



PLAY WITH
CONFIDENCE

WEEK
THREE
MAY 2023

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey, everyone! Question for you as we get started: does anyone in here tend to get nervous a lot? Like maybe you become worried or feel anxious about certain things? Yeah, me too! If you feel like that, please know that you’re not alone. Lots of people get anxious when they think about all sorts of different things.

“Think about this for a moment: what are some of the difficult things you’ve faced? Or tense situations you’ve been in? What are the things that make you worried or anxious?”

Take a few answers from the group. Comment on them and affirm their answers.

Then tell about a time personally when you were faced with something difficult. Don’t say how you worked your way out of it or offer any solutions. Just talk about the situation itself.

“Yeah, life isn’t always perfect, that’s for sure. We face some tough things, don’t we?”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “But I’ll tell you this—to make it through tough times or to face something that’s super-difficult, we often need way more than just a motivational speech or a ‘Get Well’ card.

“For certain moments we face, we need more. But from where? How does that even work? When you’re at the end of your rope, where do you get more rope? I know that ‘church’ is often the answer that’s given, and so is ‘ask God for help,’ but how does that work? Will God give you the answers to the math test you’re currently failing? When we’ve given all we can, who will make up the rest?”

“Good questions. And with questions like these, the answers won’t always be found in the ‘Self-Help’ section of a bookstore. That’s why the first place we should check out is the Bible. This book is actually a lot like a library that contains all sorts of wisdom from people who experienced God in their lives and were inspired to write down what they learned. And because of that, we can learn the best way to live for God just by reading and following what they wrote down. The story we’re looking at today deals directly with those kinds of questions—and follows two men in a really difficult situation.”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Is anyone a fan of video games? Not the brand-new ones, built with unreal engines and moving at breakneck speeds. I’m talking the OG video games, the 8-bit masterpieces, the ones that started it all. Ahh, I can hear them just like they were yesterday . . .

AUDIO: “POKEMON (RED, BLUE, YELLOW) [MAIN THEME]” FROM 101 GAME THEMES, VOL 1.0 BY 8-BIT ARCADE

“Hey, here’s an idea! Let’s use that style to enhance the story today! So, for example, if something bad happens to the hero of the story . . .



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AUDIO: "SUPER MARIO BROS. - DEATH" FROM SUPER MARIO GAMES - GREATEST THEMES & SOUNDS BY 8-BIT ARCADE

"Perfect! Let's get started!

AUDIO: "THE LEGEND OF ZELDA (MAIN THEME)" FROM 101 GAME THEMES, VOL 1.0 BY 8-BIT ARCADE

"We're picking up God's Big Story today as we continue to see what happened with the believers after Jesus returned to heaven.

"But at the start of Jesus' ministry, He called 12 men to follow Him. They were actually pretty ordinary people—a tax collector, some fisherman, just average-Joes doing everyday sorts of things. But then Jesus found them and changed their lives forever.

If you're using a timeline of story images on the wall, reference it here.

"At this point in the life of the disciples, Jesus was no longer there with them in person. Jesus had recently gone back to His Father in heaven. But, Jesus promised that God would send the Holy Spirit to His people to help them. Sure enough, at the feast of Pentecost, God's Spirit filled the believers, and they were able to speak in languages they had never known before. Thousands of people who were in Jerusalem at the time heard what Peter had to say about Jesus, and thousands of them put their faith in Jesus right then and there!

"Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the early church grew and grew every day. More and more people began to believe that Jesus really is the Son of God . . . and the Savior of the world.

"And now Peter and John were continuing to preach and show Jesus' love to others.

Fade out the music if it hasn't ended already.

"As Peter and John approached the Temple gate, they encountered a man sitting just outside. The man hadn't been able to walk his entire life. Every day, someone would carry him to this spot by the gate and there he would beg for coins.

AUDIO: 8-BIT COIN SFX

Open the Bible to Acts 3:3-5 (NirV) and read.

"He saw that Peter and John were about to enter. So, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, and so did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So, the man watched them closely. He expected to get something from them.'

"The man probably expected money. But that's not what they were offering—Peter and John had a much better gift.

