

“Life Lab” - LESSON 1

“Joy”

Main Focus:

We must be full of the joy of the Lord.



Power Verse:

“But let the godly rejoice... Let them be filled with joy.”

- Psalm 68:3



Whatchagaddaknow:

“I’ll Be Full Of The Joy Of The Lord!”

LEADER’S INFO

A lot of times it is easy for followers of Jesus to lose their joy when bad or difficult circumstances come their way. When tough stuff happens in our lives, we often lose our sense of joy because we’ve forgotten some very important things about the joy of the Lord.

In the Bible Story, we will see how David had joy even when his wife, Michal, criticized him during his time of worship and dancing. In spite of what was going on around him, David chose to have the joy of the Lord and let no one stop him from showing it.

In this lesson, we learn that joy is not optional - it’s a command. We learn that the Bible says we must have joy - even when the things going on around us aren’t very fun and exciting. We also learn that the reason we should have joy in every circumstance, good or bad, is because God is with us always.



“The Spark” Intro Video

“Combustion Labs, Inc.”



“Whatchagaddaknow” Video

Cali from the Valley teaches “Whatchagaddaknow”



Character Skit

“Beaker”



Offering Time



Game Time!

“Hot Air Balloon Race”



Bible Story

“David Dances For Joy”



Power Verse Video

“But let the godly rejoice... Let them be filled with joy.”

- Psalm 68:3



Call To Action

“Joy”



Rewind!

Review Game



Small Group Experience

Main Focus:

We must be full of the joy
of the Lord.



Power Verse:

“But let the godly rejoice... Let them
be filled with joy.”

- Psalm 68:3



Whatchagaddaknow:

“I’ll Be Full Of The Joy Of The Lord!”

Lesson 1 Materials Needed:

“The Spark” Intro Video

- “Lesson 1 - The Spark” Intro Video

“Whatchagaddaknow” Video

- “Whatchagaddaknow - Lesson 1 - Teaching” Video

- “Whatchagaddaknow - Lesson 1 - Trigger” Video

Character Skit

- “Beaker” Theme Graphic/Music

Offering Time

- “Offering Time” Bumper Video

Game Time!

- “Game Time!” Bumper Video

- “Hot Air Balloon Race” Graphic

- Large Balloons

- Roll of Duct Tape

Bible Story

- “Lesson 1 - Bible Story” Graphics

Power Verse Video

- “Lesson 1 - Power Verse” Video

Call To Action

- “Lesson 1 - Call To Action” Graphics

- A Camera

- Pictures That Didn’t Turn Out Well (see CTA for details)

- An Extra Large “Magic Grow” Sponge Capsule

- Bowl Of Warm Water Labeled “God’s Presence”

Rewind!

- “REWIND!” Bumper Video

- “REWIND!” Lesson 1 Graphics

Small Group Experience

- Mad Lib Print Piece

- Pencils, Crayons, Or Markers

- Balloons

- Sharpies

- Psalm 68:3 Print Piece

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Introduction to “The Spark” Intro Video

Leader: Hey, kids! Today, we are starting a new series called “Life Lab”! It’s all about the essential elements of a healthy Christian life! You know, in science, some elements are so powerful they can change everything in an experiment. Well, today we’re looking at one of the most powerful elements God has given us!

But first, I have a question for you. If you had to choose between finding a twenty-dollar bill in your pocket... OR coming home to find out your mom ordered a LARGE pizza with your favorite toppings... which would make you happier? (*allow response*)

I’m sure it would be hard to choose because both of those things might make you happy. But, the element we are talking about today isn’t happiness. Happiness can disappear as fast as the pizza once you start wolfing it down! But today in the LIFE LAB, we’re talking about something way more powerful than just being happy.

Before I tell you what it is, check this video out...

(play “The Spark - Intro Video Lesson 1”)

Leader: Joy is an essential element for a healthy Christian life. But joy isn’t just a feeling you get when something good happens. It’s something God puts deep inside you that stays there - even when life isn’t going your way. In fact, it’s so strong that you can have joy even in tough times!

