

LESSON 3 JOY AND CONTENTMENT

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2–4

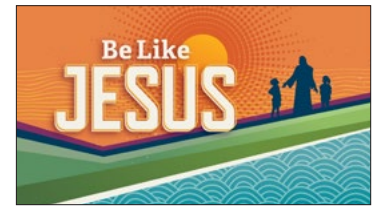
GOD'S BIG STORY: While he is in prison, Paul encourages the church in Philippi to rejoice. He teaches that when we are thankful, God's Spirit will give us joy and contentment no matter the circumstance.

WORD OF WONDER: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. —Galatians 5:22–23a (ISV)

CURIOSITY 15 minutes • Large Group or Small Group

Hands-on activities to spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God

- Welcome Question: When are you most happy?
- Curiosity Questions
- Curiosity Activity: Emoji Matching
- Declaring God's Wonder



BELIEF 25–35 minutes • Large Group

An interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder

- Prayer of Invitation and Worship
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Word of Wonder: Galatians 5:22–23a

FAITH 15 minutes • Small Group

An intentional conversation that helps kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own

- Discussion Questions
- Craft: Joy Picture
- Game: Joy Jump

IDENTITY 10 minutes • Large Group or Small Group

An interactive worship response activity that creates space for God to remind kids that they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder

- Responding in Worship: Drum Lesson
- Blessing Your Kids
- Closing Game: Joy Jump and Drum Worship

Wonder@Home™

Designed for families to engage in the wonder of God together at home. This resource includes a video, worship playlists, activities, and more!

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2–4

WORD OF WONDER: Galatians 5:22–23a

In our lives as followers of Jesus, it's easy to give lip service to being joyful or content. We know that we should be joyful in everything, but we so often find our moods dependent on our finances, our relationships, or our circumstances. We know that we should be content—but we also feel that if we just get the right car, or the perfect job, or the latest fashions, our contentment would soar.

Do you struggle with joy and contentment? Where do you see this conflict in your life?

Read through Philippians 2–4 and imagine Paul sitting in a dirty prison cell. Paul had no reason to be joyful, given his circumstances. And somehow, through his painful experiences, he learned the secret to true joy and contentment. No matter his circumstances, he could trust that God was with him, that God loved him, and that God would give him strength when he needed it. Paul recognized that true joy and contentment come directly from the Lord.

As you prepare to lead kids through these truths this week, seek out the Lord. Ask Him to fill you with His joy and to give you deep contentment in your circumstances—so that you can be more like Jesus and bring glory to His name.

—Denise Morris Snyder

Spiritual Formation Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Paul wrote the Letter to the Philippians. After Paul gave his life to Jesus, he traveled throughout the Roman Empire telling God's joyful big story to everyone he met. He had once persecuted Jesus' followers, but now he himself experienced persecution as a follower of Jesus.

WHAT?

In Philippians 2–4, Paul encourages the Philippians to rejoice in all circumstances, whether good or bad. In Paul's case, he has joy despite his imprisonment and apart from the gifts of financial support he was sent. He has a contentment that comes from Jesus.

WHERE?

Paul wrote this letter to Jesus-followers in the Roman colony of Philippi, located in modern-day Greece. He was in prison in Rome at the time. Roman prisons were dirty, dank, and often crowded, and the only food and supplies prisoners received were those brought by friends or family.

WHEN?

Paul most likely wrote this letter around AD 62. By all likely accounts, Paul would be executed two years later by the Roman emperor Nero.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

Paul's letter to the Philippians echoes the Habakkuk's message of joy and contentment in the Old Testament. Even if the fields are barren and nothing remains, Habakkuk declares, "I will still be glad because of what the LORD has done. God my Savior fills me with joy" (Habakkuk 3:18).

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2–4

WORD OF WONDER: Galatians 5:22–23a

Series Bumper and Countdown Videos

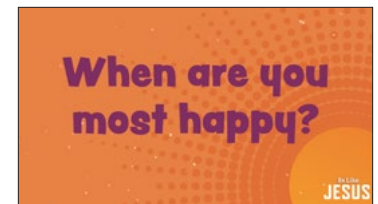
Choose between the [Be Like Jesus Series Bumper Video](#) and [Countdown Videos](#) to introduce the kids to the series.

Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Joy Welcome Question Slide

Before kids arrive, display the Joy Welcome Question Slide or write the following question on a whiteboard: “When are you most happy?” Set out paper and coloring utensils.



As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome kids by name and show them the Welcome Question. For younger kids, you may read them the question out loud. Encourage kids to share their answers with one another. If kids prefer to draw a picture of their answer, invite them to do so. Feel free to share your answer as well!

At your start time ...

Greet all kids and ask them to answer the Welcome Question: When are you most happy? If kids are slow to volunteer, ask anyone with brown hair to answer the question first.

Being happy is pretty awesome! But all of us know that sometimes life is hard, and our circumstances aren't very happy at all. Today we'll hear in God's big story about how God can give us joy and contentment even during hard times. But first, it's time to be curious!

Curiosity Questions

Ask the following “I’m curious” questions. Say, “I’m curious ...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one.

I’m curious ...

- **Does anyone know what it means to be content?** (If needed, help kids understand that to be content is to be at peace and satisfied.)
- **Can you think of a time when you had a good attitude even though nothing was going your way?**

Leader Tip: Kids will be exploring the idea of joy and contentment throughout this lesson. Refer to these definitions as needed: Joy—deep gladness because of Jesus; Contentment—being satisfied and at peace.

Curiosity Activity: Emoji Matching

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Emoji Matching Sheets

Ahead of time, print the Emoji Matching Sheets.

Does anyone know what an emoji is? Pause for answers. **It’s a picture that describes how someone feels. How you feel is an emotion. Today we’re talking about two things that are more than just feelings and emotions, because emotions come and go. We’re talking about joy! Joy can always be inside us because it comes from God.**

Joy is a deep sense of happiness. Hold up the joy emoji sheet.

Being content means being happy with what we have. Hold up the contentment emoji sheet.

Show the kids the other emoji sheets and ask them to say what feeling or emotion each sheet makes them think of.

I’m going to put these emoji sheets down on the floor and call out some statements. You can run and stand by the emoji that matches what I’m saying! It’s OK if your answer doesn’t match someone else’s or if you’re not sure which one to choose.

Lay the emoji sheets on the floor, spread out across your room. Call out the following statements and have the kids run to the emoji sheet that matches what you say. Play multiple times using the following phrases:

- **I feel so happy deep down in my heart because I know God is always with me!** Encourage the kids to run to the “joy” emoji sheet.
- **I feel sad because I got hurt.** Encourage the kids to run to the “sad” emoji sheet.
- **I’m thankful for every gift God has given me and everything I have.** Encourage the kids to run to the “content” emoji sheet.
- **I feel silly and feel like laughing because of something funny my friends did.** Encourage the kids to run to the “silly” emoji sheet.
- **I feel like celebrating and praising God because He’s amazing!** Encourage the kids to run to the “joy” emoji sheet.



When they finish the activity, encourage the kids to think of their own statements that match the joy and contentment emoji sheets. For example, they could say: I feel content because I'm thankful to have good food to eat, or I feel joy because I get to come to church today.

Declaring God's Wonder

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Declaration [Video](#) or Slide (optional)

Show the Declaration [Video](#) or Slide and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

Thank You, God, that You made me! (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from above and make a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

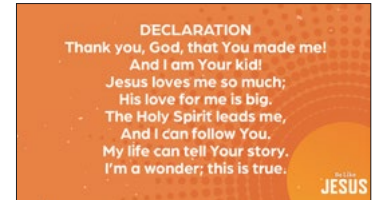
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").



Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2–4

WORD OF WONDER: Galatians 5:22–23a

Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, thank You for this time together in the Bible. Help us to understand how much You love us. We invite Your Holy Spirit to guide us to live like Jesus and to fill us with the joy and contentment that only You can give. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: songs from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Today we'll hear how God gives us joy and contentment, even during hard situations. Let's praise God now for loving us and for always being with us through His Holy Spirit! Play songs from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Joy Title Slide, God's Big Story Video ([Early Childhood](#) or [Elementary](#))

Display the Joy Title Slide and gather the kids together. Explain that today's story comes straight from the Bible, God's Word, and can be found in the book of Philippians, one of the letters the apostle Paul wrote to Jesus-followers in the early church. Invite everyone to turn to Philippians 3. Encourage volunteers to help kids find this passage.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story!

