



Joy is choosing to celebrate what God is doing.

DAY 1

Read Luke 2:10-11

This summer, we're talking about JOY—choosing to celebrate what God is doing! There are so many things we can thank God for and celebrate with JOY, including the birth of Jesus, God's one and only Son.

Have you ever heard of Christmas in July? While it might sound crazy, we don't have to wait until December because Jesus' birth is something to celebrate every day of the year!

On the night Jesus was born, an angel appeared to an ordinary group of shepherds to announce His birth! They told the shepherds this good news would bring GREAT joy for all people. Because Jesus brings joy to the world.

Joy to the World Mural

Grab a paper plate and use a marker to divide it into four sections. In one section, draw the night sky with a bright light and a speech bubble that reads "Good news of great joy!" Save the plate to add to each day this week.

DAY 2

Read Luke 2:15

It's fun to think about how we might have reacted if we'd been in that field, minding our own business.

Shepherd 1: "Let's go to Bethlehem!"

Shepherd 2: "Hold on, my ears are still ringing from all the singing."

Shepherd 3: "Can we stop for snacks? All the excitement made me hungry!"

Shepherd 1: "Guys, come ON! It's Jesus, the Messiah. This is literally a once in a lifetime opportunity. Let's go!"

They probably didn't sound exactly like that. But it IS important to remember that these were regular, everyday people just like you and me because God sent Jesus for everyone. Jesus came to bring joy to the WHOLE world.

Joy to the World Mural, Part 2

In the next section of your plate, draw a shepherd and a sheep or two with a pencil. Add a speech bubble that reads, "Let's go!" over their heads and fill in with markers or crayons to add color.

DAY 3

Read Luke 2:16–17

Have you ever heard some really good news and you just couldn't wait to share it? Maybe you found out that your family is going on vacation. Or that the math test that was supposed to be on Friday got moved to Monday. Or that your grandma is feeling better. When we have good news, we want to share it!

That's how the shepherds felt when they saw Jesus. They couldn't wait to tell everyone. Immediately after seeing baby Jesus with their own eyes, the shepherds told everyone what they'd seen and heard. They wanted everyone to know that Jesus brings joy to the world.

Joy to the World Mural, Part 3

On the third section of your plate, draw baby Jesus in the manger, which is a feeding trough for animals. Then add a speech bubble that reads, "Jesus is here!"

DAY 4

Read Luke 2:18–19

When the shepherds found Jesus, they couldn't contain their joy. They wanted to tell everyone they could find. And the Bible tells us that everyone who heard this good news from the shepherds about Jesus was amazed!

But Mary had a different reaction. The word "treasured" here means to "preserve knowledge or memories." After the shepherds left, Mary stopped to take the time to reflect, hold on to, and preserve these memories of Jesus' birth like a treasure she could think about over and over. As He grew, Mary would learn and experience for herself the JOY Jesus came to bring to the whole world.

Joy to the World in July Mural, Part 4

In the last section of your plate, draw a picture of a treasure, like a precious jewel. Above the jewel, write, "Mary treasured these things in her heart."

Jesus brings joy to the world.



_____ Name

_____ Parent Signature

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DAY 1

Read John 2:9-10

Have you ever heard the phrase “party pooper”? In our Bible story this week, Jesus was the opposite of that. Instead of the party ending too early when the host ran out of wine, Jesus stepped in to help. By performing a miracle and turning the water into wine, Jesus allowed the celebration to continue! Why? Because He knew that spending time celebrating with family and friends was important. Jesus showed us how to have joy.

Party Planning

If you could plan a party for your family and friends, what would you do? What kind of food would you serve? Grab some construction paper and coloring utensils to create a party invitation. Make sure to include the name of the party (for example: Evan’s 5th Birthday).

DAY 2

Read Galatians 5:22-23

Today’s verses aren’t about strawberries or bananas! When we trust Jesus as our Savior and His Spirit lives in us, the “fruit” we produce should look like the things listed in this verse, including JOY! Even when things don’t go our way.

Real joy, the kind that comes from knowing God, means that even when we have bad days, we remember what Jesus has done for us. We can celebrate, even on the crummiest of days because Jesus came to make a way for us to have a relationship with God, now and forever.

