

ALLEY Rundown- June 8- 9, 2024

Today's Bible Story: Over and Over (Feast of Booths) • *Deuteronomy 16:13-17*

Today's Key Question: How can you remember to be joyful?

Today's Bottom Line: Make a habit of choosing joy.

Monthly Memory Verse: *A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up.*
Proverbs 17:22 (NirV)

PRE-SERVICE VIDEOS – Dude Perfect

SLIDE: Theme

Hi, everyone! Welcome to the ALLEY! It's the second week of June, hopefully you're done with tests, done with school, and ready to get up, get out, and get going. Before we get started, I'd like to welcome our brand-new 4th graders to the ALLEY! Hey 5th graders, can you guys help me...what are some things we should make sure our fourth graders know about the Alley? *(Give kids time to answer. They may need prompting but make sure they cover:*

- *Where the bathroom is*
- *What they can do each week when they first come in*
- *Where they should sit*
- *EXPLAIN ALLEY CASH!*
- *Parent Discussion Guides...tell what happens when they return each week*
- *The So and So Show*
- *Where the offering goes*

SLIDE: Theme

This month we are "starting the Party" as we talk about having JOY. In the Alley we take parties pretty seriously. To have a solid party, we need some people to show up, we need some good music and we need a good game! Would anybody out there like to play a classic party game with an Alley twist?

Choose five volunteers and invite them to the front. Have the volunteers hold hands in a circle, surrounding a chair placed in the middle.

We will be playing 'The Party Chair of Disaster.'

SLIDE: "The Party Chair of Disaster"

Now, this is similar to the timeless game, which I'm sure many of you are familiar with . . . musical chairs. However, instead of using many chairs, we play 'The Party Chair of Disaster' with a single chair.

As the music plays, our brave and bold volunteers will take turns quickly sitting in the chair while still holding hands in the circle. The music will randomly stop, just like musical chairs, but *unlike* musical chairs, when the music stops the person who is *sitting in the chair* will be eliminated from the game.

If nobody is sitting in the chair, the next person in line to sit in the chair will be eliminated from the game. The last person standing will be crowned 'The Party Chair of Disaster' Champion. A title not to take lightly! It's very prestigious!

Any questions about the game? *(Allow response)* Great! Let's play!

AUDIO: Up-tempo Game Music

Play the game. Keep the energy and tension up by commenting throughout and do your best to get the kids to move quickly . . . and safely.

Each volunteer should fully sit on the chair before they move on from the chair, with no one skipping sitting. Anytime the music stops, eliminate one volunteer from the game.

When one volunteer remains, celebrate the winner!

What an amazing finish! Great job to all our volunteers, let's give them a hand!

I'm going to make an assumption—the reason there are so many happy kids today is because school is officially out!

Long-gone are the days of complicated math, group projects, and reading long chapter-books. Here to stay are lazy days by the pool, playing ball at the park, late bedtimes, and movie nights. Summer break gives us all kinds of reasons to celebrate!

Like many of you, I loved summer break as a kid. As soon as school let out, my friends and their families celebrated the end of school in different ways. Some of my friends would go immediately to the local ice cream place and order a large cone with sprinkles. Usually, a group of kids from my class would head to a matinee movie. There's nothing like seeing a movie in the middle of the day!

My parents had an odd way of celebrating the start of summer. By the time we got off the bus, both of my parents would be hiding outside my house with a large stash of water balloons. When my siblings and I approached the front porch, they would surprise us and begin to launch water balloons at us.

I'm curious. What does your family do to celebrate different milestones and holidays? Maybe you celebrate another year older by drinking a giant birthday milkshake with sprinkles and sparklers instead of a birthday cake with frosting and candles. For another holiday, some of you might celebrate the day by going to your town's parade or watching fireworks.

Does anyone want to share a unique way your family celebrates milestones or holidays.

Nice! I love each of the ways your families celebrate! When your great-grandmother turns 90 years old, you commemorate the day—hopefully not by skydiving or running with the bulls in Pamplona. Maybe you play Bingo.

