



Fruit of the Spirit

Joy - Lesson 3

"Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again - rejoice!" Philippians 4:4

Circle Time

Supplies:

Large clear cup

Pie Plate

5 Smaller cups

Water bottle

Printed words for cups

1 Teaspoon of baking soda

Vinegar

Set one large clear cup into the center of a pie plate, and have 5 smaller cups (one with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water, one that says "Pray" with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water, one that says "Hard Times" with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar, one that says "God's Word" $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water, and one that says "Holy Spirit" with one teaspoon baking soda.)

Can anyone tell me what our memory verse for the fruit of joy is? (Let a few children say it. If there are no volunteers, help the children say it all together at least two times.) **That's right! God's word** tells us to "Always be full of joy in the Lord." What if you are having a bad day or you are really sad about something? Can you still have joy? Yes, we can still have joy even in hard times. When you trust God and decide to follow His ways His Spirit produces fruit in your life. Remember joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit. God's Spirit helps to change our hearts so our thoughts and actions are ones of GOOD fruit like God's. We begin to think and act with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

When we have a bad day or when something sad happens in our lives God wants to give us joy. (Hold up the empty clear cup.) Here is a clear cup. It is like us when we become a Christian. (Start pouring

water into the cup stopping when it is about half full and continue speaking.) When we choose to follow Jesus and ask Him to forgive us of our sin God does what this water is doing; He forgives us and washes our sin away and begins filling us with joy. We get to have a brand new life and choose to obey God and follow Him.

That doesn't mean we won't have bad days though. (Hold up the cup with 1/2 cup vinegar in it labeled "Hard Times".) We will still have hard times like when we lose at a game we are playing or when we fall off our bike and skin our knees or when our friends treat us unkindly. We will sometimes want to be unkind back or whine and complain or we might even just want to give up. (Start pouring the vinegar into the clear cup.) But God can use the hard times in our lives to teach us to rely on Him and give us more joy.

When we have hard times one of the best things we can do is pray to God and tell Him how we feel. We can thank Him for always being with us. Even in hard times He never leaves us. (Start pouring the water from the "pray" cup into the clear cup.) As we go to God in prayer our hard times often seem smaller and He grows our joy.

We can also read God's word - the Bible - and allow Him to talk to us. (Hold up the cup that says "God's word" and start pouring the water into the clear cup. Make sure you fill the cup so that there is only about 1/2 inch of space left at the top.) Reading God's word helps us remember all of God's promises and it helps us trust Him to do what He says. We can learn to rejoice and praise God when we go through hard times.

God's spirit is like the baking soda in this cup. (Pour the baking soda into the clear cup.) When God's spirit is in charge of our thoughts, attitudes and actions then the fruit of joy will overflow in your life. (The clear cup should overflow into the pan.) His spirit gives us His joy and strength in our hard times. We can have joy knowing God is in control and He always keeps His promises.

Prayer Time

Share prayer requests and pray together.

Activity Time

The goal of this time is to utilize a variety of engaging activities –passive and active play, crafts, application, and more – to reinforce what was taught in the lesson. While you may not get to every activity, we encourage you to complete the "Take-Home" activity so children leave with a tangible reminder of what was discussed today.

If numbers are high and/or time and space allow, you may want to use a center format: divide the class into groups (one for each activity) and rotate through the centers after an allotted time.



Joyful Noise Bell Chime

Supplies:

Small terra cotta pots (1 per child)

Clear verse labels (1 per child)

Crayons/Stickers for decorating
Plastic lacing cord 22" long (1 piece per child)
Pony beads (1 per child)
Bells (1-2 per child)

Let the children decorate the pots. Go over the verse with them as they stick the labels onto their pots. Then help them assemble the beads and bells to create the bell chime. (It may be best to have one group decorating while the other is getting bells/beads threaded and then switch. See the instruction sheet in the bin.)

Show the children how they can shake their chimes to make a joyful noise to the Lord. These can be hung at home to remind children that we can be joyful in all circumstances and even in hard times, we can rejoice and praise God. Tell them they can shake their chime as a reminder to be joyful!



Overflowing Joy

Supplies:

Paper cups (4 per bin)
Pie plates (4 per bin)
Water bottles (4 per bin)
Vinegar (1 bottle per room)
Baking soda (1 teaspoon per child)

Choose 3 to 4 children to demonstrate the Overflowing Joy activity. Give children the pie plates and have them put a small paper cup in the center. Pour about a 1/2 inch of vinegar in the bottom of each of their cups and have them add water until it is almost to the top of the cup. Make sure they hold onto the cup to help them to try not to spill. Then let them add in a teaspoon of the baking soda and let the class watch their joy overflow.



Spread the Joy

Supplies:

"Circles" Scenarios
Beanbags

Tape the circles to the floor. Have children stand several feet away behind a tape line. Let the children take turns throwing a beanbag onto one of the circles. (It will help to put the circles close together.) When the beanbag lands on a circle with a scenario, read it out loud and have the child go to the back of the line. If the beanbag lands on a sad face have the child say the memory verse as the GOOD NEWS!



Full of Joy Relay

Supplies:

Large bin/basket of cotton balls

Two small bins

Two plastic spoons

Split the children into two equal groups and have them line up in two lines. Set a large bucket of cotton balls between the two lines and the two small bins down at the other end of the room; one for each line. Give the first child in each line a spoon. Have them place a cotton ball or two onto their spoon and run down to the other side of the room and drop their cotton balls into the small bin. If they drop their cotton ball have them pick it up and put it back onto their spoon before continuing to run down to the small bin. Have them drop their cotton ball into the small bin and run back and hand the spoon of to the next child in line. Continue until they fill their bin full of "joy."



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