

Alley Rundown—November 21st-22nd, 2021

Today's Bible Story: In My Life (Israelites Long for Egypt) • *Exodus 16:2-21; 17:1-7*

Today's Key Question: What is good in your life right now?

Today's Bottom Line: Don't miss out on what you have now.

Monthly Memory Verse: Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." (Luke 12:15 NIV)

CG: Dude Perfect Filler Videos

ICE-BREAKER: Would You Rather? Thanksgiving Edition

SLIDES on Computer

How to Play:

Using the slides on the Computer, read each Would You Rather Question, assign sides of the room for each answer, and interact with the kids as they answer the questions. Use as many questions as time and interest allows.

"Hey, everyone! Now, I know it's still November, but I can't help but think that in just a few weeks we'll be celebrating Christmas! I'm curious how many of you already have decorations up where you live? (*Pause for response*) Awesome! Me too. It's like once it's November 1st I can't help but start putting up decorations, listening to Christmas music, and getting ready for the big day! Question for you: what do you love most about Christmas?"

Allow a moment for kids to discuss. Allow kids to share a couple of the reasons they love Christmas.

"Those are great reasons to love the upcoming holiday! I'll be honest with you. As a kid, every year I would anticipate Christmas by making my Christmas list the first week of November. It was a different time back then."

Tell a personal story about making a Christmas list similar to the following.

"I want you to imagine a time before YouTubers starting unboxing random toys to spark Christmas dreams or before you could look at a device and endlessly scroll on Amazon for gifts. In fact, this was a time before our phones were smart! This was before the existence of tablets or even the internet. Sounds kind of scary, right? This was my childhood!"

"Some may be wondering how in the world I managed to make a Christmas list without wi-fi. Well, we were scrappy back then. Our lists came primarily from three sources. First, cartoons came on Saturday mornings. They brought with them a plethora of commercials showing the latest and greatest playthings! Second, we had large stores dedicated to toys like TOYS R US! Imagine aisles and aisles of trinkets and knickknacks made with kids like me in mind! Sounds like a dream, but it was better than that! Third, we had magazines that came in the mail bringing the newest and coolest games and goods kids loved! I would spend hours flipping through the pages circling all the toys, gadgets, and gizmos I couldn't live without."

“Each year, it was the same. Leveraging those big three sources, I would dream up a massive list of the Christmas gifts I NEEDED! At the start, I began the season high on hopes of acquiring all the things! These items were toys I’d never seen before or items I used to have but lost over time!”

“I am fairly confident I’m not the only one who has had an annual Christmas list routine! I’m pretty sure there are others in the room who focus much time and effort on dreaming about the NEXT BIG THING we can add to our collections of stuff. Others in this room, I know, have thought about the goods you USED TO HAVE but were lost or broken and you long to get another!”

“But think about this. What if this hyper-focused energy on gaining more causes us to miss out on something big? What if all the scrolling through Amazon toy lists or watching YouTubers unboxing the most fantastic items can cause us to miss out on what we have right now? Does that even matter? Is there harm to be so focused on what we DON’T HAVE without pausing to look around at the good we ALREADY POSSESS?”

“Well, guess what. These are questions people have been wondering about for thousands of years. I’m serious. If you’ve been coming to *The Alley* for a while, you already know this. But when it comes to hard questions, we have a place we turn to first to find answers. Where is that? *(Pause for response.)* That’s right! The Bible. And in the Bible we read that long ago there was a group of people who ran into a very similar situation. Let’s check it out now with the help of this week’s Episode!”

CG: Lesson Video (Runtime: 14:00)

“This story is so interesting to me. The Israelites were trapped in slavery with no freedom. When the slave masters gave instructions, they were required to obey or face a painful punishment! When God freed the Israelites using miracle after miracle, they were no longer forced to labor for the Egyptians. One would think the Israelites would have been overjoyed and never want to return. However, in the desert, God’s people whined and complained about what they didn’t have! They questioned why they had been brought out of Egypt. However, throughout the exodus, God continued to provide for everything they needed when they needed it!”

“It’s easy for us today to look at the Israelites’ story and think we would never whine or complain in their situation. But our stories are not too different from the Israelites’ story.”

“One minute we are cruising through life without a care in the world. Everything seems to be going our way! We try out for football and land one of the best positions on the team! The class you are enrolled in at school is the same homeroom as your best friend! Under the tree, you notice several big gifts with your name on it. Again, everything is cruising along great.”

“However, the next moment we are grumbling because last year’s football team didn’t lose as many games as this year’s. We get upset because we received ‘better’ gifts at Christmas last year. We pout because last year’s teacher didn’t give us as much homework. It doesn’t take much for each one of us to whine and complain when we don’t immediately get what we want!”

“But what if life could look different? Instead of looking at what we don’t have or what we had before, we could look at what we have right now! Just like the Israelites, God provides for us—here and now. God won’t guarantee a win every time we play football, but God will give us

opportunities to make new friends. God won't gift us every present we could possibly want on Christmas, but God did provide a reason to celebrate every Christmas—Jesus! God won't always give us easy teachers, but we always get the opportunity to trust God matter what."

"God provides for us because He loves us so much! God's love is so great. Jesus came to die on a cross to rescue us so we could have a relationship with God that would last forever!"

"As we head into Small Groups, take a moment right now and think of what you do have. As yourself:"

SLIDE: Key Question

"What is good in your life right now? Ignore the thoughts of what's missing or what has changed from the past. Focus on all the ways God has provided for you today. If you're not quite sure how you'd answer that, don't worry. You'll talk more about all of this in Small Groups. Let's pray to thank God for all He's provided. Let's ask God to help us find contentment in all situations."

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

OFFERING:

Here in Parkview Kids, we bring our offering each week to help support (your Campus Child) learn more about Jesus just like we do here in Parkview Kids. Here's a picture of (your Campus Child)! If you brought your offering you can bring it up now as we dismiss to Small Groups.

Orland Park: Michael and Valeri, New Lenox: Daniel, Homer Glen: Victor