

Alley SG – February 26th, 2023

Today's Bible Story: God is God (A Roman Commander Has Faith) • *Matthew 8:5-13*

Today's Bottom Line: Remember God is most important

Monthly Memory Verse: *Do to others as you want them to do to you.* Luke 6:31 (NirV)

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: No supplies

What You Do:

- Form a circle then ask someone to stand in the middle.
- Explain that the point of the game is for the kid in the middle to figure out which kid in the circle is the "Captain," the one leading the others in making gestures that all the other kids will repeat.
- Ask the kid in the middle to close their eyes as you choose a Captain.
- Once the Captain begins a gesture and the others are repeating it (over and over), the kid in the middle can open their eyes.
- Let the Captain choose their own movements or suggest simple actions such as the ones below.
 - *Nod head*
 - *Wave arms*
 - *Snap fingers*
 - *Jump up and down on one leg*
 - *High five neighbors*
 - *Turn in a circle*
 - *Hiccup*
- The captain can change movements as often as they want but should try to do so without being noticed by the kid in the middle.
- When the Captain is correctly identified, choose a new Captain and a different kid to stand in the center.
- Play a few rounds then ask the questions below to review the story:
 - What was it about the Roman Commander that made Jesus so pleased?
 - How did the Roman Commander show that he understood how important Jesus was and that Jesus had great authority?
 - Why does God qualify for the role of "Captain" in your life?
 - What are some reasons why God is not most important to some kids?
 - How do you show that God is most important?
 - When God isn't most important to someone, what are some things that take God's place as more important to them?
- Provide an opportunity for kids to take a moment to consider the things that are most important to them. Assure them that the people they love and the things they spend time doing can be high on their list of what they value most. God isn't asking them to NOT love those things. God is asking them to make sure they give God their heart, love, and attention as well.

2. Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Application

What You Need: Blank pieces of paper (one per kid), markers

What You Do:

- Give each a piece of paper and a marker.
- Assign one of the following places from the list below (or others of your choice) to each kid, then ask them to write someone they might find in that place who is in charge in some way and write it on their paper.
 - Church
 - Home
 - School
 - City
 - Zoo
 - Store
 - On a bus
 - Public swimming pool
 - Stadium
 - The whole universe
- Invite kids to work together to arrange their papers in a pyramid that puts the greatest authority at the top then others in the order they feel reflects other levels of authority over them.
- If kids have a difference of opinion as to where their papers should be placed, challenge them to give reasons for why it should be positioned in a certain spot then vote on its placement.

3. Discussion Questions

What You Need: No supplies

What You Do:

Ask:

- Does anything ever make you doubt that God is worthy of your respect? Explain.
- What are some ways that kids your age show disrespect for God and may not realize it?
- What do you think is most important—words or actions—when it comes to respect for God and others? Why?

4. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bibles, paper, pens

What You Do:

- Divide kids into partners
- Give partners a Bible and ask them to look up Deuteronomy 8:6.
- Use the tip below if kids need help locating the verse.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Our verse is from Deuteronomy. Ask kids to tell you whether that's in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (*Old*) So we know it's toward the front of the Bible. It's the fifth book in the Old Testament. (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*). When they find Deuteronomy, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Tell them to find chapter 8. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell them to them find verse 6 in chapter 8.

- Invite partners to simply read through the verse without discussing it.
- Give partners a sheet of paper and one pen. Without discussing what they are going to write, tell them to grip the pen together and silently write a 6-12 word summary of what the verse means.
- They should do this without speaking and while they both hold the pen.
- When finished, let partners show their papers to the group and each share what they were trying to write.
- Ask:
 - What was it like to try to write something when you and your partner were not going in the same direction or were thinking of different words to write?
 - What did you have to do in order for the words to be written?
 - How does your struggle to go one way with the pen and your partner's to go another remind you of the struggle we sometimes have with God or others who are in charge?
- Read the verse again then discuss how doing what God wants us to do shows God respect. Emphasize that God desires our respect out of love, more than fear or wanting us to feel like we have no choice.
 - How do you show respect to God?
 - When we don't want to do what we know God says to do, what are some things we know about God that are helpful to remember?
 - What are three ways you can show respect to God this week?
- Clarify for kids that while God deserves and asks for our respect, we always have the choice to go our own way. Doing so is not the wise choice, but because God loves us, we have that choice.

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: paper (one piece per group)

What You Do:

- Invite kids to tell you things about God that give us reason to respect God as the most important.
- Write what they tell you. It can be a single word or a simple sentence.
- When finished, set the paper down in the middle of the group.
- Ask kids to silently pray and thank God for the characteristic or qualities described on it.
- When they are done, close in a group prayer.

What You Say:

"Dear God, we believe You should have our greatest respect. You showed US that we are important to You when You sent Jesus to be our Savior. Help us show You how important You are by spending time talking to You in prayer, doing what You want us to do, and continuing to learn more about You from the Bible. Remind us of the things we learned this month about showing others they are important by what we say and do. In Jesus, name amen."