

ALLEY Rundown – October 28- 30, 2023

Today's Bible Story: All About Soul (Think About These Things) • *Philippians 4:8*

Today's Key Question: What do you spend the most time thinking about?

Today's Bottom Line: Focus on what's true.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Anyone who lives without blame walks safely. But anyone who takes a crooked path will get caught.* Proverbs 10:9 (NIRV)

SLIDE: Theme

Welcome to the Alley, everyone. I'm really glad to see each of you today. I have a question I'd love for you to think about today. You don't need to answer this out loud but just think about it for a moment. What is your biggest fear?

When I was your age, it was not cool to have fears! Friends expected us to act fearless in all situations. In fact, I remember a popular clothing brand in elementary school with the slogan 'No Fear!' The toughest kids wore an attitude and shirts screaming NO FEAR!

But if I can be honest, I had lots of fears—and still do. When I was younger, the fears would consume my thoughts and at times affect my behavior.

Large Group Leader tells a personal, age-appropriate story about a fear that consumed their thoughts and affected behavior. Use the following as a template.

I was afraid of the dark. Every night I went to bed, I dreaded turning off my room lights because my night light was never bright enough! My family lived in an old house that made all kinds of noises! The noises were loudest the moment my room lights were turned off. The wind howled. The trees scraped against the roof. Critters seemingly had parties in the attic. The floorboards creaked. The shadows loomed on the walls.

On one particular night, a storm blew through complete with thunder, lightning, and hail. My imagination was in overdrive. I had convinced myself there was a mob of rowdy monsters trying to tear into my house and take me away to their villainous lair. It was impossible to ignore my thoughts by singing a song, counting sheep, or praying! So I did the only thing that made sense—I hid under the covers. There was a problem in this moment. My house was entirely too hot to hide under the big covers. As I started to sweat profusely, I couldn't stop thinking about the massive, nondescript monsters waiting to pounce as soon as I would rip off my covers to get cool. So I did the only thing that made sense to me at the time. I sweated under the covers until morning and didn't get any sleep!"

Looking back on this experience, it is such a sad story! There were no monsters or villainous lairs. My fear of the dark mixed with my overactive imagination caused me to stay miserable all night long! My thoughts were completely consumed with a negative, made-up narrative and made me miserable.

I've got a sneaky suspicion I'm not the only one here who knows this feeling! I'm sure there are at least a few others in the room who can focus on what's going wrong even though we know it's making us miserable. Some of you can get upset over not being selected first for the pick-up game at recess. The

negative thought rolling through your head is telling you that ‘you’re not good enough.’ Maybe you compare your outfit to what others are wearing. In your head, you can’t shake the feeling of not liking any of the clothes you own. For others, you have people making fun of your size—you’re too tall or short. Your thoughts could be screaming, ‘I wish I was different.’

It’s important for everyone to understand that how we focus our thoughts can affect our behavior and emotions. And when we choose to focus on negative thoughts, they can make us completely miserable! But what do we do about it? Fear is real. Anger is real. Sadness is real. How can we feel those feelings without letting them control us? How can we trust God to help us deal with them and find hope and joy again? Wow, great questions, questions many of you have probably asked yourselves before.

Thankfully, the writers of the Bible have a whole lot to say about questions like these. God inspired them to write down some amazing wisdom when it comes to how we can live an honest life with hope. Let’s take a look at some of that wisdom right now!

VIDEO: So and So Show (12:56)

Sometimes it can be difficult to discern truth from fiction. It can be difficult to recognize who or what is worthy of respect. It can be hard to recognize what is right from wrong. This is why we believe it is important to spend time in the Bible and spend time with wise voices like your Small Group Leaders! Before we spend time with our leaders on this subject, we want you to noodle on this one question.

SLIDE: Key Question

What do you spend the most time thinking about? What thoughts or subjects consume your mind at school? When you lay down in bed at night, where does your mind go? On your drive to practice, what are you thinking about? This is something you’ll talk more about in Small Group, but before you head out, let’s spend some time praying to ask God for help when we have trouble focusing our minds on what’s true!

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

Before we head into small groups, we want to tell you about a special event.

SLIDE: Alley After Hours

We have an extremely fun night planned just for you THIS Friday, November 10th. Alley After Hours is ONLY for 4th and 5th graders and we are taking over the whole church!

It’s one epic night of jumpy’s, a glow room, epic ball, crafts, and prizes! Just bring yourself, all your friends and some money to buy candy and slushies, too. And the best part is - we will have an end of the night battle between 4th and 5th graders to see which one of our mystery leaders will be slimed!

It will be a night you won't want to miss, so register online today and be sure to tell your friends so they can register, too. You can grab a postcard on your way out!

OFFERING:

It's the last weekend in October, so we have 2 more months to give our offering to those in need in Kenya. Our friends at Missions of Hope are delivering food baskets to families in need in the area called Turkana. Take a look at the video of that area.

Turkana video #1

Your offering money will be such a blessing to the children and families in this community. If you have any offering you can bring it up now.