

## Be Like Jesus

Week 3

### **BIG IDEA**

God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

### **BIBLE**

Joy and Contentment (Philippians 2-4)

## WELCOME

### MUSIC | Worship Playlist

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *During free time, use one of our Spotify playlists to play background music while kids play OR stream the main worship service on your classroom TV to participate in the worship happening in the Auditorium.*

### PLAY | Free Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tables will be set with games and activities for kids to play until the lesson begins.*
  - *This is a great opportunity to get to know some kids and work on building relationships.*
  - *Have kids go to the bathroom prior to class beginning*
  - *At the end of Free Time, play the Countdown Video and have kids work together to clean up toys/activities and then join you for the lesson - either on risers or on the floor.*

### MEMORY VERSE | Prizes

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *During free time, kids may say their memory verse from the past week to any leader in the room. Place a dot sticker on their name tag to signify that they've said the verse. Give a memory verse prize **AT PICK UP** to any kids with dot stickers.*

### WELCOME QUESTION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *This question will be written on the board as a conversation starter during free time.*
  - **When are you most happy?**

## INTRO

### TALK

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Gather the emoji sheets before beginning. Play the Countdown Video to signify time to clean up. Gather kids on the floor or on the risers. It's always fun to have everyone count down the last 10 seconds together!*
- **Welcome to church today, friends! I am so glad to be here with all of you.**
  - *This is a great opportunity to let kids know what the time together will look like! Walk them through the schedule and go over the class rules.*
- **I have a question for you: When are you most happy?**
  - *Allow a few people to share their answer.*
- **Today we are going to discover how God can give us joy and contentment even when we don't have those things that make us most happy.**
- **I can't wait to find out how, but first I have another question for you.**
- **Does anyone know what it means to be content?**
  - *Instruct kids to do a "turn and talk" with someone sitting next to them where they say, "Good morning!", give each other a high five, and then discuss their answer. Choose a few to share their answer with the group.*
- **You all know what an emoji is, right? Pause for answers. An emoji is a picture that describes how someone feels. How you feel is an emotion.**
- **Today, we're talking about two things that are more than just feelings and emotions, because emotions come and go. But the things we're talking about today are things we can ALWAYS have because they come from God. We're talking about joy, which is a deep sense of happiness. Hold up the joy emoji sheet.**
- **And we're talking about contentment. Hold up the contentment emoji sheet. Being content means being happy with what we have.**
- *Show the kids the other emoji sheets and ask them to say what feeling or emotion each sheet makes them think of.*
- **I'm going to put these emoji sheets on the board and call out some statements. I want you to make the face of the emoji that matches what I'm saying!**
- *Hang the emoji sheets on the board. Call out the following statements and have the kids make the matching emoji face. Play multiple times using the following phrases:*
- **I know that I'm never alone because God is always with me.** *Encourage the kids to match the joy emoji.*
- **Someone said something really hurtful and I can't stop thinking about it.** *Encourage the kids to make to the sad emoji face.*
- **Even though I don't have everything I want, I know God will provide everything I need.** *Encourage the kids to match the contentment emoji.*
- **I can't stop laughing because of something funny my friends did.** *Encourage the kids to match the silly emoji.*
- **We all have lots of feelings and emotions. And they can come and go so quickly. Today, we'll get to hear how God helps us think and act differently. Through God's Holy Spirit, we**

can have joy and contentment no matter what our circumstances might be—no matter what is happening in our lives.

