

City SG - May 11-12, 2019

Bible Story: I Won't Back Down (Paul and Silas in Prison) • *Acts 16:16-40*

Bottom Line: You can choose joy when life gets hard.

Memory Verse: *But those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.*
Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)

1. Get out of Jail

Note: This will be played as an environment-wide activity.

What You Need: Foam balls, prepared floor

CG: 2-Minute Countdown

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into two teams (making sure to evenly divide 3rd graders), and send each team to one side of the playing area.
- Place the balls along the centerline.
- Explain that on your "Go," kids will race to the line to get a ball.
- The goal is to hit someone on the other team with the ball. But the trick is they MUST hit them below the knees.
- Point out the "jail" areas of the room.
- Explain that if a kid gets hit below the knees OR if a kid hits someone else in the head, that kid must go to the other team's jail.
- Once someone is in jail, that side's team can no longer retrieve balls from within the jail walls.
- Only the kid inside the jail can touch any balls in the jail. When a kid gets a ball in jail, he can rejoin his team and start playing again. (Note: Balls can randomly end up in jail by rolling there, and kids can also deliberately toss balls toward the jail in order to free a team member.)
- At any point during the game, the Leader can yell, "Get out of jail," and all kids in jail can immediately rejoin their teams.
- Play continues until the countdown timer runs out.
 - Play a few rounds as time allows.

What You Say:

"That was a crazy game and it was fun! But the truth is, being in jail is NO fun at all.

[Transition] In Large Group today, we heard about some other people who got out of jail by choosing to worship God no matter what! You all are dismissed to your groups!"

2. Jesus, Others, You

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Introduce the JOY acrostic: Jesus / Others / You.

- Talk about how when you need to persevere and choose joy, first you focus on JESUS and who He is and what He has done.
- Then you focus on OTHERS and what you can do for them.
- And finally you think about how YOU won't give up in the situation.
- Challenge the kids to use their bodies to (individually) create the letter J on the floor.
- Give kids this scenario:
 - Your dad gets a job in another state across the country, and your family has to move a month before school is out for the summer.
- Ask kids what they know about Jesus that could help them in that situation.
- Instruct kids to use their bodies to create an O on the floor.
- Ask kids how they could focus on others in order to have joy in the middle of that situation.
- If you wish, repeat the J and O steps above with more scenarios, such as:
 - Your brother is really angry with you for messing up his game console. It has been a week, and he still refuses to forgive you or speak to you.
 - Your grandparents have always watched you after school until your parents get home from work. But your grandma got really sick all of a sudden, and not only are you really worried about her, but you also now have to go to daycare after school.
- Tell kids to use their bodies to create a Y on the floor.
- Ask them to think about something they need to persevere through right now. Encourage kids to share their situations if they're comfortable with it. Talk through how they can focus on Jesus and others in the midst of that situation.

What You Say:

"Sometimes it can be really, really tough to persevere when you're going through a hard time. But **[Bottom Line] you can choose joy when life gets hard.** Remember our acrostic from today: JESUS, OTHERS, YOU. Focus on Jesus first. Then focus on others. And finally, think about the fact that you won't give up on the situation because God is always with you."

3. Can't Stop Smiling!

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Encourage kids to find a partner.
- Explain that they will be competing against their partner to see who can keep a straight face for the longest time without laughing.
- They can make faces and funny sounds, but the winner is the person who lasts the longest without laughing or smiling.
- After each round, encourage kids to find a new partner and try again!

What You Say:

"Was anybody able to keep a straight face the entire time? (*Allow time for conversation and responses.*) That is much harder to do than it sounds! I love that as hard as we tried, we couldn't help but smile. **[Transition] Today in Large Group, we learned about two people who decided to have joy even though they were faced with some pretty hard circumstances.**"

4. Strong on the Inside

What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

- Tell kids to stand up, face you, and make sure they're at least an arm's length away from anyone else.
- Read the first sentence/phrase of Isaiah 40:31. Tell kids to do 10 push-ups.
- Read the second sentence/phrase of the verse. Tell kids to do 20 jumping jacks.
- Read the third sentence/phrase of the verse. Tell kids to run in place for 30 seconds.
- Read the fourth sentence/phrase of the verse. Tell kids to walk in place throughout the discussion below.
- *Note: Please be sensitive to kids in your group who have special needs or injuries that might prevent them from doing the activities above, and adjust accordingly.*

What You Say:

"This verse isn't talking about the fact that your body won't get tired. It will. It probably has during this activity. Where God will help us not be weary or tired is on the inside. We can refuse to give up and keep going when we trust in God to keep us strong on the inside. One of the ways He can do that is by helping us have joy in the midst of whatever is happening in our lives. **[Bottom Line] You can choose joy when life gets hard."**

EXTRA TIME ACTIVITY: Memory Verse Scramble

What You Need: Bibles, "Memory Verse Scramble" Cards (3 sets per group)

What You Do:

- Guide kids to look up Isaiah 40:31 using the following tips.

Finding verses with 1st-3rd 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 Isaiah in the list under "Old Testament." When the kids find Isaiah, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Isaiah. Help the kids find the page. When they find Isaiah, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 40. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 31 in chapter 40.

- Say the verse together several times.
- Divide your group into 2 or 3 teams (depending on the size of your group)
- Give each team a set of "Memory Verse Scramble" cards.
- Tell the kids to spread the cards, face down, and scramble them up on the floor.
- On your "Go!" the first team to put the verse in order wins.
 - Have a team member read the verse to you to complete the round.
- Play a few rounds as time allows.

BEFORE DISMISSAL: AT "COMMUNION CALL"

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

IF CHILDREN BRING THEM BACK THE FOLLOWING WEEK, THEY RECEIVE A PRIZE!