

Alley Rundown - July 20-21, 2019

Bible Story: This One's for the Children (Jesus and the Little Children) • Mark 10:13-16 (supporting: Mark 9:36-37)

Bottom Line: God can give you the strength to be gentle.

Key Question: Why is it sometimes hard to be gentle?

Memory Verse: *"being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."* Philippians 1:6, NIV

CONNECT TIME: Dig Dug Balloon Competition

Supplies Needed: Bag of Balloons (1 per Campus), Balloon Pump (2 per Campus)

"What's going on my people? We have such a good day in store for you. And that day starts with an awesome game inspired by the classic video game *Dig Dug*. Yes, you heard me right . . . it is not just a present and past tense verb . . . oh no. When put together, these two words make up a retro, 8-bit game that filled arcades in the 80's. Check it out!"

CG: Visual image of Dig Dug

"*Dig Dug* was kind of like Pac-Man except you could sneak up on the bad guys first and pump them up with your little air pump and . . . POP! Seriously, who comes up with this?! Brilliant minds . . . that's who."

"Alright, so we have a little *Dig Dug* inspired game here on stage today, and I need two challengers!"

Choose two volunteers.

"So here is how the game is played. Here I have my little *Dig Dug* air pump. A formidable weapon against the forces of evil, I think you'd agree. Now, I'm going to place a balloon on the end of the pump. It is up to you to decide how many pumps it will take to pop the balloon, and try to guess one less than that. In other words, unlike *Dig Dug*, you DON'T want to pop this balloon."

Example: Volunteer 1 says "I can do 8 pumps without popping. Volunteer 2 challenges and says, "I can do 9 pumps." Volunteer 1 counters and says 10. Volunteer 2 accepts. Now Volunteer 1 has to have the balloon pumped 10 times. If it pops, Volunteer 2 gets a point. If it doesn't pop, they continue – "I can pump 2 more without it popping, etc." Once it pops, they start over with a new balloon. First one to 3 points wins a prize.

If time allows, bring up additional volunteers.

"(After the game) That was awesome. I don't know about you, but I really dug that game. Sorry, couldn't resist. Okay, let's get started with our talk today!"

Begin Rundown...

"Hey, everyone! Glad to see you all here today. You know (*thinking out loud*), if you're ever having one of those days where you're just feeling down and out . . . where NOTHING seems to be going your way . . . where the world feels like a cruel and cold place . . . you know what's a sure-fire way to cure what ails you? (*Exploding*) Cute memes! That's right, it could be a kitten . . . it could be a puppy . . . it could be a baby . . . behold, the cute memes! Warning, though . . . some of these are on cute overload."

Show the five meme images and provide commentary.

CG: Meme Images 1-5

“Now . . . what is it that makes these so cute? It is because the subjects are so small and fragile. You have to be so gentle with them . . . and watching them do these funny things or make these ridiculous faces just captures our attentions.”

“But what if the subject changed? Here’s what I mean . . . ”

Show the five meme images with the subjects changed. Provide commentary, as the reaction should be pretty strong from the audience.

CG: Meme Images 6-10

“Something is definitely wrong here, right? It is one thing to see memes with cute kittens and puppies and babies, but then to see . . . well . . . what we just saw? It just isn’t right. It makes sense for us to be gentle with something or someone that looks fragile or like it should be treated gently, but what does it mean to be gentle with my family and the people around me?”

“Great question, right?! Well, to explore this question, we head to an interesting moment from Jesus’ life that we find recorded one of the Gospels. The Gospels are the writings that tell the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, and through them we get a picture of what Jesus was like. Today’s story comes from the Gospel of Mark.”

“Now one thing we learn about Jesus right away was that he was BUSY! There always seemed to be crowds of people around him, and usually those crowds were asking him to do things for them—heal them with a miracle, make a bread appear again and feed them . . . sometimes I think the disciples probably felt more like security guards!”

“Now, before we go further, think about little kids for a moment. In 2019, we experience so many ways that we celebrate and put kids at the center of what we’re doing. We have birthday parties where we watch them smash cake in their own faces. It’s awesome. We have celebrations when they walk and when they talk. We have graduation ceremonies. Some take pictures on Santa’s lap and on the Easter Bunny’s lap. We capture and celebrate everything. Why? Because for the most part, people value and cherish kids.”

