

City SG—January 29th, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Help Me (John the Baptist in Prison) • *Matthew 11:1-6 (James 1:5)*

Today's Bottom Line: If you don't understand something, ask.

Monthly Memory Verse: *The LORD gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.* Proverbs 2:6 (NIRV)

1. Quiz Bowl

What You Need: Buzzer, whiteboard with dry erase marker and eraser (1 set per Group)

What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Direct the kids to line up, one behind the other, on either side of you.
- If you have an odd number of kids, you can select one kid to be the scorekeeper.
- Give the scorekeeper the whiteboard and dry erase marker or hold them yourself to keep track of the score.
- Call the first two kids from each team to stand on either side of you with the buzzer in the middle. (You can place it on a chair or table or have the kids crouch down with the buzzer on the floor.)
- Explain that you will call out a review question.
- Instruct the kids to wait until you've read the entire question before tapping the buzzer.
- The first kid to tap the buzzer gets a chance to answer.
 - If correct, that kid's team gets *two* points.
 - If incorrect, the kid may choose to **pass** to the other team or **play**—allowing the members of their own team to answer.
 - If the team answers correctly, they only receive *one* point.
 - If the kid passes to the other team and they answer correctly, that team gets *two* points.
 - If the kid passes to the other team, and they *don't* answer correctly, no one gets points for that round.
- For each new question, call up the next two kids from each team.
- Move through the questions quickly to keep interest high.
- The team with the most points at the end, wins!
- Review Questions:
 1. What was the name of John's dad? (*Zechariah*)
 2. What did God tell Zechariah that John would do? (*point people to God/the Messiah*)
 3. What were John's clothes made out of? (*camel hair/skin*)
 4. What did John eat? (*locusts and honey*)
 5. Where was John baptizing and preaching from? (*the Jordan River*)
 6. Who is the most famous person John baptized? (*Jesus*)
 7. When people asked John if he was the Messiah, what would he say? (*No, I am not. I've come ahead to point other people to the real Messiah.*)
 8. John made King Herod angry. What did Herod do? (*He had John thrown in prison.*)
 9. After months in prison, John began to doubt and have questions. What question did John send his followers to ask Jesus? (*"Are you the one who is supposed to come?" Meaning, are you the Messiah, the One we've been waiting for? Matthew 11:3*)
 10. What did Jesus say to John's followers? (*He told them to go back to John and report what they had seen.*)
 11. What had John's followers seen? (Miracles! Blind people could see, disabled people could walk, the deaf could hear, skin diseases were healed, good news was preached to the poor)
 12. James 1:5 says, "If any of you needs wisdom" who should you ask? (God)
 13. And according to James 1:5, when we ask God for wisdom, what will God do? (God will give it freely.)
 14. So, if you don't understand something . . . ? (Encourage kids to finish the Bottom Line.)

What You Say:

“Great job, friends! You were listening to our story today! Do you remember the story of John baptizing Jesus? *(Pause for responses.)* A couple of weeks ago, we talked about Jesus’ baptism and we reviewed it quickly in our Bible story today. When Jesus came out of the water, a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.’ *(Matthew 3:17, NIV)*. John heard that voice. But when he was sitting in a prison cell, he started to question if he had it right. He wanted to know if Jesus was really the One they’d been waiting for. It doesn’t seem like Jesus was frustrated or upset by these questions. Jesus answered them in love. Jesus knew **[Bottom Line] if you don’t understand something, ask.**

“The only way we can learn is by being curious. And guess what? God made you that way! So when you don’t understand something—especially when it comes to faith—ASK! You can bring your questions to Small Group. You can ask someone you trust who follows God. You can pray and ask God to help you find the answer, and you can read the Bible, too. Some questions may not be answered right away, and some of our really big questions might not be answered at all, but that shouldn’t keep you from asking and learning and staying curious.”

[Make It Personal] (Tell your kids about a question you remember asking God as a kid. Has that question been answered? If so, how? If not, how has asking that question and others like it helped grow your faith?)

2. Ask

What You Need: Disc Cones and blindfolds

What You Do:

- Direct kids to stand at one end of your environment.
- Help kids find a partner.
- Blindfold one kid in each pair.
- Quickly set up an obstacle course.
- Make the course as challenging but as safe as possible.
- To play, blindfolded kids ask their partners questions to know how they can safely move through the course. They might ask:
 - Can I take one step forward?
 - Can I take one step to the right or left?
 - What can I do next?
- For safety, keep alert and help direct the kids as needed.
- When the teams finish, help kids switch roles. Be sure to rearrange the obstacle course before the kids complete it again.

What You Say:

“When you were blindfolded, could you make it through the obstacle course on your own? *(Some kids might say yes and that’s okay. If they do, ask, “What might have happened when you tried? Would it have been safe?”)* How DID you make it safely across? *(Asked questions)* Yes! When you didn’t understand which way to go, you asked!

“Is it okay to ask God when there’s something you don’t understand? *(Pause.)* Yes! It’s ALWAYS okay to ask God. God LOVES you and wants to help you! In the Bible, James wrote, ‘If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn’t find fault.’ *(James 1:5, NIV)* What that verse means is that if you’re confused or you don’t understand something, ASK. God wants to help you understand! So, remember that **[Bottom Line] if you don’t understand something, ask.**”

3. Roll-a-Verse

What You Need: “Proverbs 2:6” Activity Page and a die (2 sets per Group)

What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Give each team a die and a “Proverbs 2:6” Activity Page.
- Encourage each team to sit in a circle around their “Proverbs 2:6” page.
- Instruct each team to quickly pick a kid to go first.
- Explain that the game will move clockwise (to the left) around the circle.
- When you say, “Go,” the first kid on each team should roll the die and say that number of words of the memory verse.
 - So if the first kid rolls a three, they would say, “The Lord gives,” and pass the die to the kid on their left.
- Continue playing in the same way around the circle until the kids say the entire verse and the reference.
- The catch is that the kids must roll the exact number to end the verse.
 - For example, if there are only two words and the reference left, the player must roll a three for the last two words and the verse reference. Teams must keep taking turns rolling the die until a player rolls a three to complete the verse.
- The first team to finish, wins!

What You Say:

“That was tricky! But you just kept rolling until you completed the verse. Who is the source of all knowledge and understanding? Who is the wisest of all? *(Pause for responses.)* Yes! Our Creator, God! And God wants to be known by us more and more. The best way to grow in your knowledge of God is to be curious. Remember, asking questions helps strengthen your faith!

“So **[Bottom Line]** if you don’t understand something, ask. God loves you and wants to be known by you. Keep asking questions, keep coming to Small Group so we can talk about God, keep reading your Bible so you can learn more, and keep praying so you can stay connected to God.”

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: No supplies needed.

What You Do:

- Lead the kids to repeat each line of the prayer when you pause.

What You Say:

“God, You are awesome. *(Pause.)* Thanks for making us curious *(pause)*, so that we can know You. *(Pause.)* When we have questions *(pause)*, help us to ask You *(pause)*, to read Your Word *(pause)*, and to talk about You with others who follow You. *(Pause.)* We love You *(pause)*, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. *(Pause.)* Amen.”