

Alley Rundown—January 29th, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Help Me (John the Baptist in Prison) • *Matthew 11:1-6 (James 1:5)*

Today's Key Question: What questions do you have?

Today's Bottom Line: If you don't understand something, ask

Monthly Memory Verse: *The LORD gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.* Proverbs 2:6 (NIV)

CG: *Dude Perfect Filler Videos*

“What’s going on, everybody?! It’s been such an awesome month, and I’m really glad you’re here today. Let’s start out with a question. When have you recently had to ask for help with something? Think for a second. Maybe you had something you were working on and couldn’t figure it out. Maybe there was a job or task you were doing that ended up being too big. I’ll leave it up to you to decide. When have you needed to ask for help recently? I’ll give you a few moments to turn to your neighbor and take turns answering this question.

Turn and talk. After a set time, call everyone back.

“Alright, let’s hear some examples! What was shared that we need to hear!?

As you have time, allow several volunteers to share their stories. Interact with their answers. Share a short personal example as well. Maybe a time you had to use a YouTube video to fix your car or a time you had to ask a question on a particular problem.

“Those are great examples. It makes me think about this time when my headlight was out on my new car. I had done this before on other cars I’d owned, so I figured it’d be super easy—I mean how hard could it be, right? I went to the store, bought the new lightbulb, popped open the hood of the car, and stared in confusion at what I discovered. There was no obvious way to where the headlight popped in. I looked in the places where it seemed obvious. I searched around with a flashlight and looked at the owner’s manual. Still, I couldn’t find where to change the bulb. Finally, I took out my phone, opened YouTube, and found a video of a car expert who led me straight to the spot, a spot I had looked over several times that day. I just needed the help of an expert to help me actually SEE it. Ten minutes later, the headlight was fixed.”

“Sometimes we think we know what we’re doing and we actually do. Other times we think we know what we’re doing or think we understand what’s happening, but we actually really, really don’t. Thankfully, we have all sorts of ways of figuring things out when we don’t understand, right? Experts we can talk with, books we can read, YouTube videos we can watch. But what happens when we don’t understand something that’s happening in our lives or something we don’t understand about God. What then?

“Well, first of all, a whole lot of people have had questions or even doubts when it comes to something they believe about God, and when those questions and doubts come up, we might feel bad for asking those questions or frustrated that we can’t believe as easily as other people. But please know that you’re not alone. Questions like that are just part of being human. That begs the question, though. When we do have questions about God or what God is doing in our lives, what do we do with those? Where should we go? Who can help? Great questions!

“Like I said, we’re not alone. Even people we read about in the Bible had moments when they questioned what God was doing. They even questioned who Jesus really is. And when we look at their stories and how they dealt with their doubts, it can help us face and do something about our own.”

“Let’s check out one of those moments from the Gospels in the New Testament of the Bible with the help of this week’s Episode.”

CG: *Lesson Video (Runtime: 15:00)*

“Can you believe we get to see this kind of moment from John’s life? It would be easy for the Gospel writers to skip over stories like this. Maybe we want to try to explain it away a bit because we see questions as a weakness. But John definitely had some real questions about the way that things were going, and he wanted some answers. Thankfully, Jesus didn’t get upset with John. Instead, He answered John the perfect way for him to understand and believe that Jesus was who He said He was.

“You ever been there? You ever have something going on in your life that you don’t understand and you just have no idea where to start—and you can’t just Google it or watch a YouTube video?

“And what about when those questions are about God? That can feel a little overwhelming, for sure.

“Let me ask YOU a question. Where did John start when he had questions and doubts?

Allow for responses.

“That’s right. He started with Jesus. I’m sure if he wasn’t in prison, he would have gone himself, but he sent his disciples directly to Jesus. Now, I know what some of you might be thinking. Yes, we can’t go directly to Jesus and talk to Him like John’s disciples did. Well, yes and no. Sure, Jesus isn’t walking around like He was when John was alive, but Jesus is still alive! And as Jesus promised, He has sent His Spirit to be with us. Jesus is with us every second through His Spirit. And God hears every word we speak, each one of us when we pray. And we have the Bible, God’s Word, which is alive and active. God can be known and is available to us in so many ways!

“But there is even more. God has put good people in your life—followers of Jesus who you can look up to and ask questions to when you might be struggling. Maybe it’s a family member like a parent or an aunt or uncle. Maybe it’s your Small Group Leader or *[Host’s name]* or *[Pastor’s name]*. It might be a teacher or a coach. When we struggle—when things don’t quite go as we expected and it makes us question or doubt what we thought we knew—God has put these people in our lives to help guide us as well. All we have to do is ask!”

“Today as you go to groups, think about this:

SLIDE: Key Question

[Key Question] What questions do you have? Do you have any questions that you’ve been holding back because you’ve been too nervous to ask? What would it look like to ask those questions out loud? It can feel like we’re taking a major risk when we ask our difficult questions. Thankfully, we have people who care about us and are willing to help us figure out the answers to our big questions. If you’re not sure who that is for you, talk to your Small Group and your Small Group Leader; they’ll be able to help you figure it out. Before you head out to Small Group, let’s pray and remember that the same God who hears our worship and prayers today is the same God who is waiting to hear our questions later, too! Let’s pray!”

Dismiss students to their small groups after prayer, offering and SuperStart! announcement.

OFFERING TIME:

All this month, we have been bringing our money to support Vida Nueva Ministries in Piedras Negras, Mexico. Your offering helps people just like you to have the resources they need to experience a new life with Jesus! Here is a picture of our friends Eli and Mandy Garcia and their family...

SLIDE: Eli and Mandy

They are our friends and Parkview Global heroes that tell people about Jesus down in Mexico. So, if you brought your offering today, you can bring it up now while this video plays!

CG: Vida Nueva Ministries Video (Runtime: 2:00)

CG: SuperStart! Video Promo and Slide

"SuperStart! is March 17 & 18 – and you won't want to miss this fun event! Bring along friends, meet some new friends there, too! Don't forget to sign up.