

The ALLEY (March 5th & 6th)

Savior's Playbook

Bible Story: The Savior's Playbook (Jesus encourages the disciples) • *John 14–16 (Supporting: John 12–13)*

Bottom Line: Whatever happens, remember what Jesus promised.

Memory Verse: “In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world.” *John 16:33b, NIV*

Life App: Hope—believing that something good can come out of something bad.

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

SFX: *Play high-energy music as kids enter.*

Opener

HOST: “Hey guys! It’s great to see you. This month, we’re lighting this place up because we’re talking about HOPE!”

“I know that ALL of us in this room have gone through some dark times. That’s why it’s so great to know that we can ALWAYS have hope in God.

CG: *Hope Slide*

“Hope means believing that something good can come out of something bad. It’s remembering that God is always with you ... that He has a bigger story than what you can see ... that **you can trust Him no matter what!**

“We’re going to talk about that in today’s story. Sometimes you KNOW there’s trouble on the way, and sometimes you don’t even see it coming. But even when there’s trouble, there’s always hope!

“Now, to really bring this idea home for you guys, I think we should play a little game today. Easter IS coming. And Easter is all about hope! The very BEST thing about Easter is the fact that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and then rose from the dead three days later so we can have new life too. But what’s ANOTHER reason that Easter is awesome? Any ideas? *(Pause for responses.)* Easter candy! I LOVE Easter candy!

“And that’s why I love this game. Let’s get into our small groups so we can play this fun and exciting game!

“Over here, I have my buckets of delicious Easter candy—the GOOD stuff. *(Hold up a few of the items so the kids can see them.)* Over here, I have my buckets full of plastic eggs. *(Hold up one of the eggs to show that it’s empty.)* And over here, I have my super-fun Easter basket. *(Hold up the Easter basket)* [SGL’s name], you will have one minute to put as much delicious Easter candy as possible inside the eggs, and then drop the eggs over here in my basket ... so I can eat them.

Small Group teams will fill the eggs with candy and run them up to the Easter basket on the stage. The team who can get the most eggs in the basket wins!

"Oh, and I almost forgot ... you might run into some trouble along the way. Remember, sometimes you can see trouble coming, and sometimes you can't. And this game is going to be a little bit like that. But don't worry! It's going to be okay. The eggs are glow-in-the-dark, so when we turn out the lights ...

LIGHTS: Dim (stage still visible)

"... you'll still have something to light the way.

(To audience) "All right, everybody, cheer on their team mates so they can push through the trouble and load me up with Easter deliciousness. And ... GO!

SFX: Fun music

SFX: Buzzer (after 60 seconds)

The contestants start to fill up the eggs to put them into Host's basket. After a few seconds, Host sprays students with water guns. Then, about 15 seconds later, the team member bringing up the eggs must put a blindfold on. Then, about 15 seconds later, the host blocks the path of the students with chairs or other obstacles.

LIGHTS: Back up

"Great job, everyone! Since everyone faced their troubles like a champ, you each get a candy egg! See good things do come from sketchy situations!

"I'm telling you, you've got to have HOPE to push on through. And now I need you guys to stand up, because it's time to sing LOUD to our God who loves us!"

Worship

1. Happy Day
2. Christ Arose
3. Forever

SETTING UP THE STORY

There is a table set on the stage with chairs, plates, cups, utensils, Hawaiian rolls, place cards, and cue cards for each of the disciples & Jesus. Make sure Jesus' place card is at the head of the table.

"For many months, the Jewish leaders had been troubled by Jesus. He performed miracles and taught large crowds, saying things that challenged the way they thought and lived. He said things like, 'Love

your enemies. Do good to those who hate you.’ (Luke 6:27 *NlrV*) Jesus even raised His friend Lazarus from the dead, which made even more people take notice and started to follow Him. That’s when the religious leaders got serious about their plans. They knew Jesus would soon be coming to Jerusalem, so they plotted to arrest Jesus and have Him killed.

“Jesus already knew these leaders were planning to kill Him. But He also knew God could use even this scary moment for good. As He entered the city on a donkey, huge crowds waved palm branches to welcome Him, shouting ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the king of Israel!’ (John 12:13 *NlrV*) Once inside the city, Jesus explained to the crowd what was about to happen. (*Read from John 12:25, 32*) ‘Anyone who loves their life will lose it. But anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it and have eternal life. ... I am going to be lifted up from the earth. When I am, I will bring all people to myself.’”

PASSOVER

HOST: “The disciples were very confused by what Jesus meant. But that evening, Jesus and the disciples gathered to eat the Passover meal together. Remember when Moses led his people out of Egypt and protected the first born sons of the Israelites by instructing them to cover their doorways with the blood of a lamb, well that was why Jesus and his disciples were celebrating and having dinner! Jesus knew things were about to get bad—really bad.

Host should play the role of Jesus. When speaking as Jesus, sit down at the table with the disciples.

