

ALLEY SG – May 20-22, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Under Pressure (Peter and John Are Taken to the Sanhedrin) • Acts 3:1–4:21

Today's Key Question: When have you felt under pressure?

Today's Bottom Line: God is with you no matter what

Monthly Memory Verse: *So we can say boldly, "The Lord helps me. I will not be afraid."* Hebrews 13:6a (NIRV)

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bible, butcher paper, markers

What You Do:

- Set the butcher paper and markers out and have the kids sit around it.
- Ask them to think about an important fact or point from the story today that they remember.
- Have the kids draw something from the story.
- They will each show the group what they drew and describe how it relates to the story.
- Use the following questions to engage kids in conversation about the story:
 - What are some highs or lows you've experienced in your life?
 - How did Peter and John find the confidence to keep telling people about Jesus even though they were arrested and told by authorities to stop healing in Jesus' name?
 - What does this story tell us about God's presence?
- Remind them that we all experience highs and lows throughout our entire lives. Peter and John certainly had their share! Regardless of what happens, we can remember that God is with us no matter what!

2. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: white board and markers (1 per group)

What You Do:

- Write a few of the following verse references on the white board:
 - Matthew 1:23
 - Matthew 28:30
 - Joshua 1:9
 - Psalm 118:6
 - 1 Corinthians 3:16
 - 1 John 4:13
 - Psalm 54:4
 - Deuteronomy 31:8
 - Isaiah 41:10
 - Psalm 23:4
 - Revelation 21:3
 - Galatians 2:20
- Hand out Bibles and assign each kid a verse to look up. (Multiple kids can look up the same verse, or you can pair them up to look up verses together.)
- Once everyone has looked up their verses, let them take turns reading it out loud for the group.
- Encourage kids to listen and choose one that they identify with or that stands out to them.
- Have those who are comfortable explain what verse they chose and why.

3. Discussion Questions

Ask:

- Why is it sometimes difficult to make decisions?
- When have you felt under pressure?
- How can believing God is with you give you confidence?
- Is it easier to remember that God is with you when things are going well or when things are going badly?
- What can you do to remind yourself that God is with you no matter what?

4. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: “Joystick Controls” Activity Page (1 per student), pens

What You Do:

- Hold up a copy of the “Joystick Controls” Activity Page.
- Ask kids these questions and call on volunteers to answer:
 - Does anyone know what this is? (*Joystick controller*)
 - How do you use it in order to play a video game? (*You can use it to steer your player in the direction you want them to go on the screen.*)
 - What makes this type of controller so special? How is it different from other kinds of controllers? (*The square base stays in place, while the stick can move in all different directions in the hands of the player. The advantage of a joystick is the ability to provide quick interaction between the player and what happens in the game.*)
- Tell kids that God is our base. God never changes, is always with us, and remains constant through every turn we face in life.
- Give kids a chance to think of specific decisions they may be currently facing.
 - Are they choosing which friends to hang out with or which friends to hang out with less?
 - Are they choosing where to go for the summer, be it with a relative or another parent than the one they live with?
- Instruct them to write these things down on their “Joystick Controls” Activity Page.
- Remind kids that God is with us through every single big decision, as well as every little decision. God is with us no matter what, and we can have confidence in knowing that.
- Assure kids that Jesus has promised to be with us always. When we choose to follow Jesus, we have the help of the Spirit to guide us through life’s twists and turns and help us have confidence to keep going.
- Encourage kids to hang this up somewhere where they will see it to remind them that God is with them in their decisions.

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: “Joystick controls” page from Act. 4

What You Do:

- Have kids look at what they wrote on their joysticks controls page.
- Encourage kids to pray throughout the week about whatever they wrote on their paper.
- Close the group in prayer, praying specifically for what your kids wrote on their sheet and anything else they shared.