



SMALL GROUP: MONDAY

BIBLE STORY: Matthew's Party (Luke 5:27-32)

MEMORY VERSE: You will fill me with joy when I am with you. Acts: 2:28

KEY QUESTION: Who can celebrate Jesus?

BOTTOM LINE: I can celebrate Jesus!

PLAY TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

MEMORY VERSE MOTIONS

WHAT YOU NEED:

Memory Verse Sticker

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Say the memory verse and teach the motions to the children.

During the Activity: Say the verse again with the motions and invite the children to do it with you. Repeat several times. Give each child a sticker after saying the memory verse.

After the Activity: Review the Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Today we are going to learn a memory verse from the Bible and the motions that go with it. I will say the memory verse and do motions that will help us remember our memory verse. Everyone listen and watch me. 'You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top), ' Acts 2:28.'" (Open hands like a book.)

During the Activity:

"Now let's try it together. Are you ready? You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top), ' Acts 2:28. (Open hands like a book.) One more time! You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top), ' Acts 2:28. (Open hands like a book.) Great job, friends. I have a special sticker for you."

After the Activity:



“Our memory verse teaches us that Jesus fills us with joy when we are with Him. We can celebrate Jesus because Jesus wants to be our friend forever! **Who can celebrate Jesus? I can celebrate Jesus!** One more time. **Who can celebrate Jesus? I can celebrate Jesus!**”

JOURNAL AND PRAYER

WHAT YOU NEED:

Memory Verse Card, Bible, journal, and a fun-shaped pen

WHAT YOU DO:

Place the Memory Verse Card in your Bible at Acts 2:28.

During the Activity: Lead the children to use different motions as they walk to the Small Group spot. Talk about today’s Bible story, say the memory verse, and write in the journal.

After the Activity: Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: “It’s small group time! Everyone, stand up and follow me! Make sure you watch me closely and do what I do. Here we go! (Do different actions, like jazz hands, hop on one foot, or zigzag as you lead the children to your Small Group spot. Encourage the children to do what you do as they follow you.) You did a great job following me! Let’s sit down and talk about today’s Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!”

During the Activity: (Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.) “In our Bible story today, Jesus told Matthew to follow Him. Matthew was so excited that Jesus wanted to be his friend that he got up and followed Jesus! Then Matthew threw a party to celebrate Jesus at his house. Matthew invited lots of people so they could meet Jesus and celebrate Jesus too.

“Matthew celebrated Jesus, and so can we! So when I ask you, ‘Who can celebrate Jesus?’ I want you to say, ‘I can celebrate Jesus!’ Let me hear you say it! Who can celebrate Jesus? I can celebrate Jesus! Again! Who can celebrate Jesus? I can celebrate Jesus! Yay, Jesus!

“Okay, now we are going to start learning a new Bible verse. It will help us



remember one of the reasons we celebrate Jesus. Are you ready to hear it? The Bible verse we are going to learn says this. (Turn the pages of your Bible to the Memory Verse Card.) 'You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top),' Acts 2:28. (Open hands like a book.)

(Close Bible and lay it down.) "When Matthew followed Jesus, Jesus gave him joy. And when we follow Jesus, Jesus will give us joy, too! Let's stand up and say those words together with the motions. Just say what I say and do what I do. "You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top).' Acts 2:28. (Open hands like a book.)

(Repeat the verse with motions a few times.)

"Hearing you say that verse makes me want to celebrate Jesus! (Clap and cheer.) Yay, Jesus! Woo-hoo! Yay, Jesus! Now let's sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. (Hold journal and fun-shaped pen.) We are going to make a list of people and things we celebrate with a party, like Christmas, a person on their birthday, first day of school, end of soccer season—it can be anything or anyone you celebrate with a party. Listen for your name and be ready to tell me one person or thing you celebrate. (Remember to print so the children can recognize their names and the letters.)

"Wow! Look at all the things we celebrate! Now I'm going to add one more person to our list: JESUS! (Write "JESUS" in the journal.) We celebrate Jesus because Jesus is God's Son, AND Jesus wants to be our friend forever. Thanks for making this list with me. We can use it when we pray."

After the Activity:

"Would anyone like to pray before I pray? (Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.) Dear God, we have so many wonderful things to celebrate. We celebrate (read the list the children made). Help us remember to celebrate Jesus, too. Jesus is special because Jesus is Your Son, AND Jesus wants to be our friend forever. THAT is good news worth celebrating! We love You, God! In Jesus' name, amen."