Choose 12 kids to come up and play the role of the disciples. (Choose [3] kids who can read well for the speaking parts of Peter, Thomas, and John)

Encourage the students to partake in the Passover “meal.”

“That night during their Passover meal, Jesus said, ‘One of you is going to hand me over to my enemies.’ (John 13:21, *NlrV*) You see, Jesus knew the rest of His friends would run away. He even told Peter: ‘Where I am going you can’t follow now. But you will follow me later.’” (John 13:36, *NlrV*) And Peter said...

(On CUE CARD for student to read) PETER: “Lord ... why can’t I follow you now? I will give my life for you.” (John 13:37, *NlrV*)

HOST: “Jesus told Peter, ‘Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you don’t know me!’ (John 13:38, *NlrV*)

“And it was true. Before another day passed, Jesus would be betrayed ... arrested ... left alone. He would be killed. He knew His friends would be devastated. But even in the midst of this terrible darkness, Jesus wanted to give them hope.”

JESUS SPEAKS

HOST: “‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. ... There are many rooms in my Father’s house,’ (John 14:1-2, *NlrV*) Jesus encouraged them. ‘That’s where I’m going. And while I’m there, I’ll get a place

ready for you. Then I'll come back. And I'll take you to be with me there. You know the way to the place where I am going,' He said." (*John 14:4, NlrV*) And then Tomas spoke....

(On CUE CARD for student to read) THOMAS: (*Moving to Thomas' seat*) "'Lord, we don't know where you are going. So how can we know the way?'" (*John 14:5, NlrV*)

HOST: "Jesus told the disciples, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' (*John 14:6, NlrV*) The disciples tried to keep up with what Jesus was saying, but they were still very confused." So John said...

(On CUE CARD for student to read) JOHN: (*Moving to John's seat*) (*Rubbing his forehead*) "Seriously, this is making my head hurt. It sounds like Jesus is telling us He's going to leave us?"

HOST: "That's exactly what Jesus was telling them. But it was also so much more than that. Jesus continued encouraging His disciples. Jesus said, 'If you love me, obey my commands ... I will ask the Father. And he will give you another friend to help you and to be with you forever. That friend is the Holy Spirit. He lives with you, and he will be in you.'" (*John 14:15-17, NlrV*) And John spoke again...

(On CUE CARD for student to read) JOHN: "So ... God's Spirit will be with us?"

HOST: And Peter then said...

(On CUE CARD for student to read) PETER: "That's what it sounds like He's saying. Pretty cool!"

HOST: "Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Sprit would teach them everything and remind them of all of the incredible things that He had said to them."

AFTER THE PASSOVER

HOST: "As Jesus continued to encourage His friends, they all left the upper room where they had shared the Passover meal and started toward the Garden of Gethsemane.

"Jesus continued to speak words of encouragement to His disciples. "'In a little while, you will no longer see me. Then after a little while, you will see me. ...Now it's your time to be sad. But I will see you again. In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world.'" (*John 16:16, 22, 25, 33*)

The disciples didn't like the idea of having troubles, but they knew they didn't have to worry, because Jesus had already beat it! They had HOPE because of all the things Jesus had done and said to encourage them."

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Sadly, things got pretty dark after that. A few short hours later, Jesus was arrested. And in the middle of the darkness, Jesus' friends forgot to hold onto the hope He gave them.

"They forgot Jesus had promised to be with them again. But three days later, they would see everything He said begin to come true.

"The disciples forgot something that you and I must do if we want to have hope in the midst of hard times. And that is: ...

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] "Whatever happens, remember what Jesus promised. Just like Jesus promised He would send His Holy Spirit to help His disciples, and just as He promised that they would never be alone, and just as He promised that He was preparing a place for them in heaven, He has promised the same things to you and me. So, **[Bottom Line]** whatever happens, remember what Jesus promised.

"Let's say that together nice and loud: **WHATEVER HAPPENS, REMEMBER WHAT JESUS PROMISED!**

"That was great!

"There are going to be times in your life when you're going to be a bit overwhelmed. Things are going to happen that you won't see coming. It could be an accident of some kind. It could be someone that you love getting sick. It could be a really hard time at school. It could be ... I don't know what it could be, because I don't see it coming either.

But remember, any storm you face, any problem you have, any kind of trouble you're in, Jesus saw it coming. He knew it was going to happen even when you didn't. And what's even better is what Jesus said next.

CG: Memory Verse Slide

"He said, 'In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world,' John 16:33b. (NIRV)

HOST: "Storms don't last forever. And you don't have to deal with them alone. That's why we have some amazing Small Group Leaders who hang out with you every single week. They are there to help! So let's pray so we can have fun and be encouraged in our small groups!

Pray

HOST: "Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior. But also thank You for sending Him to earth to be our hope. When we're going through hard times, help us to remember that You have promised to always be with us. We know that we can **[Basic Truth]** trust **You no matter what**, and that is how we can know that something good can come out of something bad. Thank You for loving us. We love You. And we ask these things in Jesus' name, amen."

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.