“But what if I told you that in the first century . . . the time when Jesus’ lived . . . this was not really the case? See, in that society, the value of a person was tied to how much they could contribute or produce. But how much can a two-year-old contribute and produce? Yeah, not a whole lot. And for that reason, kids didn’t have a lot of value until they were grown and could begin to contribute to the family or society. I know it sounds bad, but that’s the way it was. And that’s the attitude we see on display in the story today. Look for it! Here we go.”

“(Read directly from Mark 10:13 NIV) ‘People were bringing little children to Jesus. They wanted him to place his hands on them to bless them. But the disciples told them to stop.’”

“What did you all see there that fit what we were just talking about?”

Pause for responses about the disciples keeping children away.

“Exactly. ‘But the disciples told them to stop.’ Can you believe that? Now, how do you think Jesus responded? I mean, this was pretty typical, so He could have been all *(acting matter of fact)* ‘That’s just how it is in our world today. Once these youngsters learn to do their part and pick themselves up by their own bootstraps, then I’ll have time for them.’”

“Check out his response, though. *(Read directly from Mark 10:14a NIV) ‘When Jesus saw this, he was angry.’”*

“Woah. That’s a strong reaction. I could imagine annoyed. I could see bothered. But angered? There are actually only a few times in the Gospels where it says Jesus was angry like this, and they all involve times when a person or people were being treated unfairly or looked down on. Check out what He says next.”

“(Read directly from Mark 10:14-16 NIV) ‘When Jesus saw this, he was angry. He said to his disciples, “Let the little children come to me. Don’t keep them away. God’s kingdom belongs to people like them. What I’m about to tell you is true. Anyone who will not receive God’s kingdom like a little child will never enter it.” Then he took the children in his arms. He placed his hands on them to bless them.””

“See, the disciples, much like other people of that day, were quick to keep the kids away simply because they thought Jesus was too busy—like He had other, more important things to do. Yet, Jesus responds with gentleness. And in his gentleness, He made time for those that others often pushed away and looked down on. In fact, Jesus actually used the children as an example of HOW people should come to God! That’s what this week’s episode is all about. Let’s take a look!”

CG: Lesson Video (Runtime: 15:30)

“Thankfully, when it comes to gentleness, we don’t have to try to do this on our own. When we put our faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit is with us to help us power up and find the strength we need to be gentle. After all, gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit!”

“At the same time, it’s good for us to be aware of the times when we’re struggling to be gentle with others. Today as you go to groups, think about this question.”

CG: Key Question Slide

“Why is it sometimes hard to be gentle? When we discover the moments where we struggle, we can make a plan to ask God for help. How about we do that now? Let’s pray and, first of all, thank God for sending Jesus as the ultimate example of gentleness and, second, help for how we show that same gentleness to people in our lives. Let’s pray.”

Lead group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, lead offering and the Worship Experience, then dismiss kids to Small Group.

OFFERING TIME:

Homer Glen: Victor

New Lenox: Daniel

Orland Park: Michael and Valerie

CG: Picture of Child

CG: MOHI JPEG

“Offering Time is important here in the Alley, because it gives you all an opportunity to worship God by giving your money generously. Here at *(your campus)*, we give our offering to help support *(your campus child)* in Kenya. Our offering goes to show kindness to them by buying clothes, and food, and other materials they may need. We have a picture of Mission of Hope International in Nairobi where *(campus child)* goes to school! If you brought an offering today, you may place it in our Alley Offering Bin *(point children to location of bin)*

CG: Alley Offering Bin JPEG

...when the video plays. If not, that’s ok too. You can bring an offering next week. The Bible tells us this about bringing our offerings to Him...”

CG: Offering Verse JPEG (Acts 20:35)

(Invite students to place their offerings in bin)

CG: Worship Experience Video (Runtime: 5:00)

NOTE: This week, students will stand and sing "Who You Say I Am" as performed by Parkview Christian Church Band.

Dismiss to Small Groups.