Bananas of Joy

Do you have a banana or two in your kitchen? If so, grab a plastic knife and carve the word “JOY” into the peel along the side. Observe what happens over the course of a few hours. “JOY” should stand out more and more. As you eat your banana, thank God for sending Jesus to give us joy!

Read John 16:33

Have you ever had a day where nothing seemed to go your way? Your brother used the last of the milk, so you had to eat a bowl of dry cereal for breakfast. Your dog had an accident in the house, and you had to clean it up. You fell and scraped your knee at the pool.

Jesus reminds us here that we *will* have trouble. But be encouraged! Jesus is bigger than all those annoying or hard things. He made a way for everyone who believes in Him to have a relationship with God. We can look for joy and find it always, when we remember what Jesus has done for us.

Talk It Out

Read today's verse out loud to an adult or older sibling. Talk about any "trouble" you faced today and why it made you sad or frustrated. Then spend some time praying together, thanking God for sending Jesus. Ask God to help you face trouble with JOY and peace!

Read James 1:2-3

When you face hard things, do you want to whistle your favorite tune, smile wide, or say to yourself, "You know, my life is pretty great?" NO WAY! When hard things happen, and they certainly will, you are allowed to be upset or sad or angry.

But James is reminding us that every trial is a chance to learn something, to grow in our faith and trust in God. Hard things are still hard things BUT we can remember that God is with us and loves us. God sent Jesus to save us.

When we keep trusting God even on hard days, our faith and trust grows stronger.

Crack The Code

Use the code below to unlock the letters and reveal the verse.

"
 / - + < : >) +)

 # & ~ ; @ (= > |

James 1:2b, NlrV

#	%	*	^	()	-	+	=	:	!	\$	<	>	~	@	&	/	;	\	
A	B	C	D	E	F	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	W	Y

Jesus showed us how to have joy.



 Name

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DAY 1

Read Psalm 27:14

What do you hope for? Maybe you're hoping your teacher won't assign homework or your mom will make spaghetti for dinner. Maybe you're hoping that kid on the bus will be nice today. Or your Mom will find a job. Or your grandmother will feel better.

Even before we know how things will work out, we can choose to celebrate what God can and WILL do because God is in control. Not only that, but God loves us. Even if the thing we're hoping for doesn't work out the way we want it to, we can still trust that God loves us and will be with us. When you wait with hope, you can help others find joy too.



What's Missing?

Fill in the missing words from today's verse. Then pray and ask God to help you hope with joy this week.

"Wait for the Be and don't lose Wait for the"

Psalm 27:14, NlrV

DAY 2

Read Romans 12:15

In Bible times, it was customary to celebrate and mourn together. Entire villages would attend weddings and funerals as a way to support one another. Can you imagine inviting everyone in your town to your wedding? Or finding a church large enough to house everyone for a family member's funeral?

Sometimes all it takes is that one friend to make a difference. When a friend is sad, be the kind of friend who sits and listens. When a friend is excited and happy, be the kind of friend who celebrates with enthusiasm. You can encourage and help when friends are sad, and you can help others find joy too.



Prayers Of Joy

Do you have a friend who's had a hard day? Or a friend who's really excited about something? Stop and pray for that friend. Ask God to help you support and encourage them so they know you're on their side.

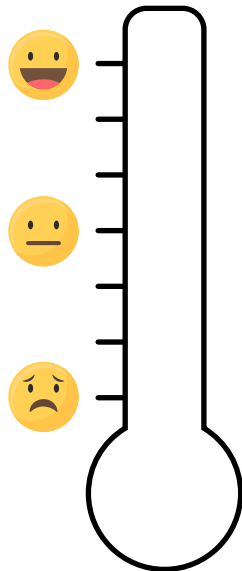
Read Acts 2:46-47

The first followers of Jesus made up the early church. But church wasn't about meeting in a building. It was about gathering together to share what they had. They needed each other to lean on, to encourage each other, and to keep telling others about what Jesus had done even when it was hard. When they met, their hearts were happy. Gathering together brought them joy!