Read Philippians 3:1; 4:4–7, 10–13 aloud while the kids follow along or invite three confident readers to each read one section of the passage. Then do one or both of the following:

- Use the following Joy and Contentment Experience It! Script
- View God’s Big Story Video ([Early Childhood](#) or [Elementary](#))

LESSON 3 JOY AND CONTENTMENT EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), cardstock, brown paper lunch bags (7), permanent marker (prep only), dirty gym socks (2), bite-sized cracker or bit of bread (1), pen, paper, single-serve bag of chips, empty ice cream carton, small gift box, money (such as a single bill), table

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: God Sheet

Allergy Caution: This activity includes possible food allergens!

Before kids arrive, print the God Sheet onto cardstock. Gather brown paper lunch bags and props. Number each bag 1–7 with a permanent marker, distribute the props in the appropriate bags, fold the tops over to close, and place them on the table in numerical order.

Bag #1—dirty gym socks

Bag #2—bite-sized cracker or bit of bread

Bag #3—pen and paper

Bag #4—single-serve bag of chips

Bag #5—empty ice cream carton

Bag #6—small gift box with money inside (such as a single bill)

Bag #7—God Sheet



Gather the kids and explain that when you point to them during today’s part of God’s big story, they can repeat what you just said.

After the Holy Spirit came as a powerful helper to Jesus’ disciples, Jesus appeared to a man named Paul and changed his life completely! Paul went from being an enemy of God’s people to being a devoted follower of Jesus who traveled many places sharing the good news of Jesus and starting churches. Paul often wrote letters to the people in those churches, and many of those letters are now books in the Bible.

At the time of today’s story, Paul was in prison. Pause to sniff the air with a disgusted look on your face. **Do you smell something?** Allow kids to respond. **Seriously! Do you smell that?** Sniff the air again and allow kids to respond. **It smells disgusting—stinky, nasty, and old. You don’t smell it?** Pause for kids to respond. **It seems like the smell is coming from over there.** Walk toward the table, continually sniffing the air and acting like you smell something terrible.

Here it is—right here in this bag! Wow! This sure stinks! Open bag #1 and pull out two dirty, smelly gym socks. **This smell reminds me of an ancient Roman prison! Those prisons were horrible places.**

Close your eyes and imagine you’re in a Roman prison cell long ago. It’s the most disgusting, smelly place you can imagine. Everyone, plug your noses! Pause for kids to plug noses. They can unplug them after a few moments. **Roman jailers rarely took care of the prisoners, and prisoners only got food if their friends visited and gave it to them.** Invite kids to open their eyes.

I'm hungry! Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

I'm thirsty! Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

Maybe we should check out the next bag to see if someone brought us some delicious food! That would beat the smelly socks! Set down the socks and invite a volunteer to come up, open bag #2, and pull out the one bite-sized cracker or bit of bread. **It looks like no one is visiting us in prison today. One measly bite for dinner.**

In circumstances like this, most people would lose hope. But despite these horrible circumstances, Paul was content or satisfied. What do you think Paul was doing while he sat in his prison cell?

Allow kids to respond. **Let's check our next bag and see if it'll give us a clue.** Open bag #3 or invite a volunteer to do so and pull out a pen and paper. **I knew it. Paul wasn't griping or complaining about the smell or the food. He was writing letters!**

Paul's letter to the Philippians is filled with joy!

Say what? Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

You heard it right. In the middle of a nasty jail cell, Paul writes to his friends, "Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!" (Philippians 4:4). He even encourages the people in Philippi not to "worry about anything" and to "tell God about everything" (Philippians 4:6). That's a surprising statement from someone in a Roman prison who didn't know if he would ever be free again!

But Paul wasn't just telling the Philippians to have a positive attitude.

Chin up, sonny! Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

He was encouraging them to ask God for help in their difficult circumstances.