So, put on your goggles, fire up your imagination, and get ready to learn some amazing truth - because today, we’re discovering how to be FULL of the joy of the Lord!”

But, before we do that, we need to find out “Whatchagaddaknow.”

(play “Whatchagaddaknow” Teaching Video)



CHARACTER SKIT

Character: “Beaker” (His full name is Eugene Buttonsworth III; He is the “Custodial Engineer” at Life Lab, dresses like a janitor, wears rubber gloves, and pushes a mop bucket around which he refers to as “Professor Sloshton”)

Leader: I love this new series, “Life Lab.” That’s probably because I really like Science...

Beaker: (Enters with his mop bucket and interrupts) Well, butter my biscuits and call me a waffle! Looks like a science party exploded in here! Wow!

Leader: (Smiling) Hi there! Actually, we are not having a party. We’re learning about the joy of the Lord today!

Beaker: Well, that sounds great! My name is Eugene Buttonsworth III. But you all may call me “Beaker.” I am the Custodial Engineer here at the Life Lab. That means - I’m the cleaner upper! I have a lot of joy in my life! I LOVE Joy! It reminds me of the story in the Bible about Molasses and the Flaming Shrubbery! (Looks confused) Wait... or was it joy? Or cinnamon? Am I getting this right?

Leader: (Laughs) I’m not sure what Bible Story you’re talking about, but, yes! We are talking about joy! It’s a command, Beaker, not just a feeling. It’s about knowing God is always with us.

Beaker: (Nodding) Oh! Like how I always take Professor Sloshton with me? He keeps me company while I clean! (Hugging his mop) I love you so much!

Leader: Well...uhhhhh...sure! Just like you’re never alone with your mop... Oh, I mean Professor Sloshton, God is always by our side.

Beaker: Isn’t that the truth! You don’t need a clean floor to hear from God - but it sure helps! (Hums as he starts to clean the floor)

Leader: (Picking up a beaker) And joy doesn’t depend on what’s happening around us! Can you think of a time when you felt joy, even though things were messy?

Beaker: (Pausing dramatically) Oh, one time I spilled glitter all over the science room! It was like a sparkly nightmare, but everyone giggled and we made the mess into art! I drew a giant smiley face with my toes!

Leader: That’s a perfect example! You found joy even in a messy situation. That’s what matters.

Beaker: Like bubbles! When you blow ’em, they float away, but they still bring a smile! Or you could say they’re like blessings that burst into laughter!

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CHARACTER SKIT

(Continued)

Leader: Very true, Beaker! And joy helps us see the good even when things aren't perfect.

Beaker: You know, I don't always “get” science...but I get Jesus! So, joy is when I mop, clean, bubble, and sparkle, and I remember God's always here!

Leader: Absolutely! And when we focus on God, we can always discover joy, even in life's messiest moments.

Beaker: Just like cleaning up! *(Stops, suddenly serious)* But what if I forget? What if the mess gets too big? Oh my goodness!

Leader: That's all right, Beaker! Just never forget - there is joy in God's presence.

Beaker: That's true! So, I will come back to God's presence over and over! *(Accidentally knocks over a beaker)* Oops! That was almost a failed experiment.

Leader: *(Laughing)* Well, you just keep living out the joy of the Lord! After all - joy is an essential element of a healthy Christian life.

Beaker: *(Grinning as he starts mopping)* You bet it is! So, I am gonna clean this place up - with a song in my heart and bubbles in my bucket!

Leader: Never forget - joy is a choice! Whenever you feel sad or frustrated, you can choose to remember how close God is to us!

Beaker: *(Enthusiastically)* Amen! I better get going, but I will keep my eyes open for that flaming shrubbery of joy! My name is Beaker! Remember, you don't need a clean floor to hear from God—but it sure helps!

