

# ALLEY SG – September 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup>

**Bible Story:** Unhappy Days (Joseph in Jail) • *Genesis 40* (Supporting: *Genesis 39*)

**Bottom Line:** When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.

**Memory Verse:** "Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding." *Proverbs 3:5, NIV*

**Life App:** Trust—putting your confidence in someone you can depend on.

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

*Before kids arrive, pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray for the conversations your group will have today. Ask God to give you wisdom and guidance to respond to any difficult circumstances that may come to light as a result of today's content. Pray also for the kids whose families are doing well. Pray that they would internalize today's message and be able to recall it during times when life doesn't make sense.*

## The Jail Journal

**What You Need:** "Jail Journal" Activity Pages; 6-8 per small group, pencils, pens, markers, Bibles

### **What You Do:**

- Tell kids to pretend they are in jail with Joseph, and they are on the staff of the jail newspaper, *The Jail Journal*. They will write articles and draw pictures.
- Remind kids that all good stories include "Who, What, When, Where, and Why."
- Divide kids into four groups, and assign each group one story:
  - How/why Joseph ended up in jail
  - The cupbearer's (drink taster's) story/dream
  - The baker's story/dream
  - Joseph helps cupbearer and baker, but he's still in jail
- Depending on the number of kids in each group, you could also suggest they assign each person a role: illustrator, writer, and presenter.
- Remind kids to brainstorm together as a group before they start on their article.
- They can read *Genesis 40* if they need to review.
- When groups have finished their articles, allow time for them to share the stories and pictures with the other groups.

### **What You Say:**

"Joseph was handed a pretty raw deal. He was sold by his brothers, and then unfairly sent to jail, and then when he helped others, they didn't help him get out of jail in return. I bet none of that made sense to Joseph. I know it wouldn't make sense to me! But God was with Joseph through it all, just like He's with us. **[Bottom Line]** When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you. **[Make It Personal]** (Tell kids an age-appropriate story about a time your life that didn't make sense, but God was with you and He worked things out in the end.) Just like my story turned out all right when I trusted God with the results, so will Joseph's. But that's a story for another week!"

## **Lean on Me**

**What You Need:** Bibles

### **What You Do:**

- Look up Proverbs 3:5 with the kids and read it aloud several times.
- Pair the kids up. Make sure the kids in each pair are of a similar size. If you have an odd number of kids, some will have to take turns.
- Tell pairs to sit back to back.
- Challenge them to stand up without using their hands, by pressing against each other's backs while they push up. As they do so, they should say the verse together.
- Do this several times, letting kids switch partners, if there is interest.

### **What You Say:**

"Just like you had to lean on someone else and trust them to keep pushing on you so you wouldn't fall down and could complete this activity, you also need to lean on God and trust Him to hold you up when things don't make sense. **[Bottom Line] When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you,** kind of like you trusted your friend was with you in this activity."

## **Pray**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

### **What You Do:**

- Tell kids to think of a situation in their lives where they need to trust God. It could be something similar to one of the scenarios in "Scenario Bingo" or it could be something completely different.
- Then ask kids to finish this prayer, "God, help me trust you when ..." and finish with the situation they just thought of.
- Close with the prayer below.

### **What You Say:**

"God, we know that You are good and powerful. You know everything that happens to us, and You know how things will work out in the future even when we don't. Help us to trust You during those hard times when life doesn't make sense. Help us to remember that You are always with us. In Jesus' name, amen."

### **At Pick Up Time:**

As adults arrive to pick up, **pass out God Time cards** and encourage the kids to show their parents their Jail Journal.

## **EXTRA TIME ACTIVITY: Secret Decoder**

**What You Need:** "Secret Decoder" Activity Pages; 1 for each kid, pencils or pens, Bibles

### **What You Do:**

- Let kids use the Activity Page to find out how to decode the nonsense words.

- Look up the verse together and let kids check their answers.

**What You Say:**

“These words didn’t make any sense at first! Then you were able to use the decoder to find out what they meant. A lot of times, life works that way. Things that don’t make sense eventually become understandable when you see how God is working. God uses all kinds of things in His plan—even the parts that we don’t really get. Waiting to see how God will use crazy situations is a great way to remember that **[Bottom Line] when life doesn’t make sense, you can trust God is with you.**”