



Today's Promise (#101) — KJV

Psalm 37:7-8 "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him... Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."

Exodus 14:14 "The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

Ephesians 4:26-27 "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When you're tempted to explode with anger, pause. Let God fight for you. Trust God, stay calm, and walk away.

📖 Bible Story (Exodus 14)

Long ago, God chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. They marched toward freedom, but soon found themselves trapped. A deep, wide sea blocked their path forward. When the people looked back toward the desert, they heard the thunder of horse hooves. They saw the Egyptian king charging toward them with an army of chariots, ready to capture them.

The Israelites felt helpless, and their panic quickly turned into hot, explosive anger. They surrounded Moses and yelled at him, demanding to know why he had led them out into the wilderness just to die. They cried out that it would have been better to serve as slaves forever than to face the approaching swords. Fear made them want to argue and complain.

Moses did not yell back. He knew losing his temper would not solve their problem. He stayed calm, stood tall, and spoke to the furious crowd with a strong, clear voice. He told them not to be afraid, to stand still, and watch how God would save them. He promised the Lord would fight for them if they chose peace over anger.

God told Moses to stretch his staff over the water. A strong wind began to blow, pushing the sea apart and making a dry, safe road right through the middle. Giant walls of water stood on both sides. The Israelites walked across safely, and God stopped the pursuing army. Moses showed the people that when we feel trapped, we do not need to explode in anger; if we hold our peace, God will fight the battle for us.

☀️ True Story

Richard Weaver was a tough English coal miner who lived in the 1800s. Before he became a Christian, he was a famous fighter with a quick temper. If anyone upset him, Richard used his strong fists to hit them and win the argument. He thought fighting and hurting people was the only way to earn respect from the other rough miners.

But after Richard gave his heart to Jesus, he changed. He left his fighting days behind and chose to walk a path of peace.

One day, deep underground in the dark, dusty coal mine, a worker named Tom tried to pick a fight. Tom was upset about a disagreement. He marched right up to Richard, shouted angry insults, and suddenly shoved him hard, striking his face! The other miners dropped their heavy tools. They watched closely, expecting a loud, angry fight to start right there in the dirt.

In the past, Richard would have hit back instantly. His face stung, but this time was different. He chose to let God fight for him. Instead of giving in to anger, he stood still and kept his hands resting by his side. He looked calmly at Tom and said, "The Lord forgives you, and so do I."

Tom stood frozen in shock. He was waiting for a hard punch, but instead, he saw only peace. That gentle response changed his angry heart. Later that day, Tom found Richard, burst into tears, and asked for forgiveness. Richard showed that holding our peace and choosing kindness can change hearts in ways anger never could.

💬 Discussion Questions:

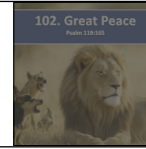
- Why did the Israelites get so angry with Moses when they reached the Red Sea?
- How did Richard Weaver react when the angry miner, Tom, hit him in the face?
- When someone is mean or unfair to you, how can holding your peace change the situation?

🎬 Activity:

Act out a situation that might make you feel angry—like someone taking your turn or saying something unkind. First, act out the wrong way (arguing or yelling). Then try again the right way. Practice these steps:

Stop. Be still. Pray, "God, help me stay calm."

Choose a peaceful response—walk away, wait, or speak kindly.



Today's Promise (#102) — KJV

Psalm 119:165 "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When people are mean or unfair, God's Word is like an invisible shield. If you fill your heart with His love, He gives you "great peace" so their words won't offend you or make you angry.

📖 Bible Story (2 Samuel 16)

King David was going through a sad and hard time. His own son, Absalom, had turned against him, forcing David to quickly run away from his beautiful home in Jerusalem to escape danger. The king and his loyal helpers were crying as they walked barefoot along a hot, dusty road near Bahurim. Suddenly, a man named Shimei came out to meet them.

But Shimei was not there to help the tired travelers. He was from the family of the old king, Saul, and he blamed David for taking the kingdom away. He was angry! Shimei walked along the high rocky hillside right above David, shouting mean words down at him. He called the king terrible names, kicked up thick clouds of dust, and even threw hard stones at David and his strong soldiers! It was unfair, and it made the sad, tiring journey even worse.

One of David's bravest captains, Abishai, was angry. His face grew hot as he watched the stones fall. He drew his sword and asked the king if he could march right up that hill to stop the mean man. He wanted to protect David and make the shouting stop.

But David was a man who truly loved God's law, and his heart was full of a deep, quiet peace. He was not easily upset. He gently told his angry soldier, "Let him yell." David knew that God was in control of his life. He did not need to explode in anger or fight back to protect his pride. He chose to stay calm, keep walking, and trust God to take care of him. He believed God would turn those mean words into a blessing. David showed us that when you have God's peace inside, you don't have to let mean words bother you.

☀️ True Story

When Desmond Doss was a young boy, he had a quick temper. One day, an argument with his brother turned into a fight. In a sudden flash of anger, Desmond picked up a heavy object and threw it. It struck his brother and nearly caused a bad injury. Shocked by what he had almost done, Desmond felt a deep sadness. He looked at a picture of the Ten Commandments hanging in his home and realized how dangerous his anger could be. He knew he could not fix his heart on his own. He prayed and asked God to take away his anger and fill him with true peace.

Years later, during a major war, Desmond joined the army. Because he trusted God to help him, he chose to serve as a medic. He wanted to heal hurt soldiers rather than carry a weapon. Every night in the busy, loud camp, Desmond would quietly sit on his bed to read his Bible and pray.

The other soldiers did not understand his peaceful ways. They thought his choice to not fight made him weak. They were mean to him because of his faith. They called him bad names, made fun of his beliefs, and even threw heavy boots at his head while he was kneeling on the floor to pray.

It would have been easy for Desmond to let his old anger take over and fight back. But he asked God for strength. Because of this, his heart remained full of quiet peace. He refused to get mad, answering their cruelty with kindness instead. He even offered to help the men who were mean to him.

Desmond showed us that when we ask God for help, His quiet peace is stronger than our anger.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did Shimei do as King David was walking down the dusty road?
- How did Desmond Doss react when the soldiers threw heavy boots at him while he prayed?
- When someone calls you a bad name or acts mean, how can having God's "great peace" stop you from getting offended?

🎨 Activity:

Today's promise says God's word is like a shield that gives us peace so words won't offend us. Build a pretend shield out of a large piece of cardboard or grab a large pillow. Have one person hold the shield. Have another person gently toss soft items (like rolled-up socks or yarn balls) to represent "mean words." Every time a soft item hits the shield, the person holding it says the promise: "Psalm 119:165!"



Today's Promise (#103) — NKJV

Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

💖 Apply the Promise!

*If someone is rude or unkind, God can help you answer softly.
Your calm words can stop a fight and show others what it
means to follow Jesus.*

📖 Bible Story (1 Samuel 25)

Before David became king, he and his men lived out in the hot, dusty wilderness. While they were there, they were kind to a wealthy man named Nabal. David's men acted like a strong wall, working day and night to protect Nabal's shepherds and his sheep from wild animals. They never took anything that did not belong to them.

Later, when Nabal was having a big feast, David sent his men to kindly ask for some food. "Please remember how we treated your helpers well," they said. But Nabal was a harsh and selfish man. He laughed at David's men and shouted, "Why should I give anything to you?"

When David heard those cruel words, he was so mad! He ordered his men to grab their heavy swords. He marched furiously toward Nabal's house, ready to fight. Nabal's harsh words had stirred up a terrible anger inside David.

Thankfully, Nabal's wife, Abigail, heard what was happening. She quickly packed a feast of fresh bread, roasted grain, and sweet raisins. She rode out on a donkey to meet the angry men. When she saw David, she bowed down to the ground and spoke gently. "Please forgive my husband," she said in a calm, soft voice. "Don't do something you will be sorry for. Let God take care of it."

Abigail's calm, respectful words changed everything. Her soft answer stopped David's anger! He put his sword away and thanked her, saying, "God sent you to stop me from making a big mistake." Her gentle words brought peace. Abigail showed us that when someone is angry, a kind answer can stop a fight.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did Abigail say or do that helped stop David from making a big mistake?
- Why was Jamie so angry at his nurse?
- Can you think of a time when kind words or actions helped calm someone down? What happened?

☀️ True Story

When Jamie Winship was seventeen years old, his world came crashing down. He had suffered a severe wrestling injury, and when he woke up in a bright hospital room, the doctor delivered devastating news: he might never play sports again, and his lifelong dream of passing the physical exam to become a police officer was likely over.

Jamie was crushed. But mostly, he was furious. He was so filled with wrath and bitterness that he lashed out at everyone around him, especially the nurse who came to care for him. Every time she walked in to check his bandages, he was mean. He insulted her, spoke to her with deep hostility, and refused to let her talk.

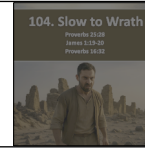
He expected her to get angry, to yell back, or to just leave him alone. But the nurse chose a different path. She didn't raise her voice or fight back. Instead, she stepped closer, gently touched his arm, and spoke with quiet kindness. She looked right at him and said, "I will help your body get well, but the thing that is going to kill you in life is your anger."

Over the next few days, her soft, loving answer melted his wrath. Jamie realized her gentle peace was far more powerful than his hostility. He stopped yelling, listened to her talk about God's love, and eventually gave his life to Christ. The heavy anger that had trapped him in that hospital bed was finally gone.

This story shows us that soft answer does more than just stop a fight. It has the power to heal a hurting heart and change a life.

🎬 Activity:

Put a scoop of baking soda in a cup. This is an angry person! Pour in a little vinegar, which represents a "harsh word." Watch the angry explosion! Next, put baking soda in a new cup and add cool water instead. This is a "soft answer." See how there is no explosion? When someone is mad at you, ask God to help you be the cool water that stops the fight, instead of the vinegar that makes it explode!



Today's Promise (#104) — KJV

Proverbs 25:28 "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."

James 1:19-20 "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

Proverbs 16:32 "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

💖 Apply the Promise!

Someone who can't control their anger is like a broken-down city with no protection. God says real strength comes from staying calm, listening carefully, and not letting anger take over.

📖 Bible Story (Judges 13-16)

Samson was the strongest man who ever lived. God gave him special strength to protect His people from their enemies. He was so strong that he could fight a wild lion with his bare hands! He could even snap heavy ropes off his arms as if they were thin pieces of string. No one could beat him in a physical fight.

But even though Samson had a strong body, he had a weak spirit. He struggled with a quick temper. The Bible says that a person who cannot control their anger is like a city with broken-down walls. Because Samson's walls were broken, anger could rush into his heart at any moment. He never practiced holding his peace.

When things did not go his way, Samson would lose his temper. Once, some men played a mean trick on him. Instead of staying calm, Samson let his anger take over. He rushed out and made poor choices that hurt many people. Another time, he became so mad that he caught three hundred foxes! He tied torches to their tails and used them to burn down a whole field of food!

Samson never learned how to rule his own spirit. Because he let his anger control him, he made foolish mistakes again and again. Eventually, his lack of self-control led him right into a dangerous trap. He was captured, and he lost all of his amazing strength. Samson's story reminds us that real strength is not about having big muscles. The strongest person in the world is the one who stays calm and controls their temper. Even the strongest person is weak without God's help to control their spirit.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What was Samson's biggest weakness, even though he had huge muscles?
- What did Ben Carson do immediately after his knife broke?
- When you feel your temper starting to rise, how can you practice being "slow to wrath"?

☀️ True Story

Ben Carson was a very smart boy, but he had one dangerous problem: a terrible temper. If someone disagreed with him or made him angry, he did not just get a little upset. Sometimes he lost control. He would hit people, throw things, and let anger rule his actions. He had not learned to rule his own spirit.

When Ben was fourteen years old, he got into an argument with a good friend over what music to listen to on the radio. Ben became so angry that he grabbed a small camping knife and swung it toward his friend.

By God's mercy, the blade struck the large metal buckle on his friend's belt. The knife broke, and his friend ran away frightened.

Ben stared at the broken knife. He realized his anger had almost ruined his life and could have badly hurt his friend. Terrified of his own temper, Ben ran home, went into the bathroom, and locked the door. He knelt down with his Bible and began reading the book of Proverbs. He read about wisdom, self-control, and the danger of anger.

Ben prayed for hours, asking God to take away his angry heart and help him rule his spirit. God answered that prayer. From that day on, Ben chose to let God help him stay calm. Years later, he became a skilled doctor and performed very difficult surgeries with steady, careful hands.

Ben Carson's story shows us that when God heals an angry heart, He can turn a dangerous temper into a peaceful, useful life.

🎨 Activity:

Play "Build the City Walls!" Grab some building blocks, pillows, or couch cushions. Have the kids build a strong, sturdy wall completely around a favorite toy. Talk about how the wall protects the toy. Then, gently toss a rolled-up pair of socks at the wall. Explain that having self-control is like having a strong wall—it protects your heart and keeps angry words from bursting out and hurting others! Now leave a gap and try again.



Today's Promise (#105) — KJV

Proverbs 29:20 "Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

Proverbs 29:11 "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When you feel furious, it's easy to let angry words burst out. But a wise person takes a deep breath and keeps those words inside until the anger passes!

📖 Bible Story (Numbers 20)

Moses was a great leader, but guiding a huge crowd of people through a hot, dry desert for years was a hard job. One day, the camp ran out of water. The people were upset, and Moses felt the heavy weight of their demands. He was deeply tired, and his patience was running out.

Moses and his brother, Aaron, went to God's tent to ask for help. God gave Moses clear, simple instructions. He told Moses to take his walking stick, gather everyone together, and simply speak to a specific rock. God promised that fresh water would flow out so everyone could drink.

Moses gathered the large crowd in front of the rock, but his heart was not peaceful. Instead of carefully obeying God, Moses let his own frustration take over. He lost his temper. Instead of speaking gently to the rock like God asked, he shouted at the people, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Then, in a sudden flash of anger, Moses lifted his hand and struck the solid rock with his heavy stick—two hard times!

Because God is kind, cool water did pour out for everyone to drink. But God was sad. Moses had allowed his temper to rule his heart, and he had disobeyed God in front of everyone. Because he spoke in anger and lost control of his spirit, Moses lost the special blessing of leading the people into the Promised Land.

Moses showed us that when we let anger make us speak and act without thinking, it always leads to sad consequences.

☀️ True Story

Abraham Lincoln was the President of the United States during a long, hard war. It was a stressful job. Sometimes, his generals would make big mistakes that lost important battles. When this happened, President Lincoln would feel furious. He wanted to yell and tell the men how foolish they were being.

But Lincoln was a wise man, and he knew that speaking hasty words would only make a bad situation worse. Instead of screaming or sending a mean message right away, he found a smart way to handle his anger.

He would sit down at his wooden desk and write a letter. He poured out all his angry thoughts onto the paper, writing down every single frustration. He let out his entire angry mind on the page. But then, he did something amazing. He never mailed the letter! He realized that it was much better to let his anger out on a piece of paper than to let it start a fight with a soldier.

Instead, he would fold the paper up, write "Never sent, never signed" on the outside, and lock it safely away inside his desk drawer. By the time he finished writing, his anger had usually cooled down. He could then speak to his generals calmly and kindly to fix the problem.

Years after he died, people opened his desk and found a whole drawer full of these angry letters!

President Lincoln showed us that a wise person locks their angry words away until they have the peace to speak gently.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did God tell Moses to do to the rock, and what did Moses do instead?
- What did President Lincoln do with his angry letters instead of mailing them?
- If you feel like saying hasty, mean words today, what is a safe way you can "lock them away" until you calm down?

🎨 Activity:

Grab a tube of toothpaste and a plate. Squeeze the toothpaste out as fast as possible! This represents letting angry words explode out all at once. Now, try to put it all back into the tube! It's impossible, right? That is exactly what happens with hasty words. Once they leave our mouths, we can never take them back. Ask God to help keep your words inside until your anger cools down!



Today's Promise (#106) — KJV

Ephesians 5:19-20 "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Apply the Promise!

God loves when we sing and give thanks in every situation. Praising Him can turn sadness into joy and remind you that He is always in control.

Bible Story (Acts 16:16-40)

Paul and Silas were traveling and sharing the good news of Jesus. But some people in the city did not like their message. An angry crowd turned against them, and the city leaders ordered guards to hurt them. After they were bruised, soldiers threw Paul and Silas into a cold, dark prison. To make sure they could not leave, the guards locked their feet tightly in heavy wooden blocks.

Their backs were sore. Their feet could not move. The prison was dark, cold, and uncomfortable. Most people would have spent the night crying, complaining, or feeling angry. But Paul and Silas knew a secret: God was still with them, even in that painful place.

At midnight, instead of groaning, Paul and Silas began to pray and sing hymns of praise to God. Their voices echoed through the prison, and the other prisoners listened in amazement.

Suddenly, a strong earthquake shook the prison! The stone walls rumbled, all the iron doors flew open, and everyone's chains fell right off. The jailer woke up and was terrified. He saw the open doors and thought all the prisoners had run away, which meant he would be in big trouble. But Paul shouted out to him, "Do not be afraid, we are all here!"

Seeing this quiet peace, the jailer wanted to know God. He asked how to be saved. Because Paul and Silas chose to sing and be content in a hard moment, the jailer and his family gave their hearts to Jesus that same night!

When we singing and thanksgiving even in hard times, God can use our joy to light up the dark for everyone around us.

True Story

In April 1877, a group of hardworking coal miners went deep underground into a mine in Wales. Suddenly, a loud roaring sound echoed through the rocky tunnels. A flood of water had burst through the walls! Most of the men rushed to the surface, but five miners were trapped in a small, dark cave. The cold water was rising fast, blocking their only way out. Soon, their candles burned out, leaving them in the dark.

They had no food, no clean water, and no idea if anyone was coming to save them. It would have been easy for the men to give up, complain, or panic in fear. But the head miner, a faithful Christian named Dafydd Jenkins, knew they needed God's peace. In the cold and damp cave, Dafydd told the men to pray. Then, instead of crying, he began to sing.

Soon, all five trapped miners joined their voices together, singing a church hymn. They sang with all their hearts, praising God and choosing to be content and trust Him, no matter what happened next. Their hopeful song echoed through the solid rock.

On the other side of the cave-in, a rescue team was digging. They stopped their tools and listened. Through the thick stone, they actually heard the faint sound of the men singing! The song guided the rescuers right to them. After many long days trapped in the dark, the miners were finally pulled out to safety.

Singing praises to God is the best way to find peace and contentment, no matter how dark and scary the situation might be.

Discussion Questions:

- What did Paul and Silas decide to do with their time while they were in the dark prison?
- How did singing hymns help the trapped coal miners while they waited to be rescued?
- When you feel grumpy today, what is a favorite happy song you can sing to God?

Activity:

"Sing Your Thanks" Circle! Sit together in a circle. Instead of just speaking what you are thankful for, you have to sing it! Take turns singing a short phrase about a blessing (like making up a grand opera voice to sing, "I'm so thank-ful for my fluff-y dog!"). The sillier the tune, the better! This reminds us that praising God is fun, brings out our joy, and quickly turns a grumbling, discontented heart into a bright and happy one.



Today's Promise (#107) — KJV

Philippians 2:14 "Do all things without murmurings and disputings:"

♥ Apply the Promise!

"Murmuring" means complaining and grumbling, and "disputings" means arguing. When we whine about chores or dinner, we forget our blessings. God wants us to do everything with a thankful heart instead of a grumbling one!

📖 Bible Story (Exodus 16, Numbers 14)

God did wonderful miracles to rescue the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. He parted the deep sea so they could walk through on dry ground. He led them safely into the desert with a tall pillar of cloud by day and a bright fire by night. You might think they would be the most thankful people in the world!

But soon, the Israelites started to murmur and complain. Even though they were free, they began to grumble. They cried about missing the food they used to eat in Egypt. They complained that they were tired of walking and that the desert was too hot.

To show them His love, God did a miracle every single morning. He rained down sweet white bread from heaven called manna. He even brought cool, fresh water out of a solid rock so they would not be thirsty.

But it was never enough for them. They kept arguing with their leaders and murmuring against God. Because they focused on what they did not have instead of the miracles right in front of their eyes, God was very sad. There were serious consequences for their constant grumbling. Because they refused to trust His goodness and kept complaining about their journey, that group of people was not allowed to enter the new land God had promised them. By choosing to complain instead of being thankful, they missed out on a wonderful blessing.

The Israelites showed us that a complaining heart can keep us from enjoying God's special blessings.

☀ True Story

When Helen Keller was a baby, she became sick with a high fever. The illness took away her ability to see and hear, leaving her in a dark, silent world. Because she could not hear voices, she could not easily learn how to speak. She often felt lonely and confused, and sometimes she threw angry tantrums. It would have been easy for Helen to spend her whole life murmuring about the things she could not do.

But when Helen was seven years old, a kind teacher named Annie Sullivan came to help her. One afternoon, while standing outside at a water pump, Annie held Helen's hand under the cool, rushing water. With her free hand, Annie traced the letters for the word "water" right into Helen's palm. Suddenly, Helen understood! She realized that those shapes were words, and words had meaning. A whole new world opened up for her.

Helen made a brave choice. Instead of being angry, she worked harder than anyone else. She learned to read books by using her fingers to feel special raised dots called Braille. She even learned how to speak out loud by gently touching her teacher's face to feel the words! It took years of hard practice, but she never gave up. As she grew older, Helen graduated from college and traveled to many different places to write books and encourage others who were hurting. Instead of focusing on her struggles, she chose to use the gifts God gave her to help the world.

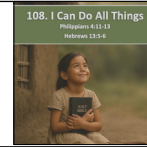
Helen's brave choice reminds us that when we choose a thankful heart instead of a complaining one, we can find joy in any situation.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did the Israelites complain about even after God had helped them?
- What did Helen Keller learn to focus on instead of only thinking about what she could not do?
- Imagine you are served your absolute least favorite food for dinner. How can you practice not murmuring in that moment? What is something you could say instead?

🎬 Activity:

Blindfold one person and hand them an everyday object, such as a sock, spoon, toy, or pencil. Let them guess what it is by touch. Then talk about how Helen Keller learned through touch and how many blessings we often forget to notice. Have each person name one thing they are thankful for that they can touch, see, hear, smell, or taste.



Today's Promise (#108) — KJV

Philippians 4:11-13 "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound... I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Hebrews 13:5 "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

♥ Apply the Promise!

Covetousness is always wanting more toys or money. Contentment is a happy peace, knowing that because God is with you, you already have everything you need!

📖 Bible Story (Philippians 4)

The Apostle Paul traveled thousands of miles to tell people about Jesus. Sometimes, his journeys were easy. People welcomed him as a guest and gave him big feasts to eat and soft beds to sleep in. But other times, his life was hard. He faced scary storms at sea, went many days without food, and was treated unkindly by angry crowds.

When Paul wrote his famous letter to the Philippians, he was actually a prisoner in the city of Rome. He was not living in a comfortable home. He was stuck inside, chained to a Roman guard every hour of the day and night. He could not go for a walk, visit his friends, or even choose what he wanted to eat.

Most people in that situation would have been miserable. They would have spent their days complaining and wishing for the freedom that everyone else had.

But Paul did not grumble. Instead, his letters were full of joy! He shared something wonderful with his friends. He wrote, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Paul did not mean that prison was easy. He meant that Jesus was with him there, and that was enough.

Paul knew what it was like to have plenty, and he knew what it was like to have little. He had been hungry, tired, and treated unfairly. But his joy did not depend on comfort, money, or freedom. His joy came from Christ, who promised to give him strength every single day.

Paul showed us that whether we have a lot or a little, we can be happy because Jesus is with us.

☀ True Story

Matthew Henry lived a long time ago in England. He loved God and spent his life writing helpful books to teach people about the Bible. One evening, he was traveling home alone. As he was riding his horse along a quiet, dark dirt road, a group of thieves suddenly jumped out from the shadows. They stopped his horse, demanded his belongings, and stole his money.

For most people, being robbed by bad men would ruin their whole week. It would be easy to feel angry, scared, and upset. Many people would loudly complain and ask why God allowed something so bad to happen to them.

But Matthew had learned the secret of having a peaceful heart. When he finally made it safely home that night, he did not grumble or throw a fit. Instead, he sat down at his desk, opened his private journal, and wrote a list of four reasons he was actually thankful about being robbed!

First, he was thankful because he had safely lived a long time and had never been robbed before. Second, he was thankful that even though the men took his money, they did not hurt his body. Third, he was thankful that he did not have much money in his pocket anyway. And fourth, he was thankful that he was the victim, rather than being the wicked man stealing from others.

Matthew Henry proved that contentment doesn't mean bad things never happen to you. Contentment means choosing to find a reason to thank God no matter what happens.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Where was Paul when he wrote that he had learned to be content?
- What did Matthew Henry do right after he got home from being robbed by thieves?
- If you had to write a "Thankful List" like Matthew Henry right now, what is one weird or unusual thing that happened recently that you can actually be thankful for?

🎲 Activity:

Take turns tossing a coin in the air. If it lands on Heads, the person has to name something they have that makes them feel perfectly content (like a cozy bed or a great family). If it lands on Tails, they have to name something they don't have—but they are super thankful they don't have it (like a broken arm, or Brussels sprouts for dessert, or a skunk in their bedroom)! This helps us be content for both the things God gives us and the things He keeps away from us!



Today's Promise (#109) — KJV

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

💖 Apply the Promise!

God tells us to give thanks in everything. That doesn't mean we have to be happy when bad things happen. It means that even in the middle of a hard day or when we have lots of chores to do, we can still find something to be thankful for!

📖 Bible Story (Luke 10:38-42)

One afternoon, Jesus and His friends arrived in a village called Bethany to visit the home of two sisters named Mary and Martha. Can you imagine having Jesus as a guest in your own home? You might think everyone in the house would be full of joy and thankfulness.

But while Mary sat down quietly at Jesus' feet to listen to His teaching, Martha was hurrying around the house. She was busy trying to prepare a big meal, set the table, and make sure everything was perfect for her special guest. She was working so hard that she began to feel tired and upset. Instead of being thankful that the Savior was right there in her home, Martha started comparing her hard work to her sister's rest.

The more Martha looked at Mary just sitting there, the more worried and discontent she became. Finally, Martha could not take it anymore! She marched right up to Jesus and complained, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me!"

But Jesus didn't scold Mary. Instead, He looked at Martha with love and gently told her that she was "careful and troubled about many things," but that Mary had chosen the better part. Martha had become so focused on her chores and what felt unfair that she completely missed the joy of just being with Jesus.

Mary showed us that if we only focus on our work and our complaints, we will forget to give thanks for the beautiful blessings right in front of us!

☀️ True Story

During World War II, Corrie ten Boom and her sister Betsie were sent to a terrible prison camp because they had helped protect Jewish people. Life in the camp was incredibly hard. They had to live in a dark, dirty, overcrowded building.

To make matters worse, their beds were completely infested with tiny, biting fleas! Corrie was disgusted and frustrated. It was so easy to complain and be deeply discontent. How could anyone be thankful in such a miserable place?

But Betsie had managed to sneak a small Bible into the camp. She opened it and read 1 Thessalonians 5:18: "In every thing give thanks." Betsie told Corrie they needed to pray and thank God for every single thing in their new room—even the terrible fleas! Corrie thought her sister was crazy. She told Betsie, "I will not thank God for fleas!" But Betsie insisted, so Corrie bowed her head and thanked God for the biting bugs.

Weeks went by, and the sisters noticed something amazing. They were able to read their Bible out loud and hold prayer meetings in their room every single day, and the cruel guards never once came inside to stop them.

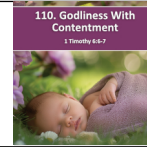
Finally, they discovered the secret. Why did the guards refuse to ever step foot inside their room? Because they were terrified of the fleas! God had used those annoying little bugs to protect them. Corrie learned that we really can give thanks in everything! Corrie realized that when we stop complaining about our 'fleas' and start trusting God's plan, we often find that the very things we disliked were actually the tools God used to keep us safe.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why was Martha so grumpy and discontent while Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet?
- What did Betsie tell Corrie they needed to thank God for in their dark, dirty room?
- When you have to do a chore and your sibling gets to play, how can you practice being thankful instead of acting like Martha?

📖 Activity:

Have everyone sit in a circle. One person names a situation that is usually a bummer and makes people complain (for example: "We have to clean our bedrooms," or "We are stuck in a long line at the store"). The next person has to quickly find the "hidden blessing" to be thankful for in that situation (for example: "I am thankful I have a bed to clean," or "We get to spend more time talking together in line"). See how fast you can turn complaints into gratitude!



Today's Promise (#110) — KJV

1 Timothy 6:6-7 "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."

💖 Apply the Promise!

We didn't bring any stuff into this world when we were born, and we can't take any of it with us when we leave. True happiness doesn't come from getting more toys, but from loving God and being thankful for what He gives us right now.

📖 Bible Story (Luke 12:16-21)

Jesus told a story to help people understand what truly matters. He spoke about a wealthy farmer who owned a large piece of land. One year, the weather was perfect, and his fields grew such a huge harvest that his barns were bursting at the seams. He had grown more food than he could ever eat in a lifetime. But instead of being thankful to God for the blessing, or sharing his extra food with people in his town who were hungry, the farmer had a selfish heart. He did not think about God at all; he only thought about his piles of grain.

He sat down alone in his house and thought to himself, "What shall I do? I have no room to store all my crops!" He thought about his problem, and then he came up with a plan that he believed was clever. He said, "I know exactly what I will do! I will tear down my old barns and build bigger ones. I will store all my grain and my goods there. Then I can confidently tell my soul to sit back, eat, drink, and be merry for many years!"

He thought his towering piles of stuff would keep him happy, safe, and comfortable forever. He believed he did not need God because he had so much wealth. But God looked at him and said, "You are a fool! Tonight, your life on earth will be over. Now, who will get all these things you have kept for yourself?" The farmer realized too late that his earthly treasures could not save him. He was so busy trying to build bigger barns that he forgot to build a friendship with God.

This story helps us remember that nothing we own can last forever. True contentment comes from loving God, sharing what He gives us, and being rich toward Him.

☀️ True Story

William Borden was born into a wealthy family. By the time he was a teenager, he was a millionaire. He lived in a beautiful home and could have bought any toy or gadget he ever wanted. When he graduated from high school, his parents gave him a special gift: a trip to travel all the way around the world.

But as William traveled from country to country, he did not just look at the famous buildings or the scenery. He saw many people who were poor, hurting, and did not know about the love of Jesus. His heart began to change. He realized that holding onto his millions of dollars would never make him truly content. He knew his earthly wealth was temporary and that he could not take his money with him when his life was over.

Instead of building bigger barns to keep his money safe, William made a choice that shocked everyone who knew him. He decided to give his huge fortune away! He wanted to use his money to help the poor and to become a missionary. He wanted to tell people in faraway lands about Jesus.

Many of his friends thought he was crazy to give up his riches. But William wrote a famous note in the back of his Bible: "No reserves. No retreats. No regrets." He died with a perfectly peaceful heart, knowing he had traded earthly money for a heavenly reward.

William Borden's life reminds us that great gain is not found in what we keep for ourselves. It is found in loving God, giving freely, and living for something that will last forever.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why was the rich farmer called a "fool" even though he had so much stuff?
- Why did William Borden decide to give away his millions of dollars instead of keeping them?
- If you had to leave for Heaven today and could only take things that aren't made of plastic or metal, what would you bring?

🎨 Activity:

Turn on your favorite scripture songs and grab a soft ball. Sit in a circle and start passing the ball as fast as you can! When you catch the ball, you have to quickly shout out one thing you are thankful to God for before passing it to the next person. When the music stops, the person holding the ball has to say, "Godliness with contentment is great gain!" Try to see how fast you can pass the ball without being the last person holding it when the music stops!



Today's Promise (#111) — NKJV

Psalm 119:36–37 “Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way.”

♥ Apply the Promise!

We can pray, “Lord, help us love Your Word more than we want what others have. Turn our eyes away from things that lead to envy, and fill our hearts with joy in Your way.”

📖 Bible Story (1 Kings 21)

King Ahab ruled over the nation of Israel. He lived in a large palace, had many servants to help him, and enjoyed great wealth. He had almost everything a person could want! But right next to the king's palace was a small, beautiful vineyard owned by a man named Naboth. One day, Ahab looked out his window and decided he simply had to have Naboth's land for his own vegetable garden.

Ahab offered to buy the land, but Naboth respectfully said no. God's law said that family land should stay with the family to honor their ancestors, and Naboth wanted to obey God more than he wanted the king's money. You would think a powerful king with thousands of acres would simply choose another piece of land. But instead, Ahab allowed a dark, prickly weed—envy—to grow in his heart.

Even though he owned an entire kingdom, he became upset over the one small patch of dirt he could not have. He went to his room, lay on his bed, turned his face to the wall, and refused to eat his dinner. He acted like a pouting child because his eyes were fixed on what was missing instead of the gold and silver all around him. When his wife, Queen Jezebel, saw this, she made a wicked plan. She arranged for Naboth to be falsely accused and killed just so Ahab could walk over and take the vineyard.

Ahab got what he wanted—but it brought terrible consequences and a heavy heart. His envy led to sin, sorrow, and a very sad judgment from God. Ahab's story teaches us that when we keep looking at what we don't have, we lose all the joy in the many blessings God has already given us.

☀ True Story

Imagine waking up and not being able to use your arms to brush your teeth or your legs to run. For Nick Vujcic, this was his reality from the day he was born. He had no arms and no legs—only one small foot with two toes. Growing up, life was frustrating. He had to rely on others for almost everything, and he was sometimes bullied at school. It would have been very easy for him to spend his whole life feeling jealous of the kids playing sports he could not play. For a long time, he was sad and wondered what his purpose could be.

But as Nick grew older, he realized that focusing only on what he lacked was keeping him from using what he did have. He decided to stop being jealous and start getting creative. Using his small foot, Nick learned to do amazing things. He figured out how to operate an electric wheelchair. He learned to type 43 words a minute on a computer using just his toes. He learned to comb his hair, brush his teeth, and answer the phone. He even learned how to swim, skydive, and surf, once managing to do a full 360-degree spin on his board!

Instead of staying hidden away in jealousy, Nick chose to be thankful for the unique life he was given. Today, he is not only a world traveler speaking to millions of people, but he is also a husband and a joyful father to four children. His story proves that true happiness does not come from having a body like everyone else; it comes from being thankful and making the most of what God gave you. When we choose to be happy for others and thankful for ourselves, we find a strength that envy can never give us.

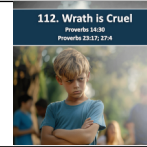
💬 Discussion Questions:

- King Ahab had a whole kingdom but became upset over one small garden. Have you ever been upset about something small when you already had many blessings?
- Why do you think Nick is joyful today, even though he does not have arms or legs?
- What could King Ahab have chosen to do instead of going to his room and refusing to eat?

🎬 Activity:

Have everyone stand like statues while one person (the “Distractor”) walks around holding something interesting, like a toy or treat, trying to get others to look. If someone looks, they are out!

Afterward, talk about how focusing on things we don't have can lead to envy and take away our joy. Choosing to “turn our eyes away” helps us stay content and thankful.



Today's Promise (#112) — KJV

Proverbs 14:30 "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones."

Proverbs 23:17 "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long."

Proverbs 27:4 "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?"

💖 Apply the Promise!

Envy harms your heart, but a pure heart brings life. God tells us not to let our hearts envy others, but be content and let Him fill our hearts with peace and joy.

📖 Bible Story (1 Samuel 18)

When a young shepherd boy named David defeated the giant Goliath, all of Israel celebrated. King Saul should have been happy that his kingdom was safe. But as the army marched home, women came out dancing and singing a joyful song: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

That single song changed everything. Instead of being thankful, Saul felt a sting in his heart. He could not stand the thought of someone else receiving more praise than he did. The Bible says that from that day forward, Saul "eyed" David. Every time Saul looked at the young hero, he did not see a loyal servant; he only saw a rival.

Jealousy is like a weed. If you do not pull it out immediately, it grows and chokes out all the joy in your heart. Saul let that weed grow. He stopped enjoying his beautiful palace and his many blessings. His mind became busy with thoughts of David, making him angry and miserable.

One day, David was sitting quietly in the palace, playing beautiful music on his harp to help calm the king's troubled mood. Suddenly, Saul was so overwhelmed by his jealous rage that he grabbed a heavy spear and hurled it straight at David!

David dodged the weapon and escaped, but Saul's jealousy had already destroyed his own peace. Instead of ruling his kingdom in quiet joy, Saul spent his final years chasing David through the wilderness. He learned that envy doesn't hurt the person we are jealous of; it poisons our own hearts and steals our happiness. When we allow jealousy to grow, it acts like a rot that destroys our own peace and friendship with others.

☀️ True Story

In the early 1990s, two talented American figure skaters named Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding were top competitors. Both wanted to represent the United States at the Winter Olympics. Nancy was graceful, popular, and loved by many fans. Tonya was a powerful, athletic skater, but she often felt overlooked.

Because they were close rivals, jealousy and pressure began to grow around them. Instead of everyone focusing on training, winning fairly, and doing their best, people connected to Tonya became focused on stopping Nancy. That envy led to a terrible plan.

A few weeks before the Olympics, an attacker struck Nancy on the knee with a heavy baton after a practice session. The men behind the attack hoped she would be too injured to compete.

But the plan failed. Nancy's leg was bruised, not broken. She healed, competed in the Olympics, and won a silver medal. Meanwhile, the police uncovered the plot. Tonya admitted that she had helped hide what she knew afterward. She lost her national title and was banned from U.S. figure skating for life.

This story warns us that envy can grow into terrible choices when it is not stopped. When we focus on hurting others or pulling them down, we do not gain true joy. We lose peace, trust, and blessing.

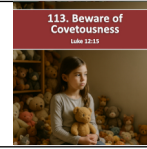
When someone else is praised or chosen, God can help us rejoice with them and do our own best with a clean heart.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why did King Saul become jealous of David after the victory over Goliath?
- What happened to Tonya Harding's skating career after the police uncovered the plot?
- What can you do when someone else gets praised, noticed, or chosen instead of you?

🎨 Activity:

Show how envy destroys from the inside out! Take a fresh apple and heavily bruise one side of it by dropping it on the counter a few times before the lesson. Show the kids the apple—it looks perfectly fine on the outside! Now, slice it open right through the bruised spot. The inside will be dark, brown, and totally rotting. Talk about how jealousy is a secret sin that rots our hearts on the inside just like Proverbs 14 says.



Today's Promise (#113) — KJV

Luke 12:15 "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

Watch out for always wanting more. Jesus says your life is not about how much you have. True joy comes from loving God, not from having many things.

📖 Bible Story (2 Kings 5)

Elisha was a faithful man of God who spent his life helping others. One day, an army captain named Naaman came to him for help. Naaman had a terrible skin disease, but God healed him when he obeyed Elisha's instructions and washed in the Jordan River seven times.

Naaman was filled with joy. He wanted to thank Elisha by giving him rich gifts of silver, gold, and beautiful clothing. But Elisha refused. He wanted Naaman to understand that God's healing was a free gift. It could not be bought with money.

