

ALLEY SG – September 30 – October 2, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Just the Way You Are (A Tree and Its Fruit) • Luke 6:43-45 (John 15:1-17)

Today's Key Question: How do you want people to describe you?

Today's Bottom Line: Be truthful with your whole life.

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: Bibles, "Billboard" Activity Page, markers

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Lead the kids to look up Luke 6:43-45.
- Invite a kid to read the passage aloud as the others follow along.
- Say: "Jesus often helped His followers understand what He was teaching them by comparing it with something they were already very familiar with. In this story, He used the example of a tree and fruit."
- Ask: "What do you think was the message or point Jesus was making when He gave this example of trees and fruit?"
- Continue the discussion by asking:
 - If a kid followed Jesus, what are some words and actions you'd expect to see in their life?
 - What would you say is the key to being a "good tree"?
 - Like actual trees, there are important things we need in order to grow. What do we need in order for us to grow healthy fruit in our lives?
- Look up and read John 15:5 aloud.
- Say: "God gives us freedom to choose the kind of tree we want to be. The key is in knowing Jesus. Like a branch has to be connected to the vine or tree trunk to survive, we were designed for connection to Jesus. And when we're regularly learning more about Jesus and talking with Him, things start to change inside of us. When we follow Jesus, we can be confident that we will become a good tree, growing good fruit."
- Give each kid a "Billboard" Activity Page.
- Set out the markers.
- Challenge the kids to draw a sign on the "Billboard" Activity Page that represents what Jesus was teaching in Luke 6:43-45 and John 15:5.
 - Help kids with ideas if needed and encourage them to look back over the verses to remember some of the word pictures or imagery Jesus used.
- Invite kids to share what they drew and what the message on their "Billboard" means.
- Direct the kids to take the "Billboards" home as a reminder of today's bottom line **"Be truthful with your whole life."**

2. Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

What You Need: Adhesive name tags (one per kid), pens

What You Do:

- Give each kid an adhesive name tag and a pen.
- Ask, "If someone described you, what are some words you'd **want** them to use?"
- Give kids a moment to think of their answer.
- Instruct the kids to write on their name tag a couple of words they feel would be most important to them.
 - Prompt if needed by suggesting they think about their character qualities, gifts, skills, strengths, etc.

- Invite kids to share what they wrote and why they chose the words they did.
- Remind them that one of the greatest qualities we should work hard to have is integrity—choosing to be truthful in whatever you say and do.
- As time allows, use the words kids wrote on their name tag to play “You, Me, Left, Right.”
- Direct the kids to refer to one another using a word written on their name tag rather than the kid’s actual name.
- Instruct your group to form a circle.
- Choose one kid to stand in the middle.
- Invite kids to look at the word(s) on one another’s name tags.
- Have kids quickly go around the circle and re-cap one word from their name tag.
- Ask each kid to remove their name tag.
- Direct the kid in the middle to point to someone in the circle and say either “You” “Me” “Left” or “Right” then count to five.
 - “You” is the kid being pointed at.
 - “Me” is the kid in the middle.
 - “Left” is the kid to the left of the one being pointed at.
 - “Right” is the kid to the right of the one being pointed at.
- Challenge the kid being pointed at to correctly name that person’s quality on their now-removed name tag before the kid in the middle counts to five.
- Choose a new kid to be in the middle.
- Play as many rounds as time and interest allow.

3. Discussion Questions

Ask:

- Jesus compared Himself to a vine and those who follow Him as the branches connected to the vine. If He is the source of what we need to grow and bear fruit, what are some ways we stay connected to Him?
- If someone said they loved and followed Jesus but didn’t act like it, what question should they be asking themselves?
- What are some better “fruit” you’d like God to help you show in your life? What would help you with that?

4. Verses to Take with You

Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Bibles, Cards with words from the Memory Verse (a couple sets per bin)

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, direct the kids to look up Proverbs 10:9.
- Ask:
 - When we live with integrity, it’s similar to living without blame. Why would someone who lives with integrity “walk safely”?
 - When we “take a crooked path,” it’s similar to living without integrity. What does it look like to live without integrity?
 - Is the fear of getting caught a good reason to be truthful? Why or why not? Are there other reasons you can think of to be truthful?
 - What would you say is at the heart of why we choose to be truthful? In other words, why should we care that we’re truthful?

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Give each team a set of Memory verse cards.
- Have a race to see which team can put the cards in order the fastest.
- Play until time allows.

5. Pray

- “Dear God, when we choose to follow Jesus, we know You will help us make wise choices. This week, help us to be honest in everything we say and do. We know that when we live with integrity—we have the best life possible. Protect us from a dangerous and crooked path. We want to live a life pleasing to You. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

PARENT PICK UP POINT: When a parent comes to pick up, ask their child, “What do we need in order for us to grow healthy fruit in our lives?” Let the parent hear their answer.