#### DECLARATION

- **Before we get started, I have an important reminder that's true for ALL of us. Let's say this together by repeating after me!**
  - **Thank you, God, that You are good!** (Kids repeat)
  - **You made me on purpose, for a purpose.** (Kids repeat)
  - **I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat)
  - **You know me, love me, and lead me.** (Kids repeat)
  - **Your Spirit gives me joy.** (Kids repeat.)
  - **In all things, I can be content.** (Kids repeat.)
  - **My life can tell of Your wonder!** (Kids repeat)

## WHAT? What are we talking about today

#### PRAYER

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words:*
  - **God, thank You for this time to hear from Your Word. Help us to understand how much You love us. We invite Your Spirit to guide us to live like Jesus and to fill us with the joy and contentment that only You can give. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.**

#### BIBLE STORY VIDEO

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play the Joy and Contentment Big Story Video.*
  - *NOTE: This short video will teach the Bible Story and give you a jumping off point for the rest of the teaching. If you split into smaller group for the re-telling of the Bible Story, watch the video together as a large group before doing so.*

#### BIBLE STORY | Philippians 2-4 (Joy and Contentment)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Gather the brown paper bags numbered 1-7. In each bag is the following: Bag #1—dirty gym socks, Bag #2—bite-sized cracker or bit of bread, Bag #3—pen and paper, Bag #4—single-serve bag of chips, Bag #5—empty ice cream carton, Bag #6—small gift box with*

money inside (such as a \$5 bill), Bag #7—God Sheet. These items will be used to tell the story.

- Explain to your kids that today's story comes straight from the Bible, God's Word, and can be found in the book of Philippians, one of the letters written by the Apostle Paul.
  - FOR OLDER KIDS: Ask everyone to turn to [Philippians 3](#). Encourage volunteers to help kids find this passage. Ask for three volunteers who would be willing to read, and assign [Philippians 3:1](#) to the first, [4:4-7](#) to the next, and [4:10-13](#) to the last volunteer. Kids can follow along while leaders help them look up the verses.
- **During our story today, each time you see me point to you, I want you to repeat what I just said. Let's practice.** Point to kids and wait for them to repeat back, "let's practice"
- **Alright, looks like you're ready to go.**
- **Do you smell something?** Sniff the air with a disgusted look and allow kids to respond. **Seriously! Do you smell that?** Sniff the air again and allow kids to respond. **It smells disgusting—stinky, nasty, and old. You don't smell it?** Sniff the air again and allow kids to respond. **It seems like the smell is coming from over there.** Walk toward the counter, where the brown bags are continually sniffing the air and acting like you smell something terrible.
- **Here it is—right here in this bag! Wow! I think this is the nastiest smell I've ever smelled in my life!** Open bag #1 and pull out two dirty, smelly gym socks. **Yup! I knew it! As soon as I smelled that smell, I knew what our story was going to be about today. These socks will get us started.** Hold up the socks with two fingers. **I hope the rest of these bags are filled with something more pleasant.**
- **Close your eyes and imagine with me. You're in prison. And it's dark and smelly and disgusting. Everyone, plug your nose. That's got to help a little!** Kids plug their noses.
- **You've sat in the same cell for days and days and days, locked away in a Roman prison. Nobody cares about you because, of course, they assume you did something wrong.**
- **Ok, you can open your eyes.**
- **I'm hungry!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond. **I'm thirsty!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.
- **You're left to rot in a cell, surrounded by smells like these stinky, smelly socks.** Keep holding up the socks.
- **Pee-ew!** Point to kids to repeat the word, allowing them to respond.
- **It didn't just smell in the Roman prison, but you also didn't get much food unless you had a visitor. Maybe we should check out the next bag to see if someone brought us some delicious food! That might help us forget about the horrible smell for a minute!** Set down the socks, open bag #2, and pull out the one bite-sized cracker or bit of bread. **One measly bite for dinner.**
- **I'm starving!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.
- **Most people in these kinds of conditions would give up hope, except for the most encouraging guy in the universe—the one and only Paul. As Paul sat in a terrible Roman jail, he did the thing he did best. Does anyone want to guess what Paul did?** Allow kids to respond. **Let's check our next bag and see if it will give us a clue.** Open bag #3 and pull out a pen and paper. **I knew it. Paul wasn't griping or complaining about the smell or the food. He was writing letters!**
- **Say what?** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.
- **I'm not surprised! As Paul so often did, he wrote to his friends. This time, he wrote to his friends in Philippi and told them he was filled with joy.**
- **Say what?** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.
- **You heard it right. In the middle of a nasty jail cell, Paul wrote to his friends telling them to always rejoice and not worry about anything.**
- **I don't get it!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.
- **You see, Paul was filled with joy. It didn't matter what kind of circumstances he faced. Paul knew how important it was to ask God for help in every situation.**
- **He reminded his friends that when they were thankful to God and prayed for help—even in the hardest times—God would give them joy, contentment, and the confidence to do anything that came their way. God would help them to be at peace and satisfied in all circumstances. Paul encouraged his friends to rejoice always and to avoid worrying about anything—all while he sat in a stinky, nasty jail cell!**

