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SERIES: TRUE CHRISTMAS

What Is Joy?

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Lesson Overview

Today, we're going to talk about joy! Joy is just another word for being happy. Did you know that we have a lot of reasons to be joyful? We do and we'll learn about just a few reasons in this lesson. First, we should be happy that we have life. You have a heart that beats and the ability to breathe! Second, we should be happy and joyful for the cool toys and games we already have and look forward to the news ones we might get for Christmas. Third, we should be joyful for all the people who love us and take care of us. And, the real reason we should be joyful is that we have Jesus! After all, Christmas is celebrating his birthday when he chose to come to live among us so he could die to pay for our sins. So, remember to be joyful this Christmas season and be thankful for all that God has already given you.

Classroom Agenda

- (5 min) PLAY: Let kids start working on Activity Page #1.**
- (5 min) WARM UP: What do you look most forward to at Christmas?** (Tip: Christmas is such a fun time of year with lights and decorations, yummy food, and of course, presents!)
- (5 min) PREVIEW: Write out the Big Idea, Memory Verse, and Key Question on a whiteboard.** Have the kids copy it down on Activity Page #1 (if applicable).
- (20 min) LARGE GROUP: Gather for songs and videos with other kids.** Then return to class to finish this guide.
- (2 min) RECAP: Read the Lesson Overview (see above).**
- (3 min) KQ: Answer the Key Question.** (Answer: **Because joy reminds us to be thankful for what we already have.** (This is important. Christmas is fun because we're excited to open those presents under the tree. We're excited to get new stuff. But, the truth is, we should be just as excited and thankful for all the things we already have. When we choose to have joy, we realize how blessed we are and appreciate all that God has already given us.)
 - Bonus Questions:** Why is joy important? Why is it important to be thankful? **4-5th:** What are some things you need to thank God for today?
- (5 min) EXPLORE: Read Philippians 4:4-5. What does it mean to have the joy of the Lord? How can you share that joy with others?** (Answer: The joy of the Lord means we are happy and thankful for all that God has given us through Jesus. Because of Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we have the power to live a life that honors God. Jesus also provides the way for us to live in heaven some day. Now, those are reasons to be full of joy! We can share this joy, first and foremost, by sharing the truth of Jesus with others. We can also do it by serving others in need, being a good friend, and being an encourager to those who are sad.)
- (10 min) PLAY: Choose a group activity from Activity Page #2.**
- (5 min) CLOSE: Share prayer requests and pray as a class.** Encourage kids to use the Family Guide at home with their parents - and remind them to go online to pursueGOD.org/kids to find this week's lesson video.

Big Idea

Joy is being happy with what you have.

Key Question

Why is joy important?

Memory Verse

Luke 2:10-11 "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David."

Teacher instructions: Choose an activity for your classroom.

OPTION 1: JOY ORNAMENT

Instructions:

- Give each kid a Joy ornament (page 5). Give each kid a piece of red construction paper.
- Have kids color and decorate their ornament. Then have kids glue the ornament onto the construction paper.
- Have kids punch a hole in the top middle and give them a piece of yarn. Help them tie the ends of the yarn together so they can hang their ornament on their Christmas tree.
- As they work, remind the kids to be joyful and happy this Christmas and to be thankful for all the blessings God has given them.

Supplies needed: Joy ornament (pg. 5, precut, 1 per kid) Red Construction paper (pre cut to same size as ornament, 1 per kid), Glue, Crayons, Hole punches, Red yarn (cut into 8 in. pieces, 1 per kid)

Bonus Activity: "Memory Verse Game"

Say the memory verse as a class. Say it again while **clapping**. Say it again while **marching** in place.

OPTION 2: CANDY CANE GRAB GAME

Instructions:

- Before starting the game, place a pile of candy canes on a table. Have two kids come up and stand on either side of the table. Give each kid a candy cane. Have them place the candy cane in their mouth with the hooked end facing out. When you say "Go!" have the kids race to see how many candy canes they can remove from the big pile in a minute using their candy cane as a hook and no hands! Continue until all the kids have had a turn.
- Kids can eat their candy cane (that was in their mouth) when they're done playing.

Supplies needed:

Regular sized Candy canes

Bonus Activity: "Telephone"

Have the class sit in a circle. Whisper the **Big Idea** into the ear of one kid. Have that kid whisper it to the kid on their right. Continue around the circle. Last kid has to say the message they heard.



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Christmas time is a great time for JOY! It's a time to remember what you have and thank God for giving it to you.

#1. We Have _____!

Are you breathing right now? Are you blinking? Are you thinking? That means you're alive! Be joyful! When's the last time you just stopped to say thank you to God for life? He gives you oxygen to breathe every day, and he keeps your heart beating.

#2. We Have _____!

What's your favorite gift you've ever gotten at Christmas? Did you ever think about why you even get gifts? After all, it's Jesus' birthday... not yours! We get gifts because God loves to give good things to his children. So even on HIS birthday, WE get gifts! So be joyful! Even if you don't have everything you want, you should stop to think about the good stuff that you do have.

#3. We Have _____ Who Love Us!

Did you know that people matter even more than stuff? Every kid has family and friends who love and care for them. Moms, dads, grandmas, grandpas, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, friends and more. Make your own list of the people who love you. Now look at that big list. That should make you joyful! Get a picture of some of those people in your mind right now. Are you smiling? You should be! Those people are God's gift to you.

#4. We Have _____!

Now kids, don't forget this last thing. The greatest gift at Christmas time is Jesus himself. He's our real source for joy. Jesus came to set us free from sin so we can live in heaven some day. That's what the angel said to the shepherds in the Christmas story.

Answers: *Life, Stuff, People, Jesus*

Parent

Signature: _____

Questions:

1. *What was your favorite part of the video? What is one thing you learned from the video?*
2. *What do you look most forward to at Christmas?*
3. *What is joy? Why is it important?*
4. *Why should Jesus be the most important person in your life?*
5. *Read [Philippians 4:4-5](#). What does it mean to have the joy of the Lord? How can you share that joy with others?*
6. *How will you apply this lesson to your life this week?*

Instructions: Color the picture.

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HAPPY WITH
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Key Question

Why is joy important?

Memory Verse

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