

Alley SG - April 6-7, 2019

Bible Story: You Raise Me Up (Lazarus Raised) • *John 11:1-45*

Key Question: How do you react when bad things happen?

Bottom Line: Whatever happens, remember how powerful God is.

Memory Verse: *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* John 16:33b, NIV

1. Get Your Head in the Game

What You Need: Notecards/Slips of Paper (10 per group per service), pens (campus supplies)

What You Do:

- **Ask** students to brainstorm things that are powerful.
- **Write** each of their ideas on a separate notecard.
 - If needed, interject a few additional suggestions that students might not come up with on their own.
 - For example, words, technology, anger, hot sauce, or a chainsaw.
 - The group will likely have named GOD or JESUS, but if not be sure to include them in the list.
- **Place** all the cards face down on the floor/table.
- **Invite** two students to each turn over one card and then decide which of the two is more powerful and why. Remove the cards after each turn.
- **Repeat** until everyone has had at least one turn. Encourage students to turn over a different combination of cards each time.

What You Say:

"There are a lot of things in our world that are powerful, but our great God is above them all. That's something we should never forget no matter what happens. The Bible is full of evidence of God's strength."

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Hoops (2 per group), black paper squares, yellow paper squares

What You Do:

- **Form** at least two teams.
- **Give** each team a hoop and black paper squares.
- **Challenge** teams to be the first to fill the center of their hoop with the paper squares.
- **Declare a winner** then ask students to take turns telling about a "dark" time in their lives when they were disappointed, sad, or going through a tough situation.
 - It could be a recent event or something that happened in the past.
 - How did they feel going through that hard time?
- **Repeat** the race, but this time use the yellow paper squares.
- **Declare** a second winner then ask students to go back to the stories they shared and tell how the event turned out for good in some way.
 - Was there a bright side?
 - Did they learn to trust God in a new way?
 - Did they learn something as they went through it?

What You Say:

"Life is filled with dark days and bright days, ups and downs, highs and lows. Many times, things happen that are out of our control. However, there IS one thing that's always IN our control—the way we react to those situations whether they're good or bad. For followers of Jesus, there's always hope even on the darkest days. This month we're going to discover that in Jesus there's always a BRIGHT SIDE."

3. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bibles, Mouth expression cut outs (1 set of 8 per group)

What You Do:

- **Place** each of the cut outs face up on the floor then gather around.
- **Review** the Bible story by selecting and reading aloud key portions of your choosing from John 11:1-45.
- **Pause** the story to let students interject what they think the characters may have been thinking and feeling at that time.
- **Invite** the group to choose one of the cutouts to hold in front of their mouths as they share.
- At the end of the review, **read John 11:45** then ask . . .
 - Why do you think the people in this verse believed in Jesus?
 - If you had been there when this miracle took place, what would you be thinking or feeling?
 - Why do you think Jesus waited until Lazarus was dead for several days before He came?
 - How can this story give you hope when you're in a tough situation?

4. Discussion Questions

- **Read** John 11:4 aloud. What are some ways that sickness, suffering, or other tough situations bring glory to God?
- If God is powerful enough to bring a dead person like Lazarus back to life, what does that tell you about Him?
- If God is super-powerful, why do you think He doesn't bring all the people we love back to life again or make every sick person well?
- How do you react when bad things happen?
- What helps you when you need to trust God in tough situations? **[Make it Personal]** (*Give students an example from your own life of what helps you to trust God in difficult circumstances. Is there a particular verse you recite over and over to yourself? Is there a friend who continually reminds you to take comfort in God's power?*)

5. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bibles, pens, Verse reference sheet (1 per student), tape (1 roll per group)

What You Do:

- **Give** students a Bible, pen, and a copy of the "Verses to Take with You" Activity Page. If you have more than five students, allow them to work in pairs or groups of three.
- **Ask** students to look up and read the verse written at the top of their Activity Page then finish one or more of the sentences in their own words.
- **When everyone is finished**, bring students together then ask them to read their verses to the whole group and share what they wrote.
- **For your reference**, here is the NIrV translation of the verses students will be looking up:
 - John 16:33b: *"In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world."*
 - Ephesians 6:10: *"Finally, let the Lord make you strong. Depend on his mighty power."*
 - Psalm 28:7: *"The Lord gives me strength. He is like a shield that keeps me safe. My heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart jumps for joy, and with my song I praise him."*
 - Matthew 19:26: *"Jesus looked at them and said, "With people, this is impossible. But with God, all things are possible."*
 - Romans 15:13: *"May the God who gives hope fill you with great joy. May you have perfect peace as you trust in him. May the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with hope."*
- **Give** students (or each group of students) a challenge to come up with a way to make the sheet of paper they used in this activity hold a Bible at least an inch off the floor or tabletop, using only the paper and some tape.

Note: If students don't come up with a strategy that works, suggest they roll the paper into a tube about the size of paper towel roll and secure it with tape. Another method is to fold the paper like a fan.

What You Say:

"No one would expect a sheet of paper to hold up under the weight of a heavy book, but we just proved it can. You might not think that you're able to be strong in your faith when you're facing a tough time, but you can. When you feel weak and without hope, remember how powerful God is. Ask Him to help you trust Him even when life doesn't make sense. When you do, God gets the credit in a big way."

6. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Bibles

What You Do:

- **Invite** students to share a personal struggle of their own or a difficult time that a friend or family member is going through right now.
- **Encourage** them to think of something they learned about hope today as they pray for the people who were mentioned.

What You Say:

"Dear Jesus, you have told us to expect some tough times. Help us remember that You are greater than our most gigantic problem. You can make dead things alive again, so we know that You have the power to give us hope on our dark days. Help us remember how powerful you are. Amen."

BEFORE DISMISSAL: AT "COMMUNION CALL"

HAND OUT "GOD TIME" CARDS TO EACH STUDENT BEFORE DISMISSING AND ALLOW THEM TIME TO BEGIN WORKING ON THE WEEKLY ACTIVITY

IF STUDENTS BRING THEM BACK THE FOLLOWING WEEK, THEY RECEIVE \$3 IN ALLEY CASH!