

ALLEY Rundown July 20-21, 2024

Today's Bible Story: Come Rain or Come Shine (Be Joyful with Others) • *Romans 12:15 (Supporting: Acts 2:42-47)*

Today's Key Question: What are ways you can help others find joy?

Today's Bottom Line: You can help others find joy.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!*
Philippians 4:4 (NIRV)

LG Supply: Notecards and pens

Note: Divide the kids into their small groups before you begin

SLIDE: Theme

Welcome! I have to say, this is one of my favorite places with some of my favorite people. Take a look around this room. *(Pause)* Do you notice anyone awesome? Do you see anyone amazing? You are surrounded by awesomeness and amazing-ness! I think everybody needs good people in their lives to count on, to lift us up, and to help us experience all that life has to offer.

Today I need your help. We're about to take some time to talk about a couple of questions on the topic of friends. To do so, circle up with your Small Groups, and as you do, think about all the friends you've had in your life.

Give the Small Groups two index cards and something to write with.

I imagine that you and your friends have had some incredible experiences. I know a lot of you personally, and you're amazing, so I can imagine how amazing your friends are, too.

Maybe they've made the club volleyball team. Maybe they consistently dominate in literally every video game they pick up. Maybe they ace every test, get the leads in all the musicals and plays, or edit some of the most hilarious videos you've ever seen!

Share with your Small Group Leaders some of the good things that have happened to your friends—and leaders, write a few down on one of the notecards.

AUDIO: Quiet background music

Take about three minutes for kids to share and leaders to write. Then, collect the cards and read a few out loud to the Large Group.

The other notecard should remain blank and with each Small Group.

These are awesome examples. Your friends have had some big-time goings-on in life! Now, what you shared was all pretty positive . . . so let's flip the script.

"Although your friends have had many good things happen to them, I would assume a few of them have faced some difficulties as well. Some may be struggling at school and are stuck taking classes in the summer. Others might have been sick, or injured, or something similar.

“This time, share some not-so-great things that your friends have gone through. You don’t have to tell long stories or share all the details; just give a sentence or two to share the situation. Leaders, write these down as well.

AUDIO: Quiet background music

Take about three minutes for kids to share and leaders to write. Then, collect the cards, but don’t read them out loud.

I have no doubt there are some really difficult situations friends could face on these cards. We’ll talk about them in a moment, but first, let’s chat for a minute.”

Bad things happen. Hard times happen. Life happens. As much as we would like them to, good times don’t last forever. Life is full of highs and lows. This is true for each one of you, me, your parents, your Small Group Leaders, your families, and your friends.

Unfortunately, no one can escape bad experiences from time to time. Knowing your friends will experience plenty of hardship, here is another question I’d like you to think about: how can you be the sort of friend who stands by people no matter what? What would that look like? What would you say? How can you not feel awkward but strong and supportive?

Great questions. Tough ones, too. I’m excited you’re here today because we’re headed to the Bible to look for some answers. These are questions people have been asking for centuries. And the writers of the Bible have a lot to say about how we can be there for each other and help each other trust God no matter what! Let’s take a look together.

VIDEO: The So and So Show

Friends, when Paul wrote those words to the people in Rome, he was encouraging them to use their imaginations to put themselves in someone else’s place. Remember what Paul said:

Be joyful with those who are joyful. Be sad with those who are sad.

Why is this important? Why should Christians feel what others feel? Well, when you take time to understand the feelings of others, it’s a way to love them and show you care. After all, isn’t that what you want? Someone else to understand what you’re going through when life stinks?

And keep in mind, we don’t have to do this alone. Every difficult situation is an opportunity to turn to God and ask for God’s help! To do this, ask God to help give you the discernment, or understanding, to see the emotions of others. We can even ask God to help our friends find joy when it seems to be gone.

You know what’s great? We don’t have to wait for tomorrow to put this into practice! We can start today. We can pay attention. We can listen. We can be ready to stand or sit with a friend or family member—even if it’s hard or difficult. When someone cries over an argument or is upset over a sports injury, God can use us to help someone else find joy!

As we prepare to head to Small Groups, consider this:

SLIDE: Key Question

What are ways you can help others find joy? Maybe you can tell them a joke. Maybe you can invite them to your house for video games. When you think of ways to bring others joy, it can bring you joy, too! Before you continue the conversation, let’s pray together to ask God for direction as we work on being empathetic and helping others find joy.

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

SLIDE: Theme

CHECK THE TIME: There should be 20-25 minutes for small group. If LG is running late, skip the next part and just have kids bring up their money.

OFFERING:

We are collecting money for an organization called Hope Mobility. It provides wheelchairs to people with physical challenges in Africa. But they provide a lot more than just wheelchairs. Check out this video.

VIDEO: Michael's Story 2

Our focus will be raising money for wheelchairs for kids. Each pediatric wheelchair costs \$275 and we will see how many wheelchairs we can purchase to help kids in Africa!

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

SLIDE: Theme