- **Bravo, Paul!** Point to kids and encourage them to respond with a round of applause.
- **I'm sure that was a hard thing for Paul's friends in Philippi to accept. Having joy when things are bad? Being content—at peace and satisfied—in all circumstances?**
- **Woah!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing kids to respond.
- **So, Paul decided to show the Philippians an example of joy and contentment.**
- **I wonder what it was.** Open bag #4 and reveal a single-serve bag of chips. **Do you think this was what brought Paul joy and contentment?** Allow kids to respond.
- **Maybe this bag will show us what Paul's example of joy was.** Open bag #5 and hold up an empty ice cream carton. **Do you think this was it?** Allow kids to respond.
- **Well, there are only two bags left. One of these has to reveal Paul's secret! Let's try this one.** Open bag #6 and reveal a gift box. **Do you think we should open it?** Allow kids to respond. Carefully open the box and reveal the money inside.
- **Woah!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing kids to respond.
- **While Paul was in prison, the church in Philippi sent him money to help take care of him. He was so grateful for their generous gift and was filled with joy. Still, Paul didn't need their money to find joy. Paul had already spent years traveling. On some days he had eaten in the nicest places. And then at other times he had gone without food for days. Paul had experienced it all.**
- **Bravo, Paul!** Point to kids and encourage them to respond with a round of applause.
- **Do you want to know his secret?** Allow kids to respond. Open bag #7 and reveal the God Sheet.
- **Paul's secret was God. Paul knew that God was with him, that God loved him, and that God would give him strength when he needed it. Paul recognized that only God gives true joy and contentment.**
- **Thank you, God!** Point to kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

## NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

BIG IDEA | God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

- **Great job following along!**
- **What situation was Paul facing?**
- **If I was in Paul's situation, I think I would find it really hard to be content. Paul says that he can face anything that comes his way because He has strength that comes from Jesus. That's how he was able to be content and even to be joyful in a dirty, stinky, horrible prison. With his stomach growling and not knowing how he would get out.**
- **He knew that God was with him no matter what and that's enough for anything we face!**
- **That reminds me of our Big Idea today!**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the Big Idea slide on the screen or the poster on the white board while you have kids repeat after you.
- **Let's say the Big Idea together: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment!**
- **Sometimes we find ourselves in difficult situations. Sometimes life is really hard. Thankfully, God is bigger than even the hardest stuff in life. And when we turn to him for help, he can give us joy and peace just like Paul had when he was in prison.**

MEMORY VERSE | Galatians 5:22-23a (ISV)

- Today, we've learned that God gives us joy and contentment. These are things we get from the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Our memory verse this month is all about the characteristics we get from the Holy Spirit. These are the things that grow in our lives when we follow Jesus.
- Here's what the verse says:
  - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23a
- Let's practice our verse together.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the verse to the kids, then encourage them to stand and repeat after you with the following motions:
  - **The fruit of the Spirit is** (Draw a large S in the air)
  - **love,** (Pat your hands on your heart)
  - **joy,** (Put your arms up as if celebrating)
  - **peace,** (Hold up two fingers in "peace sign")
  - **patience,** (Point to a pretend watch on your wrist)
  - **kindness,** (Pretend to give someone a hug)
  - **goodness,** (Make two thumbs up)
  - **faithfulness,** (Make two fists and start with the one fist on top of the other, then switch to stack the bottom fist on top, then switch again, as if stacking bricks)
  - **gentleness,** (pretend to gently rock a baby)
  - **and self-control** (Point to self with both thumbs)
  - **Galatians 5:22-23a** (clap hands together, then open like a book)
- Nice work, friends! When we memorize God's word, we let it live in our hearts and remind us of who God is and who we are.
- Now, we're going to have a chance to talk with our friends in small groups about everything we learned today and ask any questions you might have.