God, please help me. Look up to heaven as though praying. Then point at the kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

Instead of grumbling or worrying, Paul tells them to pray for what they need and give thanks to God for what He has given them. When they do that, their hearts will be filled with God's peace. God will replace their worries with a sense of calm and a confidence that He will care for them in their time of need. Then they will be able to endure whatever comes their way.

This might have been a hard thing for Paul's friends in Philippi to accept. Having joy when things are bad—being content, at peace and satisfied—in all circumstances?

Whoa, kid! Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing them to respond.

So, Paul decided to show the Philippians an example of joy and contentment. I wonder what it was. Open bag #4 or invite a volunteer to do so and reveal a single-serve bag of chips. **Do you think this was what brought Paul joy and contentment?** Allow kids to respond. **Maybe this bag will show us what Paul's example of joy was.** Open bag #5 or invite a volunteer to do so and hold up an empty ice cream carton. **Do you think this was it?** Allow kids to respond. **Well, there are only two bags left. One of these has to reveal Paul's secret! Let's try this one.** Open bag #6 or invite a volunteer to do so and reveal a gift box. **Do you think we should open it?** Allow kids to respond. Carefully open the box and reveal the money inside.

Whoa, kid! Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing kids to respond.

While Paul was in prison, the church in Philippi sent him money to help take care of his needs. Paul could have let himself be discouraged. (After all, he was stuck in the worst prison of all time!) Instead, Paul chose to thank God and to thank the Philippians for their generous gift to him. Paul rejoiced despite his difficult circumstances.

The gift of money from the Philippians made Paul very joyful, yet he explains that his joy doesn't depend on the gift. For years, Paul had been taking long journeys around the Mediterranean region. He had experienced times of great need and times of great abundance. Sometimes he taught in the homes of rich people and ate all the food he wanted. Other times he went hungry for days as he traveled the long roads between towns. Some of Jesus' disciples helped Paul, while others ignored him. Through it all, Paul remained joyful and content.

How did he do that? Point at kids to repeat the phrase, allowing kids to respond.

Do you want to know Paul's secret? Allow kids to respond. Open bag #7 or invite a volunteer to do so and reveal the God Sheet. **The secret, Paul says, to being satisfied in every circumstance is to let Jesus be our source of strength. Through Jesus, we can endure and thrive in every circumstance. No matter how challenging our situation is, God will provide the strength to get through it. He will give us peace in our hearts and help us to see all the good things He has given us. He will help us become more like Jesus.** Hold up the God Sheet. **Life will be hard sometimes, but when we look to and rely on Jesus, God gives us joy and contentment.**

Connecting the Wonder Truth

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Joy Wonder Truth Slide

Display the Joy Wonder Truth Slide. **Our Wonder Truth today is GOD GIVES US JOY AND CONTENTMENT. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.

Hundreds of years before Paul wrote to the Philippians from a Roman prison cell, a prophet named Habakkuk wrote in the Old Testament about being filled with joy in difficult circumstances. He wrote that even if the fields are barren, the crops are dead, and our food and money are gone, "I will still be glad because of what the LORD has done. God my Savior fills me with joy" (Habakkuk 3:18).



Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, scissors (prep only)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Word of Wonder Fruit Pictures (2 copies), Be Like Jesus Word of Wonder Slide or [Video](#) (optional)

WORD OF WONDER

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

—Galatians 5:22–23a (ISV)

Ahead of time, print two copies of the Word of Wonder Fruit Pictures and cut apart each picture. Display the Word of Wonder Slide or [Video](#), if using.

Our Word of Wonder for the Be Like Jesus series is Galatians 5:22–23a. Let’s practice saying the Word of Wonder together. Practice the verse with the kids.

Put one set of fruit pictures aside and spread out the other set on the floor across the room (or tape them to the wall, a few feet apart).

In our story today, we learned that Paul says that the secret to being joyful no matter what is to trust Jesus for our strength. God will give us strength for everything, even hard things. God will give us peace in our hearts. Let’s say our Word of Wonder together while we jump for joy! I’ll hold up a picture of fruit with a word on it, and you’ll jump to the matching fruit and repeat the word.

