

ALLEY Rundown – August 19-21, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Change the World (Joseph and the Plan to Save Egypt) • *Genesis 40-41*

Today's Key Question: How have you seen someone solve a problem?

Today's Bottom Line: You can use what God gave you to solve problems.

Monthly Memory Verse: *we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)*

SLIDE: Theme

Hello! It is so good to see so many smiling faces today in my favorite place, the ALLEY! In the Alley, we try to have a bit of fun and learn a thing or two about God.

Have you ever gotten stuck on something? Because let's be honest, being stuck is the absolute worst!

Communicator tells a personal story of a time they were stuck. Match the idea in the following example story.

I remember this one time in fifth grade when I was stuck! We were studying indigenous people of the United States. Our assignment was to create a 3D model of the homes of specific tribes. Our teacher showed us examples of tepees, longhouses, wigwams, and grass houses. However, there was one home I really wanted to build—the pueblo cliff dwellings found in Mesa Verde National Park! These homes were built into natural cliff alcoves! As a fifth grader, the idea of living in a home built into a cliff was beyond cool!

So I looked at pictures of the cliff dwellings, and the homes looked like they were made from dried mud. At home, I grabbed a bucket of water and dad's shovel. In the backyard, I started digging a hole in the grass to get to the dirt beneath. Before long, I had a bucket of glorious mud. I had a box to serve as my base and generously started applying mud. Before long, the box collapsed and mud was oozing all over mom's patio furniture. It was a hot mess and a complete failure. I was out of ideas and completely stuck! This idea was supposed to work!

Then mom came to the rescue! She suggested making the cliff dwellings out of paper mâché, which combines glue, water, strips of newspaper, and a structure to drape it over! I'd never heard of such a technique. Mom helped me get unstuck! Plus, she helped me complete the project! The final product put my failed muddy disaster to shame!

"Is there anybody else in this room, besides me, who knows what it feels like to be stuck? (Allow response) That's what I thought. I'm not alone! Many of you have faced situations in life where you ran into a problem but weren't sure how to solve it!

On the basketball court, you couldn't stop this really tall girl from scoring whenever she got the ball in the low post! In theater class, you want a speaking role, but you freeze every time you're given the chance because public speaking is terrifying! All these situations that seem impossible are incredibly frustrating!

Sometimes we can't see a way around the problem or come up with a creative solution to overcome an obstacle. But what if the solutions aren't as difficult as we make them out to be? What if God made us with the ability to look at a problem and see a way out of it? What if we just need to change our perspective a little bit?

This month we've talked about how God is SUPER creative! We are created in God's image, so our creativity ultimately comes from God! What if we were able to tap into the creativity God gave us to solve problems? What would it look like to trust God with all of the tiny frustrations and the major headaches of life?

Great question! Thankfully, when we have questions like that, we have a great starting point with the Bible. The Bible is full of truth from people who experienced God and were inspired to write down what they learned about God from those moments. We can learn from them and gain all sorts of wisdom, even when it comes to this idea of creativity. Let's jump in!

VIDEO: The So and So Show (14:09)

This story is wild! Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob but was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. All things considered, Joseph was doing well until someone lied about him and caused Joseph to be sent to prison. However, God gave Joseph the ability to interpret dreams. Using his ability, Joseph stood before Pharaoh to help the ruler creatively solve a huge problem!

I love how Joseph was able to use how God created him to save lives! Now there's a solid chance you will not have to stand before a king in your lifetime—but all of us will face problems in our daily lives. Just because times are hard or things haven't gone the way you expected doesn't mean God hasn't given you a gift that you can use to solve the situation you face! In fact, God has given each one of us a gift that we can use creatively! And it's a great idea to figure out how to use them!

For example, when your friends aren't getting along, it can be an uncomfortable situation. But what if you used your sense of humor to creatively bring peace between your friends? This is using the creativity God has given you to help solve a problem.

Creative problem-solving is just one way we reflect God. God has been solving problems from the very beginning. Even after sin entered the world and changed our relationship, God made a plan through Jesus to fix what was broken. Because of Jesus, we get to have a relationship with God forever!

It's important to remember creativity isn't always about doing something artistic like painting, singing, or building cliff dwellings out of paper mâché. Creativity is bigger than that! Being able to solve problems is creativity! God gave Joseph exactly what he needed to solve a massive problem. Likewise, God can give us ideas and tools to help us solve the problems around us.

Many times, we will be able to use our gifts to help others. However, there are moments we can receive help from others just like Pharaoh! This is a chance for you to benefit from the gifts God has given others around you!

It's like our memory verse says...

SLIDE: Memory Verse

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

We will continue to talk through this later, but we want you to ponder this one question.

SLIDE: Key Question

"How have you seen someone solve a problem? It could have been a teacher working through an experiment gone wrong or a grandmother baking a cake without a key ingredient. When you think about these examples, you'll realize we ALL can use our God-given gifts to solve problems. Before we leave, let's pray together!"

SLIDE: Theme

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

OFFERING:

All summer, our offering money will go to families in Kenya. As you can see in these pictures, this is an area in Kenya called Turkana that is very rural and the people who live there do not have much money for food.

SLIDES: Kenya 1-4

We are working with an organization called Missions of Hope. Our money will help them make food baskets for families who live in Turkana. The food baskets will be such a blessing to the children and families in this community who have very little resources! If you have any offering you can bring it up now.