

ALLEY SG July 27- 28, 2024

Due to summer scheduling, these activities can be done in small groups or in one large group led by one leader.

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Butcher paper (one sheet per group) and markers

What You Do:

- Have someone read Revelation 21:1-5
- How was Heaven described in the book of revelation...the letter from John?
 - God will live with us. We will see his face.
 - There will be no more death or sadness.
 - There will be no more crying or pain.
 - There will be no more night.
 - He will make everything new.
 - God will have the perfect place for us to use our gifts.
- Have kids sit around the outside of the paper.
- Set out the markers.
- Direct kids to take time to draw what they imagine Heaven will look like
- Let kids share what they drew with the group.

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Dry erase board, dry erase marker

What You Do:

- Direct kids to sit so they are facing the dry erase board.
- Draw 3 equal columns on the board.
 - At the top of the column on the left, write the letter, "J."
 - At the top of the middle column, write the letter, "O."
 - At the top of the column on the right, write the letter, "Y."
- Ask kids to think of things they can celebrate when it comes to Jesus. As kids take turns sharing, write those things down in the "J" column (for JESUS).
- Ask kids to think of things they can celebrate when it comes to other people in their lives. As kids take turns sharing, write those things down in the "O" column (for OTHERS).
- Ask kids to think of things they can celebrate when it comes to themselves. As kids take turns sharing, write those things down in the "Y" column (for YOU).
- After everyone has had time to share, remind kids that we have so many reasons to celebrate what God is doing now in our lives as well as what God will do in the future. When we spend time praying, we should make sure to not always only ask for things. Instead, we can take time to celebrate and tell God how thankful we are for all that God does for us!

3. Discussion Questions

- What's the best party you can imagine?
- Which part of John's description of heaven is most exciting to you?
- How can you celebrate what God will do?
- Why is it sometimes challenging to focus on what God *will* do, rather than focusing on what God is doing now?

4. Messy Middle

What You Need: None

What You Do:

- One at a time, read the story descriptions below.
- After each one, have the kids stand up if they know the story.
 - I'm thinking of a story. In the beginning of this story, a grandmother gives a girl a red cloak. One day, the girl travels through the woods to visit her grandmother. In the middle of the story, the girl arrives at her grandmother's house and finds a wolf in bed disguised in her grandmother's clothes. (**Little Red Riding Hood**)
 - I'm thinking of a story. In the beginning of this story, three bears take a walk while they wait for their porridge to cool. While they're away, a curious young girl enters their home. In the middle of the story, the girl tastes the bears' porridge, sits in their chairs, lays in their beds, and falls asleep in the smallest one. (**Goldilocks and the Three Bears**)
 - I'm thinking of a story. In the beginning of this story, a boy sells a cow in exchange for magic beans that grow into a giant beanstalk. In the middle of the story, the boy steals a magic goose from a giant, who chases after the boy. (**Jack and the Beanstalk**)
 - I'm thinking of a story. In the beginning of this story, a mother duck's eggs hatch. One duckling looks different, and the other birds and animals on the farm are mean to him. In the middle of the story, the duckling wanders from place to place, trying to find a home and a family. (**The Ugly Duckling**)
 - I'm thinking of a story. In the beginning of this story, a young girl who says she is a princess needs a place to stay. In the middle of the story, she is put to the test when a tiny pea is placed underneath a stack of mattresses. (**The Princess and the Pea**)
 - I'm thinking of a TRUE, REAL story. One that's happening RIGHT NOW! In the beginning of this story, God created a beautiful, perfect world, but people turned away from God. But God had a plan to fix our relationship. God sent Jesus to live and die in our place and return to life! (**God's Story**)
- Say, "Many stories have what we might call a messy middle. It's the part of the story where things could be exciting, scary, and confusing—the part of the story before we know the ending."
- Say, "Right now, we're in the messy middle of GOD'S big story. Bad things happen in the world, and we all experience difficult things. But when we follow Jesus, we know that what's happening NOW is not the END of the story. We can focus on what God is doing now and what God will do when we get to live forever with Jesus. Those are the very best reasons to celebrate."

AT THE 5- MINUTE CALL:

PRAY

- Ask, "Does anyone have any prayer requests or things they want to thank God for from this week? (*Let the kids share their prayer requests and praises*)
- Take some time to pray for these things as a group, then finish with the prayer below...
"God, we are so grateful that we can celebrate what God will do. As we move forward through our week and may experience a time when we don't know how to find joy, we will celebrate what God will do. When we see our friends or family who need some encouragement, we ask that You guide us to help them celebrate what God will do. Fill us with Your joy so we are a walking celebration of joy to the world! We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."
- If there is still time, pass out the Parent Discussion Guides to the kids and begin to read through them together. Remind them they can do the activity at home and bring it back next week for a prize.

PARENT PICK UP POINT: invite kids to show off the picture they drew of Heaven.