Elisha had a servant named Gehazi who saw everything. When Gehazi looked at the silver, covetousness began to grow in his heart. He could not stop thinking about the treasures Elisha had turned away. After Naaman left, Gehazi decided to run after him and get something for himself.

When Gehazi caught up with Naaman, he told a lie. He said that Elisha had changed his mind and needed silver and clothing for two young men who had just arrived. Naaman believed him and gladly gave him the gifts.

Gehazi carried the treasure back and hid it in the house. Then he went and stood before Elisha as if nothing had happened. But God had shown Elisha the truth.

Because Gehazi let covetousness rule his heart, he lied, deceived, and lost the peace he could have had. Gehazi's story warns us that wanting what God has not given us can lead us into sin and sorrow. True happiness does not come from getting more things, but from having a heart that is right with God.

☀️ True Story

In 2012, a university student named Christine opened a bank account. Because of a computer error, the bank accidentally changed a setting on her card. This allowed her to spend as much money as she wanted, even though she had nothing. Instead of calling the bank to report the mistake, Christine let greed take over.

Christine loved fashion and wanted people to think she was wealthy. She began spending money from the broken account. Over the next few years, she spent over four million dollars! She did not use the money to buy a house or help people in need. Instead, she bought hundreds of expensive handbags, jewelry, and shoes. She hoarded these items inside her apartment, filling her closets to the top with things she could not even use.

Christine thought having many possessions would finally make her happy. Instead, she lived in constant fear, carefully hiding her secret from her friends and family. Eventually, the bank discovered their mistake and demanded their money back. They went to her apartment and took away every purse and pair of shoes.

Christine was forced to declare bankruptcy, meaning she was left with absolutely nothing. Her choices did not bring her joy; they only brought her public embarrassment and the loss of everything she had gathered.

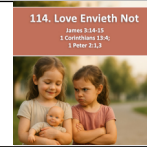
Christine's story reminds us that a person's life is not made better by piles of stuff. True joy comes from honesty, thankfulness, and being content with what God has given us.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why did Gehazi tell a lie to Naaman?
- How did Gehazi's desire for treasures make things worse for him in the end?
- What did Christine hoard inside her tiny apartment?
- Jesus said our lives are not about the "abundance of things." Since toys and clothes don't make life truly good, what are the things that do matter most?

🎨 Activity:

Have one child hold out their arms. Gently stack soft items on them, such as pillows, jackets, stuffed animals, or light toys. With each item, name something people may want more and more of—money, toys, clothes, treats, or fancy things. Keep adding items until it becomes hard to hold them all. Then ask, "Does having more make this easier or harder?" Let some of the items fall onto a blanket or soft place. Talk about how greed can become a heavy burden.



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#114) — KJV

James 3:14-15 "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." **1 Corinthians 13:4** "[Love] envieth not..."

1 Peter 2:1, 3 "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings... If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

♥ Apply the Promise!

True love is kind and does not envy. God wants us to put away jealousy and choose His peace.

Bible Story (Genesis 37)

Joseph was a young man and the favorite son of his father, Jacob. To show his special love, Jacob gave Joseph a beautiful coat of many colors. When Joseph's older brothers saw the coat, envy grew in their hearts. They could not stand that their father loved him more. They hated Joseph so much that they could not even speak a kind word to him.

One day, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers while they were taking care of sheep far from home. Long before Joseph reached them, the brothers saw him coming in the distance. Their envy turned into a dark plan. Before Joseph could even speak, they grabbed him, pulled off his special coat, and threw him into a deep, dry hole in the ground.

The brothers sat down to eat their meal, ignoring Joseph's cries for help from the bottom of the pit. Soon, a group of traveling merchants passed by on camels. They pulled Joseph out and sold their own brother to the strangers for twenty pieces of silver. The merchants took Joseph far away to Egypt.

To hide what they had done, the brothers dipped Joseph's coat in the blood of a goat and took it home to their father. Jacob recognized the coat and wept bitterly, believing Joseph had been killed by a wild animal.

Joseph's brothers got rid of the one they envied, but they did not gain peace. Their jealousy brought sorrow to their father and guilt into their own hearts. This story warns us that envy is not a small thing. If we let it stay in our hearts, it can lead to unkind words, cruel actions, and deep sadness. True love does not envy. Love rejoices when others are blessed.

True Story

Long ago in Germany, there lived a girl named Fanny and her younger brother, Felix. Both of them were highly gifted musicians. They loved to write music. They sat at the piano for hours, playing songs for each other. They were best friends. They studied, played the piano, and wrote songs.

As they grew older, people began to notice Felix's talent. He performed, published music, and became famous. Fanny was happy for her brother, but a problem came up. At that time, people believed that women should stay home and not publish music. Her father told her that writing music was just a hobby for a girl, but it was a real job for Felix.

Fanny kept writing music anyway. She composed hundreds of pieces, but many were not published during her lifetime. A few of her songs were even published under Felix's name. Felix received public praise, while Fanny's work was mostly heard in her home.

It would have been easy for Fanny to let envy grow in her heart. She was very talented, but she did not receive the same attention as her brother. Yet she continued to love Felix and share music with him. She also found a way to bless others by holding concerts in her own home. She could not control how others treated her, but she could choose to keep a loving heart.

Fanny's life reminds us that love does not envy. Even when someone else is noticed more than we are, God can help us use our own gifts faithfully and rejoice when others are blessed.

Discussion Questions:

- How did Joseph's brothers feel when they saw his special coat?
- Why did Fanny choose to love her brother instead of being jealous?
- What is something you can do when you start to feel jealous?

Activity:

Play a game of "Encouragement Circle." Sit in a circle and pass a soft ball while music plays. When the music stops, the person holding the ball says one kind or encouraging thing about the person next to them.

Afterward, talk about how encouraging others instead of comparing or being jealous helps keep our hearts peaceful and joyful.



Today's Promise (#115) — NKJV

James 3:16-18 "For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

♥ Apply the Promise!

Envy brings confusion and trouble, but God's wisdom is pure, gentle, and peaceful. Instead of fighting for attention, we can choose to be kind and peaceful.

Bible Story (Numbers 16)

God chose Moses to lead the Israelites, and He chose Aaron to be the high priest. Moses did not ask to be in charge; he simply obeyed what God commanded. But a man named Korah began watching Moses and Aaron with an envious heart. Korah already had a special job helping care for God's tent, but it was not enough for him. He wanted the power and the attention that Moses received from the people.

Korah allowed jealousy to take over his mind. He went to two hundred and fifty other leaders in the camp and convinced them to turn against Moses. They marched right up to Moses and demanded, "You take too much upon yourselves! All the people are holy. Why do you lift yourselves up above everyone else?" Moses fell on his face in sadness. He knew that by envying his position, Korah was not just fighting a man; he was fighting against God's plan.

Moses told Korah and his followers to bring their incense burners the next morning, so the Lord could show everyone whom He had chosen. The next day, as the men stood at the door of the tent, God's glory appeared for everyone to see. To show that Moses and Aaron were His true servants, the ground split wide open. The earth swallowed up Korah and the men who followed him, and the rebellion ended. Korah's envy only brought confusion and trouble to the camp.

Korah's story warns us that envy and strife do not bring peace. When we want the place God has given someone else, our hearts become restless and unhappy. God's wisdom is gentle and peaceable. He wants us to serve faithfully where He has placed us.

Discussion Questions:

- What happened to Korah because he allowed jealousy and strife to grow in his heart?
- How did George Whitefield respond when people told him John Wesley was becoming more well known?
- If a friend does better than you at something, how can you choose to be a peacemaker instead of being jealous?

True Story

Many years ago, two preachers lived in England named George Whitefield and John Wesley. Both men loved Jesus and traveled across the country to share the gospel. They often preached to large crowds in open fields because the church buildings were too small. Sometimes, George would preach to thousands of workers who would stand in the rain just to hear him speak about God's love.

George began his work first and was well-known. But later, John Wesley also began preaching, and soon, huge crowds started gathering to hear him as well. Some people tried to cause trouble between the two friends. They went to George and whispered, "Look! John is becoming more famous than you. He is taking away your crowds and getting all the attention!"

It would have been easy for George to feel jealous. He could have argued, complained, and tried to compete to keep his spot as the most popular preacher. But George refused to let envy grow in his heart. Instead of getting upset, George smiled. He said he did not mind at all if people forgot his name, as long as they remembered the name of Jesus.

Later, someone tried to stir up more jealousy by asking George if he expected to see John Wesley in heaven. George gave a kind answer. He said, "No, I do not. John will be so close to the throne of God, and I will be so far back, that I will hardly catch a glimpse of him!" Because George chose peace, both men were able to work together.

Choosing to celebrate the success of others keeps our hearts free from envy and full of peace.

Activity:

Play "Peacemaker Keep-Up! Blow up a balloon and try to keep it in the air as a group. You must take turns hitting it, and no one can hit it twice in a row!

Afterward, talk about how sharing and taking turns keeps the game peaceful and fun. When we stop trying to get all the attention and choose to work together, it brings peace—just like God's wisdom teaches us.



Today's Promise (#116) — KJV

Psalm 27:1, 3 "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When God is your light and strength, you don't have to be afraid! Even if an army stands against you, you can be confident. God cares for you and you are never alone.

📖 Bible Story (1 Samuel 17)

The Philistine army gathered on a mountain to fight the Israelites. Every morning, a giant named Goliath stepped into the valley. He was over nine feet tall, wore heavy bronze armor, and carried a large spear. He shouted for the Israelites to send one man to fight him. King Saul and his army were filled with fear. Whenever they saw the giant, they ran away.

One day, a young shepherd named David came to the camp to bring food to his older brothers. When David heard Goliath insulting God's people, he knew someone needed to stand for the Lord. The giant looked frightening, but David chose to remember God's power instead of focusing on his fear.

David offered to fight Goliath. King Saul tried to dress him in heavy armor, but David could not use it. He knew that armor and swords were not what had saved him before. God had helped him protect his sheep from a lion and a bear, and David trusted that God could help him again.

David walked into the valley with his shepherd's staff, a simple sling, and five stones from the brook. When Goliath saw him, he mocked him and cursed him. But David answered boldly, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts."

Then David put one stone in his sling, swung it, and let it fly. The stone struck Goliath in the forehead, and the giant fell to the ground. David's story reminds us that courage does not mean we never feel afraid. Courage means trusting God, remembering His help, and taking the next faithful step even when the problem looks huge.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- David and the soldiers both saw the same giant. Why do you think David saw a "big God" while the soldiers only saw a "big problem"?
- What did Coach Lowe do to the student instead of trying to fight him?
- Psalm 27 says, "whom shall I fear?" What is one scary thing in your life right now that you need to ask God to help you face with confidence?

☀️ True Story

In 2019, a man named Coach Keanon Lowe was working at a high school in Oregon. One morning, a very angry and deeply troubled student walked into the main hallway holding a loaded weapon. The student was hurting inside and wanted to cause a terrible tragedy. When the other students and teachers saw the scary weapon, they were absolutely terrified. They immediately panicked, screamed, and ran away to hide behind locked doors.

But Coach Lowe did not run away. He saw the terrifying situation standing right in front of him, but he refused to let fear control his mind. Just like David stepping out to face Goliath, the brave coach walked straight toward the dangerous threat. But he did not use his physical fists or try to fight the troubled student. Instead, Coach Lowe did something completely shocking.

He calmly walked right up to the angry student, gently took the heavy weapon out of his hands, and wrapped his strong arms around him in a giant, loving hug. He held the crying student tightly until the police arrived, constantly whispering that he cared about him and that everything would be okay.

Coach Lowe could have easily run away like everyone else, but he chose to face the giant of fear with total courage and deep compassion. His incredible bravery safely ended a dangerous situation without a single person getting hurt. When we fully trust God to be our light and our salvation, we do not have to run away when scary giants show up. We can boldly step into the hardest moments and bring God's perfect peace.

🎨 Activity:

Hide five smooth rocks or crumpled pieces of paper around the room to represent David's stones. Have the children search for them. When a child finds a "stone," they must stand tall and loudly share one wonderful thing about God that is bigger than our fears, such as "God is strong!" This helps the children practice speaking truth to their fears just like David did when facing his giant.



Today's Promise (#117) — KJV

Psalm 56:3-4 "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When we feel afraid, we can choose to trust God. Because God is stronger than anything people or the world can do, we do not have to live in fear.

📖 Bible Story (2 Samuel 23)

King David had a group of brave soldiers called his mighty men. They helped protect the kingdom of Israel. One of these men was named Benaiah. The Bible tells us that Benaiah was a valiant man who did many mighty deeds.

One short story shows how much courage he had. One day, when snow covered the ground, Benaiah faced a lion in a pit. The Bible does not tell us every detail, but we can imagine how frightening it would be to look down into a pit and see a strong, dangerous lion below.

A lion is powerful in the open field, but a lion trapped in a pit could be even more dangerous. There would not be much room to move. The ground was snowy, cold, and slippery. Most people would have stayed far away.

But Benaiah did not let fear control him. He went down into the pit and faced the lion. He could not fight from a safe distance. He had to go right into the danger.

With God's help, Benaiah killed the lion in the snow. His courage became part of the Bible's record of David's mighty men.

Benaiah may have felt the cold air, seen the narrow pit, and known that one wrong step could be dangerous. But he chose faith and courage instead of letting fear decide for him.

Benaiah's story reminds us that courage does not mean danger is not real. Courage means choosing to do what is right even when the situation feels frightening. When God gives us a hard job, we can ask Him for strength and courage to obey.

☀ True Story

In the summer of 2020, a six-year-old boy named Bridger Walker was playing outside in Wyoming with his four-year-old sister. They were enjoying an afternoon in a friend's backyard when a neighbor's large dog suddenly broke loose and charged toward them. In that moment, Bridger saw that his little sister was in danger. The angry dog had locked its eyes right on her.

Bridger was only a small boy, and the dog was much bigger and stronger than he was. He had every reason to be afraid and could have easily run away to protect himself. But Bridger refused to let fear control his actions. He loved his sister dearly, and he chose to stand between her and the sudden danger.

As the dog lunged forward, Bridger deliberately stepped right in front of her. He stood as a human shield, taking the brunt of the attack. The dog bit his face and head. Even though he was badly hurt and frightened, he still thought only of his sister. As soon as the dog let go, the brave young boy grabbed his sister's hand and led her to a safer place.

Bridger had to go to the hospital and receive ninety stitches. Later, when people asked him why he had stepped in front of the dog, his honest answer touched the world. He simply said, "If someone had to die, I thought it should be me."

Bridger's story reminds us that courage does not mean we never feel afraid. Courage means doing what is right even when we are scared. When fear comes, we can trust God, ask Him for strength, and take the brave step He gives us to take.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What fierce animal did Benaiah fight down inside the snowy pit?
- How many stitches did Bridger receive after protecting his sister?
- Benaiah felt fear, but he did the right thing anyway. Why is it important to remember that being brave doesn't mean you stop feeling afraid?

🎨 Activity:

Show what Bridger did for his sister! Tape a paper target to the wall. Have one child gently toss soft foam balls or rolled-up socks at the target. Have another child play the "shield" and bravely stand in front, trying to block the soft balls from hitting the paper. Talk about how true courage means putting others first, exactly like Bridger did.



118. Fear Thou Not
Isaiah 41:10, 13

Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#118) — KJV

Isaiah 41:10, 13 "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you feel afraid, remember that God is with you and holding your hand. You do not have to be afraid, because He promises to help you and make you strong.

Bible Story (Joshua 2)

Long ago, God was leading His people into the Promised Land. Their leader, Joshua, needed to know what was ahead, so he sent two spies to quietly look over the city of Jericho. Jericho had strong walls, and the people of the city were afraid because they had heard how the Lord had helped Israel.

The two spies came to the house of a woman named Rahab, whose home was built into the city wall. But soon the king of Jericho heard that Israelite spies had come into the city. He sent men to Rahab's house and told her to bring them out.

Rahab knew she had a serious choice to make. If she helped the spies, she could be in danger. But Rahab had heard about the God of Israel, and she believed He was the true God. Instead of letting fear decide for her, she chose to trust Him.

Rahab hid the spies on her roof under stalks of flax. After the king's men left, she told the spies that she knew the Lord had given Israel the land. She asked them to spare her family when Jericho was taken.

That night, Rahab helped the men escape by lowering them down from her window with a rope. Later, when Jericho fell, Rahab and her family were kept safe.

Rahab did not know every detail of what would happen next, but she knew enough to believe that the Lord was powerful and true. Her faith helped her act with courage while the whole city was trembling with fear.

Rahab's story reminds us that faith in God can make us brave. When we are afraid, we can trust His promises and choose to do what is right.

True Story

In 1960, a brave six-year-old girl named Ruby Bridges became the first African American child to attend an all-white elementary school in New Orleans. A large crowd of adults was very angry because they believed Black children and white children should not go to the same schools. Because the crowd was so upset, federal marshals had to walk beside Ruby every morning. She had to pass through adults who shouted cruel words and held up frightening signs.

Ruby was only in first grade. She was small, and the people around her were loud and unkind. Many children would have cried, run away, or begged not to go back. But Ruby kept walking into school day after day.

A doctor named Robert Coles met with Ruby because many people wondered how she could face so much fear. Ruby explained that she prayed for the angry people every morning before she left home. Her mother had taught her that when she felt afraid, she could talk to God.

One morning, a marshal watched Ruby stop right in the middle of the shouting crowd. Her lips were moving, but she was not talking to the people. Later, she explained that she had forgotten to pray before leaving home, so she stopped right there to pray for the angry adults. She prayed, "Please, God, try to forgive those people, because they don't know what they're doing."

Ruby's story reminds us that courage does not mean we never feel afraid. Courage means trusting that God is with us, praying when we are scared, and choosing to do what is right even when others are unkind.

Discussion Questions:

- Why did the Israelite spies need a safe place to hide in Jericho?
- What did Ruby Bridges forget to do before she left her house one morning?
- When you have to do something scary, how does remembering that God is holding your right hand help you feel brave?

Activity:

Take a long piece of red yarn or string (representing Rahab's red rope) and weave it through a room or down a hallway, looping it gently around chairs or doorknobs. Have the kids close their eyes (or use a blindfold) and hold onto the red string with one hand. They must navigate the "maze" by trusting the string to guide them safely to the other side.



Today's Promise (#119) — KJV

John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

Jesus gives us a peace the world cannot give. Even when everything around us feels stormy, He is with us and can calm our hearts so we do not have to be afraid.

📖 Bible Story (Mark 4)

Jesus had been teaching large crowds of people all day and was very tired. As evening came, He and His disciples got into a wooden boat to cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus went to the back of the small fishing boat, laid His head on a cushion, and fell fast asleep.

Suddenly, a dark storm swept down over the lake. The wind howled loudly, and foamy waves crashed over the sides of the little boat. The boat began to fill up with freezing water, tossing wildly up and down in the dark. The disciples were experienced fishermen who knew all about the sea, but even they were terrified. They were certain they were going to sink.

But where was Jesus? He was still peacefully sleeping right through the loud, crashing thunder! The frightened disciples ran to Him and shook Him awake, crying out in a panic, "Master, do You not care that we are going to drown?"

Jesus calmly stood up. He was not scared of the wind or the stormy water. He looked out at the wild, roaring storm and simply spoke to the sea, saying, "Peace, be still." Immediately, the roaring wind stopped blowing. The waves flattened out instantly. The deep water became as perfectly smooth as a piece of glass.

The disciples stared in wonder. They had seen that even the wind and the sea obeyed Jesus.

Jesus showed His friends that when He is with you, you never need to let your heart be troubled. His powerful peace is stronger than the biggest storm.

☀️ True Story

Many years ago, a young preacher named John Wesley was traveling on a ship across the ocean to America. John knew many Bible truths, but in his heart, he still struggled with fear. He had not yet learned to rest his whole heart in God.

One day, a storm struck the ship. The wind roared, and waves smashed against the wood. Water poured onto the deck, and the main sail tore apart. Most of the passengers cried out in panic, certain the ship was going to sink. John felt the panic, too. In that moment, he realized he was afraid to die.

But on the same ship was a group of believers called Moravians. They loved Jesus and trusted His promises. They believed their lives were safe in God's hands, whether He calmed the storm or carried them through it. Right in the middle of the storm, while the waves crashed and others screamed, the Moravians calmly sat together and sang hymns to God. Even their little children were not afraid.

John Wesley was amazed. When the wind stopped, he asked one of the Moravian men, "Were you not frightened?" The man answered, "I thank God, no." John asked, "But were your women and children not afraid?" The man replied, "No, our women and children are not afraid to die."

John realized they had a peace he was missing. They did not just know about God; they trusted Him like a loving Father. Their hearts rested safely in Jesus.

John Wesley's experience reminds us that real peace comes from trusting Jesus with our whole heart. When we believe that God is near, loving, and strong enough to care for us, fear does not have to rule us.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What was Jesus doing while the storm was roaring all around them?
- What did the Moravians do at the exact moment the giant wave crashed over the ship?
- What does it mean when Jesus says He gives us a peace that the world cannot give?

🎭 Activity:

Choose to act out either Jesus calming the storm or the Moravians on the ship. Let some children make loud storm sounds like howling wind and crashing waves, while others act very afraid. Then, have one child stand up and say, "Peace, be still," or begin calmly singing a hymn. Show how trusting God brings a quiet calm, even when everything around us feels scary.



Today's Promise (#120) — KJV

2 Timothy 1:7-8 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord..."

1 John 4:4 "...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

♥ Apply the Promise!

God has not given you a spirit of fear. He gives you power, love, and a calm, clear mind. Because He is with you, you can be brave and do what is right, even when something feels scary.

📖 Bible Story (2 Timothy 1)

The Apostle Paul was an older man, locked inside a Roman prison for preaching about Jesus. He knew his time on earth was almost over. He wrote a personal letter to his young friend and helper, Timothy. Timothy was a dedicated leader, but he naturally struggled with feeling afraid. He faced pressure from angry crowds who wanted to stop the growing church, and he felt fear pressing down on his heart.

Paul did not want Timothy to be trapped by his worried feelings. He gently reminded the young man that the Holy Spirit living inside him was not a spirit of fear. Paul explained that God provides three special gifts to replace our fear: power to stand strong, love to help others, and a clear mind to think when situations become scary.

Timothy did not have to find bravery hidden inside his own heart. He just had to rely on God's Spirit living within him. Paul encouraged Timothy not to be ashamed of the Gospel or the fact that his teacher was in chains. He wanted Timothy to realize that even though the Roman leaders looked strong, God's power was much higher.

Timothy took Paul's wise words to heart and continued to lead the early church with a steady focus. He refused to let his young age or angry critics hold him back. Whenever he felt small or worried, he chose to lean entirely on the strength God provided.

Timothy's story reminds us that fear does not have to control God's children. When we feel timid or afraid, God can give us strength, love, and a clear mind to obey Him bravely.

☀ True Story

In early 2026, thirteen-year-old Austin Applebee was on holiday with his mother, his twelve-year-old brother, and his eight-year-old sister in Western Australia. They rented paddleboards and a small kayak, but the ocean conditions quickly changed. Strong winds and rough water pushed the family far from the beach, and the kayak began filling with water.

With no help in sight, Austin's mother made a difficult choice. She told Austin to try to get back to shore and find help. Austin was not a strong swimmer. He had actually struggled to pass a basic swimming class just weeks before. It would have been easy for fear to take over as he looked at the long stretch of water between him and the land.

Austin first tried to paddle the kayak, but it kept taking on water. Soon, he had to leave it behind and swim through the cold, choppy waves. When his life jacket slowed him down, he bravely took it off. He prayed and kept telling himself he had to make it for his family.

For four exhausting hours, Austin battled the ocean alone. When his arms ached, he kept moving toward shore. At last, he reached the beach, but he did not stop. He ran more than a mile to find a phone and call for help. Because Austin kept going, rescuers found his mother and siblings safely later that night.

Austin's story reminds us that fear does not have to stop us when we place our trust in God. We can pray, remember that God is near, and keep moving forward one step at a time.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Where was Paul when he wrote to Timothy?
- What did Paul remind Timothy that God had not given him?
- Why did Austin have to swim to shore?
- What helped Austin keep going when he was tired and afraid?
- When you feel scared or timid, what can you ask God to give you?

🎬 Activity:

Have an adult randomly call out one of three words: "Power," "Love," or "Sound Mind." When they hear "Power," children must stand strong and flex like a hero. For "Love," quickly make a heart with their hands. For "Sound Mind," stand perfectly still, point to their head, and take a deep breath. Mix up the words quickly to see who can keep up without giggling!



Today's Promise (#121) — KJV

Psalm 30:5, 11-12 "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness...I will give thanks unto thee for ever."

Psalm 147:3 "He healeth the brokenhearted, and bindeth up their wounds."

♥ Apply the Promise!

Even when you are so sad that you cry yourself to sleep, remember that the "night" of weeping will end. God promises that a bright morning of joy is coming because He heals your heart.

Bible Story (Ruth 1-4)

Long ago, a woman named Naomi moved away from Bethlehem with her husband and two sons because there was not enough food. But while they were living in a new country, a great sadness came into her life. Her husband died, and later both of her grown sons died too. Naomi was left far from home with an aching, lonely heart.

When Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem, her daughter-in-law Ruth loved her and refused to leave her side. But when Naomi came back to her old home, she was so sad that she told her friends not to call her Naomi, which means "pleasant." She told them to call her Mara, which means "bitter." Naomi felt empty, as if all the happiness had gone out of her life.

But God had not forgotten Naomi. He was already working, even while she was hurting. Ruth traveled back to Bethlehem with her and worked hard in the fields to gather food for them. Slowly, Naomi began to see God's kindness again.

In those fields, Ruth met a kind man named Boaz. He cared for Ruth and Naomi, and later he married Ruth. God gave them a baby boy named Obed. When Naomi held that little grandson in her arms, her neighbors rejoiced with her. The woman who had come home feeling empty was now being comforted. Her bitterness was gone, and her heart was filled with gladness.

Naomi's story reminds us that even when our sadness feels long and heavy, God still sees us. He can bring comfort, kindness, and joy back into our lives.

True Story

In the summer of 1967, seventeen-year-old Joni Eareckson was swimming with friends. She loved riding horses, hiking, and being active. But that afternoon, Joni dove into the water without realizing it was too shallow. She hit the bottom and broke her neck. In one moment, her life changed. She could no longer move her body the way she had before.

At first, Joni's heart sank into deep grief. She had to stay in the hospital for months, lying still while others cared for her. She cried often and wondered why God had allowed this to happen. She missed the life she used to have and feared that nothing would ever feel bright again.

But Joni did not hide her sorrow from God. She cried out to Him and told Him the pain in her heart. Friends read the Bible to her and reminded her that Jesus had not left her alone. Slowly, she began to understand that God was with her even in the hardest place.

Her sadness did not disappear all at once. But day by day, God gave her strength. Over time, Joni learned to hold a paintbrush in her mouth and paint beautiful pictures. She later wrote books, spoke to many people, and encouraged others who were hurting.

Joni found joy again, not because everything became easy, but because she learned that Jesus was close to her in her suffering.

Joni's life reminds us that God can comfort the deepest sadness. He can stay near to broken hearts and still give our lives meaning, hope, and beauty.

Discussion Questions:

- Why did Naomi want her friends to call her "Mara" when she first got back to her hometown?
- Joni went through something very hard. What helped her begin to find hope again?
- Is it okay to cry when we are sad?

Activity:

Give each child a paper heart and ask them to gently tear it into a few pieces to represent how grief can feel. Then, have them use colorful bandages or bright tape to "mend" the heart back together. As they work, explain that while we feel broken sometimes, God is the Great Physician who stays close to us, gently binding up our wounds and making our hearts strong again.



Today's Promise (#122) — KJV

Psalm 34:3, 18-19 "O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together... The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit... Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all."

💖 Apply the Promise!

Even when you face many troubles, the Lord is right beside you. When your heart is broken, He is closer than ever to save and deliver you. Let's praise His name together for His goodness!

📖 Bible Story (Job)

Long ago, there was a man named Job who loved God with his whole heart. Job had a large family, many animals, and a beautiful home. But one day, everything changed. Messengers ran to Job with terrible news. In a single day, all his animals were stolen, and his servants were killed. Then, the saddest news of all arrived: a strong wind had knocked down a house, and all of his children had died.

Job's heart was completely broken. He fell to the ground in the dust and wept. Most people would have been angry at God, but Job made a different choice. Even in his deep sadness, he chose to worship. He said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Job's grief soon grew even heavier. Painful sores covered his entire body. His friends came to visit, but instead of comforting him, they spoke unkind words and misunderstood his pain. Job asked hard questions and cried out in his sorrow. Yet, he did not let go of God. He believed that God was still near, even when he could not understand what was happening.

After a long time of sadness, God spoke to Job out of a swirling whirlwind. God reminded Job of His great power and wisdom. Job had walked through deep grief, but he was never forgotten. The Lord healed Job and eventually gave him a new family and twice as much as he had before.

Job's story reminds us that God is close to us when our hearts are broken, and He never leaves us alone in our sadness.

☀️ True Story

Annie Johnson Flint was a young girl who knew exactly what it felt like to have a broken heart. Before she even became an adult, both of her parents passed away. Annie was left as an orphan. Not long after that great loss, she developed a painful disease called arthritis. Her joints ached so badly that it became impossible for her to walk, and she could not use her hands easily.

Annie lost her family and her health. She spent many nights in physical pain and deep sadness. It would have been very easy for her to become angry or give up on her faith entirely. Instead, Annie began to trust that God was near to her right in the middle of her suffering.

She started to write poems about the peace she found during her tears. Because she could not hold a pen easily, she often had to push the keys of a typewriter with her knuckles. She wrote beautiful words about how God gives us more grace when our burdens grow heavy. Her poems did not come from an easy life. They came from a heart that had been broken and then comforted by the Lord.

Annie's words traveled all around the world. Her poems brought hope to millions of people who were also walking through seasons of grief. She lived a life of peace despite her many daily trials.

Annie's story reminds us that no matter how much we have lost, God has a deep storehouse of comfort, and He can use our sadness to bring hope to others.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- How did Job react differently than most people?
- Annie Johnson Flint had to type with her knuckles because of her illness; what does that tell you about how much she wanted to share God's love?
- Annie wrote that God gives "more grace" as our burdens grow heavier. What do you think "more grace" feels like when you are sad?

🎨 Activity:

Cut out simple flower shapes from colorful paper. Have the children write or draw one thing that makes them feel happy or a way God has been kind to them on each flower. Tape these flowers onto straws and place them in a jar. Talk about how God can grow beautiful things like joy even in the middle of a "rainy" season of sadness.



Today's Promise (#123) — KJV

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

💖 Apply the Promise!

God is the Father of mercies who comforts you in every hard time. He gives you peace so that you can share that same love and comfort with others who are hurting.

📖 Bible Story (2 Samuel 18 & 19)

King David once faced a sorrow that cut deeply into his heart. His son Absalom had rebelled against him and tried to take the kingdom away. David had to leave Jerusalem because of his own son's choices. Yet even after all Absalom had done, David still loved him.

When the battle began between David's men and Absalom's men, David stood near the city gate and gave one clear command: "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." David was not thinking only like a king. He was thinking like a father who still loved his son.

After the battle, David waited anxiously for news. When a messenger arrived, David did not first ask if his army had won. He asked, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Then the painful answer came. Absalom had died.

David's heart broke. He went up to the room over the gate and wept. He cried, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee." David did not hide his tears or pretend he was fine. He cried out loud because his sorrow was real.

Later, David had to keep leading his people, but the Bible still lets us see his grief. God did not erase David's tears from the story.

David's experience reminds us that God understands deep family sorrow. When someone we love is gone, or when our family story is painful, we can bring our tears to the Father of mercies. He can comfort broken hearts and help us keep going one day at a time.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why was King David so sad even though the battle was won?
- What did Jaden call his plan to hand out small toys to people on the street?
- 2 Corinthians 1 says God comforts us so we can comfort others. If your friend is feeling sad today, what is one kind thing you could do to make them smile?

☀️ True Story

When Jaden Hayes was six years old, he went through a heartbreak no child should have to face. His father had died when Jaden was four, and two years later, his mother suddenly died in her sleep. Jaden had to move in with his aunt, and his little heart was full of grief.

At his mother's funeral, Jaden looked around and saw the people he loved crying. Their faces were heavy with sadness. Jaden was sad too, but he wanted to do something kind. He told his aunt that he was tired of seeing everyone with frowny faces. He wanted to make people smile.

So Jaden started what he called "The Smile Experiment." His aunt helped him buy a bag of small toys, like little rubber ducks and dinosaurs. Then they went to the busy streets of Savannah, Georgia. Jaden looked for people who seemed sad or serious.

When he saw someone who was not smiling, he walked up and handed them a toy. He simply wanted to see them smile. Many people were surprised. Some smiled right away, and some were so touched that they cried and gave him a hug. Soon, his small idea grew bigger than he ever imagined. He ended up giving away thousands of little toys to hurting people all over his city!

Jaden was still sad about losing his parents. But by bringing comfort to others, he found a little light in his own grief too.

Jaden's story reminds us that grief does not disappear all at once. But when God comforts our hurting hearts, He can help us gently bring comfort to someone else who is hurting too.

🎨 Activity:

Give the children three small items (like cute stickers, colorful plastic animals, or pieces of candy). Challenge them to go on their own "Smile Experiment" this week! Tell them to look closely for someone in their house, neighborhood, or church who looks tired, grumpy, or sad, and hand them the item. Talk about how sharing God's comfort with others helps heal our own sad hearts, too.



Today's Promise (#124) — NKJV

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

♥ Apply the Promise!

Because Jesus rose again, we have a wonderful hope! We do not have to be overwhelmed by sorrow when loved ones die. We can comfort each other knowing we will see them again.

📖 Bible Story (John 11)

In the small town of Bethany, two sisters named Mary and Martha were facing the saddest day of their lives. Their brother, Lazarus, had become very sick and passed away. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had already been in the grave for four days. The sisters were grieving, and their friends had gathered to mourn with them.

Martha went to meet Jesus and said, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Even in her sadness, she still trusted Him. Jesus looked at Martha and gave her a wonderful promise, saying, "Your brother will rise again." When Jesus saw Mary weeping, He did not tell her to stop. He did not act as though her sorrow did not matter. Instead, He felt their grief so deeply that He cried right along with them.

Then, Jesus went to the grave and asked the people to roll the stone away from the door. He prayed to His Father and shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" Suddenly, the man who had been dead walked out of the tomb, still wrapped in his burial clothes!

One day, Jesus will return from heaven with a shout. We can comfort each other with the promise that our sorrow will not last forever, and we will be gathered safely with Him. Mary and Martha's story reminds us that because Jesus has power over death, we have hope even when we grieve, knowing He understands our tears.

☀ True Story

Sadie Delany lived to be one hundred and nine years old! Because she lived such a long life, she experienced a unique kind of sadness. One by one, Sadie outlived her parents, all nine of her siblings, and almost everyone she knew.

Sadie never did marry. For her entire life, Sadie lived with her younger sister, Bessie. They were best friends for over a century. When Bessie passed away at one hundred and four years old, Sadie's house felt incredibly quiet and lonely.

Many people would feel overwhelmed by that much grief. But when Sadie was one hundred and seven years old, she decided to write a book about her life to help others. She wanted to share the secret of how she handled her lonely feelings. She wanted people to know that even when your heart is broken, you do not have to sorrow without hope.

Sadie chose to wake up every single morning, look around her room, and say out loud, "Thank you, Lord, for another day!" She decided to keep being kind and thankful while she waited for the day Jesus would return. She knew God was preparing a beautiful, happy reunion for all His children!

Sadie's story reminds us that grief can feel lonely when someone we love is gone. But God can still help us face one day at a time. We can thank Him for the love we shared, trust Him with our tears, and hold on to the hope that one day He will make every sad goodbye right again.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- How did Jesus show that He cares about our sadness even before He performed the miracle for Lazarus?
- How old was Sadie when she decided to write a book to help other people?
- When Jesus reunites all His children, who is someone you are excited to see again?

📖 Activity:

Write "forever treasures" on slips of paper, such as Jesus, family, love, joy, peace, heaven, the New Earth, animals, or a happy home with God. Let one child secretly pick a slip and draw it while everyone guesses. Afterward, talk about how toys and money do not last forever, but God's best treasures will be safe with Him forever, where nothing can spoil or be lost.

Grief — Day 5



🎵 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#125) — KJV

Revelation 21:4-5 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When we feel overwhelmed by sadness, we can look forward to the day God Himself will wipe away our tears. In His New Earth, there will be no more pain, crying, or goodbyes ever again.

📖 Bible Story (Revelation 21 & 22)

The Bible ends with a comforting promise about a place where grief and sadness can never enter. The apostle John was given a vision of the New Earth, the final home that Jesus is preparing for all His children. In this wonderful place, the streets are made of pure gold and the gates are solid pearl. But the absolute best part is not the riches; it is the perfect peace. John saw that in this new home, God Himself will come down to live right beside us. He will gently reach out His hand and wipe away every tear from our eyes.

In this brand-new world, there will be no more hospitals, no more cemeteries, and no more heartbreaking goodbyes. A pure river of life flows through the city, and the tree of life grows on its banks. Even the animals will be completely at peace. The Bible says the lion and the lamb will rest together, and a little child will lead them. There will be no more pain in our bodies, no sickness, and no heaviness in our spirits. Everything that was broken by sin will be made perfectly new.

This promise of the New Earth is what helps us get through sad days right now. When our hearts break, we can remember that we are just travelers headed toward a home that lasts forever. One day soon, death and sorrow will pass away completely, and we will live safely with our Creator. Every ache will be completely healed, and we will finally get to see Jesus face-to-face.

John's vision reminds us that we can have hope when we are grieving, because God is preparing a place where our joy will never end.

☀️ True Story

Imagine working on a single project every day for ten whole years. That is exactly what William Carey did. In 1793, He moved to India to translate the Bible into new languages. He spent years carefully translating verses by hand and had giant stacks of finished paper ready to be turned into books. It was his prized possession.

But one night, a terrible fire started. By the next morning, the printing press and all ten years of his irreplaceable work had burned to the ground. It was nothing but a pile of gray ashes.

If William had made his work his ultimate "treasure" or his only reason to live, that fire would have completely destroyed his heart. He felt very sad to see the ashes, but he understood that paper was an earthly treasure. His true, number one treasure was God! Because his ultimate joy was kept safely in heaven, the fire could not touch it. He thanked God for giving him strength and cheerfully started translating all over again.

Sometimes we lose things far more precious than paper. We may lose someone we love, and our hearts may hurt deeply. God does not ask us to pretend we are not sad; He wants us to love our family and friends deeply!

However, He knows that if we make another person our only reason to live, losing them can feel like our entire world has ended. That is why He asks us to let our deepest hope rest in Him. When God is our greatest treasure, grief can hurt, but it cannot take away all hope. His love, His promises, and His coming kingdom can never be burned, broken, or lost.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What is the best part about the New Earth that John saw in his vision?
- What happened to the giant stacks of paper William Carey spent ten years translating?
- Why is God a safer treasure than anything we own?

