

2 ▶ 52

Basics

...AND JESUS GREW IN WISDOM
AND STATURE AND FAVOR WITH
GOD AND MAN. Luke 2:52

virtue:

CONTENTMENT

deciding to be
happy with what
you've got.

November 3 & 4, 2007

3-5

memory verse:

I have learned to be content no matter what happens to me. I know what it's like not to have what I need. I also know what it's like to have more than I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. Philippians 4:11b-12a NIV

Bottom Line: Think about what you have, not what you don't have.

Bible Story: The Garden of Eden *Genesis 2-3*

BIBLE BLOG (please spend 7-10 minutes on this section)

We're still working on it...thanks for your patience

INTRO

ACTIVITY: "Be Happy Anyway"

SUPPLIES: a 2x3-foot piece of paper, markers, items for decorating, one or more "Have a Nice Day Anyway Posters"

Show the kids one of the posters and guide them to come up with a logo for their small group that demonstrates contentment. One example is "Be happy anyway." Once they've settled on a logo, let them put their logo on the banner and decorate it. Then they can hang their banner up on display for the entire month.

SMALL GROUP LEADER:

- **Contentment is deciding to be happy with what you've got.**
- **God is the Creator of contentment.**
- **God wants us to be content.**
- **When I'm content, I can enjoy all God has given me and focus on thanking Him.**

Adam and Eve lived in a perfect world, yet they were not content. They wanted something they didn't have. When they took what God told them not to, their relationship with God was no longer perfect.

Our logo should let people know the importance of making the decision to be happy with what we've got as opposed to always wanting what we don't have. We often spend so much time being envious or sad about what we don't have that we forget to enjoy what we do have. Think about what you have, not what you don't have."

When the banner is finished, hang it where it can easily be seen. Leave it up for the entire month as a reminder that God wants us to be content.

LIFE APPLICATION

ACTIVITY #1 “I Gotta Have It!”

SUPPLIES: magazines and catalogs, scissors, glue, construction paper

Guide the kids to look through the catalogs and magazines and cut out pictures of things they want or think they need. Listen as they talk with each other about the items in the catalogs and magazines. Ask questions about the items, such as: “Do your friends have some of these things?” or “Do you try to earn money to buy cool stuff?” Encourage them to make a montage on a piece of construction paper of all the pictures they cut out.

SMALL GROUP LEADER: “It’s fun to look through the catalogs at all the things we want for ourselves. There are so many new toys, fun electronics, and cool clothes in the stores. I would guess that some of your friends have things or clothes that you would like to have, and that you have some things your friends would like to have. **In today’s Bible lesson, we heard about two people who had everything they could ever need. In fact, they lived in a pretty much perfect world. And then something happened.**

SMALL GROUP LEADER:

- “What happened to Adam and Eve when they took something they wanted instead of enjoying what they already had? *(Pause for responses.)*”
- When you looked through the magazines and catalogs today, did you find things you really wish you had? *(Pause.)*
- What happens when you start focusing only on what you don’t have?” *(Pause.)*
- This week, ask God to help you be thankful for what you do have instead of focusing on what you don’t have.”

ACTIVITY #2: Gratitude Relay *(especially for 5th graders)*

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Use the tape to mark two start and finish lines that are equal distances apart.
- Instruct each team to line up behind their starting line.
- Tell them that when it’s their turn to run, they should say something they’re thankful for. Not all ideas should be material. They could be thankful for the love of a family member, an important friend, or even the chance to sing during worship.
- The runner will shout this while running to the finish line. While one runner is shouting, the runner who is standing at the finish line can come back and get back in line for another turn.
- Runners keep doing this until a team runs out of things to be thankful about or until time is up.

- *Note to SGLs: As soon as someone runs out of things to be thankful for, end the relay immediately and declare a winner.*

SMALL GROUP LEADER: “That felt really good. Sometimes after you get going, you find that it’s fun to think about what you have, not what you don’t have. We really ARE thankful people! I bet not many of you were thinking about what you didn’t have while you were running. Our Bible verse talks about there being a secret to learning to be content in every situation. You know what the secret is? You just practiced it. *(Pause for them to respond.)* Right! When you focus on what you’re grateful for, it’s really difficult to get down about what you don’t have. We have so much, and it’s good to remind ourselves of that. Good job, you guys!”

REVIEW THE BIBLE LESSON

ACTIVITY: Word Lightning: I’m Thankful

SUPPLIES: paper, pencils, a stopwatch, montages earlier activity

Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Give them 15 seconds to write down everything they can remember about the Bible story. When time is up, let the kids share some of the things they remember about the story. Add facts they may have left out.

Next, pass out the montages they made during earlier. Give the kids 15 seconds to list things they are thankful for on the back of their montages.

SMALL GROUP LEADER:

- “Was it easy to list things you have that you are thankful for?”
- Turn your papers over and look at some of the items on your montage. Now look again at your list of things you’re thankful for. Just like Adam and Eve, sometimes we get so focused on what we don’t have or things that we want, that we forget to be thankful for what we do have. It’s hard to be happy with what we have when we’re so busy looking around at what we don’t have. **Think about what you have, not what you don’t have.**”

MEMORY VERSE REVIEW

ACTIVITY: Paul Knew the Secret

SUPPLIES: the prepared cards from “Memory Verse” (see “3-5 attachments” on the web), masking tape, Bibles

Line up their small group up in two teams and show them the prepared cards. Tape the first card to a wall. Explain that each person will take turns running up to where the cards are and adding a phrase to the Bible verse by taping the next phrase to the one before. Lay a Bible opened to the memory verse in front of each small group to reference if necessary. The first team to finish wins.

When everyone’s finished, discuss the verse together.

SMALL GROUP LEADER: “Will someone read the verse for me? *(Pause while a child does so.)* Wow, Paul seems to know the secret to being content. Remember, contentment is deciding to be happy with what you have. Paul learned to be content when he was sick and when he was well. He was happy when he had a lot and when he didn’t have a lot.

- Think about a time when you were sick. Were you happy?
- What about a time when a friend got something you wanted. Were you happy then?
- Why do you think Paul was happy with what he had even when he didn’t have much?
- (1) Contentment is deciding to be happy with what we’ve got. (2) God is the Creator of contentment. (3) God wants us to be content. (4) When we’re content, we can focus on all of the wonderful ways God takes care of us.”

Optional Discussion Questions

- What do you think is Paul’s secret to being content in all circumstances?
- How can discontentment get in the way of growing your relationship with Jesus?
- How can contentment help you share your relationship with Jesus with others?

PRAYER

SMALL GROUP LEADER: “Let’s take a moment to tell God what we’re thankful for. Think about your list and let’s take turns calling out something you want to thank God for. I’ll go first.” *(Call out something you’re thankful for, such as your family. Encourage the kids to do the same.)* “Thank You, God, for all these things. You are SO good to us! Please help us to practice being content this week. In Jesus’ name, amen.”