
NOVEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "God doesn't abandon us when we feel boxed in by the difficulties of life. God is still present! When we choose to rely on God, contentment isn't too far away. As you head to your small groups, think about this question:"

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

"When is it hardest to be content?" Is there a certain situation, a specific day, or a person in your life that causes you to feel like you're trapped in discontentment? We are excited you are here to talk this through with your Small Groups. Before we head out, let's pray and thank God for the love and contentment God helps us find."

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP