

Alley SG—March 27th, 2022

Today's Bible Story: One (Early Church Works Together / Believers Share Their Lives Together) • Acts 2:42-47

Today's Key Question: How do you cooperate every day?

Today's Bottom Line: Make a habit of working together.

Monthly Memory Verse: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor." (Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV)

1. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bibles, hula hoops (1 per Group)

What You Do:

- Say, "We are going to apply what we're learning today about cooperation in a fun way. Let me tell you ahead of time though, some of you might get frustrated. It's important that we consider others during this time, and we all work together!"
- Give each kid a Bible.
- Look up John 15:12.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Ask:
 - What does it mean to love one another as Jesus loves us? (*Encourage kids to think about how Jesus interacted with people. We can love others by putting their needs first, we can love others by helping them succeed, by helping others in need, by treating them the way we want to be treated, etc.*)
 - How did the early church reflect Jesus' love to each other?
- Gather the group in a circle if they're not already.
- Instruct kids to work together to hold a hula hoop about chest height using one of their index fingers.
- Tell kids to work together to see how far they can lower the hula hoop. The challenge: everyone's index finger must be always in contact with the hoop. Set expectations by telling kids that, though it looks easy, it is going to take practice to do it.
- Give kids time to figure out how to do it.
- *Note: This is not as easy as it looks. Be prepared for kids to be frustrated and be prepared to help them. Here is a video of kids working together to do it: <https://bit.ly/3mYqvwq>*

Tip: This activity provides an opportunity to discuss how cooperation isn't always easy and it takes practice. There will be days when it is difficult to remember to look for ways to work together but the more we practice cooperation the easier it will be to remember to work with others daily.

2. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Pool noodles (1 per 3 kids), "Early Church Jam Session" Page (1 per kid), markers

What You Do:

- Divide kids into groups of three.
 - Line up teams at one end of your space and establish a finish line on the other end.

- Give each team a pool noodle.
 - Tell teams to work together to decide who will be the “jumper” and who will twirl the “jump rope.”
 - Instruct the “twirlers” to each grab one end of the pool noodle and to set the noodle on the floor; instruct the “jumper” to stand behind the pool noodle.
 - When you say “GO,” the jumper hops over the pool noodle; the twirlers lift the noodle up over the jumper’s head and set it on the ground in front of the jumper; the jumper hops over the noodle again.
 - Teams repeat this until they reach the established finish line.
 - The first team to get there wins!
 - Compliment teams on how well they worked together to move across the floor.
- Play a couple more rounds so that each kid gets a chance to be the jumper.
- Then gather the group together and give each kid an “Early Church Jam Session” Activity Page.
- Read it aloud to the kids. As you read it, tell kids to underline ways the church showed cooperation.
- Allow kids to share their answers.
- Ask:
 - How many examples do we have in this passage of how early church work together? (Encourage kids to underline words/phrases depicting how the early church cooperated. As a group, discuss what they circled.)
 - Why do you think cooperation and working together was so important for the early church?
 - What was the result of them working together well?
 - How does our church work together?
 - How are we similar to the early church? How are we different?
- Depending on how well you know your kids in your group, to dig deeper, ask:
 - How is our Small Group like the early church? How does our Small Group work together?
 - **[Make it Personal] (Share how each kid benefits the group—how everyone in the group has a part to play. For example: one kid may have a great sense of humor, one kid may add artistic flair to crafts, one kid may be great at singing, etc.)**

3. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Paper, pens, mobile device timer

What You Do:

- Divide kids into teams of two or three.
- Give teams paper and pens.
- Play a game similar to Scattergories.
 - Ask teams to make a list of ways we work together.
 - Encourage kids to think about what the group talked about in previous weeks this month.
 - Remind them to include examples of ways we work together to help someone succeed or to help someone in need.
 - Explain the point system. Teams earn the following points:
 - Each example (one point)
 - Each original example (i.e., no other team came up with the same example) (two points)
 - Give teams a time limit to come up with examples.
 - When time is up, discuss the examples and award points.
 - The team with the most points wins.

4. Discussion Questions

- Why is it important for us, as Jesus followers, to show cooperation and work together?
- What can be the result when we work well together?
- What can be the result when we *don't* work well together?
- Since cooperation isn't normally thought of as a daily “habit,” how do we form a habit of working with others?

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Note cards, pens

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Say, "Working together was important for the early church, and it is important for us today. What steps can we take to remind us to look for opportunities to work together every day?"
- Give kids a note card.
- Tell kids to write a prayer asking for God's help to remind them to look for opportunities every day to work together. Be sure to write a prayer, too.
- Allow kids to share their prayers.
- Encourage kids to use their note cards as a reminder to develop the habit of asking for God's help every day to see ways they can show cooperation.
- Say: Where can you put your note card where you will see it every day as a reminder? By your bed or maybe by your toothbrush? Taped to the wall by your light switch? Share with the group where you will keep your note card.
- Close by asking for any volunteers to read their prayers out loud.