When you gather with your small group at church to pray together, learn together, and worship together, it's like filling up your gas tank with joy! And that joy can help you live out your faith and shine bright for Jesus all through the week.

Joy-O-Meter

How joyful do you feel today? Fill in the JOY-O-METER below to indicate your joy level. If it's low, talk to your parents about getting together with others who bring you joy so you can be encouraged and be an encouragement to others.



Read Proverbs 17:22

Healthy Habit Jumble

REST EXERCISE WATER SUNSHINE
OXYGEN JOY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Getting plenty of rest and exercise, drinking plenty of water, eating healthy foods, and making sure you get outside for some sunshine are all ways to keep your body in tip-top shape. But there is something else you can do to stay healthy! A cheerful heart is like good medicine. In other words, joy can make you feel better!

Try spreading some joy today.

How could you help someone else in your family?
How could you encourage a friend who is down?
Who needs to hear a silly joke or a funny story?
What is ONE thing you could do today to spread joy and cheer someone up?

Pray and ask God to help you follow through on spreading joy around like good medicine this week!

Answer Key: Rest, exercise, water, sunshine, oxygen, joy, fruits and vegetables

You can help others find joy.





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DAY 1

Read Philippians 4:4

Do you have a lost and found at school? Do you know what items NEVER end up in Lost and Found? Items labeled with the owner's name. If you accidentally leave your water bottle on the playground and it has your name on it, it will be handed back to you because it's labeled as yours.

Just like the labeled water bottle belongs to someone, we belong to the Lord. Because of that, we can have joy! We often look at what's going on around us and let our circumstances determine how we feel. But JOY is bigger than happiness. Because being *happy* depends on what is *happening* around you. Joy is a deep-down understanding that no matter what, God is on your side.

Label It

Grab an index card and write, "I belong to God" in big block letters. Hang it in your closet where you will see it each day. Every time you read those words, stop and thank God for loving you and celebrate what God can and WILL do.

DAY 2

Read Philippians 3:1a

When Paul wrote this letter to the church in the city of Philippi, do you know where he was? Take a guess.

- A. At his seaside home
- B. Visiting family
- C. In prison
- D. None of the above

Paul wasn't visiting family or hanging out at the beach. He wrote these words while in prison. Despite his circumstances, Paul knew that joy was possible because of Jesus. He wanted to encourage the believers to keep serving God and to hang on to joy because they belonged to God.

Even if you never ended up in a situation like Paul's, you still might face difficult situations that try to steal your joy. When you feel discouraged, remember that God has promised to make everything right in the end. Because of what Jesus has done, when we trust Him as our Savior, we don't have to worry about the future. We can have joy and celebrate what God will do.

DAY 3

Read Revelation 21:3

Swim With The Fishies

Do you have a pet fish? What if you could shrink down, jump into the bowl, and talk to your fish? What if you could tell him all about what life is like outside of his fishbowl? What if you tried to describe what it's like to breathe air and walk around on two feet? How would you describe life on land?

When it comes to heaven and spending forever with God, we're kind of like that fish. We won't be able to understand everything about heaven until we experience it. While we don't know all the details, we do know it means we will get to live with God forever! Because of Jesus, we now have a way to fix our broken relationship with God. We will be WITH God, just like we're with our parents or friends, and THAT will be awesome. Until that day, we can wait with hope and celebrate what God will do!

DAY 4

Read Revelation 21:4

Heaven Views

Grab some paper and some watercolor paints or crayons. Spend a few minutes painting or coloring what you think heaven will look like.

God has made a BIG promise to us. When we put our trust in Jesus, we can live with God forever in a place where nothing bad or sad EVER happens.

In heaven, we will live with God in a perfect place, more awesome than we can imagine. A place with no pain, no sadness, no worry, no tears, no separation, or fear. We won't need band-aids or medicine or even doctors because there will be no sickness, or injuries, or death. Being with God will be like the best party you've ever been to— except it will be BETTER— because this party will never, ever end.

Take a look at your drawing of heaven. Stop and celebrate with JOY today because following Jesus means that you'll be with God one day in this perfect place.

Celebrate what God will do.



Name

Parent Signature