

ALLEY SG – 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)

1. Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

- Look up Philippians 4:8 and read it out loud to the group.
- Ask: "What did Paul encourage the Philippians (and us) to think about?" (*What is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, worthy of respect, excellent, worthy of praise—NIRV*)
- Say the verse again.
- Pause after saying key words in the verse to let kids share an example of each one.
- Prompt ideas using questions similar to the ones after each word.
 - TRUE: *What do you know is true about God?*
 - NOBLE: *What shows good character?*
 - RIGHT: *What is the wise choice?*
 - PURE: *What is free of wrong motives?*
 - LOVELY: *What is beautiful in the world around you?*
 - WORTHY OF RESPECT: *What is being done the right way by someone?*
 - EXCELLENT: *What is being done really well?*
 - WORTHY OF PRAISE: *What is pleasing to God?*
- Ask:
 - If you could choose one of the words or phrases from the list, which one do you feel is most important to think about?
 - Why are our thoughts such a big deal?
 - What we think about determines how we act and the choices we make. Do you agree or disagree and why?
- Direct the kids to stand in a circle and place their hands out to their sides, palms up, one hand on top of the other of the kid next to them.
- Start saying Philippians 4:8 by saying the first word and (lightly) slap the right hand of the kid to your left.
- Instruct that kid to say the next word of the verse and (lightly) slap the right hand of the kid on their left.
- Continue in the same way, with each kid repeating the next word of the verse and passing the gentle slap around the circle.
- Ask: "What can you do to help yourself get rid of wrong thoughts and focus instead on the things Paul encouraged the Philippians to think about?"

2. Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

What You Need: Cars (2 different colors per bin)

What You Do:

- Divide your group into two even teams.
- Instruct the teams to count off so each kid shares the same number with someone on the other team.
 - If there isn't an even number on both teams, invite one of the kids to be a caller with you.
- Set the two cars between the two teams.
- Read one of the "Car Heist Statements" below without sharing if it's true or false. (Or have the "caller" who is with you do it.)
- Quickly call out one of the numbers of the pairs in your group.
- If kids with that number feel the statement is true, instruct them to do a "Car Heist" and try to be the first to grab the *(whatever color car you're using to represent true)* car.
- If they think the statement is false, direct them to grab the *(whatever color car you're using to represent false)* car.
- Briefly discuss the statement by asking the group why they would agree or disagree with the statement.
- Share whether the statement is true or false. (Or have the "caller" share.)
- Continue reading statements and calling out a new number with each round.
- If time and interest allows, invite the kids to come up with statements about themselves that are either true or false.

Car Heist Statements:

1. Kangaroos can hop backwards. *(false)*
2. Memorizing Bible verses help us focus on what's true. *(true)*
3. Hippos can be more dangerous than lions. *(true)*
4. It's very easy to control your thoughts. *(answers may vary)*
5. Choosing what to put in our minds is one of the keys to becoming more like Jesus. *(true)*
6. Earthworms don't have a heart. *(false—they have five hearts)*
7. Ketchup was originally sold as medicine. *(true)*
8. It's okay to think bad thoughts as long as you don't say them out loud. *(false)*
9. God will always forgive when we ask, and will always be with us. *(true)*
10. Popsicles were invented by an old man called "Pop." *(false—an 11-year-old kid invented them)*
11. You can change how you feel by changing your thoughts. *(true)*
12. Panda bears are part of the cat family. *(false)*
13. We need power from God to help us learn to think rightly. *(true)*
14. Turtles can breathe under water. *(false—but they can hold their breath for several hours)*
15. We should focus on what's true. *(true)*

3. Discussion Questions

- When your thoughts are stuck on something wrong or a problem you're worried about, what can you do to get unstuck?
- Why do you think it's often easier to focus on the negative instead of the positive?
- What are some ways we can train ourselves to focus on what is true?
- How does it help you to remember that God knows your thoughts?
- What is one thought you been struggling with that you'd like to get rid of this week? From the list of things Paul encouraged the Philippians to think about, which one would be most helpful to you in changing your focus?

4. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: blank paper, markers

What You Do:

- What do you remember from Philippians 4:8—our Bible story passage for today—that helps us know what kinds of words and thoughts please God? (*Read Philippians 4:8 if a review is needed.*)
- Give each child markers and a piece of paper.
- Ask kids to create a poster with the words of Philippians 4:8 written on it and decorated.
- When the posters are completed, encourage them to hang this somewhere at home where they will see it and remember the things Paul encourages us to think about.

5. Pray

- “Dear God, we need Your help to think about what is right. This week, help our minds focus on what is true noble right pure lovely worthy of respect excellent and worthy of praise. Help us remember that the choices we make matter—even the things we choose to think about. We love You and want to please You in the things we do, the words we speak, and the thoughts we think. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

PARENT PICK UP POINT: Ask kids to tell their parents one of the things Paul encouraged the Philippians to think about?