🎨 Activity:

Give everyone paper and crayons to draw a map of the New Earth. Encourage them to draw the river of life, trees with twelve kinds of fruit, and bright, happy homes where families live together.

This activity helps us focus our hearts on the beautiful home Jesus is preparing for us right now.



Today's Promise (#126) — KJV

Psalm 103:8, 10–14 "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy... He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

📖 Apply the Promise!

When we do wrong things, we feel a sad, heavy weight called guilt. But God does not want you to carry that shame! When you ask for forgiveness, He washes your mistakes far away forever!

📖 Bible Story (Luke 15)

Jesus often told stories to help people understand God's love. One day, He told a story about a father who had two sons. The younger son made a selfish choice. He demanded his share of the family's money early, packed his bags, and traveled to a faraway country. There, he wasted all of his father's money on bad choices. Soon, he had absolutely nothing left.

A famine struck the land, and the boy became so desperately hungry that he got a job feeding muddy pigs. He was so starving that even the pig food looked good to eat. Sitting in the mud, his heart felt heavy with deep guilt. He realized he had sinned against God and his father. He thought to himself, "I am no longer worthy to be called his son. I will go home and beg to just be a servant."

He began the long walk home, expecting his father to be angry. But while the boy was still a long way off, his father saw him. The father did not cross his arms or demand an apology. Instead, he was filled with pity. He picked up his robes and ran down the dirt road. He threw his arms around his smelly, dirty son and kissed him.

The father did not give the boy a harsh punishment. Instead, he called for a new robe, placed a ring on his finger, and threw a joyful party.

This story reminds us that when guilt makes us want to hide, we can come back to our Heavenly Father. When we confess our sins, He is ready to forgive, cleanse, and welcome us home.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did the younger son in Jesus' story do with all of his father's money?
- Where did Christopher Yuan find the Bible that helped him understand God's forgiveness?
- When we do something wrong, why does God want us to come running back to Him instead of hiding in shame?

☀️ True Story

Christopher Yuan grew up in a loving family, but as he got older, he started making choices that hurt his parents. He decided he did not want to follow their rules or God's ways. He pushed his family away, moved far from home, and began breaking the law. Eventually, his bad decisions caught up with him, and he was sent to prison.

Sitting in his quiet cell, Christopher felt a heavy weight of guilt. He knew he had ruined his life and caused his parents deep sadness.

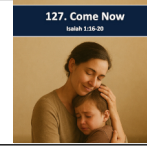
One day, Christopher was walking through the prison and noticed a small book sitting in the garbage can. It was a New Testament Bible. He pulled it out of the trash and began to read it in his cell. As he read the verses, he clearly saw all his mistakes. But as he kept reading, he also discovered God's promise of complete forgiveness.

Christopher decided to call his parents. He felt ashamed and expected them to be angry. But when his mother heard his voice, she was filled with joy. She had not given up on him. She had been praying for him for years.

Christopher's life completely changed. He accepted God's forgiveness, and the guilt that had felt so heavy began to lift. He later became a teacher who shares God's grace with others. Christopher's story reminds us that guilt does not have to keep us hiding from God. When we confess our sins and come back to Him, He is ready to forgive, cleanse, and give us a new beginning.

🎨 Activity:

Grab a clear glass bowl or a tall pitcher, fill it with water, and collect a few heavy pieces of gravel from the driveway. Have everyone hold a piece of gravel in their hand and think about a time they made a mistake or felt guilty. Then, drop the stone into the water! Watch how fast and hard it sinks to the very bottom. Explain that just like the heavy stone sinks and stays at the bottom of the bowl, Jesus takes the heavy weight of our mistakes and drops them to the very bottom of the sea. They are gone forever!



Today's Promise (#127) — KJV

Isaiah 1:16-20 "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

♥ Apply the Promise!

God invites us to come to Him, promising to wash our scarlet mistakes completely white as snow.

📖 Bible Story (Zechariah 3 & Isaiah 1)

The prophet Zechariah had a special vision from God that showed exactly what the Lord does with our guilt. In this vision, a high priest named Joshua was standing before the Angel of the Lord. But there was a problem. A high priest was supposed to wear perfectly clean garments to serve God. Instead, Joshua was dressed in very dirty clothes. Satan stood right beside him, pointing at the stains and trying to make Joshua feel ashamed of his sins.

When we do something wrong, our guilt feels just like that heavy, dirty coat. In the book of Isaiah, God tells us exactly what to do about it. He says, "Wash you, make you clean." But we cannot wash away our own sins. The secret is in what Joshua did. Joshua did not try to scrub his own clothes or hide his mess. He stood directly in front of the Lord and waited for His help.

Only God can actually remove the stain of sin. When we bring our mistakes to Him, God does not yell at us. Instead, He says, "Take away the filthy garments from him." God takes away the coat of shame and dresses us in a clean robe.

This is how God keeps His promise in Isaiah. When we ask for forgiveness, He washes our mistakes until they are as white as snow. We never have to live weighed down by our past choices.

Joshua's story reminds us that we cannot clean our own hearts, but God is always ready to wash away our guilt and dress us in forgiveness.

☀ True Story

In the summer of 2015, a twelve-year-old boy was taking a walking tour through an art museum in Taiwan. As he followed his guide, the boy was holding a drink and not paying close attention to where he was stepping. He suddenly tripped on a raised wooden platform. Trying to catch his balance, he reached his hand out.

His hand went straight through the center of a rare, three-hundred-and-fifty-year-old Italian painting. He had accidentally punched a hole right into a piece of art worth over one million dollars. The boy froze in panic. He felt a heavy weight of guilt and expected to be arrested. He was afraid his family would be forced to pay an impossible debt to replace the ruined canvas.

He had no way to fix what he had broken. But then, the head organizer of the art exhibition stepped forward and made an unexpected choice. Instead of yelling in anger or calling the police, he looked at the frightened boy and offered him complete forgiveness.

The kind organizer told the boy he was fully forgiven. They would not charge his family a single penny for the accident. An artist was later called in to carefully repair the canvas until the tear vanished. The boy brought a deep mistake to the curator, but instead of punishment, his record was wiped clean.

The boy's story reminds us that when we make a terrible mistake, receiving true forgiveness can wipe our heavy guilt away completely.

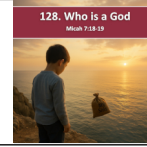
💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why didn't God tell Joshua to go home and wash his own clothes before coming back?
- What did the young boy accidentally punch a hole into at the museum?
- When we make a mistake and feel dirty or guilty, what should we do instead of hiding from God?

🎬 Activity:

Head out to the driveway and find a dirty, muddy piece of gravel or stone. Bring it to a bowl of water and talk about how our mistakes stain our hearts like the dirt.

Let the children scrub the stone until it is perfectly clean. Remind them that just as the water cleans the stone, Jesus washes our "scarlet" sins completely away.



Today's Promise (#128) — KJV

Micah 7:18-19 "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

♥ Apply the Promise!

God doesn't hold onto our mistakes. When He forgives us, He throws our sins into the deepest part of the ocean, never to be seen again!

Bible Story (Jonah)

Jonah knew exactly what God had asked him to do, but he did not want to obey. God told Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh and warn the people to turn from their wicked ways. But Jonah did not want to help his enemies. Instead of going toward Nineveh, he boarded a ship sailing in the opposite direction.

For a while, Jonah may have thought he could get away. But no one can run from God. Soon, a great storm rose over the sea. The wind blew hard, the waves tossed the ship, and the sailors were terrified. Jonah knew the storm had come because of his disobedience. The weight of his guilt was heavy. At last, he told the sailors the truth and said the only way to save the ship was to throw him into the sea.

As Jonah sank down into the water, seaweed wrapped around him. He could not climb back into the ship. He could not undo what he had done. But God's mercy reached him even there. God sent a great fish to swallow Jonah and save him from drowning.

Inside the fish, Jonah stopped running. He prayed to God from that dark, lonely place. He admitted his need and cried for help. The Lord heard Jonah's prayer and gave him a new beginning. God commanded the fish to bring Jonah safely back to dry land.

Jonah's story reminds us that guilt should not make us keep running from God. No matter how far we have gone, His mercy can reach us, forgive us, and help us start again.

True Story

John Bunyan lived in England during the 1600s. He worked as a tinker, traveling from house to house to mend broken pots and pans. As a young man, John was known for his temper and his careless words. One day, a woman heard him speaking badly and warned him that his words were setting a harmful example for the children nearby.

John felt ashamed. He tried to change his behavior, but the guilt in his heart did not go away. It felt as if he were carrying a heavy burden he could not put down. He began reading the Bible, but for a long time he feared that he was too sinful to be forgiven.

John thought that if he could only act better on the outside, the heavy guilt would leave. But no matter how hard he tried, he could not give himself a clean heart.

At last, John began to understand God's grace. He saw that forgiveness was not something he could earn by trying harder. Jesus had already paid for sin. John needed to stop trusting in himself and trust fully in Christ.

When John believed God's promise of mercy, the heavy burden of guilt began to lift. Later, he became a preacher and wrote a famous book called *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In that story, a man carries a heavy burden until it falls from his back when he comes to the cross.

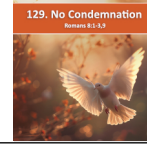
John Bunyan's life reminds us that we cannot remove guilt by ourselves. But when we come to Jesus, He is ready to forgive us, cleanse us, and lift the burden from our hearts.

Discussion Questions:

- Where was Jonah when he finally decided to stop running and pray for help?
- In John Bunyan's book, what happens to the heavy backpack the main character is carrying?
- Sometimes guilt feels like a heavy backpack. What is the best thing to do when you feel weighed down by a mistake?

Activity:

Fill a backpack with heavy books or canned goods. Have a child strap it on and try to run, jump, or play a quick game. It is exhausting and drags them down! Talk about how shame and guilt are heavy burdens we carry on the inside, just like John Bunyan. Then, take the backpack off and let them run freely! Talk about how confessing our sins to Jesus instantly removes the heavy weight.



Today's Promise (#129) — NKJV

Romans 8:1–3, 9 "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh... But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When you are in Christ, God does not condemn you—He forgives you and sets you free.

📖 Bible Story (John 8)

Jesus spent much of His time teaching people in the temple. One morning, a group of religious leaders brought a woman before Him. They announced that she had been caught doing something very wrong. According to the law, the leaders said she deserved to be punished. The woman stood in the center of the crowd, trembling with fear. Everyone was looking at her with judgment, and she had no way to defend herself.

Jesus did not join in the shouting. Instead, He stooped down and began writing in the dust on the ground with His finger. He may have been writing down the secret, hidden mistakes of the angry men in the crowd. When the leaders kept questioning Him, Jesus stood up and said, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

One by one, from the oldest to the youngest, the leaders walked away. They realized their own hearts were not pure either. Soon, the woman was left completely alone with Jesus. The only One who actually had the right to judge her was the only One who showed her mercy.

Jesus looked at her and asked, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, Lord." Then Jesus spoke the most comforting words: "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." Jesus did not excuse her mistake, but He gave her a brand-new start and the power to live a different life.

The woman's story reminds us that when we bring our mistakes to Jesus, He offers us mercy instead of condemnation.

☀️ True Story

Martin Luther was a monk who lived in Germany many years ago. Even though he prayed often and studied the Bible every day, he did not have peace in his heart. Martin knew he made mistakes, and he carried a heavy weight of guilt. He was constantly afraid that God was angry with him.

Martin tried very hard to be perfect. He would confess his sins again and again, sometimes for hours. He fasted, went without sleep, and laid in the cold without a blanket, hoping that if he suffered enough, God would forgive him. But no matter what he did, the guilt would not go away. He felt like a prisoner to his own shame.

In his mind, God seemed like a strict judge who was never satisfied. Martin wondered if he would ever be free. But one day, while reading the book of Romans in the Bible, Martin discovered a truth that changed everything.

He read that people are saved by faith in Jesus, not by their own hard work. Forgiveness was not something he had to earn by punishing himself. It was a free gift! In that moment, the heavy weight of guilt finally lifted. His heart was filled with joy and peace. Martin later said it felt like the gates of heaven had suddenly opened to him. He spent the rest of his life teaching others about this wonderful grace, and he even translated the Bible into everyday language so ordinary people could read about God's forgiveness for themselves.

Martin's story reminds us that we cannot earn God's forgiveness by punishing ourselves, because Jesus has already paid the price to set us free.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why did the angry men bring the woman to Jesus instead of just helping her?
- Did Martin Luther feel like God was a "harsh judge" or a loving Father?
- Have you ever tried to do "good things" to make up for a mistake you made? Why doesn't that bring real peace to our hearts?

🎨 Activity:

Spread a thin layer of sand or flour on a tray. Have the kids use their fingers to write a word representing a "shame" or a "mistake" they feel bad about. Then, recite Romans 8:1 together and have them gently shake the tray or smooth the sand over until the word is completely gone. Talk about how Jesus' forgiveness smooths over our past so there is "no condemnation" left.



Today's Promise (#130) — KJV

Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When we make a mistake, we might worry that God will stay mad at us forever. But when He forgives you, He chooses to completely forget your sins and give you a fresh start.

📖 Bible Story (Luke 22 & John 18)

Peter spent three years traveling with Jesus. He listened to His words, watched His miracles, and became one of His closest disciples. Peter loved Jesus and promised that he would stay faithful, even if everyone else turned away.

But on the night Jesus was arrested, fear filled Peter's heart. While Jesus was being questioned, Peter stood outside in the courtyard, warming himself by a fire. Three different times, people asked if Peter knew Jesus. Three times, Peter said, "I don't know Him." Each time, Peter's fear grew stronger than his courage. He wanted to stay safe, but every denial pulled his heart farther into guilt.

Just then, a rooster crowed. Jesus turned and looked at Peter. In that moment, Peter remembered what Jesus had warned him would happen. He had denied the One he loved most. Peter went out into the night and wept bitterly. His guilt felt heavy and painful.

But Jesus did not give up on Peter. After Jesus rose from the dead, He met His disciples by the Sea of Galilee. He made a fire and cooked breakfast for His tired friends.

After they had eaten, Jesus spoke gently with Peter. He did not scold him or bring up his failure. He asked him three times, "Do you love Me?" Three times, Peter answered, "Yes, Lord. You know that I love You." And three times, Jesus gave Peter work to do for Him.

Peter's story reminds us that guilt should not make us run away from Jesus. When we repent and come back to Him, He forgives us, lifts our shame, and gives us a new beginning.

☀️ True Story

In the famous 1929 Rose Bowl, a college football player named Roy Riegels made a mistake in front of thousands of people. During the game, Roy picked up a loose football. But in the excitement of the moment, he got turned around and ran almost seventy yards in the wrong direction, toward his own goal line.

When Roy realized what he had done, he was crushed. His mistake helped the other team score points, and he felt as if everyone in the stadium had seen his failure. At halftime, the players went into the locker room, but Roy sat alone in a corner with a blanket over his head and cried.

When it was time to go back out, Roy did not want to move. He told his coach, "I can't do it. I've ruined you, I've ruined myself, and I've ruined the University of California. I can't face that crowd again."

Roy expected his coach to leave him on the bench. But Coach Nibs Price did not treat him as though his mistake was the end. He told him, "Roy, get up and go back out there—the game is only half over."

Roy went back onto the field and played hard for the rest of the game. His mistake was remembered, but it did not have to be the end of his story.

Roy's story reminds us that when we have failed, guilt can make us want to hide. But God does not want us to stay under the blanket of shame. When we confess our sins, He forgives us, lifts us up, and helps us take the next right step.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- If your feelings are whispering that you are still "dirty" or a failure, but God's promise says He remembers your sins no more, which one is the boss?
- What did the coach tell Roy Riegels when he refused to go back out on the field?
- Is there someone you need to say "I am sorry" to so that the heavy weight can be lifted today?

🎨 Activity:

Using a pen or washable marker, write a small "X" on a square of toilet paper to represent a mistake. After reading Hebrews 8:12, drop the paper into a glass of water and stir.

Watch the paper and ink disappear completely. Just as the water dissolves the mark, Jesus' mercy washes away our sins so they are remembered no more. We are left with a clean, new beginning!

Laziness/Diligence

Day 1



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#131) — KJV

Proverbs 20:11 "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."

♥ Apply the Promise!

People notice the way you do your chores and tasks! When you work hard and do your best without complaining, you show everyone that you love God. Even small jobs are very important!

Bible Story (John 6)

Large crowds often followed Jesus to hear Him teach about God's kingdom. One afternoon, more than five thousand people followed Him far out into the wilderness. They listened all day long, and as the sun began to set, the people grew tired and hungry. Because they were far away from any towns, there was no easy way to buy food for such a large crowd.

The disciples were worried and wanted to send the people away. But Jesus already had a plan. Andrew looked around the large group and spotted a young boy carrying a small lunch. Someone had been very diligent that morning! Whether it was the boy who planned ahead, or his mother who lovingly prepared the basket before he left the house, that careful work mattered. He had five barley loaves and two small fish.

It was not much for thousands of hungry people, but it was ready to use. The boy could have kept his food for himself. Instead, he made the right choice and willingly offered his entire lunch to Jesus. Jesus gladly accepted the gift and told the crowd to sit down on the grass.

Jesus took the loaves and fish, gave thanks to God, and broke the bread. A miracle happened! The food kept multiplying until every single person had enough to eat, with twelve baskets of leftovers.

This story reminds us that God can use what is ready and willingly placed in His hands. When we are faithful in small things, prepared to help, and willing to share, Jesus can use our efforts to bless many people.

True Story

In the summer of 2016, an eight-year-old boy named Jalen Bailey lived with his single mother in an apartment in California. Jalen noticed that his mother was working very hard just to pay their monthly rent, and he wanted to help her save enough money to buy a house.

Instead of spending his afternoons playing or waiting for someone else to solve the problem, Jalen decided to take action. He enjoyed baking, so he started his own small business out of their apartment kitchen called "Jalen's Bakery." He did not wait until he was an adult to start working. He chose to be diligent right away.

Every day after school, Jalen got straight to work. He spent hours measuring flour, mixing sugar, and baking peanut butter cookies from scratch. He organized his sales, packed up the cookies, and sold them to people in his neighborhood. He saved his earnings and kept his focus steadily on his goal of helping his mother.

People quickly noticed Jalen's hard work and dedication. Word about his bakery spread, and he was soon invited to share his story on national television programs. Jalen used his own hands and his afternoon time to make a difference for his family. He showed everyone that a child can choose to work hard and do a job well.

Jalen's story reminds us that we do not have to wait until we are grown to be diligent, and our hard work can be a huge blessing to our families.

Discussion Questions:

- What did the young boy in the Bible story bring with him to hear Jesus teach?
- What did Jalen bake from scratch to help his mother?
- What is a chore at your house that you sometimes complain about, and how can you do it with a diligent heart instead?

Activity:

Choose one simple chore to do in secret today, like making someone else's bed or putting away their shoes.

Do it perfectly and diligently without telling anyone! Later, talk about how God sees our pure, hard work even when no one else notices.

Laziness/Diligence

Day 2



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#132) — KJV

Luke 16:10 "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you are trusted with a very small job, God watches to see if you will do your best. If you work hard on small things, God knows He can trust you with big things!

Bible Story (1 Samuel 17)

Before David became the king of Israel, he was a young shepherd with an ordinary job. While his older brothers went off to the army, David stayed in the hills and cared for his father's sheep.

Watching sheep may not have seemed important to everyone. David could have been lazy. He could have complained, fallen asleep, or let the sheep wander away. But David chose to be diligent. He faithfully guided the flock to grass and water, watched for danger, and cared for the sheep day after day.