Open the Bible to Acts 3:6-8a (NirV) and read.

"Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold. But I'll give you what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk." Then Peter took him by the right hand and helped him up. At once the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk.'



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AUDIO: "SUPER MARIO BROS. – LEVEL COMPLETE" FROM SUPER MARIO GAMES – GREATEST THEMES & SOUNDS BY 8-BIT ARCADE

Open the Bible to Acts 3:8b-10 (NirV) and read.

"He went with Peter and John into the temple courtyards. He walked and jumped and praised God. All the people saw him walking and praising God. They recognized him as the same man who used to sit and beg at the temple gate called Beautiful. They were filled with wonder. They were amazed at what had happened to him."

"I want you understand what a big deal this was—especially for someone other than Jesus to heal someone. Other people noticed, too, and began to gather around this man. They knew him, because they'd seen him every day at the gate, begging. And now he was up and walking around! Maybe he even got up and danced for joy!

AUDIO: "DONKEY KONG COUNTRY (MAIN THEME)" FROM 101 GAME THEMES, VOL 1.0 BY 8-BIT ARCADE

The Host enters along with a few willing Small Group Leaders, and they start dancing comically to the music.

AUDIO: AFTER ABOUT 30 SECONDS, FADE OUT THE MUSIC.

Small Group Leaders exit.

"Yeah, something like that. This guy must have been SO EXCITED! The crowd started to grow. And grow. And people had questions. Peter saw that it was the perfect opportunity to tell everyone, everywhere, about Jesus—His life, death, and resurrection!

Open the Bible to Acts 3:12-13a, 16 (NirV) and read.

"Peter said, "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us? It's not as if we've made this man walk by our own power or godliness. The God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has done this . . . This man whom you see and know was made strong because of faith in Jesus' name. Faith in Jesus has healed him completely. You can see it with your own eyes."

"Peter went on and taught the crowd all about Jesus. They were so moved and wanted to know they could follow Jesus, too. The crowd grew, and Peter spoke more, telling them that God's promise had come true through Jesus. He told people to turn away from their sins and turn to God—and their sins would be wiped away. One by one, group by group, family by family, people were saved. Soon there were about 5,000 people gathered. And wouldn't you know it . . .

AUDIO: "DOOM (MAIN THEME)" FROM 101 GAME THEMES, VOL 1.0 BY 8-BIT ARCADE

". . . there were religious people there, too—religious leaders who were not happy at all about what Peter and John were doing. The leaders decided to do something about it.

AUDIO: FADE THE MUSIC IF IT HASN'T ALREADY ENDED.



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Open the Bible to Acts 4:1b-3 (NirV) and read.

“The priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees came up to the apostles. They were very upset by what the apostles were teaching the people. The apostles were saying that people can be raised from the dead. They said this can happen because Jesus rose from the dead. So the temple authorities arrested Peter and John. It was already evening, so they put them in prison until the next day.”

AUDIO: “GAME OVER (SUPER PAC MAN)” FROM JOIN THE PAC – PAC-MAN 40TH ANNIVERSARY BY VARIOUS ARTISTS

Open the Bible to Acts 4:5-7b (NirV) and read.

“The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas, the high priest, was there. So were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and other people in the high priest’s family. They had Peter and John brought to them. They wanted to question them.”

“They weren’t happy at all with what Peter and John were doing. They started asking them all sorts of questions, like: ‘Who do you think you are? What do you think you’re doing? How did you do this?’ It didn’t help that Peter and John spent the whole night in a dirty disgusting jail, either.

“But the night in jail, the tired eyes and dirty clothes, or the religious leaders grilling them—none of that made Peter or John back down. In fact, they spoke boldly to the leaders. And Peter didn’t speak boldly because of anything he was doing on his own, no. Luke tells us in Acts that Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. And I kind of imagine Peter, smiling, saying this to those leaders with this music in the background.

AUDIO: “SUPER MARIO BROTHERS (MAIN THEME)” FROM 101 GAME THEMES, VOL 1.0 BY 8-BIT ARCADE

Open the Bible to Acts 4:8-12 (NirV, emphasis added) and read.