(EXITS WHILE THEME MUSIC PLAYS)



GAME TIME

“Hot Air Balloon Race”

Items Needed For Game:

Large balloons; Roll of duct tape

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Preparation:

Choose however many players you desire to play the game. Place strips of duct tape on the floor to signify the start line and the finish line.

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How To Play:

Give each player a balloon. Have them all start on the starting line. When you say “Go,” the players must each stand firmly in one spot, blow their balloon up (*as much or as little as they desire*), and then let it go. It will fly (*perhaps a little bit forward, perhaps a whole lot backward - you can never tell with balloons*). Then, they will run to wherever the balloon lands, pick it up, stand still, and blow it up again.

They will repeat this process, each time trying to aim the balloon toward the finish line. The first player whose balloon crosses the finish line is declared the winner.



Bible Story

“David Dances For Joy”

Materials Needed:

The graphic slides for Lesson 1; begin with the slide that says “Bible Story”; follow the instructions below, changing the slides to follow along with the story (*as shown*)

Preparation:

Familiarize yourself with the story in 2 Samuel 6; have your open Bible in your hands as you tell the story

The Story:

In 2 Samuel chapter 6, the Bible tells a story about King David. King David had been away on a mission to go get the Ark of the Covenant from a far away land and bring it back to Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant was very special. It was what the Ten Commandments were stored in. It was also a very important spiritual symbol for the Israelites.



King David had longed for many years to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem, God’s Holy City. (*show pic*) As King David entered into Jerusalem, he went in front of the ark, praising God. David was the King of Israel, but he wasn’t wearing his royal robe as he worshipped. Instead, he was wearing a “linen ephod”, which was not very “king-like” at all.



David didn’t care about how he looked. He just wanted to worship God. (*show pic*) In fact, David worshipped God so much that he began to dance wildly before the Lord. He led the entire group of people there in praise and shouting unto God. David had the joy of the Lord!



However, King David’s wife, Michal, was not very happy. (*show pic*) She got angry at King David and began to criticize him. She told King David that he looked very foolish dancing and celebrating like that. She didn’t think this made him look very good in front of all the people.



King David wasn’t thinking about what the people who were watching thought about his dancing and singing to God. He was focused on GOD, not the other people. So, King David looked at his wife and said, (*show pic*) “I was dancing before the Lord. So, I am willing to act like a fool in order to show my joy in the Lord. Yes, I am willing to look even more foolish than this!”

You see, King David understood exactly what we are learning today. The joy of the Lord is an important part of being a Christian! It doesn’t matter what others think about how we look – it only matters what God thinks. God LOVES when we are full of joy! He LOVES to see His children express their joy and celebrate Him, no matter what good or bad things are happening in their lives.



Call To Action “Joy”

Materials Needed:

The “Lesson 1 - Call To Action” graphics; a camera; pictures that didn’t turn out well (*funny pictures of grumpy kids, etc.*); an extra large “magic grow” sponge capsule (*inexpensively available online*); bowl of warm water labeled “God’s Presence”

Preparation:

Begin with the slide titled, “Lesson 1 - Call To Action - Title”; place a label on the bowl of water that says “God’s Presence)

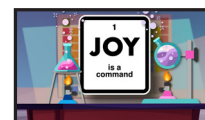


The Message: *(title slide)*

(walk out with the camera) Say, “Cheese!” (pretend to take a picture of the kids) How many of you love taking pictures? (allow response) How many of you hate taking pictures? (allow response) People have been taking pictures for years! Some of them turn out great and some of them not so great! Here are a few examples of some pictures that didn’t turn out so great! Some of these people just look a little grumpy in these pictures! (show a few pictures; ad lib, pointing out the funny parts of the pictures)

Sometimes pictures don’t turn out very well. Those grumpy kids were certainly not trying to help capture a picture-perfect moment! I bet they were upset about something! Even though their mom or dad was trying to get them to say “Cheese!” and get them to smile, they let whatever bad that happened to them steal their joy.

