



WEEK  
**TWO**  
JULY 2023

SMALL GROUP  
**K-5**  
STARTER

**PRELUDE      SOCIAL      STORY      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME**

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO MOVE

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



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Praise God for giving us joy through hard circumstances. Ask God to guide you as you help your few understand that even through dark and trying times, they can have joy. Pray that these concepts would begin to take root as your kids' faith grows and that today's conversations would serve as a jump-off point for future growth.

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Joyful Noise**  
Paul and Silas Are  
Thrown into Prison  
Acts 16:16-40

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

**God can help you find joy.**

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift."**  
Ephesians 2:8, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I can trust God no matter what.**

### 1. EARLY ARRIVER

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Offering container; *Optional: small prize*

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Greet kids by name as they arrive.
- Invite kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Remind the kids of the "secret handshake" you came up with last week.
- Teach the handshake to any new kids.
- Encourage the kids to add a step to the handshake this week!
- After they've gotten the handshake down, play a game called "Last One Standing." (The last kid standing gets a round of applause, a small prize, etc.)
- Instruct the kids to stand up.
- Explain that you'll share some things the kids might have done.
- If you say something a kid has not done, instruct them to sit.
- If you say something a kid has done, instruct them to stay standing.
- One at a time, say the following, giving the kids a chance to respond by standing or sitting.
  - Been to Small Group this morning!
  - Been somewhere today that sells coffee.
  - Been somewhere this week that sells pineapples.
  - Been somewhere this week that sells refrigerators.
  - Been somewhere this week that sells golf clubs.
  - Seen a live bird or animal in the last 24 hours.
  - Seen a dog in the last week.
  - Seen a parrot in the last month.
  - Been somewhere with a parking lot in the last 24 hours.
  - Been somewhere with a slide in the last week.
  - Been somewhere with a water slide in the last month.
  - Been somewhere with a roller coaster in the last year.
  - Been somewhere with a space shuttle, ever.
  - Seen a live shark in the last year.
  - Give a prize (or a round of applause) to the winner.

*There's no actual point to this game. It's just to get to know your few a little better! You might be losing or gaining some in the next month or so, and it helps to have silly things to talk about before the big stuff starts.*



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

## MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving



## 2. SCRATCH THAT!

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Scratch drawing pages and styluses or unsharpened pencils

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Give each kid a drawing page and a stylus or pencil.
- Encourage kids to think about how they could make a picture that reminds them of joy.
- Direct the kids to carefully scratch their design into the page, removing the black covering and showing the color underneath.
- Let kids work as long as time allows.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"This reminds me of our Bible story today. Even when things looked pretty dark on the outside, Paul and Silas had joy on the inside. They knew that **God can help you find joy**, even when your situation seems shadowy.

"We all have times of sadness and loss, times of being scared or angry. Have you ever gone through something that made you feel really joy-less? *(Invite kids to share if they would like. Be sensitive to kids facing serious challenges. If you don't know what to say, a simple, "That sounds tough. Thanks for telling us," is best. For real issues where kids are hurting emotionally or have been in danger, please follow up with your Family Ministry Leader, pastor, or church counselors.)*

"Sometimes, joy seems impossible if we just focus on what's around us. But when we have faith that God is with us on the inside, we can have joy because God never leaves us and will help us find joy that can face anything."

**[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate situation that caused you to feel sad or hopeless. Maybe it was a childhood move, the loss of a grandparent or pet, a family break-up, or financial challenges. What gave you joy at that time? Were you aware of God's presence then or did you come to follow Jesus later? Was there a verse, song, or advice from an older adult that helped you find joy during that time?)**

*Optional Discussion Questions for Older Kids*

If you lead 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- Does having joy mean feeling happy? What could be the difference?
- How are joy and faith related in today's Bible story?

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## MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see**

## BASIC TRUTH

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**2-3**

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



### 3. CHAINED UP

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Verse Puzzle" Activity Page and bandanas

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Guide the kids to pair-up.
- Use a bandana to tie one kid's left hand to the other kid's right hand.
- Direct the kids to place their free hands behind their backs.
- Set a "Verse Puzzle" Activity Page in front of each pair.
- When you say, "Ready, Set, Move," instruct the teams to assemble the puzzle using their tied hands only.
- Allow the kids to struggle for a little while, then give them permission to use their free hands, too.
- The first team to assemble the puzzle, wins.

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**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"What made the game easier? Why? (*Invite responses.*) It wasn't easy assembling the verse with your hands tied up. I saw your frustration and decided to be kind and allow you to use your free hands.

"That's kind of like grace! Grace is getting something we haven't earned and might not deserve. Paul, the author of this verse, was reminding people who follow Jesus that we are saved by grace. That means that we aren't brought into forgiveness with God because we earned it or we deserve it. No, we have forgiveness and a good relationship with God because of God's gift of Jesus. Jesus gave His life for us, willingly, because He loves us. We didn't do anything to deserve that, and we can't mess up so badly that we lose it. We have this gift of freedom through Jesus simply because God loves us.

"When you remember this amazing truth, you can trust that **God can help you find joy**, and will be with you to help you face difficult situations."



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**2-3**

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal processing and application



### 4. PRAY AND DISMISS [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** No supplies needed

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Invite the kids to circle up.
- Instruct the kids to brainstorm and call out ways God can help them find joy.
  - Some suggestions include spending time with friends and family; engaging in an activity that makes them happy like drawing, reading, baking, creating; praying; journaling; listening to worship music; etc.
- Invite the kids to silently reflect on a situation they're facing that seems difficult.
- Guide kids to silently ask God to help them find joy in the middle of their difficult situation.
- Close your group time in prayer.

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

#### Joyful Noise

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Acts 16:16-40

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"God, thank You for reminding us—through the story of Paul and Silas—that we can have joy. Thank You for hearing our prayers. Even when life is difficult, You are always with us, helping us find joy while we go through hard times. Help us remember that no matter what we're going through, **God can help you find joy.** We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share their laughs from their "Laughter Cards" and explain how **God can help you find joy** in difficult situations.

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