“Peter said, “Rulers! Elders of the people! Are you asking us to explain our actions today? Do you want to know why we were kind to a man who couldn’t walk? Are you asking how he was healed? Then listen to this, you and all the people of Israel! You nailed Jesus Christ of Nazareth to the cross. But God raised him from the dead. It is through Jesus’ name that this man stands healed in front of you. Scripture says that Jesus is ‘the stone you builders did not accept. But it has become the most important stone of all.’ You can’t be saved by believing in anyone else. God has given people no other name under heaven that will save them.”

AUDIO: FADE THE MUSIC IF IT HASN’T ENDED ALREADY.

“Well, the religious leaders, Annas, the priests, they were all shocked at Peter’s confidence and the sheer boldness of these two men, no, these two fishermen, who were lecturing them in their own place. They didn’t know what to do with them, so they had them promptly thrown out in order to gather their thoughts.

AUDIO: “FAIL (PAC-MAN)” FROM JOIN THE PAC – PAC-MAN 40TH ANNIVERSARY BY VARIOUS ARTISTS

Open the Bible to Acts 4:13-17 (NirV) and read.



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“The leaders saw how bold Peter and John were. They also realized that Peter and John were ordinary men with no training. This surprised the leaders. They realized that these men had been with Jesus. The leaders could see the man who had been healed. He was standing there with them. So there was nothing they could say. They ordered Peter and John to leave the Sanhedrin. Then they talked things over. “What can we do with these men?” they asked. “Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed an unusual miracle. We can’t say it didn’t happen. We have to stop this thing. It must not spread any further among the people. We have to warn these men. They must never speak to anyone in Jesus’ name again.”

“So after all of the questions and dragging them in front of the leaders like getting in trouble in the principal’s office, their solution was to let Peter and John off with a warning. A stern talking-to. They called them back in and commanded them to not speak or teach at all in Jesus’ name.

“Peter still wasn’t having it.

AUDIO: “SUPER MARIO BROTHERS (MAIN THEME)” FROM 101 GAME THEMES, VOL 1.0 BY 8-BIT ARCADE

Open the Bible to Acts 4:19-20 (NIRV) and read.

“Peter responded, maybe a bit louder this time, and John spoke up, too. They said, ‘Which is right from God’s point of view? Should we listen to you? Or should we listen to God? You be the judges! There’s nothing else we can do. We have to speak about the things we’ve seen and heard.’

“In other words, Peter and John were saying, ‘We literally saw these things with our own eyes. We’ve seen Jesus, heard His teachings, and seen His miracles. We can’t just lie about it and say it didn’t happen.’

Fade the music if it hasn’t ended already.

“The leaders stood there, trying to figure out what to say—but all they could do was tell Peter and John not to do it again and send them off. They knew that all of the people were praising God for what had happened, but they were powerless to stop it.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: *“Just like last week’s story, it wasn’t Peter on his own who was talking to the people. It wasn’t just Peter talking to the religious leaders, defending why he healed a man in Jesus’ name. It was Peter with the Holy Spirit inside of him, helping him, giving him the words.*

SLIDE: GOD’S BIG STORY TIMELINE

SLIDE: WEEK 3 TIMELINE IMAGE

If you’re making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today’s timeline image on the clothesline.

“Friends, when you choose to follow Jesus, God promises to be with you. Always. Since God’s Holy Spirit lives inside of you, you’ve got a personalized guide, a helper, a comforter to make sure you get through any tough situation you face. Think about it—Peter and John were jailed and hauled in front of powerful leaders. None of us have experienced that, I hope, but since the Holy Spirit helped them in that situation, think how much the Holy Spirit can help you in yours!



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“God’s Spirit is always present and at work in your life. Always. Just knowing that can give you tons of confidence—the same type of confidence that Peter and John had. Having a hard go of it? Stuck in a situation where you can’t see a way out? Talk to God. Ask God for help from the Holy Spirit.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “As you make your way to your Small Groups, think about this question:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

“When have you felt under pressure? Trapped, cornered, helpless, or hopeless? If you know you’re doing something right or you know you have to stand up for what’s right, that’s when you can trust God to help you, whatever you face! Let’s pray and ask God to help us out in those times.”

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 THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP