

# GOD OFFERS JOY INSTEAD OF EMPTINESS

## STORY: NEW CREATION

### BIG TRUTH: GOD OFFERS JOY INSTEAD OF EMPTINESS

Psalms 16:11; Romans 5:1-2; 14:17; 15:13; 1 Peter 1:8-9

### BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:11

*"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."*

### BIG IDEAS

- Sin makes us empty.
- Jesus is the priceless treasure every heart longs for.
- We find joy when Jesus becomes our joy.

### BIBLE STORY: MATTHEW 13:44-46

True joy can only come from knowing Christ. Any other joy is not eternal and does not really bring peace. The parables of the hidden treasure and the valuable pearl teach us that true treasure is found in the kingdom of Heaven. Only there can we truly be satisfied.

### STORY: NEW CREATION

Part of the beauty of the gospel is that God does not just rescue us from the power of sin, but He is also making everything new. God offers new creation to those who place their faith in Jesus. This newness comes in two ways. The first is that by breaking the power of sin, Jesus is making men and women into brand new people with new identities. Second, God is not only making people new, but He is also going to make a new heaven and a new earth for us to live on and worship Him in.

### BIG AIMS



#### Every child should know that:

- God offers us new life (new desires, purpose) through Jesus



#### Every child should feel:

- The need to live differently because of Jesus



#### Every child should:

- See life in light of God's promises to those who are in Jesus



#### Every child should want:

- To be freed and rescued from their sin and given new life in Jesus

### FAMILY DEVOTION: A PRICELESS TREASURE

There are many things to treasure in this life, but only those that hold eternal value are priceless. Jesus is our priceless treasure. He is the greatest treasure and the only one that can bring true joy.

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## BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:11

*"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."*

### Obedience produces joy.

- Joy comes from serving God and being in a relationship with Him.
- Joy is possible because God sent His Son, Jesus to pay our sin debt.
- Jesus found joy in obeying God the Father.
- Our obedience to God produces joy in us because we know we are glorying God.

### Joy is possible through Jesus.

- Only through a relationship with Jesus can we have joy.
- Any other type of joy is not true joy.
- Jesus is the only way to have our sins forgiven and to be in a relationship with God.
- Apart from God, we cannot have true joy.
- Our lives are empty without God.
- When we have a relationship with God, we can be filled with His joy, which is everlasting and present in every circumstance.

### True joy is possible in any circumstance.

- God's joy is everlasting.
- When we walk with God, we can have His joy.
- Our joy is never-ending because it comes from God.
- Even in the most difficult circumstances we can have joy because our joy comes from Jesus.

## BIBLE STORY: MATTHEW 13:44-46

### Opening Illustration:

Make a "Pearl of Great Price" by folding a small white paper plate in half. Using paint, crayons or markers color the outside of the plate gray and the inside pink to resemble an oyster. Glue a copy of the Bible verse for the week inside the oyster along with a small white bead as the pearl."

After the children finish making their oysters, help them think of the different things that God offers us in place of our sin, such as joy instead of emptiness, a new eternity instead of our sinful life, etc. Lead the children in a discussion about how God offers us many things that are better and perfect compared to our sinful choices.

# GOD OFFERS JOY INSTEAD OF EMPTINESS

## BIG IDEA: SIN MAKES US EMPTY.

### Our sin makes us dead in our trespasses.

- We all are dead in our sin.
- Our sin makes us dead because we do sinful deeds.
- Our sin causes us to reject God, who is the only source of true life.
- We live, instead, for ourselves and we follow after the ways of this world.
- We live empty lives filled with empty things that are all fading away as this world fades away.



Bring in a bowl, colander and a bottle of water. Tell the children that the water is our life. The colander is sin. Pour the water into the strainer while holding it over the bowl. The water flows out of the colander just like our sin takes life from us leaving us empty.

### The passions of our flesh are empty and meaningless.

- When we are sinners, we follow our flesh.
- We seek to do the things that are pleasing to our sinful hearts and not the things that please God.
- The passions that we seek after hold no eternal value for us.
- They tear us down and continue to lead us into more sin.
- These fleshly passions are meaningless because they do not please God.

### Our sin takes life from us instead of giving life.<sup>1</sup>

- The passions of the flesh drive us to do things that hurt us.
- They hurt our bodies, our minds, and our emotions.
- These sins leave us empty and broken.
- They take life, leading us down the path of destruction instead of giving life.