David did not only work when someone was watching. Out in the quiet fields, where no one else could see him, he still did his job well. When a lion and a bear came to take lambs from the flock, David did not run away. With God's help, he fought the wild animals and rescued the sheep.

Those quiet shepherd days were preparing David for something greater. He learned courage, patience, faithfulness, and trust in God while doing a simple job that many people might have overlooked.

God saw David's faithful heart in the fields. Later, when the time was right, God called David from caring for sheep and chose him to lead His people.

David's story reminds us that small jobs matter to God. When we are faithful, hardworking, and careful with the duties we have now, God can use them to prepare us for greater responsibilities later.

True Story

Booker T. Washington was born into slavery and grew up very poor. After he gained his freedom, he had a strong desire to learn. When he was a teenager, he heard about a school called Hampton Institute. It was hundreds of miles away, but Booker was determined to go.

He traveled for many days, walking much of the way and sometimes sleeping outdoors. When he finally reached the school, he was tired, hungry, and covered with dust from the road. He did not look like a neat, wealthy student.

The head teacher was not sure whether to admit him. Instead of giving him a regular school test, she gave him a different kind of test. She pointed to a room and told him it needed sweeping.

Booker did not complain about being handed a broom. He understood that this might be his chance. He swept the room carefully, not once, but several times. Then he dusted the furniture again and again, making sure the work was done as well as he could do it.

When the teacher came back, she checked the room with a clean handkerchief. She could not find dust. Booker had shown diligence, humility, and care in a small job. Because of that, she admitted him to the school. He later became a respected teacher and leader.

Booker's story reminds us that small duties can reveal the kind of heart we have. When we do even simple work carefully and faithfully, God can use it to open doors we never expected.

Discussion Questions:

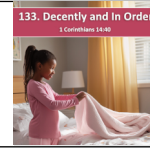
- What was David's ordinary, lonely job while his older brothers were away in the king's army?
- What "test" did the head teacher give Booker when he arrived looking tired and dirty?
- When you are given a small job like taking out the trash, how can you show diligence instead of laziness?

Activity:

Give the children an old toothbrush and a small cup of soapy water. Assign them a tiny, usually ignored spot in the house or classroom (like the grout around one tile, the rim of a sink, or the tracks of a sliding window). Give them three minutes to scrub it perfectly clean. Explain that true diligence means doing a great job on the small, hidden details, not just the big, obvious things that everyone sees.

Laziness/Diligence

Day 3



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#133) — KJV

1 Corinthians 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

♥ Apply the Promise!

God is not messy or lazy. He loves when things are done carefully and in order! When you take your time to do a good job and clean up, you are acting just like Him!

📖 Bible Story (Genesis 1-2)

Before the world began, there was nothing but dark, empty space. The earth was completely without form, like a giant, messy shadow. But God is not lazy, and He does not create chaotic messes. When He decided to build the universe, He did not just throw everything together all at once in a careless hurry. Instead, God worked with a clear purpose, incredible diligence, and perfect order.

On the very first day, God commanded the bright light to shine, separating it carefully from the darkness. He took His time, working step by step to prepare the earth. On the second day, He separated the beautiful blue sky from the deep waters below. Then, He gathered the dry land together and commanded green plants, tall trees, and delicious fruit to grow. God knew that animals and people would need a safe, beautiful place to live, so He diligently prepared their home before He ever moved them inside.

Once the habitats were perfectly ready, God filled them with life. On the fifth and sixth days, He filled the oceans with swimming fish, the skies with flying birds, and the dry land with galloping animals. Finally, He created Adam and Eve. Every single detail, from the stripes on a zebra to the tiny wings of a buzzing bee, was designed flawlessly. At the end of His work, God looked at everything He had carefully made and said it was "very good."

God's wonderful creation reminds us that when we take our time, work diligently, and do things decently and in order, the result is something truly beautiful.

☀ True Story

More than two hundred years ago, a man named Noah Webster lived in America. At that time, people spelled words however they wanted. One person might spell the word "color" with five letters, and another might spell it with seven. Reading a book or a letter could be a very confusing, messy experience. Noah was a teacher, and he knew that things work much better when they are done decently and in a careful order.

Noah decided to create the first American dictionary to help everyone learn how to spell and speak the same way. But this was not a quick, easy job. Noah could not just look up words on a computer. He had to learn twenty-six different languages to understand where words came from. He traveled across the ocean to find old books and carefully wrote down the exact definitions for thousands of words by hand using a simple quill pen.

This project took an incredible amount of diligence. Noah worked quietly and patiently at his wooden desk for over twenty-six years. Some days his hand cramped from writing so much, but he refused to quit or do a sloppy job.

Finally, when he was seventy years old, he finished his dictionary. It had seventy thousand perfectly organized words. Because Noah chose to be diligent, children all across America were finally able to learn how to read and write clearly.

Noah Webster's story reminds us that orderly, patient, and diligent work can make a lasting difference in the world.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- In the Bible story, what did God create on the very first day to start bringing order to the world?
- How many years did Noah patiently work at his wooden desk to finish his massive project?
- Why is it important to do your schoolwork or chores "decently and in order" instead of rushing?

🎬 Activity:

Take a stack of mixed-up alphabet cards or a pile of scattered books and dump them into a messy pile on the floor. Set a timer and see how fast your child can diligently organize them into perfect alphabetical order! Talk about how much easier it is to find exactly what we need when things are done decently and in order, just like Noah Webster's famous dictionary.

Laziness/Diligence

Day 4



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#134) — KJV

Colossians 3:23–24 "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you do your chores or schoolwork, pretend you are doing them directly for Jesus! When you work hard with a very happy heart, God sees it and promises to give you a special reward.

📖 Bible Story (Genesis 39)

Joseph was a young man when he was taken far away from home and sold as a slave in Egypt. He had not chosen this hard place. His older brothers had betrayed him, and now he had to work in the house of an Egyptian officer named Potiphar.

Joseph could have become bitter and lazy. He could have complained, worked only when someone was watching, or done the smallest amount possible. But Joseph loved God. Even in a place he did not want to be, he chose to do his work faithfully.

Joseph worked so diligently that Potiphar saw he could be trusted. Before long, Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his whole house. Everything Joseph cared for was managed well. Joseph's diligence did not make his hard situation easy, but it kept his heart faithful. He chose to serve God well, even when life felt unfair.

Later, Joseph was falsely accused and thrown into prison. Again, he had a choice. He could have given up and decided that hard work did not matter. Instead, Joseph kept being faithful. He helped others and did his duties well, even in a dark prison.

The keeper of the prison saw that Joseph was trustworthy and put him in charge of the other prisoners. God saw Joseph's faithful heart too. In time, God lifted Joseph out of prison and placed him in a position of great responsibility over Egypt.

Joseph's story reminds us that our work matters to God. When we do our duties faithfully, even in hard places, we are really serving the Lord, and He sees every careful effort.

☀ True Story

In 2020, a young man named Rehan Staton became known for his hard work. His family needed help, so Rehan took a job collecting trash in Maryland. Early each morning, before many people were awake, he climbed onto a garbage truck and helped lift heavy bags of trash from the city streets.

The work was dirty, tiring, and not easy. Some people might have complained or felt embarrassed about such a messy job. Some mornings, Rehan probably felt tired before the day had even begun. But he did not let tired feelings decide what he would do. Rehan chose to work hard.

He showed up faithfully, did his best, and kept a good attitude. The men he worked with noticed his dedication. They encouraged him to keep studying and not give up on his dreams.

Many mornings, Rehan collected trash first. Then he washed up and went straight to his college classes. He was often tired, but he kept going. He refused to let hard work, long days, or discouraging feelings stop him from learning.

After much diligence, Rehan reached an amazing goal. He was accepted into Harvard Law School, one of the most famous schools in the country. He worked hard there too, and in 2023 he graduated and became a lawyer.

Rehan's story reminds us that laziness listens to tired feelings and says, "I don't want to." But diligence chooses to do the right thing anyway. When we faithfully do the work in front of us, God can use it to help us grow and prepare us for bigger things.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- When Joseph was unfairly thrown into the dark prison, did he stop working hard?
- What messy, heavy job did Rehan do every morning before going to his college classes?
- Colossians tells us to work "heartily." What does it look like to have a hearty, cheerful attitude the next time you are asked to clean your room?

🎨 Activity:

Tell the children to imagine that Jesus is coming over to your house for dinner tonight. Assign them a specific room or area to tidy up. Talk about how their attitude changes when they know they are cleaning for a very important guest. Remind them that Colossians tells us to do every chore with that exact same joyful, diligent attitude, because God is always watching our hard work!

Laziness/Diligence

Day 5



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#135) — KJV

2 Thessalonians 3:10 "...if any would not work, neither should he eat." **Proverbs 14:23** "In all labour there is profit, but the talk of the lips tendeth only to [poverty]" **Proverbs 6:6-8** "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."

♥ Apply the Promise!

God promises that hard work brings a good reward, but laziness leaves us hungry. Just like the tiny ant, when you choose to work diligently without needing anyone to boss you around, you are wise!

Bible Story (Ruth 2)

Long ago, a woman named Ruth moved to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law, Naomi. Their husbands had died, and they were very poor with no way to buy food. Ruth did not sit at home and wait for someone else to help them. Instead, she decided to go to work. She went to the barley fields during the busy harvest and asked for permission to gather the leftover grain that the workers dropped on the ground.

The work was very hard. Ruth had to walk behind the harvesters in the hot sun all day long. She kept bending down over and over again to pick up tiny pieces of grain from the dirt. She did not complain, and she did not ask for an easier job. A man named Boaz owned the field. He noticed Ruth and asked his workers about her. They told him that Ruth had been working steadily since the early morning with only one short break to rest.

Because Ruth was so diligent, Boaz made sure she was safe and had plenty of water to drink. He even told his workers to purposely drop extra bundles of grain for her to find. That evening, Ruth carried home plenty of food for Naomi. Her hard work helped provide for both of them. Later, God blessed Ruth with a brand-new family, and she became the great-grandmother of King David!

Ruth's story reminds us that diligent love does not just wish things were better—it gets up and helps. When we faithfully do the work in front of us, God sees our efforts and can provide for our needs.

True Story

In 2015, the world learned about a hardworking man named James Robertson who lived in Detroit, Michigan. For over ten years, James had a very hard time getting to his job at a factory. His old car had broken down, and the city buses did not go all the way to the building where he worked. Instead of making excuses, complaining about his bad luck, or giving up on his job, James decided he would do whatever it took to keep working.

Every single day, James walked a total of twenty-one miles just to get back and forth to work. He walked through the hot summer sun, the pouring rain, and the freezing winter snow. He left his house early in the afternoon and often did not walk back home until four o'clock the next morning. He only had time to sleep for a few short hours before waking up to do it all over again!

James never missed a single day of work. He always showed up on time with a quiet, humble, and happy attitude. He believed that having a job was a wonderful blessing, and he worked hard to do his absolute best every single day. Eventually, a man noticed him walking on the side of the road and shared his amazing story with the local news. Thousands of people were so inspired by his hard work that they donated money to buy him a brand-new car!

James's story reminds us that when we choose to work hard instead of making excuses, our hard work will eventually bring a wonderful reward.

Discussion Questions:

- What did Boaz do when he noticed how hard Ruth was working without resting?
- How many miles did James Robertson walk every day just to get to his job?
- Proverbs 14:23 says there is a "profit" or a good reward in all work. What is a good reward you get when you work hard on your schoolwork or chores?

Activity:

Mark a small path around your house or yard. Have the children walk the path while carrying a "load" (like a basket of laundry or a few heavy books). Tell them to keep going until a timer goes off. Talk about how Ruth and James did not quit when they were tired. Remind them that being diligent means finishing the job even when it feels long or difficult!



Today's Promise (#136) — KJV

Joshua 1:9 "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you feel completely alone, remember that God is standing right beside you! Because He promises to go everywhere you go, you can be strong and brave, knowing you are never truly by yourself.

📖 Bible Story (Joshua 1)

When Moses died, Joshua faced one of the loneliest moments of his life. For many years, Joshua had worked beside Moses. He had watched him lead God's people, pray for them, and listen to God's instructions. Moses had been his teacher, leader, and guide. But now Moses was gone, and Joshua had been chosen to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land.

Joshua's new responsibility was not small. He had to lead a whole nation across the Jordan River and into a land filled with strong cities and powerful enemies. The people would look to him for courage, wisdom, and direction. Without Moses beside him, Joshua may have felt small and alone.

But God did not leave Joshua by himself. The Lord spoke to him and gave him a promise: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

God told Joshua to be strong and of good courage. He did not say this because Joshua would never feel lonely or unsure. He said it because Joshua would never truly be alone. The same God who had helped Moses would help Joshua too.

Joshua needed to listen to God's Word, obey His commands, and trust that God would go with him wherever he went. Because Joshua believed God's promise, he stepped forward and led the people across the Jordan River.

Joshua's story reminds us that even when someone we depended on is gone, God has not left us. We can feel lonely, but we are never truly alone when the Lord is with us wherever we go.

☀ True Story

In 1989, a ten-year-old boy named Joshua Dennis went on a scouting trip with his dad. They went to explore an old mine with their group. The mine was a huge maze of rocky tunnels. While walking, Joshua accidentally took a wrong turn. He became separated from his dad and the other boys. Soon, his flashlight died, trapping him in the dark.

Deep underground, the air was very cold and quiet. But the very first thing Joshua did was bow his head and pray. He asked God to stay with him. Outside, rescue teams searched for five long days and nights. They worried the boy would panic from being all alone. The workers could not find him and were preparing to call off the search.

But then, a rescue worker finally found him! Joshua was perfectly calm. He had no idea he had been lost for five whole days. He thought he had only been sleeping for a little while. They pulled him outside into the bright sunlight, and everyone cheered.

Later, Joshua told his dad what happened inside the mine. He did not feel lonely at all! He felt safe the entire time. He said it felt like someone was wrapping a warm blanket around his shoulders, keeping him company in the dirt. Because God was with him, he refused to be scared. He simply slept on a rock ledge and waited. His survival proved that God is always by our side.

Joshua's story reminds us that even in the loneliest places, God can still be near. When no one else can see us, He sees us. When we feel forgotten, we can pray and trust that we are never truly alone.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What special promise did God make to Joshua to help him feel brave?
- What was the very first thing 10-year-old Joshua Dennis did when his flashlight died in the mine?
- When Joshua Dennis was finally rescued, did he realize he had been in the dark for five whole days?

🎨 Activity:

Give each child paper and crayons. Ask them to draw a picture of themselves in a place where they might feel lonely, like at school or in their bedroom. Then, have them draw Jesus standing right beside them, smiling! At the top of the page, help them write the words: "God is with me wherever I go." Keep this picture nearby to remember you are never truly alone.



Today's Promise (#137) — KJV

Psalm 16:8-9 "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When you feel invisible or left out, remember that God always sees you! If you set Him in front of you like a best friend, your sad heart can be glad and full of hope.

📖 Bible Story (Genesis 16)

Hagar was a servant girl living far away from her own home. She was in a very painful situation and was not treated kindly. Her boss, Sarah, became angry with her and treated her so harshly that Hagar felt trapped and unwanted. At last, Hagar ran away into the hot, empty wilderness.

She walked a long, tiring way under the hot sun. She did not know where she was going to sleep. Finally, she came to a spring of water in the desert. There, Hagar sat down, alone and afraid. She had no family nearby to protect her, no safe home to rest in, and no friend walking beside her. It may have felt as if no one saw her pain or cared what happened to her.

But Hagar was not forgotten. The Angel of the Lord found her right there by the spring. God knew exactly where she was. The Angel even called Hagar by her very own name! He spoke to her and showed her that He had heard her crying. He gave her a wonderful promise about her family and told her what to do next.

Then Hagar realized something beautiful. Even in the wilderness, even when she was all alone, God had seen her. She called Him by a special name: "The God Who Sees Me." Hagar learned that God was always watching over her. Her situation was still hard, but her heart had hope. She wiped her tears and walked back knowing that the Lord cared about her.

Hagar's story reminds us that even when we feel unseen, lonely, or forgotten, God knows exactly where we are. He sees our tears, hears our cries, and stays near to us even in the wilderness experiences of life.

☀️ True Story

In November 2012, a fisherman named José Salvador Alvarenga left the coast of Mexico in a small boat. He planned to fish for only a short time. But a strong storm swept across the ocean, damaged the boat, and pushed it far away from land.

When the storm passed, José was drifting across the open sea. He had no motor, no way to call for help, and no clear way to get home. For months, his small boat floated farther and farther across the Pacific Ocean.

José's loneliness was heavy. After his fishing companion died during the journey, José spent many long months without seeing another human face. Day after day, he looked out over endless water. There were no houses, no roads, no friends, and no family nearby. Floating entirely alone for that long would cause almost anyone to give up.

But José did not stop talking to God. He prayed, remembered Scripture, and sang hymns in the empty boat. When the loneliness felt too heavy, he spoke to God as if the Lord were sitting right next to him in the small boat.

After 438 days at sea, José finally reached a remote island in the Marshall Islands and was rescued. He was weak and worn, but alive.

José's story reminds us that loneliness can feel painful, but we are never outside God's sight. Even when no one else is near, we can pray, sing, and remember that the Lord is with us on the loneliest waters.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why did Hagar run away into the hot, empty wilderness?
- How many days did José survive alone in the vast Pacific Ocean?
- Hagar felt totally abandoned in the desert before she saw the well. Have you ever felt entirely alone with a tough problem, only to realize God was actually right there helping you?

🎨 Activity:

Set an empty chair in the middle of the room and imagine Jesus sitting right there in it. Talk about how that changes the way you feel when you are scared or lonely! Then, have each child write the words: "The Lord is at my right hand" on a slip of paper and tape it to the chair. It serves as a beautiful reminder that He is always present.



Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#138) — KJV

Psalm 18:6 "In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears." **Psalm 142:4–5** "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living." **Genesis 28:16** "...Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not."

♥ Apply the Promise!

God is right there with you, even when you cannot feel Him. He is your safe hiding place!

Bible Story (Genesis 28)

Jacob was running away from home. He had made wrong choices, and his older brother Esau was very angry with him. As the sun began to set, Jacob found himself far from his family in a lonely wilderness. He had no tent, no warm bed, and no friend beside him.

When night came, Jacob lay down on the ground to sleep. He took stones from that place and used them for a pillow. The dark wilderness may have felt cold and empty. Jacob may have wondered if God would still care about him after the wrong things he had done. There were no familiar voices around him and no one to tell him what would happen next. That quiet, lonely night may have felt like the lowest place Jacob had ever been.

But God had not forgotten Jacob. While Jacob slept, God gave him a wonderful dream. He saw a ladder reaching from the earth all the way up to heaven. Angels were going up and down on it, and the Lord stood above it.

Then God spoke to Jacob. He promised to bless him, guide him, and bring him safely back. God said, "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest."

When Jacob woke up, the lonely place did not seem empty anymore. He said, "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not." Jacob learned that God had been near him all along.

Jacob's story reminds us that we may feel alone, but God is never far away. Even when we are afraid, far from home, or sorry for wrong choices, the Lord sees us, stays with us, and watches over our steps.

True Story

Martin Pistorius was twelve years old when he came home from school with a sore throat. Within a few months, a strange illness took away his ability to walk, talk, and even make eye contact. The doctors mistakenly believed his brain had stopped working. For years, Martin sat silently in a wheelchair. His family took care of him, but they thought he was asleep on the inside.

But little by little, Martin's mind began to wake up. He could hear people talking and see the room around him, but he could not tell anyone. His body would not obey him. He was trapped inside his own body and had to sit quietly while people talked right in front of him, unable to ask for help.

