

## Alley SG—September 11th-13th, 2021

**Today's Bible Story:** Help! (Nehemiah Helps the Poor) • *Nehemiah 5*

**Today's Key Question:** Who do you see being treated unfairly?

**Today's Bottom Line:** Look for ways to make things right.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord." (Colossians 3:23a NIV)

### 1. Opening Activity

**What You Need:** Metal spoon (1 per group)

#### What You Do:

- Before the game, clue in one other leader or kid to be your helper. Share the "Secret Strategy" of the game with them. (See below.)
- Ask the leader or kid you've clued in to turn their back to the other kids.
- Hold up the spoon for the kids to see.
- Explain that the spoon is actually a high-definition, state-of-the-art camera that uses advanced spoon-technology to take pictures that only those who know the Secret Strategy can see.
  - Pull out the stops on your craziness and be as ridiculous as you want.
- Pretend to take a picture of one of the kids then ask your helper to come back into the room (or turn around).
- Give the spoon to your helper and ask them to look at it and guess whose picture it is. Once they are sure, they can share who they think it is.
- Repeat by taking another kid's picture.
- Then let kids who think they know the "Secret Strategy" take a turn leaving the room.
- If they are correct, let them take a turn being the "photographer."
- Make sure no one shares the "Secret Strategy" until everyone has guessed it, or when you need to end the game.

***Secret Strategy: The person guessing who was "photographed" gets their clues by observing the "photographer" who will be imitating all the actions of the kid whose picture was taken. The photographer will sit or stand in exactly the same position as the kid who was photographed, and move as they move.***

#### What You Say:

"Your powers of observation got a workout in that game. You did a lot of watching, looking, and thinking, and when you figured out what to do, you did it. Those observation skills are helpful when it comes to taking initiative, too. **[Transition] Remember Nehemiah from last week? Well, his story isn't over yet and there's more we can learn from him. Today we focused in on the way Nehemiah used his observation skills and took care of a situation that no one else was doing anything about.**"

### 2. Take a Snapshot

**What You Need:** "People Chain" Activity Page (1 per kid), pens, scissors

#### What You Do:

- Give each kid a pen, pair of scissors, and a copy of the "People Chain" Activity Page.
- Explain that the instructions on the page show them how to make a connected chain of cut-outs in the shape of people.

- They can use the pattern as a guide, but encourage them to make their people unique in some way while still maintaining the basic shape.
- Assist as needed, making sure kids leave portions of the folded edge intact in order to keep the people shapes connected.
- When finished, ask kids to give identity to the people in their chain by giving each one a name (not necessarily anyone they know) and writing it on the front.
- On the back, ask them to write down one thing that person might need help with.
- If their ideas focus only on tangible needs of people within your community or other places, challenge them to also consider needs people have beyond food and clothing. (*Examples: being safe, friendship, support, fairness, acceptance, someone to stand up for them if being treated badly*)
- Invite kids to share their “People Chains” with the group then let them suggest what someone could do if they were aware of the need.
  - Ask: When someone is being treated badly, how can you play a part in making things better?
- Save the “People Chains” for use later in Make it Personal with Prayer.

### 3. Verses to Take with You

**What You Need:** Bible, plastic gems (50 per group), pennies (10 per group)

#### What You Do:

- Form two teams.
- Make sure each team has access to a Bible.
- Assign one of the following verses to each team:
  - Hebrews 13:16
  - Philippians 2:4
- Invite teams to look up their verse then come up with three examples of practical ways their verse can be lived out 1) at home, 2) at school, 3) in the community or world.
- Bring teams together and let them read their verse and share their examples with the others.
- Remind kids that if we’re focused on ourselves, we probably won’t see or notice the needs of others very easily. We can’t do anything to make things right if we don’t see how things are wrong in the first place.
- Ask:
  - Why do you think it’s so hard to turn our attention away from what we need or want and focus on others?
  - What can we do to become less focused on ourselves?
- Remind kids that initiative starts with SEEING what needs to be done. And more often than not, it starts with SEEING who needs to be helped and what needs to be made right.
- Give each kid five plastic gems and a penny.
- Explain that kids will challenge someone on the other team to play one round of either Rock, Paper, Scissors, Heads or Tails coin toss, or Thumb Wrestling.
  - The winner receives one gem from their opponent.
  - They can play the same game repeatedly with different kids or change it up with each round.
  - Check to make sure kids know how to play each of the games.
  - Tell kids that the game ends when someone on their team runs out of gems for more than 10 seconds.
  - When a kid is out of gems, they should start the count down by loudly counting backwards from ten to alert their team that they have a need.
- Before you begin the game, give kids a few minutes to come up with a strategy for making sure no kid on their team is left empty-handed which would end the game.
  - The goal is to not only collect gems for themselves but also see the need of someone else and do something about it so that the empty-handed player can continue to play.
- Play for a designated time or until someone on a team runs out of gems.
- Debrief the game through discussion.

- Did your strategy for keeping your teammates in the game work? Why or why not?
- How did it feel to need others' help?
- How did it feel to do what you could to help the others on your team?
- In what way did you live out Hebrews 13:16 or Philippians 2:4 in the game?
- Encourage kids to make a plan—to decide BEFORE they start their day that they're going to LOOK for the needs around them.

#### 4. Discussion Questions

##### Ask:

- We should treat others the way we want to be treated but that's not always easy. When do you find it particularly difficult to stand up for someone? Why do you think it's hard?
- When is it easy for you to step in and help make an unfair situation right?
- How would things be different at school if kids practiced treating others the way they want to be treated? What about at home? How would our world be different? What's a small way you can contribute to that change?

#### 5. Make it Personal with Prayer

**What You Need:** "People Chains" from Take a Snapshot

##### What You Do:

- Ask kids to set their "People Chain" cut-outs on the floor in front of them.
- Take a minute to let kids be reminded of the needs that are represented with each person.
- Encourage kids to choose some of the needs they are aware of in the lives of those around them or of those represented on the "People Chains."
- Challenge kids to ask God to help them not only SEE a need but take the initiative to help.

##### What You Say:

"Dear God, help us see ways we can make things right this week. There are people all around us who are being treated unfairly because of the way they look, where they're from, how much money they have, or what they believe. We know that standing up for others is one way we can make things more fair, and it's one way we can show others the love You have for the world. So open our eyes to see what we need to see and do what we need to do. In Jesus' name, amen."