

Rejoice in the Lord!

Theme: Joy — Belonging to and serving the Lord

Sunday Morning Lesson

Pre-Class Activity: Follow the sample on page 65 of this Guide to make a worksheet for each student featuring the new Memory Verse. For younger students, have paper and crayons or markers and have them draw a picture of the new Memory Verse.

Bible Facts: Special Delivery: Bible Facts

Memory Verse: Introduce the new Memory Verse. Have Memory Verse strips in the pocket chart. Read it aloud together. Ask “Who, What, When, and Why” about the Memory Verse.

Prayer

Lesson of the Day

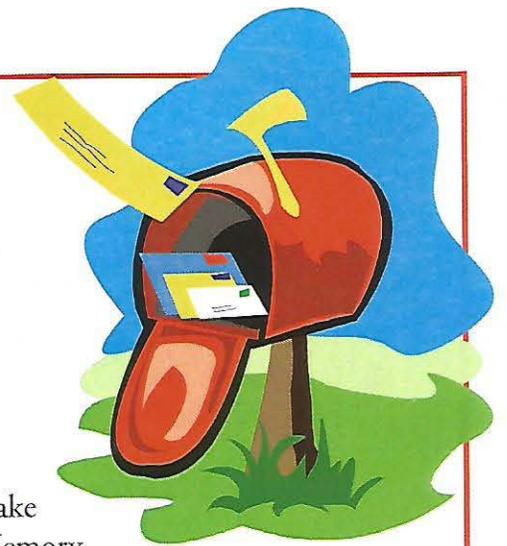
Ideas for Teaching the Lesson

1. In the classroom Bibles, have the students find and mark Philippians 4:4 and 4:13.
2. Using tan or brown sheets, brown paper, or cardboard, set up a prison cell in the classroom.  Make the room dark and dismal. Shade the lights so that it's hard to see and you have to use a candle. Tell the story of the apostle Paul being in prison because he was preaching about Jesus. Talk with the students about how Paul could have felt in such a place. Then talk about what Paul did and how he felt. He spent time writing letters. The prison letters are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

Suddenly, begin making the prison cell a brighter and better place. Bring out some flowers. Open a window to let in some light. Have brightly colored paper to put up over the brown paper in places. Talk about how these items change the character of the cell. Now, take away all the bright things to illustrate that Paul didn't have these, but he was happy anyway. Even though his physical surroundings were not great, he was happy from within himself.

3. With your students sitting in the prison cell, teach the lesson from Paul's letter to Philippi. Tell the message of Philippians in a way that emphasizes what brings joy and what makes us sad. If they hear something joyful, they give you a big smile. If they hear something sad, they give you a frown or sad face. Have them tell why about each one.

The teacher is Paul writing to Christians. He writes about ...



- Living for Jesus
- Thinking like Jesus
- Rejoicing in the Lord

4. Re-teach the lesson by reading a shortened form of Paul's letter to the Philippians that you have on a rolled up scroll. Prepare the letter with the main points you have covered in class, but having some mistakes. Have the students detect and correct the mistakes.

5. Read or tell two scenes that show the difference between joy and fun. Examples are as follows:

☀ The phone rings and your mother learns that her mother, your grandmother, has been in a car accident. It was a big crash, so your family piled in the car to drive three hours to see and check on her. During the trip, your family talked about what might have happened and worried about your grandmother. You arrive at the hospital and hurry to your grandmother's room. When you open the door, you see your grandmother sitting up in bed laughing. She was unconscious for a while, but now is in good condition. You have great "joy" inside and give her a big hug.

Think of a time in which you went to an amusement park. Think about the rides that you liked the best and what "fun" you had riding them.

Talk with the students about the difference between "joy" and "fun." Which is more valuable and why?

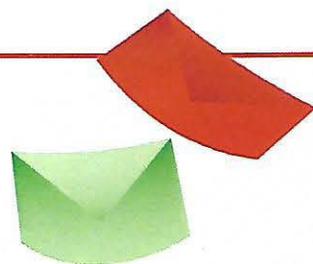
6. Put the key verse scroll on the Letters from Heaven Wall.

Suggested Song(s) for this Lesson

- I Have the Joy
- Philippians 4:4
- This Is the Day

Things to Get or Do for Sunday Morning

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Wednesday Night Lesson

Pre-Class Activity: Have a worksheet featuring the scrambled words – *joy, glad, cheerful, happy, rejoice, joyful*. Students will unscramble the words. Use the worksheet as a lead-in to talk about ways students can show the attitudes expressed in these words.

Bible Facts: Special Delivery: Bible Facts

Memory Verse: Read the Memory Verse together. Ask the students what they remember of “Who, What, When, and Why” about the Memory Verse.

Prayer

Starter

Think of what it would be like to spend a few days in jail, especially if you didn’t deserve being there. The days would be loooooong and the nights would be lonely. You could have visitors only every now and then, if anyone came at all. Do you think you would be happy in jail? Where was Paul when he wrote a letter to the Philippians? Did he allow the jail to control the way he thought and felt?

Briefly Review the Lesson from Sunday Morning

Ideas for Illustrating and Reinforcing the Lesson

1. *Objective: Consider Paul’s prayer for the Philippians*

☀ Develop a worksheet that will emphasize these parts of Paul’s prayer:

- Thankful for the Philippians’ participation in the gospel for a long time
- Thankful that they are partakers of grace along with him
- Request that the Philippians’ love will abound in knowledge and discernment
- Request that they be filled with the fruit of righteousness
- Giving glory and praise to God

2. *Objective: Make applications of things to think about*

On a marker board or poster board, list the things that Paul says we are to think about in Philippians 4:8 — what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, respectful, excellent, and worthy of praise. Ask the students to help you think of an attitude or action that shows each of these. Prepare to help the students in completing the list.

3. *Objective: Demonstrate the need to leave some things behind and press on*

☀ Prepare a kind of sled made of a carpet remnant and a rope. Cut an 18" x 24" piece of carpet and make two holes in one end, one on either side, and attach a rope for pulling. Have several heavy items that represent things people carry around in their lives – a few books, a large coffee

can filled with rocks, a 10# barbell. Make sure that the items are those that will stack fairly easily. Choose a student to pull the sled with only a Bible and another small book on it. This represents a life lived for Jesus. But things begin to pile up on the sled – worries, troubles, guilt, problems, failures, and sins not repented of. Place the heavy objects on the carpet. The sled gets harder and harder to pull. Things will fall off, but the puller goes back and puts them on again. He is making slower and slower progress. Finally, he does what is necessary to unload some of the burdens. He prays to God about his worries and troubles. He talks to God and to another person about how he failed but he must move on. He confesses things that are wrong in his life and asks God's forgiveness. As he takes these actions, the heavy objects are removed. Repeat this process quickly with each student as you read Philippians 3:13-14. Unload the sled each time when you read "forgetting what lies behind."

4. *Objective: Reinforce rejoicing in the Lord*

- ☀ Hold up cards that have the following words scrambled: joy, glad, cheerful, happy, rejoice, joyful. Let students unscramble the words. Talk about ways that the students can show the attitudes expressed in these words.

Suggested Song(s) for this Lesson

- I Have the Joy
- Philippians 4:4
- This Is the Day

Things to Get or Do
for Wednesday Night

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