

LIFE IS JOYFUL

STORY: CREATION / YEAR: ETERNITY

BIG TRUTH: LIFE IS JOYFUL

Psalm 4:6-8; Jeremiah 15:16; Matthew 13:44; John 15:5-11; Romans 14:17; 15:13

BIBLE VERSE: PSALM 16:11

“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

BIG IDEAS

- We were created for joy in this life.
- Joy is only found in God alone.
- Joy is greater than our circumstances.

BIBLE STORY: ACTS 5:17-42

Jesus’ apostles performed many miracles. Their miracles caused the high priests and council of priests to become angry. They arrested the apostles, placed them in prison, beat them, and then released them. The apostles left the prison rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus. We can find joy in all circumstances when we know Jesus.

STORY: CREATION

God created everything. Everything we see, hear, feel, taste, and that exists was created by Him. Not only did He create everything, but He created everything perfectly, including humanity. He created mankind in His very image and likeness to reflect His worth. All of creation was made just like He wanted and designed it to be. To His delight, God looked at everything He made and declared that it was good. All creation exists for God, is good, and was created to bring Him glory.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- Life comes from God



Every child should feel:

- Responsible to use the life that God has given them for His glory



Every child should:

- Find joy in the life that God has given them



Every child should want:

- To submit their lives to God’s plans

FAMILY DEVOTION: EVERYTHING FROM NOTHING

When the world began, God needed nothing to create it. His Word is powerful. All things obey His Word. When He spoke, things began to exist; life began to form and has continued forming under His command. Man must use materials to create. God needs nothing.

BIBLE VERSE: PSALM 16:11

“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

We can know joy when we know God.

- In order to know true joy, we must know God.
- Joy is a fruit of the Spirit and is only truly felt when we know and believe in Jesus Christ.
- When we repent of our sins and believe in Jesus, we can know true joy because His Spirit lives inside of us.
- God allows us to know Him when we repent of our sin.
- When we repent and believe in Jesus, the separation that was between God and us is removed.

God allows us to experience the joy of knowing Him.

- God is perfect and holy.
- He is joy itself.
- When we know God, we can't help but know joy because He is joy.
- God allows us to know Him and it brings us joy.
- The joy we experience in knowing God is so great that it is indescribable.
- God chooses to allow us to know Him and to have joy.

When we know God, we can have joy in every circumstance.

- Knowing God means we know joy.
- Having a relationship with God means we have joy.
- When we have a relationship with God, we can have joy no matter what our circumstances are because He produces joy.
- Our hope is no longer in our circumstances, but is in God. He never changes and never leaves us.
- Our joy can be forever when we have a relationship with God and place our hope in Him rather than our circumstances.

BIBLE STORY: ACTS 5:17-42

The Apostles Rejoice At Suffering

Opening Illustration:

On heavy cardstock paper, write down different things that God created. Make sure to include the following: sea creatures, birds, animals, angels, and man. You can have as many pieces of cardstock as you like. Place the pieces of cardstock on the floor and then play a game of beanbag toss with the children. When a child hits one of the pieces of paper, they get to turn it over and tell the class something that God created. When every child has had a turn, lead them in a discussion about God as the Creator of all things. Make sure to include that God created the sea creatures, birds, animals, angels, and man and He rules over everything.

BIG IDEA: WE WERE CREATED FOR JOY IN THIS LIFE.¹**Joy comes from trust in God.**

- Because God is perfect, all that He does is right and true.
- We can have a complete trust in God because He is perfect and holy.
- When we trust in God, we experience an indescribable joy because He fills us with Himself.
- We can know that no matter what, God does not change and His love for us is everlasting.
- Knowing that God does not change, and His love for us never ends, brings us great joy.



Help the children make a list of things that bring them joy. Remind the children that we can have true joy through knowing God.

We were created for a relationship with God.

- Our sin separates us from God.
- We cannot know God or be in a relationship with Him unless we repent and believe in Jesus.
- We are created to be in a relationship with God.
- Because we are created to be in a relationship with God, we know we were created for joy in this life.
- Knowing God through a relationship with Him brings joy.
- We can have joy in this life when we know God through a relationship with Him.

Knowing God brings joy.

- Knowing God brings us joy no matter what.
- When we know God, we learn about His character, and our hope is increased.
- We can find joy in all things because we know God who does not change.
- When we know God, we know that He can change anything, but His very character will never change.
- This knowledge of God, the Holy One, brings joy.