Hold up each fruit picture, one at a time, say the word, then encourage the kids to jump to the matching fruit.

We can jump for joy because the Holy Spirit gives us joy. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit!

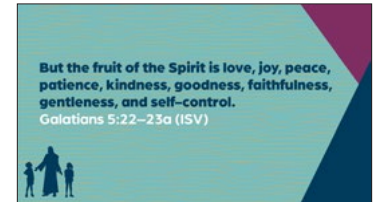
Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS**—Draw a large “S” into the air.
- **LOVE**,—Pat your hands on your heart.
- **JOY**,—Put your arms up as if celebrating.
- **PEACE**,—Place palms together by cheek and ear to indicate “sleep.”
- **PATIENCE**,—Point to a pretend watch on your wrist.
- **KINDNESS**,—Pretend to give someone a hug.
- **GOODNESS**,—Make a thumbs-up.
- **FAITHFULNESS**,—Make two fists and start with the right fist on top, hitting the left fist, then switch and pound the left fist on top of the right.
- **GENTLENESS**,—Pretend to gently rock a baby.
- **AND SELF-CONTROL**.—Point to yourself with your thumbs.
- **GALATIANS 5:22–23a**—Hold your hands together as if opening a book.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **Who gives us the fruit of the Spirit?**
- **How do we become more loving, peaceful, joyful, patient, and kind?**

Leader Tip: Some kids may be confused about the analogy of fruit to eat versus fruit in our lives. Explain to them that the fruit of the Spirit is the way we live and treat others.



Small Group

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2–4

WORD OF WONDER: Galatians 5:22–23a

Discussion Questions

SUPPLIES: inflated balloon

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any latex allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

Gather the kids to sit in a circle and hold up the inflated balloon.

When do we sometimes see balloons? Allow the kids to respond. **Yes, we sometimes see balloons at celebrations and parties! In our story today, Paul was in a sad place, but he said that his joy didn't depend on how his life was going. Sometimes he had a lot, but other times he only had a little. Sometimes he ate all the food he wanted, but other times he went hungry for days. But no matter what, Paul learned to be joyful and content.**

Where does your joy come from? What are things that bring you joy? Allow the kids to respond. Write their answers on the balloon with a marker.

We're going to have a celebration and bop the balloon with joy around our circle. When I say, "Stop," whoever is touching the balloon (or the person who is the last one to touch it) will freeze and call out one thing that makes you feel joyful, and then I'll ask a question.

Let the kids bop the balloon around the circle. Call out, "Stop" at various times and encourage the kids to shout out something that makes them feel joyful. Then ask a question from the list below.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Where was Paul when he wrote the letter to the Philippians? (*in jail*)
- I wonder ... what do you think the prison was like when Paul was there?
- When do you feel most happy and joyful?
- What do you think it means to feel content?
- Who can help us feel joyful all the time—even in hard times? (*God; Holy Spirit*)
- Share about a time when you felt sad and then God helped you find joy.
- Share about a person you know who is filled with joy.
- How can you share joy with other people?

When you face hard or scary situations, you can ask God to give you joy. Contentment means we're happy with what we have and what's happening. Whether we have a lot of things or not a lot, we can be OK because of God. We talk to God through prayer. He hears us. Let's talk to God now and ask Him to fill us to overflowing with Joy.

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for helping us have joy and contentment. God hears all our prayers!

Craft: Joy Picture

SUPPLIES: variety of small items and glue (such as confetti, stickers, pom-poms, craft flowers, craft tape, adhesive jewels, buttons, beads, etc.), glue

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Joy Craft Sheet (1 per kid)

Ahead of time, print a Joy Craft Sheet for each kid. Set out a variety of small items and glue (such as confetti, stickers, pom-poms, craft flowers, craft tape, adhesive jewels, buttons, beads, etc.).

God can give us joy, no matter what. We can have joy deep in our hearts. God will help us become more like Jesus. Life will be hard sometimes. But when we trust Jesus, no matter what happens, God gives us joy.

