



## Paul's Joy in Prison

**Bible Story:** Paul's Joy in Prison, Philippians 1:12-30

**Bottom Line:** While he was in prison, Paul told the Philippian church to be joyful.

**Memory Verse:** <sup>20</sup> I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Philippians 1:20-21 NIV

**Christ Connection:** God used Paul's difficult circumstances to spread the gospel and build the church. Paul knew that because Jesus suffered to bring salvation to the world, believers doing God's work would suffer too.

### 10 Minutes SOCIAL: SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

#### Dots and boxes

**What You Need:** paper, different colored markers (1 for each kid)

#### What You Do:

- Instruct kids to form pairs.
- Give each pair a piece of paper and two markers of different colors.
- Lead each pair to draw a grid of dots—3-by-3 or 4-by-4.
- Players should take turns joining two neighboring dots with a horizontal or vertical line.
- When a player completes the fourth side of a box, she should write her initials in the boxes and draw another line.
- The player to complete the most boxes wins.

**What You Say** "Was it hard to stop your partner from winning? Today's Bible story is about a plan to stop Paul. Did God let this evil plan stop Him? Let's find out."

### 10 Minutes Worship: CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING

#### GAME, SONGS, OFFERING AND PRAYER

#### Game- Cantagious

**What You Need:** 3 empty soda cans per player, 3 full closed soda cans per player

**What You Do-** Each player will move the soda cans by stacking them and then separating them without setting them down or leaning them against your body. The cans must change hands at the end all full cans must be in opposite hand from where it started in the end.

**What You Say-** Difficult circumstances teach us so much about ourselves and others. In today's story Paul learned that his circumstances helped more people know Jesus and understand salvation

### 15 Minutes LARGE GROUP: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS

#### Today's Passage

<sup>27</sup> Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel <sup>28</sup> without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. <sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, <sup>30</sup> since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have. **Philippians 1:27-30**

#### Context

We've been hearing a lot of stories about Paul, a man who loved Jesus and wanted to share the news of the gospel with everyone he met. Let's review the stories we've discussed the last few weeks. I'll say the story, and you respond with the main point from that week. Ready?

- **"The Plan to Stop Paul"**— When Paul was arrested, God protected him so he could preach about Jesus.
- **"Paul Before Rulers"**— Paul preached about Jesus to governors and kings.
- **"The Shipwreck"**— God protected Paul in the shipwreck so he could stand before Caesar.

#### Today's Takeaways

- Joy comes from knowing who God is and what He has promised us.
- Joy comes from trusting Jesus.
- **BL: While he was in prison, Paul told the Philippian church to be joyful. |**
- Happiness is temporary and relies on our circumstances.
- Happiness is a good feeling based on good things happening in your life.
- As Christians, we can have joy even when we are sad because we know that Jesus is King and we will live forever with Him.

#### TOC & Prayer



Give kids a chance to believe in Jesus for the first time. Remind them that God loves them so much that He sent Jesus to earth to pay for their sins. Lead them to pray as you pray. Pray that believers will submit their lives to the Holy Spirit, follow Jesus, and tell others about Him.

## 25 Minutes **SMALL GROUPS**: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

### Discussion Questions:

- Can you think of a time you felt joyful? What caused you to feel that way?
- Can you imagine being in prison?
- Can you imagine being joyful while also being in prison?
- Why do you think Paul was joyful?

### Activity: Pick a side

**What You Need:** paper, markers, tape

#### What You Do:

- Label one side of the room with a smiling face and one side with a frowning face.
- Ask the questions describing events, items, or circumstances; and ask kids to decide if those things make them smile or frown.
- After each question, kids should move to the side of the room that represents the emotion they feel.

How do you respond when it is raining outside?

How do you respond when someone asks you to share some of your lunch?

How do you respond when you are unfairly called out during a game?

How do you respond when school is canceled?

How do you respond when your brother or sister asks to play with you?

How do you respond when asked to read a book?

How do you respond when you have to share in front of the class?

**What You Say** "Our circumstances in life can make us happy or sad, but joy isn't based on circumstances. While he was in prison, Paul told the Philippian church to be joyful. Paul knew that true joy comes from a deep trust in Jesus, and the suffering Paul faced couldn't take away that joy. Encourage kids to draw something on the extra paper, to help them remember what joy is."

### Activity: Memory Verse Activity

**What You Need:** Memory Verse Poster, foam ball

#### What You Do:

- Instruct kids to stand in a circle.
- Show the memory verse poster and lead kids to read Philippians 1:20-21 aloud.
- Give a foam ball to one player in the circle.
- Explain that the player with the ball will say the first word in the key passage and then toss to ball to another player, who will say the next word, and so on until kids say the entire key passage and reference.
- Allow kids to refer to the key passage poster if they need help remembering the words.

**What You Say** "This is a bold statement made by Paul, but he could say this because he believed firmly in the love of Christ and trusted Him with his life."

### Pray and Dismiss:

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

#### What You Say:

"Pray, asking God to draw kids to Jesus so they seek and find true joy only in Him."

## 5 Minutes **HOME**: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

As adults arrive to pick up, ask kids to talk to their family about joy. Encourage a family member to share with the kids a time that they experienced joy and how they knew it was from God.