When you ace a difficult science test, you might get rewarded with extra screen time given by your parents. Parties and celebrations give us space to remember significant moments. It's an opportunity to experience joy!

The doses of joy we receive from milestones and holiday parties are not daily occurrences, unfortunately. They happen only a few times a year. For many in this room, difficult life experiences happen more frequently than these celebrations. Our siblings get on our nerves because they never share the TV remote. In class, we get in trouble for talking too much. At home, we lose tech privileges because we mess up. We learn quickly life isn't always a party.

This reality does make me wonder if it is possible to have joy even when we aren't celebrating a milestone. Or if it's possible to have joy for no reason at all. Is there something we can be reminded of that will help us to have joy even when we are facing frustration in life? Can we turn joy into a habit or regular experience?

I love good questions, and these are some doozies. More than good questions, I love good answers—and we can start digging to find those answers in the Bible. Remember, the Bible is basically a library filled with all sorts of writings: history, biography, poems, letters, and wise teachings. Everything was written by real people who experienced God—God's goodness, love, and power—in their lives. God inspired them to write about what they experienced so other people like us could experience God for ourselves! Let's head there now!

VIDEO: Bible story Video (14:22)

Today we still celebrate the joyful news that Jesus came to earth for us! And when we look back at the history of Israel, we can see how God wanted them to spend time celebrating—not just what God is doing presently but also what God has done leading up to now. The parties not only served as an opportunity to reflect on all God had done but also the opportunity to fill their lives with joy. These celebrations were to be done regularly so the people would be in the *habit* of looking for joy.

Likewise, God's love for us is deep, and God longs for our lives to be filled with joy regardless of the circumstances we face. Mowing the yard, going to the doctor or dentist, washing the dishes, or cleaning the bathroom are all not-so-fun things to do. However, if we spend time thinking about joyful times, times when God was amazing, those not-so-great times won't seem so not-so-great.

God wants us to get in the habit of pausing to look for joy.

Even though a lot of our everyday experiences will not look like a pizza party (*reference the stage*), there are still plenty of reasons to have joy! God has done *so much* for each of us. Although we don't need to build a booth or take seven days to celebrate, it is important to look for places in our everyday lives to celebrate and find joy!

Developing habits is hard work. It takes time, patience, and practice. The Israelites went through seasons when they failed to set aside time to celebrate God—but over time, God reminded them repeatedly to celebrate. In the process, they found joy despite their difficulties.

"It's possible for all of us to get in the habit of finding joy! This may look different for each person. As we wrap up our time, I want you to consider this question:

SLIDE: Key Question

How can you remember to be joyful? We can find a joyous occasion to celebrate every day. But don't worry. If you're struggling to figure out how you might begin answering that question, you'll have a chance in Small Group to chat all about it! Before we head to groups, let's pray together and thank God for giving us the best reason to celebrate: Jesus! Let's pray.

SLIDE: Theme Background

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

SLIDES: Morningstar pictures (scroll through as the leader talks about the mission)

Since its beginning in 1909, Morning Star Mission has had one main goal — to help people in need. Morning Star Mission helps people who are struggling to have enough money to live. They have a shelter that gives them a place to live if they don't have a home. People in the community can go to the mission to get clothes and food if they need it too. AND they tell people about Jesus and his love for them while they are helping them, how cool is that?

Morning Star doesn't just stop there. They have many programs that they offer people to help them get in a better financial place so that they don't need the help anymore. Morning Star is a mission that is changing lives in our area!

CG: Summer JAM Slide

It's almost time for Summer Jam! It's coming up very soon and we're so excited to invite you to these 3 nights jam-packed with FUN and Adventure! You won't want to miss it. Tell whoever brought you that you need to visit the Summer Jam Tent after our time together today to sign up and get your t shirt!

****AT YOUR COORDINATOR'S DIRECTION, YOU WILL EITHER DISMISS TO SMALL GROUP OR DO ACTIVITIES TOGETHER.**