Give each kid a Joy Craft Sheet and show them the small items available. **You can choose items that make you feel joyful and glue them onto the word "joy" on your paper to fill the word joy. Take the picture home as a reminder that God gives us joy! The joy that comes from God is different from regular happiness. Regular happiness goes away when something hard or sad happens, but the joy God gives us is always with us, deep in our heart.** Allow the kids to glue items onto their papers. As they work, talk with them about how God gives us joy.



Active Game: Joy Jump

SUPPLIES: tape (optional), cardstock (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Fruit Pictures, music from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print the Fruit Pictures and place them on the floor, a few feet apart. To make them sturdier, you can print on cardstock and tape them to the floor.

Today we're learning God makes us joyful, no matter what! Joy is the deep-down happiness we feel in our hearts that comes from God. It doesn't go away or change when something sad happens. The joy from God is always in us, and we can show our happiness by jumping for joy!

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, which means the Holy Spirit makes us joyful.

Let's jump for joy and hop from fruit to fruit while we listen to a song. We'll hop from fruit to fruit until the music stops, then you'll freeze. When the music plays again, hop some more! Who's ready



to jump for joy? Allow kids to reply. Play music from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#) and encourage the kids to hop onto the fruit pictures. Stop the music periodically and tell the kids to freeze. Play a few rounds. You can also have the kids call out one fruit of the Spirit when the music pauses.

Today we showed our joy as we hopped to the music. We can always remember that God gives us joy.

Make It Inclusive: For kids who can't jump, let them toss a beanbag onto the fruit pictures instead. You can print a set just for them in a separate area of the room if that's helpful.

LESSON 3 EARLY ELEMENTARY

Large Group or Small Group

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Gives Us Joy and Contentment

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2–4

WORD OF WONDER: Galatians 5:22–23a

Responding in Worship: Drum Worship

SUPPLIES: plastic buckets (various sizes); drumsticks, empty paper towel rolls, or dowel rods (various lengths)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: “Joy” from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Set out plastic buckets in a line or circle, turning them upside down so the bottoms face up. Set out drumsticks, empty paper towel tubes, or dowel rods.

Today you can worship and give praise to God using drums made from buckets. You can be joyful no matter what because the Holy Spirit gives us joy. What's one way you can show your joy?

Allow kids to respond.

Grab two sticks, tubes, or rods, or you can use your hands. We'll listen to a song, and you can show joy as you play these drums. You can show joy in lots of ways! God makes you joyful, and you can let that joy flow out of you.

Let the kids play the drums as you play the song “Joy” from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#).

Make It Inclusive: Some kids may not enjoy loud noises and may need to move away from the group or wear noise-canceling headphones.

If time allows, repeat the song, and encourage the kids to swap their sticks, rods, tubes, or switch to their hands to play their drums. **As you play your drums this time, listen even more carefully to the words. You can play quietly when the music gets quiet, and you should play loudly when you hear the word joy.** When the song ends, have the kids place their sticks, rods, and tubes down while you ask the following discussion questions:

- Did playing the drums bring you joy?
- Did you enjoy playing loudly or quietly?
- What brings you joy?
- How does God give you joy?

Remember, God gives us joy!

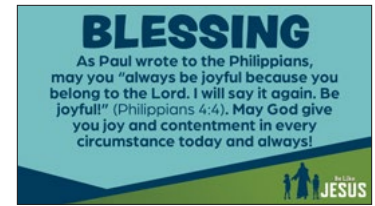
Blessing Your Kids

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Joy Blessing Slide

Display the Joy Blessing Slide. Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: As Paul wrote to the Philippians, may you “always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!”

(Philippians 4:4). May God give you joy and contentment in every circumstance today and always!



Closing Activity: Joy Jump and Drum Worship

SUPPLIES: tape, buckets, drumsticks or dowel rods

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Fruit Pictures, upbeat music from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print the Fruit Pictures and tape them to the floor, a few feet apart.

Today we're learning that God gives us joy. No matter what happens in our lives, we can have joy from God. You can show your joy now! As you listen to the music, you can hop from fruit to fruit or play a drum.

Play upbeat songs from the [Be Like Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#).

Allow kids to choose whether they want to use buckets and pretend drumsticks to drum during this song or jump from fruit to fruit.