Martin felt very lonely. He felt invisible, like no one knew the real Martin was still inside. But in those silent years, Martin realized God was right there with him. He learned to have silent conversations with the Lord. He prayed all the time in his quiet room, telling God exactly how he felt. Even without speaking a single word out loud, Martin built a beautiful, comforting friendship with his Creator.

God heard every one of those silent prayers. At last, a kind caregiver named Virna noticed that Martin was responding with his eyes. She realized he was fully awake! Martin was given a special computer that let him speak, and he wrote a book called "Ghost Boy" to tell everyone his story. Martin even got married and started a happy family of his very own.

Martin's story reminds us that even when we feel completely invisible, God hears the silent prayers of our hearts and knows exactly where we are.

Discussion Questions:

- What did Jacob use for a pillow when he slept on the ground?
- What part of his body did Martin finally move to show the nurse he was awake?
- Jacob felt abandoned in the dark, and Martin felt invisible in his own body. Have you ever felt totally alone, even when other people were in the same house?

Activity:

Have the children try to share a simple message (like "I am hungry" or "I am happy") without making a single sound and without using their hands. They can only use their eyes! Talk about how hard it is to share what we are feeling when we cannot speak. Remind them that even when we cannot talk out loud, we can always easily speak to God, because the Lord hears the silent prayers of our hearts!



Today's Promise (#139) — KJV

Psalm 34:7-8 "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you feel completely alone or scared, remember that God has a massive invisible army! He sends His angels to camp all around you. You are safely surrounded, and you are never, ever outnumbered!

📖 Bible Story (2 Kings 6)

Elisha was a prophet of God. The king of Syria was angry with Elisha and wanted to capture him. In the middle of the night, the king sent a large army with horses and chariots. The soldiers quietly surrounded the entire city where Elisha was sleeping.

Early the next morning, Elisha's young helper woke up and went outside. When he looked over the city wall, he froze. Thousands of enemy soldiers were circling the city! The helper felt very small and totally alone. He ran back to Elisha and cried out, asking what they were going to do. He thought they were the only two people left and that no one was coming to help them.

But Elisha was not afraid, and he certainly did not feel lonely. He calmly looked at his helper and told him not to fear. Elisha said that there were more people on their side than with the enemy army. The helper must have been very confused, because there was no one else in the house!

Then, Elisha prayed and asked God to open the young man's eyes. Suddenly, God allowed the helper to see into the invisible world! When he looked up at the mountains, he did not just see the enemy army. He saw that the entire mountain was completely covered with horses and chariots of fire! God had sent a massive army of invisible angels to protect them.

Elisha's story reminds us that we are not alone just because we feel alone. God is with His children, and He can send help we may not be able to see.

☀ True Story

During World War II, a young missionary named Darlene Deibler Rose was taken prisoner by soldiers. She had traveled far from home to tell people about Jesus, but now she was separated from her husband and her friends. The soldiers locked her alone in a small, dark prison cell.

Darlene was kept in that room for a very long time. She was not allowed to read her Bible or talk to anyone. The cell was cold and quiet. Sitting all alone in the dark, Darlene experienced the deepest loneliness a person could feel. She did not know what would happen next, and it would have been easy to feel completely forgotten.

But Darlene chose to pray. She remembered songs she had learned when she was younger. To comfort her sad heart, she began to sing softly to God. Suddenly, as she whispered her song, the heavy loneliness vanished. Darlene heard an invisible choir of voices join her in the dark room!

The voices filled her tiny cell with music. Darlene looked around, but she could not see anyone with her eyes. Still, the joyful singing echoed clearly off the walls. She realized that God had sent His invisible angels to sing with her in the dark! She listened until her heart felt perfectly peaceful. Darlene later wrote a famous book about her survival, sharing that this heavenly comfort kept her from giving up.

Darlene's story reminds us that even when we feel completely alone in the dark, God's invisible angels are right there to keep us company.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why was Elisha's young servant so terrified when he looked over the city wall?
- What invisible sound did Darlene hear in her dark room when she started to sing?
- How does knowing about God's invisible army of angels help you when you feel scared and alone?

🎨 Activity:

Hide several small paper "angels" or folded notes around the room. Ask the children to search for them quietly. Afterward, explain that just as these paper angels were hidden but very close by, God's angels are near us even when we cannot see them! End the activity by reading Psalm 34:7 together to remember that God's invisible army is always safely surrounding us.



Today's Promise (#140) — KJV

Proverbs 18:24 "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

💖 Apply the Promise!

To make good friends, we must first be a good friend to others. And remember, Jesus is the greatest Friend who will never leave our side.

📖 Bible Story (1 Samuel 18 & 20)

Jonathan was a prince, the son of King Saul. As the king's son, Jonathan could have expected to become the next king of Israel. But God had chosen a young shepherd named David to be king instead. It would have been easy for Jonathan to feel angry, jealous, or afraid of losing honor. Instead, the Bible says Jonathan loved David as his own soul.

To show he was a true friend, Jonathan took off his royal robe and gave it to David. He also gave David his sword, bow, and belt. This was Jonathan's way of showing love, honor, and trust. Jonathan and David made a special promise to care for one another. Their friendship was strong because they both loved and trusted God.

Later, King Saul became very angry with David and tried to kill him. David must have felt lonely and afraid, wondering who he could trust. Jonathan had to make a hard choice. He could protect his own place in the royal family, or he could help the friend God had chosen.

Jonathan chose to be loyal. He warned David about danger and helped him escape safely into the wilderness. His faithful friendship helped David know he was not completely alone.

Jonathan's choice shows us what real friendship looks like. Just as Jonathan gave up his royal robe for David, Jesus left His throne in heaven to save us. He is the greatest Friend, and He stays close when others turn away.

The story of David and Jonathan reminds us that a true friend chooses kindness, loyalty, and love, even when it is difficult.

☀️ True Story

Josh Yandt was a quiet, nervous teenager when he started at a new high school in Canada. In the past, other kids had been very mean to him. He knew exactly what it felt like to be ignored and left out. Starting over at a brand-new school was a very scary experience for him.

Josh wanted to make new friends, but he was naturally shy. He remembered that if you want to have friends, you have to choose to be friendly first. So, he decided to do something simple. Every morning before the school bell rang, Josh walked up to the front doors of the building. He stood outside in the freezing cold weather and pulled the heavy doors wide open. He warmly greeted every single student who walked inside.

At first, the other students were confused. They were not used to a stranger greeting them with a big, cheerful smile. But Josh refused to quit. Day after day, he stood at the door in the cold. He held the door open and said good morning to everyone, no matter who they were. Because he was willing to stand in the cold, hundreds of kids started their day feeling happy and noticed.

Slowly, the feeling of the whole school began to change. Students started smiling back and learning his name. They even started holding doors open for each other! By taking one small, brave step to be kind, Josh Yandt went from being a lonely new kid to the most loved student in the school.

Josh Yandt's story reminds us that friendship starts when we take the very first step to be kind to others.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- How did Jonathan show that he was a true friend to David, even when it was dangerous?
- What simple job did Josh Yandt do every morning to show himself friendly to his new school?
- Who is someone you know that might need a friend right now, and how can you "shew yourself friendly" to them today?

🎨 Activity:

Sometimes making a friend just takes one small step. Today, decorate a friendly card and write a kind note inside like, "Jesus loves you, and I do too!"

Ask God to show you someone who might be feeling lonely this week. When you see them, smile and hand them the card to brighten their day!



🎵 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#141) — KJV

Psalm 40:1-3 "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock..." **Psalm 42:11** "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When our souls are cast down and we feel stuck in a dark pit of sadness, God hears our cries. He promises to lift us up, set our feet on solid ground, and put a new song of praise in our hearts.

📖 Bible Story (1 Kings 19)

Elijah was a prophet who had just seen God send fire from heaven on Mount Carmel. It was a powerful miracle, but soon afterward, a queen named Jezebel sent Elijah a frightening message. She threatened to hurt him. Suddenly, this brave man felt afraid, tired, and deeply discouraged. He ran away into the lonely wilderness.

At last, Elijah sat down under a juniper tree. He was so worn out that he prayed and asked God to let him die. His heart felt heavy, and he felt like he was the only person left in the world who still loved the Lord. But God did not scold Elijah for being sad. He cared for His tired servant with incredible kindness.

First, God let Elijah sleep. Then He sent an angel to touch him gently and say, "Arise and eat." Elijah woke up and saw freshly baked bread and a jar of cold water. He ate, drank, and went back to sleep. God knew Elijah's body needed rest, just as his heart needed comfort.

After resting, Elijah traveled for forty days until he reached a cave. There, God showed His power through a strong wind, a shaking earthquake, and a bright fire. But God did not speak through those loud things. Instead, Elijah heard a gentle, "still small voice." God reminded Elijah that he was never truly alone. God told Elijah that there were still many other people who loved the Lord. He even gave Elijah a new friend named Elisha to help him.

Elijah's story reminds us that when our hearts feel heavy with sadness, God does not scold us; He offers us gentle rest and comfort.

☀️ True Story

When Bob was a young man, he hit absolute rock bottom. Struggling with deep discouragement, he traveled to San Diego, hoping to start over by joining the Navy. The recruiting officer coldly turned him away. Desperate, Bob tried to get a sales job, but the manager took one look at him and harshly told him to go home.

Every single door had slammed shut. Bob went back to his lonely hotel room and collapsed on the bed. He couldn't face his friends, he had no job, and he had exactly \$8.50 left to his name. The crushing weight of sadness told him to just give up—that his life was completely ruined.

Instead of listening to the darkness, Bob remembered a secret his friend had taught him: the ABCs of Bible prayer. Sitting there with tears in his eyes, Bob decided to Ask God for a way out, Believe He was listening, and Claim a Bible promise. He prayed, "God, if You pull me out of this dark pit and tell me what to do, I will do it!"

The moment he claimed the promise, the suffocating sadness broke! Suddenly, Bob heard a clear voice: "Go to Madison College in Tennessee." Bob didn't even know where that was! With a brand-new song of hope, he started walking. Miraculously, God guided him across the entire continent on just \$8.50. When Bob arrived six days later, his future was beautifully rewritten.

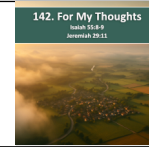
Bob's story reminds us that when sadness feels heavy, we can bring our tears to God, claim His promises, and trust Him to guide us step by step.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Elijah felt so sad even after he had just seen God do a huge miracle?
- What three letters did Pastor Glenn Coon teach Bob to use when he prayed in his hotel room?
- When you feel stuck in sadness, what is one Bible promise you can claim out loud to help your heart feel better?

🎨 Activity:

Get a large lump of sticky playdough or modeling clay. Have the children stick their fingers deep inside. It creates a tight grip that is hard to pull out! Talk about how deep sadness sometimes feels just like that—heavy and sticky, and you usually cannot get out by yourself. Then, grab their wrist and gently pull their hand free. Remind them that when they feel stuck in a pit of sadness, they can use their ABCs to ask God to pull them out!



Today's Promise (#142) — KJV

Isaiah 55:8–9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." **Jeremiah 29:11** "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When we feel sad because life isn't going our way, we can trust that God sees the whole picture. His plans for us are always good!

📖 Bible Story (Esther 2-4)

Esther was a young Jewish girl who had already known sadness. Her mother and father had died, and her kind cousin Mordecai had taken her in and raised her as his own daughter. Mordecai loved Esther and cared for her, and his home was the place where she belonged.

But one day, Esther's life changed again. She was taken from the home she knew and brought to the king's palace. She had to live among strangers and become part of a royal contest to choose a new queen. Esther may have felt afraid, lonely, and confused. She could not see why this hard thing was happening.

But God could see what Esther could not. He knew that one day His people would be in great danger. A wicked man named Haman would trick the king into making a law to destroy the Jewish people. Long before Esther understood the reason, God was already working.

In time, Esther became queen. Then the terrible law was announced, and her people were filled with fear and sorrow. Mordecai sent Esther a message, reminding her that perhaps she had come to the kingdom "for such a time as this."

Going to the king without being called was dangerous, but Esther chose to be brave. She prayed, fasted, and went before the king. God helped her, and through Esther, He saved His people.

Esther's story reminds us that when life feels confusing and sad, we can trust that God is working behind the scenes and sees the whole picture.

☀️ True Story

Bethany Hamilton was thirteen years old and already a champion surfer. She loved the water, spent her mornings in the ocean, and dreamed of surfing for many years. But one morning in Hawaii, Bethany's life suddenly changed. While she was lying on her surfboard, a large shark attacked her and bit off her left arm.

After a long stay in the hospital, Bethany had to face a very hard new reality. The life she had planned seemed broken. Simple things like cutting her food or tying her shoes became very difficult. She felt a deep, heavy sadness about losing her arm.

But Bethany did not have to face her sadness alone. She trusted God and took one step at a time. Only twenty-six days after the attack, she went back into the ocean! Surfing with one arm was very difficult. She fell off her board many times and had to use a special handle to dive under the waves. But she refused to give up and kept trying.

Over time, Bethany's incredible courage encouraged many other people. Children all over the world who were facing hard things saw her story and felt hope. Bethany learned that God's thoughts and ways are much higher than our ways. Even when she could not understand why her life had to change, she trusted that God's higher plan was perfectly good. He used her broken plans to do amazing things!

Bethany Hamilton's story reminds us that when we feel sad because our plans are broken, we can trust that God's ways are much higher and better than ours.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- If you were Esther being taken away to the palace, how do you think you would have felt?
- How many days after the shark attack did Bethany Hamilton get back on her surfboard?
- Why is asking "What's next?" a much better way to fight off a sad mood than asking "Why did this happen to me?"

🎨 Activity:

Print a few pictures (like a butterfly wing, a piece of carpet, or the skin of a pineapple) and zoom in so close that they just look like a confusing blur of colors. Show the zoomed-in pictures and ask the children to guess what they are. Then, show the whole picture! Talk about how when we are going through a sad time, we are "zoomed in" and confused by what is happening. Remind them that God is "zoomed out" and can see the whole beautiful picture of our lives!



Today's Promise (#143) — NKJV

Jeremiah 32:17–19, 26–27, 37–38 "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You...the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts. You are great in counsel and mighty in work... Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, 'Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?' ... 'Behold, I will gather them, and I will cause them to dwell safely. They shall be My people, and I will be their God;'" **Matthew 19:26** "... With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
Mark 9:23 "...If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you face a problem and feel hopeless, remember that nothing is too hard for God.

📖 Bible Story (Genesis 18 & 21)

Abraham and Sarah had waited many years for the child God had promised them. But now Abraham was almost one hundred years old, and Sarah was ninety. Sarah had never had a baby, and from the outside, it looked impossible. Her heart may have carried a quiet sadness for a very long time.

One day, three visitors came to Abraham's tent in the heat of the day. Abraham welcomed them and hurried to prepare food for them. While they were resting, the Lord gave Abraham a wonderful promise. He said that by that same time the next year, Sarah would have a baby boy.

Sarah was listening from inside the tent. When she heard the promise, she laughed to herself. She thought she was too old to have a child. After so many years of waiting, the promise sounded impossible.

But the Lord knew Sarah had laughed. He asked Abraham, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" Then He asked a powerful question: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" God wanted Abraham and Sarah to understand that age, weakness, and impossibility could not stop His promise.

God kept His word. The next year, just as He had said, Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. Abraham and Sarah named him Isaac, which means "laughter." The child Sarah once thought was impossible was now in her arms.

Abraham and Sarah's story reminds us that God sees the sadness we carry while we wait. Nothing is too hard for Him, and in His time, He can turn sorrow into joy.

☀ True Story

Holden Jorgensen was thirteen years old when a football game changed his life. During a play, a hard tackle injured his back so badly that he became paralyzed from the waist down. The doctors told Holden he would spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. They said walking again was impossible.

Trapped in a body that refused to move, Holden felt a deep, heavy sadness. He spent many days feeling completely hopeless. But in those quiet moments, Holden realized God was right there with him. Before his legs ever started working, Holden asked God for help and felt a wonderful, comforting peace in his heart. Instead of giving up, he chose to believe that nothing is too hard for the Lord.

Holden started going to physical therapy. It was very hard work. He had to wear special heavy braces on his legs just to practice standing up. Even when he fell down, he bravely refused to stay on the floor! Holden trusted God and kept trying every single day. Slowly, he learned to do exactly what the doctors said he could never do: he learned to walk again!

Holden walked right out of his wheelchair and grew up to achieve his biggest dreams. He became a strong firefighter, passed all his physical tests, and helped patients in the exact same hospital where he was treated. Amazingly, even today as he runs marathons and lifts five hundred pounds, Holden still has absolutely no feeling in his legs!

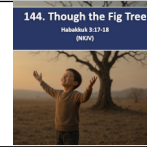
Holden's story reminds us that no matter how sad or impossible a situation seems, there is absolutely nothing too hard for God.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Sarah laughed when God promised she would have a baby?
- What job did Holden become when he grew up and walked out of his wheelchair?
- What is something in your life (or someone else's life) that seems impossible right now, and how does Jeremiah 32:27 help you face it?

🎬 Activity:

Give everyone a small index card and scissors. Ask if anyone can cut a hole in it large enough to step their entire body through. It seems completely impossible! Look up a quick tutorial online for "how to step through an index card." By cutting alternating slits, the tiny card expands into a massive ring! Just like this expanding paper, God solves our "impossible" problems in ways we cannot imagine.



Today's Promise (#144) — NKJV

Habakkuk 3:17–18 "Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls—Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When everything goes wrong and you feel sad, you always have a choice. You can focus on the empty places, or you can choose to rejoice in the God who saves you!

📖 Bible Story (Habakkuk)

Long ago, families grew all their own food to survive. They needed rain to grow plants like figs and olives. They needed green grass to feed their sheep and cows. If the plants died and the animals ran away, the families would go hungry. Life depended entirely on having full fields and crowded barns.

A man named Habakkuk served as a prophet, sharing messages from God. One day, God showed him a vision of what was going to happen to his country. In this vision, an army marched in and took over the land.

Habakkuk looked around the vision and saw that the trees had no fruit. The vines were completely bare. The dirt fields did not grow any food. The sheep were gone from their pens, and the cows were missing from their stalls.

Habakkuk knew exactly what this meant. His people would have nothing to eat. When he saw this future, he felt his stomach shake. His lips trembled, and his legs grew weak. He had every reason to sit down, complain, and give up.

Instead, Habakkuk made a clear choice. He did not pretend he was happy about the empty fields. He did not ignore the problem. He chose to praise God anyway. He said out loud that he would still rejoice in the Lord. He would find his joy in God, his Savior.

Habakkuk showed that joy is a decision we make. When things go wrong and our own lives feel empty, we can still choose to sing. We can always trust the God who saves us and praise Him in the middle of trouble.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did Habakkuk mean when he talked about the fig tree not blossoming and the fields being empty?
- What did Martin Rinkart use a pen to write right in the middle of a very sad time?
- How can we practice "rejoicing in the Lord" on days when we feel sad and nothing seems to be going our way?

☀️ True Story

During the 1600s, a war stretched across many countries. Armies marched through towns and destroyed the farms. Because the farms were ruined, there was no food left to eat. This caused a famine, which means people went hungry. Soon sickness spread through the towns.

A man named Martin Rinkart lived in a walled city in Germany. He worked as a pastor, helping people learn about God. When the war came near his city, thousands of people ran inside the walls to hide. The city became too crowded. The food disappeared, and sickness took over.

Soon, the other pastors in the city either moved away or caught the sickness and died. Martin was the only minister left to care for everyone. He worked every day from morning until night. He had to conduct thousands of funerals for the people who passed away. Some days, he buried fifty people. One of those people was his own wife.

Martin lived surrounded by sickness, hunger, and sadness. His own home felt empty. He had every reason to stop working, cry, and quit his job as a pastor.