*How does our sin make us empty? (It takes life from us instead of giving life.)*

1. Ephesians 2:1-3: Our flesh leads us down a path of destruction that takes from us, leaving us empty.

# GOD OFFERS JOY INSTEAD OF EMPTINESS

## BIG IDEA: JESUS IS THE PRICELESS TREASURE EVERY HEART LONGS FOR.<sup>2</sup>

### We seek to fill the emptiness left by our separation from God.

- God placed eternity in our hearts when He created man and woman.
- He designed us for a relationship with Him and even though we do not seek Him, we seek to fill that emptiness left by our separation from Him.
- Our hearts know that something is missing and in our sin we long for that void to be filled.
- We spend our lives seeking other things to fill that void because we are blind to the truth.



Hide a small object in the room and have the children take turns hunting it. As they play, talk with them about how Jesus is our priceless treasure just like the pearl was a treasure.

### Only Jesus can truly fill the emptiness left by our sin.

- Our sin blinds us to the truth about God.
- Our spiritual blindness keeps us from seeking God to fill the void that is left from our sin.
- Instead, we seek to fill that void with other things.
- We reject God, just as Adam and Eve rejected God in the Garden, and we look for other things to fill our lives.
- These other things do not really bring us joy or fulfillment.
- Only Jesus can truly bring us joy because He is the priceless treasure that our hearts long for.
- Just like the man who found the hidden treasure in the field gave all he had to keep it, Jesus is that treasure to us.

*What is the only true priceless treasure for us? (Jesus is the only priceless treasure and we long for that priceless treasure.)*

2. Psalm 107:9: Our hearts long for the emptiness to be filled. Jesus is the only thing that can truly fill our hearts.

# GOD OFFERS JOY INSTEAD OF EMPTINESS

## BIG IDEA: WE FIND JOY WHEN JESUS BECOMES OUR JOY.<sup>3</sup>

### Jesus' gift of salvation is our joy.

- Jesus offers salvation to anyone who believes in Him.
- This salvation satisfies our sin debt and makes a way for us to be reconciled to God.
- This salvation restores our relationship with the Creator of the world and allows us to have eternal life with Him.
- Jesus' death on the cross gives us a new heart and makes us new creations.
- Because we are made new, His gift to us fills us with joy.



Hide a box of treasure, such as candy coins, or some other treasure the children can keep when they find the box. When the children find the box, remind them of the hidden treasure that the man found and gave everything for. Tell them that Jesus is like the hidden treasure to us. He is more valuable than anything else.

### Faith in Jesus brings us joy and peace.

- When we trust in Jesus, we can have peace in all circumstances.
- This peace, as a result of our trust in Jesus and the truth of His Word, brings us joy.
- This joy is present in us because Jesus lives inside of us.
- Those who have believed in Jesus are in a constant relationship with Him through His Spirit who lives inside of them.
- Because we can trust Jesus always, our joy results in peace that the rest of the world can't understand.

### Jesus brings eternal joy.

- Trust in Jesus brings a joy that is always present.
- Even when our faith grows dim at times, the joy that is available to us is always there because Jesus is always there.
- He is our joy and He never leaves us.
- Because He is everlasting in the lives of those who have believed, the joy He gives is everlasting.
- We find real, true joy when we trust in Jesus as our Savior.

*Who brings us eternal joy? (Jesus is the only source of true, eternal joy.)*

3. 1 Peter 1:8-9: Our hope in Christ brings peace and joy when we fully trust in Jesus.

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## HOOKS



### I've Got That Joy

Help the children create “joy sticks” using empty paper towel rolls. Tape one end of the roll and then fill the roll with beans or beads. Tape the other end and help the children decorate their “joy sticks”. Spend some time singing praise songs about joy with the children as they use their joy sticks. Lead them in a discussion about how Jesus is our only source of true joy.



- We may look for joy in other places, but we do not really find true lasting joy.
- Only Jesus can bring us true joy.
- The joy we receive when we find Jesus is everlasting.



### A Valuable Pearl

Help the children create their own pearl using small Styrofoam balls. Help the children paint their pearls. As they paint them, talk with them about how Jesus is like the valuable pearl. He is worth everything in our lives because He is the only source of true joy for us. When we believe in Him, our sin debt is paid and this brings us eternal joy.

