

CITY LG – January 25 - 26, 2025

Today's Bible Story: Walking on Sunshine (Paul and Silas) • *Acts 16:16-40*

Today's Bottom Line: God can help you choose joy.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Be strong, all you who put your hope in the LORD. Never give up.*

Psalm 31:24 (NIV)

Monthly Virtue: Resilience—Getting back up when something gets you down

LG CAMPUS SUPPLY: Carpet tape line down the middle of your room.

LG CENTRAL SUPPLY: Plush snowballs

WORSHIP

Undefeated

Soldier On

SLIDE: *Theme*

Hi, friends! It's cold outside today! Good thing I'm dressed for winter, because we're playing a winter game as we get started today.

This month we're talking about how we can trust God in every season. We know that God is with us—rain or shine!

God is with us in the spring, summer, fall, and winter. God is with us when we feel happy or sad. God is with us when we feel worried, confused, angry, or silly! We all feel lots of feelings about the things that happen to us in life. In fact, God made us to feel those feelings. But it's important for us to know how to react when we feel those feelings so that we can be strong and get back up when we're feeling down.

That's what we read in our Memory Verse for this month, Psalm 31:24. Say it with me.

SLIDE: *Memory Verse*

Be strong, all you who put your hope in the LORD.

Never give up. (Psalm 31:24, NIV)

SLIDE: *Theme*

Now, about our winter game . . . It's easy to think of things I love about the winter, because, well, it's happening right now! How about you? What are some things you like to do in the winter?

Pause for responses.

Good answers, everyone. Those are all great reasons to LOVE this time of year. One of my favorite things to do in the winter is have a friendly snowball fight! That's what we're about to do here today . . . and everyone gets to play.

We've got two teams: this side of the room, and this side (*reference both sides*). As you can see, there's a tape line separating the room in two halves. Your goal, as a team, is to keep all the snowballs on the OTHER side of that line. Meanwhile, the other team will be trying to get all of the snowballs onto YOUR side of the line. So basically, when I say 'go,' you'll keep throwing the snowballs into the other team's area. Are you ready? (*Pause for responses.*) Let the winter games begin!

VIDEO: 60 second timer

SLIDE: Theme

That was some epic winter fun! Both teams did an amazing job. Let's collect those snowballs in these containers here.

Get the kids to help you collect all of the snowballs in the original containers.

I'm glad to be here with you today as we look at a really amazing story from the Bible. (*Hold up Bible.*) We can find this story in the book of Acts, which is in the New Testament.

In the book of Acts, we read about what happened with the first Jesus-followers, including the apostle Paul. Paul started many churches as he traveled around to different places and told people about Jesus.

On one trip, God called Paul and his companions to cross the sea to go to a place called Macedonia. Paul and his friends arrived there in the city of Philippi. This was a busy city, and people from lots of different backgrounds lived there.

A few people in Philippi worshipped the One True God, and Paul told these people about Jesus. A new church started up there that met in the home of a woman named Lydia. Let's check out our story lab to see what happens...

VIDEO: Bible Story

After all of that had happened, Paul and Silas went to Lydia's home. They encouraged all the believers to be brave, and they left Philippi to continue sharing the news of Jesus.

Paul and Silas had been treated unfairly . . . lied about . . . hurt . . . and thrown in prison. Yet they still chose to trust God. That's how they were able to find joy! They knew that God was with them—even in that deep, dark prison. And so they chose to worship God with joyful hearts.

Here's something important that we should stand up and remember:

VIDEO: Bottom Line

SLIDE: Bottom Line

God can help you choose joy.

With God's help, we can be joyful—even if things in our lives aren't going the way we want. See, there's a big difference between happiness and joy."

It's easy to be happy when everything is going right in your life. But joy is something deeper and more real. We find joy when we look to God and choose to trust God no matter what.

We can find joy—even in the middle of the troubles and challenges we face in life. Because we know that even if our troubles don't go away right now, God has promised to make everything right in the end for those who follow Jesus.

Remember that you can always pray and ask God to help you find joy. You can also think back and remember ways that God has brought you through hard things in the past. If you stay focused on God and choose to trust God, then you'll be able to find joy and keep going, even when things get tough!

Let's pray and thank God for giving us joy.

Dear God, thank You so much for this story about Paul and Silas. They were able to find joy because they put their trust in You. They knew that You were right there with them, even in that prison! Please help us to trust You and to choose joy—when things are going great, and also when we face tough things in life. Thank You for always being there for us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

CHECK THE TIME: There should be 20-25 minutes for small group. If LG is running late, skip the next part.

OFFERING:

SLIDES: Offering pics 1-4 (scroll through while describing the mission)

Each week in the City we collect money to support a Parkview mission that helps people in need. Starting in 2025 we are giving the money we collect to a church called La Liberte' Church (La Lib-er-tay).

La Liberte' Church is in the Republic of Congo which is in Africa. The kids at the church live in an area where they don't have a lot of money, and sometimes don't have a lot of food for their family. When the kids come to church on Sunday, they feed them a hot meal. They feed around 700 children every weekend and each meal costs \$2.00. Our goal is to help feed as many kids as we can!

SLIDE: Theme