



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Walking on Sunshine
Paul and Silas
Acts 16:16-40

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God can help you choose joy.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

Be strong, all you who put your hope in the LORD. Never give up.
Psalm 31:24, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Resilience—Getting back up when something gets you down

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

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.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSzi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Check out our Small Group Leader Conversation Guides to guide you through salvation conversations: <https://bit.ly/4daxSUG>

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener
Worship
Bible Story
Bottom Line
What's Our Part in the Story?
Prayer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Bible Story Review: They Chose Joy
Application Activity: Get Back Up
Memory Verse Activity: God Can Help
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App



PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to sit in a circle.
- Challenge the kids not to laugh as they play the following game.
- Instruct one kid in the circle to say, "ha."
- Direct the kid to their right in the circle to say, "hee."
- Instruct the next kid in the circle to say, "ho."
- Continue this pattern around the circle twice.
- When kids recite "ha," "hee", and "ho" smoothly, add a challenge by guiding them to say each sound twice, like this:
 - The first kid says "ha, ha," the kid to their right says "hee, hee," and the next kid says "ho, ho."
- Play additional rounds and add more challenge and fun by increasing the number of times kids say the sounds.
- As you play additional rounds, encourage the kids to "pass" the words faster or in different voices: high, low, mouse, robot, etc.
- Play as long as time and interest allow.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"That was SO FUN! Watching you play filled me with JOY. *[Transition]* In today's Bible Story, we'll hear about two men who found a way to choose joy even in a tough situation. Let's go learn more!"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO IMAGINE

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



1. THEY CHOSE JOY

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible marked at Acts 16, and a variety of stuffed animals

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather kids together in your group space.
- Open the marked Bible to Acts 16.
- Share the following points to recap the Bible Story:
 - One day, as Paul and his friends walked to where they prayed, a woman began to follow them, shouting: *“These men serve the Most High God. They are telling you how to be saved”* (Acts 16:17, NIV).
 - After several days, Paul said, *“In the name of Jesus . . . I command you to come out of her”* (Acts 16:18, NIV). Right away the bad spirit left her.
 - But the men using her to make money were angry and took Paul and Silas to the judges. The judges ordered that Paul and Silas should be beaten and thrown into prison.
 - Paul and Silas were locked in a prison cell and chained by their feet!
 - Even though Paul and Silas had every reason to be angry and lose hope, they chose to think about Jesus.
 - They prayed and sang to God, and the other prisoners listened.
 - Suddenly there was a powerful earthquake, the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains fell off!
 - When the jailer woke up and saw that the doors were open, he thought the prisoners had escaped.
 - But Paul said, *“Don’t harm yourself! . . . We are all here!”* (Acts 16:28, NIV). The jailer was amazed and said, *“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”* (Acts 16:30, NIV).
 - Paul and Silas shared the good news about Jesus with the jailer and his whole family! And the jailer and his whole family came to be followers of Jesus!
- Help kids get into groups of three or four.
- Give each group four to six stuffed animals.
- Encourage kids to use the stuffed animals to reenact the story.
 - If the kids are stumped, prompt them with the idea that one stuffed animal can be Paul, one Silas, one Lydia, and one the jailer.
 - If it’s better for your group, narrate the action while the kids dramatize it.
- Invite each group to use different areas of the environment for “the river,” “the marketplace,” and the “jail,” moving from place to place as they reenact the story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Paul and Silas were SO FULL of joy that they prayed and sang to God—even though they were chained and in jail! And because of what Paul and Silas did, the jailer and his whole family believed in Jesus!

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WEEK
FOUR
JANUARY 2025

SMALL GROUP
K-1

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(1. THEY CHOSE JOY, CONTINUED)

“God helped Paul and Silas choose joy, and **God can help you choose joy** too. So what is joy? Joy is choosing to look to God and trust God no matter what.

[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate example of a time God helped you choose joy— maybe someone you love was sick, or you lost something really important to you.)

“God can help you choose joy when your family can’t go on that trip you wanted to go on, when things are hard at school, or when someone you love is sick.

“God won’t always take away your difficult things, but God can ALWAYS help you choose joy! So when life gets hard, think about God. God promises to make everything right in the end for those who follow Jesus. Stay focused on Jesus and how much He loves you! **God can help you choose joy.**”



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

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



3. GOD CAN HELP

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles marked at Psalm 31, and "Psalm 31:24 Signs" Activity Pages

WHAT YOU DO:

- Encourage kids to sit in a circle.
- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up this month's Memory Verse, Psalm 31:24 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

***Finding verses with kindergartners:** Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word Psalm at the top of the page as you say "Psalm" aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 31 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 31 for the little 24; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.*

***Finding verses with 1st graders:** Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Psalms in the list under "Old Testament." You can help by telling them that Psalms starts with the letters P-S. When the kids find Psalms, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Psalms. Help the kids find the page. When they find Psalms, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 31. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 24 in chapter 31.*

- Collect the Bibles.
- Demonstrate the motions for the Memory Verse using the "Psalm 31:24 Signs" Activity Pages as a guide.
- Lead kids to say and sign the verse with you.
- Explain that you will play "pass" the verse.
- Guide one kid to begin the verse by saying the first phrase and making the first motion.
- Then, prompt the next kid in the circle to say the next phrase of the Memory Verse and do the corresponding motion.
- Continue around the circle, repeating the verse several times.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Friends, it's not always going to be easy to choose joy. Some things will make us angry, but even when it's hard to choose joy, it's so worth it! It's all about choosing to look to God and trust God no matter what. God has promised to be with us all of the time, and also to make everything right in the end for those who follow Jesus, and that's good news! So remember, **God can help you choose joy!**"

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FOUR
JANUARY 2025

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K-1

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



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

WHAT YOU NEED: Device for playing music, and a familiar worship song

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to gather together in a circle.
- Remind kids that it's okay to be sad, or mad, or scared, or even confused. We all have those feelings sometimes.
- Explain to kids that God doesn't want us to be stuck in those emotions. We can talk to God about how we feel and God can help us choose joy.
- Play the pre-selected worship song.
- Invite kids to sing along to the pre-selected worship song.
- Let kids know that when we listen to worship music, it helps us look to God and trust God—just like Paul and Silas trusted God to give them joy.
- Close the group time in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Dear God, thank You that You are always with us and for promising to make everything right in the end when we follow Jesus! Our troubles might not go away right now, but I'm so grateful You still help us choose joy. Please help us to turn to You when something hard happens. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show off their egg from the Get Back Up Activity and share this week's Bottom Line: **God can help you choose joy.**

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