That’s how life is sometimes! You’re trying your best to live a good life - being a picture-perfect Christian, always doing the right thing and showing you have a good attitude and the joy of the Lord - but all of a sudden, when something bad happens, your joy is really hard to let shine through. However, just like when your mom tells you to say “Cheese!” and if you don’t, she makes you take the picture over and over again until you actually smile - in other words, smiling for the picture is not optional - neither is joy for followers of Jesus. That’s our first lesson today...



Joy Is A Command *(slide)*

Joy is in the Bible! If you want to follow Jesus, you have to have joy! It’s a command. Remember our Power Verse? This is a command - it’s God’s Word: Psalm 68:3 says, “*But let the godly rejoice. Let them be glad in God’s presence. Let them be filled with joy.*” Having joy isn’t an option! You can’t just choose when you want to have joy. You can’t just have joy when you come to church or when you are having a good day. You can’t just choose to have joy whenever you feel like it. In fact, that’s our next point...

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Call To Action (Continued)

Joy Doesn't Depend On What Is Happening (slide)



And now you're probably thinking, "Wait a second! You can't possibly be serious! I can't have joy if bad things are happening! That's impossible!" You say that because too many people allow what is happening to affect their joy. Everything is going great in life...you're filled with joy, but then...

You find out you failed a spelling test. Then, your best friend tells you that there's a horrible rumor going around about you. It's not true, but everyone thinks it is. Then, you start to feel sick because you ate some bad food for lunch. If you let what's happening around you affect you, then your joy is about as big as this little guy right here (*hold up the magic grow sponge capsule*). I know what you're thinking...that doesn't look like much. It's true. When we lose our joy, we can start to feel pretty deflated. We feel small and worthless.

Too many people allow what is happening around them to steal their joy. But, that isn't what the Bible teaches us to do. James 1:2 says, "*Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.*"

When troubles come your way, it's a chance to *grow*! God gives us a chance to learn from hard times. When hard times come, we don't have to get all upset and quit. We can keep going - we can grow and learn! That should give us joy because we know God is always with us and He helps us during troubled times. That's our next lesson...

Joy Comes From Knowing God Is With You (slide)



No matter what happens, God is with you ALWAYS! When you're having a bad day and nothing is going right, God is with you. When you're sick, God is with you. When you get in big trouble by your parents or your teacher, God is with you. When someone you love moves away or when you find it hard to make friends at school, guess what - God is with you ALWAYS! And do you know what happens when you get in God's presence? (*place the capsule into the bowl of warm water labeled "God's Presence"; it will begin to grow large; show the kids the transformation and celebrate*)

When you realize that God is always with you, your joy should increase! The Bible says that "in His presence there is fullness of JOY!" You should have joy when you realize that no matter what happens, our great BIG God is always with you!

Altar Response: (*play soft music*)

Pray for kids that are facing difficult circumstances. Allow them to respond. Then pray for them to have joy no matter what circumstances they are facing. Remind them that God is with them ALWAYS!



REWIND!

Materials Needed:

“REWIND!” Lesson 1 Graphics; “REWIND!” Bumper Video

Preparation:

Play the “REWIND!” Bumper Video; Begin with the slide titled “REWIND!”; there is a slide for each question

1. Whatchagaddaknow today?

Answer: “I’ll Be Full Of The Joy Of The Lord!”

2. What is the “essential element” we learned about today?

Answer: Joy

3. Who was the man in our Bible Story?

Answer: King David

4. What was the name of King David’s wife?

Answer: Michal

5. True or False: Michal loved King David’s dance moves and joined him!

Answer: False

6. True or False: King David stopped dancing because of what Michal said.

Answer: False

7. According to our lesson today, “Joy Is A _____.”

Answer: Command

8. According to our lesson today, “Joy Doesn’t Depend On What Is _____.”

Answer: Happening

9. According to our lesson today, “Joy Comes From Knowing _____ Is With You.”

Answer: God

10. Where was our Power Verse found?

Answer: Psalm 68:3