But right in the middle of that pain, Martin made a choice. He sat down and picked up a pen. He did not write a letter to complain about the hunger. He wrote a song of thanks. He wrote the famous hymn, "Now Thank We All Our God."

Martin's story reminds us that sadness does not have to silence our praise. Even when our hearts hurt, we can remember God's mercy, thank Him for His care, and trust Him to carry us through.

🎨 Activity:

Go outside and find a complete-looking branch or stick, and also find a small broken branch. Bring them inside and place them in a jar. Cut out several small paper leaves. Talk about how life can feel sad and empty, just like the broken branch. Then have everyone write or say things they can still praise God for. Hang or tape the leaves onto the branches. Watch as the sad, bare branch fills up with reminders of God's goodness.



Today's Promise (#145) — KJV

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

💖 Apply the Promise!

When sadness feels heavy, choose to focus your mind on the pure, lovely, and good things God has given you!

📖 Bible Story (Numbers 13 & 14)

Moses sent twelve men to explore the Promised Land. God had promised to give them this beautiful country. For forty days, the spies walked through Canaan. They saw large cities with high walls and beautiful, green valleys. When they returned, they brought back a single cluster of grapes that was so massive it had to be carried on a heavy pole between two men! But ten of the spies chose to give a very sad and negative report. They only focused on the scary things. They talked about giant warriors and high walls, saying, "We look like tiny grasshoppers compared to them!"

Because these ten spies focused entirely on the bad news, deep sadness fell over the entire camp of Israel. The people cried all night long and felt completely hopeless. They were ready to give up and go back to Egypt. They let the bad report control their thoughts.

But two of the spies, a man named Joshua and a man named Caleb, made a different choice. They had seen the exact same giants and the exact same walls, but they refused to focus on them. Instead, Joshua and Caleb chose to think about what was true, lovely, and good. They focused on the gigantic grapes and the wonderful promise of God! They knew that with God's help, they were much stronger than any giant. They begged their friends to trust the Lord instead of giving up. They tried to encourage everyone, saying, "Do not be afraid of the people of the land. The Lord is with us!"

Joshua and Caleb's story reminds us that when sad or fearful thoughts fill our minds, we can choose to remember what is true. God's promises are stronger than the problems we see.

☀️ True Story

When Cavanaugh Bell was five years old and starting kindergarten, he faced a very hard situation. Some of the older children at his school were very unkind to him. They teased him every single day, which made him feel very small and afraid. Cavanaugh felt a deep, heavy sadness inside his heart. He cried and begged his mother to let him stop going to school because the pain felt too big to handle.

Cavanaugh felt powerless to stop the mean kids from saying hurtful things. But one afternoon, his mother gently helped him change how he was thinking. She explained that he could not control the unkind children, but he could intentionally choose where he focused his own mind.

Instead of thinking about the hurtful insults, Cavanaugh decided to focus on doing good things for other people. He completely shifted his attention away from the bullies and poured all his energy into spreading kindness. When he was only seven years old, he started his own charity called "Cool & Dope." He raised money to buy groceries and toilet paper for elderly people in his community who were stuck at home. He even packed the bags and delivered them right to their front doors with a big, happy smile.

The moment Cavanaugh shifted his focus to helping others, his dark sadness began to lift. By thinking about things that were pure, true, and good, his heart filled with courage. He became a bold leader in his city.

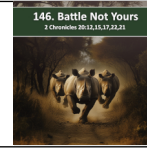
Cavanaugh's story reminds us that we can defeat feelings of sadness by intentionally choosing to focus our thoughts on doing good.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What massive fruit did the spies bring back on a pole between two men?
- What did Cavanaugh buy for the elderly people in his community?
- When you are having a really sad day, what is one "pure" or "lovely" thing you can choose to think about to help change your focus?

🎨 Activity:

Have the children roll two pieces of paper into tubes to make "binoculars." Draw a scary, angry face on one piece of paper and a big, beautiful heart on another. Tape them to opposite walls in the room. Have the kids look through their tubes at the scary face—it is all they can see! Then, have them turn their bodies and focus only on the heart. Talk about how we get to choose which picture fills our vision and our minds!



Today's Promise (#146) — KJV

2 Chronicles 20:12, 15, 17, 21, 22 "O our God...we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. ...Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed... for the battle is not yours, but God's. ... Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD... fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you. ... Praise the LORD... And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the [enemies], ...and they were smitten."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When worry overwhelms you, keep your eyes on Jesus and praise Him, because the battle is His!

Bible Story (2 Chronicles 20)

King Jehoshaphat received some very bad news. A huge army from three different nations had joined forces and was marching straight toward Jerusalem to attack them. He felt very worried and afraid because he knew his army was entirely too small to fight such a giant enemy. He was facing a problem that was way too big for him.

But instead of letting his worry turn into panic, Jehoshaphat did exactly what we should do when we are afraid. He called all the people together to pray. He honestly told God, "We have no might against this great company, neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee." He took his focus off the scary problem and looked straight at his powerful God.

God answered them with a beautiful promise. He told them not to be afraid or worried, because the battle was not theirs, but God's! He promised that they would not even need to fight. The next morning, Jehoshaphat did something that seemed very silly. Instead of sending his soldiers with swords to the front lines, he sent out the choir!

He appointed singers to march in front of the army, loudly singing praises to the Lord. As soon as they began to sing and praise, God confused the enemy armies so much that they completely defeated each other. When Jehoshaphat's army arrived, they didn't have to lift a single sword. They spent three days gathering the treasures from the empty battlefield!

Jehoshaphat's story reminds us that when worry surrounds us, our greatest weapon is keeping our eyes on God and praising Him.

True Story

On April 12, 1978, a church in the country of Uganda was holding a worship service. During this time, the country was ruled by a very mean dictator, and it was dangerous to be a Christian. Suddenly, a group of angry soldiers burst through the church doors. It was a huge, scary problem with no way out. The 600 people inside knew the soldiers were there to hurt them.

Instead of panicking or trying to fight back with their own strength, the church did something amazing. The pastor and the congregation dropped to their knees and began to pray and praise God out loud. They knew they could not defeat the armed soldiers on their own, so they turned their eyes to the One who could. They sang songs about God's power and lifted their voices right in the middle of the danger.

Suddenly, a member of the church orchestra picked up his trumpet and blew a loud, joyful blast of praise to the Lord! When the soldiers heard the trumpet echoing through the church, God fought the battle for His people in an amazing way. The soldiers were instantly filled with fear. They mistakenly thought the loud trumpet blast was a military signal for an army hiding nearby to attack them.

The soldiers immediately turned around and ran out of the church in a total panic. By choosing to pray and praise God in the middle of a scary situation, the entire church was saved.

This story reminds us that when we face a giant problem, we can start praising God right away, because He will fight our battles for us!

Discussion Questions:

- When King Jehoshaphat found out a large army was coming to attack them, what was the very first thing he did?
- When the soldiers came into the church, what did the people do instead of panicking or trying to fight back?
- Why do you think praising and thanking God can actually change how big or scary a problem looks to us?

Activity:

When you feel worried, it feels like an invisible army is attacking your mind. Have the children create a "Battle Box" by decorating a small cardboard box. Write down their biggest worries on pieces of paper and drop them in the box, officially handing the battle over to God. Then, turn on your favorite worship song and march around the room singing loudly! Remember that praising God before you even see the victory is the best way to chase away worry.



Today's Promise (#147) — KJV

Psalm 4:8 "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."

Apply the Promise!

When we feel worried or anxious at night, we can sleep in perfect peace because God is always awake and watching over us.

Bible Story (Acts 12)

King Herod was a ruler who wanted to stop people from teaching about Jesus. To frighten the believers, he arrested the Apostle Peter and threw him into a dark prison. Herod commanded sixteen guards to watch Peter carefully. He planned to bring Peter out the very next morning to face an angry crowd.

Peter was placed in the deepest part of the prison. His wrists were tied with chains, and he was forced to sleep on the stone floor right between two soldiers. It was the last night before he was going to be punished. Most people in that scary situation would be crying or staying awake all night in fear.

But Peter made a beautiful choice. He laid down on the floor, closed his eyes, and went right to sleep. He slept so deeply and peacefully that when an angel suddenly appeared in the locked cell to rescue him, the angel actually had to poke Peter on the side just to wake him up! The angel told Peter to get up, and his chains simply fell off. The angel safely led him right past the guards and out of the prison.

How could a man sleep so soundly in such a scary place? Peter knew a powerful truth. He understood that even behind locked doors, God was watching over him. He completely trusted that his life was safe in God's hands, not the king's. Because he knew God was in control, he did not have to worry about tomorrow.

Peter's story reminds us that we can close our eyes and sleep in perfect peace because God is always awake and watching over us.

True Story

In May of 2013, a very large tornado moved right through the town of Moore, Oklahoma. At Briarwood Elementary School, a first-grade teacher named Waynel Mayes rushed her young students into a hallway. The dark storm roared directly over their school building. The heavy brick walls began to shake, and loud noises filled the air. It was a very scary moment for the children in the dark.

To keep worry from taking over their minds, Ms. Mayes pulled her students close. She told them to cover their heads, and then she began singing the familiar words of "Jesus Loves Me." As the loud storm grew closer, the children sang along with their teacher. Their little voices rose in the middle of the dark hallway, helping their young hearts stay calm instead of giving way to fear.

The strong wind ruined the school building, leaving them trapped under the fallen bricks. Ms. Mayes even had her foot pinned under the heavy blocks, but she was so focused on comforting her students that she hardly noticed the pain. First responders soon followed the sound of life and dug them out. Amazingly, every single child in her small group survived that afternoon.

Just a few days later, those brave students stood together at a community church service and sang "Jesus Loves Me" once again.

Waynel Mayes's story reminds us that when scary storms come, we can fix our minds on God's love and sing His promises to keep our hearts in peace.

Discussion Questions:

- Where was the Apostle Peter sleeping so deeply that an angel had to poke him to wake him up?
- What song did the children sing to create a mental shield in the dark bathroom?
- When you feel worried or scared at bedtime, what is one truth about God that can help you lay down in peace and sleep?

Activity:

Have the children lie flat on the floor and pretend to be deeply asleep in a prison cell just like Peter. Make some loud, distracting noises, clap your hands, or drop a heavy book. They are not allowed to open their eyes, flinch, or move until you gently tap them on the side with a soft pillow (just like the angel did!). Talk about how God gives us such deep peace that the loud problems of the world do not have to wake up our fear!



Today's Promise (#148) — KJV

Isaiah 26:3–4 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength!"

💖 Apply the Promise!

When a big worry tries to steal your joy, don't let your brain spin in circles! If you choose to keep your mind focused on God instead of the scary problem, He promises perfect peace!

📖 Bible Story (Isaiah 37)

King Hezekiah received a frightening letter from the king of Assyria. The message said that a powerful enemy army was coming against Jerusalem. The Assyrian king bragged about all the nations he had already conquered. He spoke proudly against the Lord, acting as if God could not save His people.

When Hezekiah read the letter, he had an important choice to make. He could have let worry take over his thoughts. He could have paced the palace, wondering what to do or trying to fix the problem all by himself. But Hezekiah knew exactly where to take his fear.

He walked straight into the temple and physically spread the letter out before God. He did not hide the problem or pretend it was small. He laid the whole trouble before the Lord and prayed. Hezekiah reminded himself that God ruled over the entire earth. The enemy army was strong, but God was much stronger.

When he finished praying, he left the letter in the temple, knowing he did not have to carry that heavy worry anymore. Because Hezekiah trusted God, his heart filled with peace. God heard his prayer and answered by sending just one single angel to stop the Assyrian army in the middle of the night. Jerusalem was completely saved without God's people ever needing to lift a sword.

Hezekiah's story reminds us that when worry brings frightening thoughts, we can take them straight to God. We can lay our troubles before Him, remember who He is, and trust Him to care for what we cannot fix ourselves.

☀️ True Story

In the late 1990s, when Jey Mbiro was a young boy living in Kenya, he received a serious letter from his school. The note said that if his family did not pay five dollars for his school fees, he would have to leave school. For Jey's family, five dollars was a large amount of money. They barely had enough for daily food, and they had no way to pay.

Jey walked home feeling sure that his education was over. He handed the letter to his mother. She had a choice to make. She could have let worry fill her mind. She could have paced the floor, wondering how they would ever find the money. The problem looked small to some people, but to Jey's family, it felt impossible.

Instead, Jey's mother took the problem to God. She laid the letter on her bed, bowed her head, and prayed. She did not know where the money would come from, but she knew God saw their need. Instead of only looking at what they did not have, she remembered that God was faithful. She gave the burden to the Lord and trusted Him to provide.

The very next morning, someone from a local church program came to their door with surprising news. A kind sponsor from far away had sent a special gift for Jey's family. The gift was exactly five dollars. Jey was able to pay his school fees and stay in class.

Jey Mbiro's story reminds us that when worry brings a problem we cannot fix, we can lay it before God. He sees our needs, hears our prayers, and knows how to provide in His own way.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Instead of pacing the floor in worry, what did Hezekiah do with the terrible letter?
- What exact amount of money did the kind sponsor send so Jey could stay in school?
- When your mind starts spinning with a scary worry, how can you keep your mind "stayed" on God?

🎨 Activity:

Show how focus brings peace! Have a child try to balance a small book on their head while looking all around the room at different "worries." The book will fall! Then, have them pick one spot on the wall (representing God) and keep their eyes "stayed" on it while they walk. They will be much steadier! Talk about how focusing on God keeps our minds balanced and peaceful.



Today's Promise (#149) — KJV

Matthew 11:28–30 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

📖 Apply the Promise!

When life feels heavy and you are exhausted from worry, Jesus invites you to come to Him. He will take your heavy burden and give you His peace.

📖 Bible Story (Matthew 11:28-30)

Jesus looked at the crowds following Him and saw that many people were exhausted. Some were tired from working hard, but many were tired deep inside their hearts. They were trying to carry heavy burdens of worry, guilt, fear, and impossible expectations. Some religious leaders made following God feel like a heavy load instead of a joyful walk with a loving Father.

Jesus looked at these weary people with kindness. He knew they needed more than outward rest. They needed rest in their hearts. He did not tell them to try harder or carry more. Instead, He gave them an invitation. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Then Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." In Bible times, a yoke was a wooden frame placed over animals, such as oxen, so they could pull a load together. Jesus was not inviting people to carry their burdens alone. He was inviting them to come close to Him, learn from Him, and let Him help carry the weight.

Jesus said He is meek and lowly in heart. That means He is gentle, humble, and kind. He does not push away tired children who come to Him. His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. When we come to Him, He teaches us how to rest instead of trying to hold everything together alone.

Jesus's teaching reminds us that when worry makes our hearts feel tired, we can come to Him. We do not have to carry every fear by ourselves. We can walk beside Jesus, trust His love, and let Him give our souls rest.

☀️ True Story

Mary Finlayson was a mother who knew exactly what to do with heavy worries. Whenever her grown daughter, Mary Lou, called her on the phone feeling stressed or anxious about her busy life, Mary would gently tell her, "I will put it in the God Box."

Mary kept a special container in her home. Whenever someone in her family was facing a problem that felt too big to carry, Mary did not sit around and worry about it. Instead, she wrote the problem down on a tiny scrap of paper, folded it up, and dropped it into her God Box.

Placing the note inside meant she was officially handing that heavy burden over to Jesus. She took this very seriously. If her children tried to worry about the problem again, Mary would gently stop them and say, "If you think you can handle it better than God, I will take it out of the box!" That firm reminder helped her family stop fretting and start trusting the Lord. Every single slip of paper was proof that she had not carried those heavy loads alone.

When Mary passed away, her family made a beautiful discovery. They found ten different God Boxes hidden around her home. When they opened them, hundreds of tiny, folded notes tumbled out! They held twenty years of prayers and worries that Mary had faithfully handed to the Lord.

Mary Finlayson's story reminds us that when anxious thoughts feel too big to handle, we can write them down, drop them into God's strong hands, and walk away with a resting heart.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What wooden tool did Jesus talk about to show how He helps us pull our load side by side?
- What did Mary Finlayson tell her children she would do if they thought they could handle the problem better than God?
- When you feel exhausted from carrying a worry, what is one way you can give it to Jesus today?

🎒 Activity:

Fill a backpack with heavy books or rocks, each representing a specific worry. Have each child try to walk while wearing the heavy bag to feel how exhausting anxiety is. Then have a partner "help" by lifting the other side. Explain that Jesus helps us carry our burdens just like a friend helps carry something heavy.

Worry — Day 5



🎵 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#150) — NKJV

Philippians 4:6–7 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

💖 Apply the Promise!

Instead of worrying, talk to God about everything. When you thank Him and tell Him what you need, His peace will stand like a soldier guarding your heart.

📖 Bible Story (Matthew 26 & 27)

Jairus was an important leader in the synagogue, but one day his heart was filled with worry. His twelve-year-old daughter was very sick and close to death. Jairus hurried through the crowd to find Jesus, fell down at His feet, and begged Him to come to his house and heal his little girl.

Jesus went with him. But while they were walking, some messengers came from Jairus's house with heartbreaking news. They said, "Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?" To Jairus, it may have felt as if all hope was gone. His heart may have sunk as he thought about his daughter and the home he was hurrying toward. He could not change the message he had just heard, but he could choose whether to keep following Jesus.

But Jesus heard what the men said. He looked at Jairus and told him, "Be not afraid, only believe." Jesus was asking Jairus to keep trusting Him, even when the news was painful and frightening.

Jairus kept walking with Jesus. When they arrived at the house, people were crying loudly. Jesus went into the little girl's room, took her by the hand, and gently said, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise."

Immediately, the twelve-year-old girl stood up and began walking. The sorrow in that house turned into wonder and joy.

Jairus's story reminds us that worry often grows when we listen only to frightening news. But Jesus invites us to keep walking with Him, keep trusting His love, and believe that He is still able to help.

☀️ True Story

In December 2011, a nine-year-old girl named Annabel Beam suffered from a painful stomach illness that medicine couldn't fix. She spent many days in the hospital, and the worry of being sick forever felt very heavy.

One afternoon, feeling a little better, she went outside to play. She and her sister climbed the giant cottonwood tree in their yard. Annabel climbed high up, but suddenly, the branch beneath her snapped. She tumbled backward and fell thirty feet down, headfirst, into the pitch-black center of the hollow tree trunk.

She was trapped at the very bottom. It was cold, tight, and completely dark. Usually, being stuck alone in a dark place is terrifying. It makes your heart race and makes you want to scream in panic. Outside, her parents and rescue workers were frantically trying to get her out.

But inside the tree, something amazing happened. Annabel prayed. Instead of crying, a quiet, wonderful peace wrapped around her. She later told her parents that she felt Jesus sitting right there with her. All her worry and fear completely vanished. She wasn't scared at all. She just sat perfectly still, feeling completely safe.

After five hours, firefighters finally pulled her out with a rope. She was safe! But the biggest surprise came later. Not only did Annabel survive the huge fall without a single broken bone, but her stomach stopped hurting entirely. She was completely healed. Annabel's story reminds us that even when we fall into scary situations, God is right there with us to take away our worry.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did Jesus say to Jairus when the men brought him the terrible news?
- How many hours was Annabel Beam trapped inside the dark, hollow cottonwood tree?
- What does it mean that God's peace "surpasses all understanding"? Have you ever felt peaceful even when a problem hadn't been fixed yet?

📖 Activity:

Take turns coming up with real or pretend situations that might make someone feel worried—like being late, losing something, or hearing loud thunder. After each one, everyone quickly acts out two responses: first a "worried reaction," then a calm, "trusting God" response! Talk about how Jesus would. He would choose peace, pray, and trust God. We can choose the same calm response with His help.