## SMALL GROUPS

### DISCUSSION | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** If you haven't already, split kids into smaller groups, ideally by grade.
- Today, we heard an amazing story about the Apostle Paul. Who remembers one action Paul repeatedly encouraged the church in Philippi to do? Pause for kids to respond.
- That's right! Paul repeatedly encouraged the church to rejoice. And what was so amazing about Paul's instruction is that he was rejoicing while he was in prison! I imagine that rejoicing and being content could be difficult in a Roman prison.
- Paul didn't have a comfortable bed or what he wanted to eat. He didn't have extra clothes or books to read. And to top it all off, he didn't do anything wrong to be in prison, yet Paul rejoiced!
- Paul was able to rejoice because of what God had given him. When we follow Jesus, God will give us His Holy Spirit, and His Spirit produces fruit in us. When the our Memory Verse mentions fruit, it doesn't mean apples or oranges. Paul uses the word fruit because he wants us to picture something alive, something growing. Who can name one of the fruit of the Spirit? Allow kids to name any of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience (or forbearance), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- God's Spirit worked in Paul to grow joy and peace within him. Because Paul had joy and peace, he could be content even though he was in jail. He could be content anywhere.
- The good news is that Paul isn't some superhuman. We can all have these same gifts from

God.

- **And Paul gave us another clue about how to live joyful and content lives. He said when we feel worried, we should pray to God and give thanks. Giving God our concerns and thanking Him because we know He hears our prayers can change our whole attitude. We too can have joy and contentment because God gives those things. Let's take some time now to think about our own lives. Do we have joy? Are we content, or do we complain about our circumstances?**
- *Give a Strength Sheet to each kid and set out pens or pencils and coloring utensils. Encourage kids to use the Strength Sheet to write or draw a short prayer to God. On one side of the dumbbell, they can write words or draw pictures that express the areas in their lives where they have concern or worry. On the other side of the dumbbell, they can write or draw all the things for which they are thankful. Remind kids that God's Spirit can give them joy and contentment, and they can find joy and contentment in all things because Jesus gives them the strength to do so.*

## PRAYER

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Invite kids into a time of prayer. Ask kids to volunteer to pray for each other and those areas of their lives where they need joy. If kids are slow to volunteer, then you can pray for each child and her requests. End by praising God for being a God who will give His joy and contentment to those who ask!*

## CLOSING

### EXTRA TIME ACTIVITY | Banana Tag

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *This is a twist on a basic freeze tag game. When kids are tagged, they have to stand with their bodies in the shape of a banana and can only be unfrozen when another kid "peels" them. Choose one or two kids to be "It," or the tagger(s).*
- **Let's play Banana Tag!**
- **Bananas are a great fruit that I enjoy eating. Do any of you like to eat bananas?** *Pause to give kids a chance to raise their hands. Joy is another kind of fruit that we can't eat, but is also pretty great! In our story today, Paul said we should constantly be full of joy.*
- **I think I'm going to get a lot of joy out of watching you all become bananas today!**
- **Here's how it works:**
- **I will choose a tagger. Everyone will move around the room, without running, trying to avoid the tagger.**
- **If the tagger touches you, you must freeze and stand like a banana.** *Demonstrate a stance with your arms together in a sideways arch over your head, curving your body into a "C" shape as you are able.*
- **You will be frozen like this until someone else comes and "peels" you.** *Have another leader demonstrate pulling your arms down by your side, one at a time.*
- **Then, you will be free to move again!**
- *Give kids a few seconds head start before letting the tagger(s) go. Continue playing, choosing a new tagger for each round.*