How can we have joy in this life? (When we know God and have a relationship with Him, we can have joy in this life.)

1. Romans 15:13: God fills us with joy and peace. Knowing Him brings joy to our lives because we can hope in Him forever.

BIG IDEA: JOY IS ONLY FOUND IN GOD ALONE.²**God is the source of all joy.**

- Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the Trinity, or Godhead.
- In order to really have joy, we have to know God.
- God is the source of all joy in our lives.
- God is the beginning of all things, and He is the giver of all good things.
- Joy is a good gift from God.



Spend some time singing praise songs with the children. Remind the children that God is our only source of true joy.

True joy is found in obedience to God.

- When we seek to obey God, we will find real joy.
- Because our created purpose is to bring God glory, we can find joy in obeying Him.
- The Apostles found joy in obeying God by proclaiming His name in the earth.
- They were joyful that they were able to follow in Christ's footsteps in helping people know God.

Any other source of joy or happiness in this life isn't eternal.

- Other things in life can seemingly bring us joy, but they do not last.
- Things of this world and in this life can seem to make us happy or joyful, but those things are passing away. They will not last forever like a relationship with God.
- All other sources of happiness or joy are earthly and will end when Jesus returns if not before.
- Our only true source of joy is in a relationship with God.
- When we have a relationship with Him, we will find joy in obeying Him.

Who is our only source of joy? (God is our only eternal and lasting source of joy.)

2. John 15:11; John 17:13: Joy can be found in obeying God when we have a personal relationship with Him.

BIG IDEA: JOY IS GREATER THAN OUR CIRCUMSTANCES.³**Because Jesus gives peace through His Spirit, we can always have joy.**

- Those who have repented and believed in Jesus have the Holy Spirit living inside of them.
- Because of the Holy Spirit, those who have been saved can have peace that passes all understanding.
- Jesus gives peace to those who know Him.
- This peace allows us to have joy in every circumstance because our hearts do not have to worry or be troubled.

We can always have joy because of who Jesus is.

- Jesus is the Savior of the world. His death paid our sin debt, and now we can have a right relationship with God.
- Because we have a right relationship with God, we can know Him and experience indescribable joy in all situations.
- Jesus does not change. He is fully God and fully man. He has experienced every temptation that we could possibly experience and He overcame it.
- Because Jesus is the Savior and He defeated death and hell, we can rejoice in every circumstance because we know our future is secure.

Our circumstances don't have to control our joy.

- Those who have followed Jesus by repenting and believing in Him have a new hope.
- This new hope can triumph over our present circumstances no matter how difficult they are.
- Jesus promised His disciples that He was sending the Holy Spirit to be our Helper.
- Because those who repent and believe in Jesus have the Holy Spirit, true joy is always possible.
- Our joy doesn't have to be controlled by our circumstances. We can always have joy and hope in who Jesus is and what He has done.

What helps us overcome any circumstance to have joy? (The power of Jesus inside of us when we have repented and believed helps us always have joy.)



Bring in several balloons. Have the children blow up the balloons and tie a few of them. Ask the children to gather in a circle. Place the balloons with air in them in the center of the circle and also several balloons without air in them. Ask the children to toss the balloons around. After they've tried tossing all of the balloons, talk with them about how the balloons without air couldn't really be tossed. It's like when we have the Holy Spirit and can always have joy. When we don't have the Holy Spirit, we can't have joy.

3. John 14:27: Jesus gives peace to those who repent and believe in Him. This peace helps us overcome any circumstance and enables us to have joy through Jesus.

HOOKS

**Joyous Always**

Have the children look up verses that pertain to joy and having joy. Use the following and add any to them that you want: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:4, Romans 12:12, Psalm 94:19, and Psalm 118:24. Set a timer and see who can find all the verses before the timer runs out. After you play several times to see who can find the verse the quickest, talk with them about how we can have joy in this life because of Jesus.



- Jesus is the reason that we can have joy in this life.
- His Spirit enables us to have joy no matter our circumstances.
- We can have joy because He never changes and we can always hope in Him.

**Happy Hangman**

Play a game of Hangman with the children using words from the Bible Story. Help the children come up with their own words to use. Remind them that we can have joy regardless of our circumstances because of Jesus. Talk with them about how Jesus gives us peace and we can have joy in every situation.



- Just like the Apostles rejoiced that they suffered for Jesus' name, we can rejoice in all of our circumstances.
- God is the reason we are able to have joy, no matter what.
- When we choose to trust and hope in Him, then we can have true joy.