

Alley Rundown - April 5 - 6 2025

Today's Bible Story: When Love Comes to Town (Palm Sunday) • *John 12:12-16*

Today's Key Question: What are you hoping for?

Today's Bottom Line: Whatever happens, remember God is still working.

Monthly Memory Verse: *"In this world you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world."* John 16:33b (NirV)

LG SUPPLIES: several paper plates, markers, one set of Game Clue Prompts cards

PRE SERVICE VIDEOS (Dude Perfect)

Welcome the students and introduce yourself to the group. Set expectations for behavior during the large group. Review "Alley Cash" and bathroom procedures.

Hey, everyone! So glad you're all here for a fun day celebrating one of the most hope-filled times of the year: the Easter season. Throughout the Easter season we see the big picture God has been painting throughout history that all comes together with Jesus' life, death, and resurrection! And we have another great day in store for you as we celebrate that hope we have in Jesus!

To kick us off, I need six volunteers who think they have the drawing skills to create a big picture of their own . . . it's a fun game with an Alley Easter twist! I call it 'The Big Picture Platehead Pictionary!'

SLIDE: "The Big Picture Platehead Pictionary"

Host chooses 6 volunteers and partners them up. They will need several paper plates and a marker. Host will use the Game Clue Prompt cards to share the drawing clue with the volunteers.

Here's how we play. I'll show the first partner a drawing clue. They'll place a paper plate directly on top of their head and attempt to draw that clue without looking or removing the plate from their head. When I say stop, you'll reveal your plate to your partner. Your partner will get one chance to guess what you've drawn. If they're right, you get a point! If they are wrong, no points! Then we'll switch partners and repeat the game. Got it? Any questions? Great! Let's go!"

Share the first drawing prompt with the people drawing first. Give them about 30 seconds to draw the object. After time is up, have them show it to their partners at the same time, so the guessing is fair. Award the point and move on to the second drawing. Continue the pattern until you get to the end.

Drawing prompts on Game Clue Prompts

- *Peeps (Candy Marshmallow Animal)*
- *Chocolate bunny with a bite taken out*
- *Jellybeans*
- *Easter basket*
- *Donkey*
- *Palm branches*

You all did an outstanding job! Those drawings were amazing!

Have you ever had a time when something you were hoping would happen a certain way didn't happen the way you wanted? Maybe you wanted a certain part in a musical or a spot on a great soccer team and it didn't happen. You got a part, but not the one you wanted. You got on a soccer team, but not the one you were

hoping for. We all get disappointed when what we hope will happen doesn't happen. But what if how it actually happened is way better than you hoped? Like this one time . . .

Share a personal story of a time when the thing you were hoping for didn't happen the way you thought it would. Use the following as an example or share as a hypothetical situation.

If I'm remembering correctly, it was the summer I turned 10. See, every summer, our town hosted the HUGE county fair with rides, animals, and junk food. It was the BEST. My mom promised that this was the year that I could finally drive my own bumper car! I had wanted to drive my own bumper car ever since I first saw them. But when we got to the fair, the bumper cars were shut down for repairs! My heart sank. I was SO upset! Of course, my mom tried to cheer me up with cotton candy and other rides. But it wasn't the same, it felt like nothing could make up for missing out on what I hoped would be the experience of the summer.

But we stayed and wandered around the fairgrounds. We came across a small booth that turned out to be an impromptu storytelling corner where kids could listen and even add their own twists to the stories. I guess it seemed like it could be fun, but I wasn't sure . . . but with my mom's encouragement, I joined, and before I knew it, I was laughing and shouting out wild ideas with the other kids. It was really fun! I even met some kids who would be in my class that year. My disappointment led to an unexpected afternoon that turned out to be a highlight of my summer!"

Sometimes we get what we hope for. Other times we don't. Life is just like that. And I'll be honest, it's hard to know what to hope for sometimes or if we should keep hoping at all. But that doesn't feel like a great way to live, does it? But then how *should* we respond? How can we remain hopeful even when what we hope or even expect will happen . . . well, doesn't happen?

That feels like a tough question, doesn't it? Thankfully, we trust in God, who doesn't get upset or afraid when we ask tough questions. God is bigger than any question. On top of that, God has helped all sorts of people throughout history handle tricky questions and unmet expectations. Many of those people ended up writing down their experiences so we could learn from them today . . . Let's see what the guys have to say in the So and So Show.

The So and So Show 11:54

There can be a lot of times in life when we expect things to turn out one way. We get all our hopes up . . . just to find ourselves disappointed. We hoped it would go one way, but it doesn't. And in that moment, we may even be tempted to believe that God is no longer working. But sometimes the reason is because our expectations were wrong in the first place.

Many people expected Jesus to be this conquering King who would come and destroy His enemies. The crowds were really pumped up about this. But that's not what Jesus did. And a lot of people were, well, disappointed. But . . . these false expectations caused them to miss the even greater reason, and the even greater freedom that Jesus came to offer through His death and resurrection.

I don't know about you, but there are certainly times when I can get caught up hoping God will do things one way, and all of my hope is built on that expectation. Answer my prayer this way. Deal with mean people that way. Bless me like this. But God might not always respond the way we expect. But just like Jesus entering Jerusalem the final week of His life, just because God doesn't do what you hope God will do doesn't mean that God isn't about to do something even greater. God is still working!"

As you go to your groups today, think about this:

SLIDE: Key Question

“What are you hoping for?” Think about how your expectations of what you think God will do can sometimes cause you to miss something greater. It’s okay if you’re not sure how to answer that question. Maybe as you chat with your Small Group, something will come to mind. Now, before you go, let’s pray and thank God that Jesus is a greater hope than we could ever expect or imagine!”

SLIDE: Theme Background

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

CHECK THE TIME: There should be 20-25 minutes for small group. If LG is running late, skip the next part, but remind kids who have offering to place it in the container.

SLIDES: Offering pics 5-8 (scroll through while describing the mission)

Each week in the City, we collect money to support a Parkview mission that helps people in need. 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. Here are some pictures of the great work the church is doing to teach kids about Jesus. 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