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# REMEMBER & CELEBRATE

## Inspire

*Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

Until several years ago, I was satisfied in my relationship with Jesus. And then I wasn't. As I began to pursue a deeper connection with Him, I became more aware of my sin and the things that entangled me. One day, God gave me the picture of a little bird. I realized I was the bird, living in a cage. My fears, anxieties, and insecurities formed the bars of the cage that held me.

Inside the cage, my life was small and manageable—but not free. Within the safety of the bars, I encountered God in real and tangible ways. He was present with me, and He loved me in spite of my sin and brokenness. However, God invited me into a new way of living with Him—a life of freedom. Slowly I began to realize that the door to my cage wasn't closed. The door had always been open.

God is faithful and won't allow me to retreat to my life of self-confinement. He stands with me and invites me into the life He's created for me. He lovingly reminds me I'm no longer captive to fear or anxiety. I've been set free from the constraints of sin. I stand securely in the freedom that is mine.

*Kit Rae*

**ROCKHARBOR Church**

## Equip

*Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

### **Festival of Jubilee: Remembering and Celebrating God's Gift of Freedom**

The Year of Jubilee occurred on the fiftieth year following every seven cycles of seven sabbatical years. This festival celebrated God's gift of freedom. It was a consecrated year set aside to proclaim liberty and restoration for all of the inhabitants of the land. Debts were forgiven, and those who had sold themselves to settle a debt were set free. Through this festival, God reminded His people that He would always provide for them and that He "held the deeds" to everything they held as possessions. Because of this, God commanded His people to provide for the redemption of land and housing lost due to poverty or other similar circumstances.

## Support

*Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

We all have birdcages—figuratively speaking, of course. At one time or another, we lived there most of the time. Then, one day, jubilee! We were set free.

Scripture tells us to “throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles” (Hebrews 12:1). To “throw off” is a conscious and deliberate act. The door has been opened. But the choice to leave the cage behind and live in freedom is ours.

Stop for just a moment and allow yourself to be still before the Lord. Ask Him if anything is keeping you from living a life of freedom. If so, what's holding you back?

Draw a birdcage and a bird or two. On each bar of the birdcage, write words or phrases that represent the things that make up your cage. Which bird represents you in your journey? Write your name on that bird. Consider using colored pencils to make designs that uniquely represent you today.

## Small Group SECTION

## EXPLORE:: 15 min.

### Small Group Leaders

*Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's biblical feast or festival as well as what they've learned about God in the past several weeks.*

## Match It Up

Children will play a fun matching game using familiar What'sIt images as they remember the things they know are true about God.

### SUPPLIES (per small group)

- Match It Up cards (see Resources)
- Match It Up legend (see Resources)
- Scissors
- Resealable bag

### PREPARE AHEAD

Print or copy the Match It Up cards and legend. Cut out the cards and place them in a resealable bag.

### SET UP

Place the cards picture-side-down on the table.

### RELATE

Welcome kids and explain how the game is played. **Each player will have an opportunity to find a match. When a match is found, I'll ask the group some questions about the matched picture. Everyone is free to join in the**

**discussion. The game will continue until all the pictures are matched. Are you ready?**

### ASK

As a match is made, locate the picture on the leader Match It Up legend. Then ask the questions associated with the matched picture. (The dialogue below is provided as a guide.) You may choose to use the provided questions, or shorten the content to fit the conversations you're having in the moment.

- Picture of the empty Wardrobe. (Death and Resurrection) **Who remembers why the Wardrobe of Wonder was empty in this part of The Big God Story?** Children respond. **Yes! It reminded us of how the tomb was empty after Jesus died and rose again. Jesus died so our sins could be forgiven, but He didn't stay dead. Jesus is alive!**
- Picture of a battery-operated toy and batteries (Crippled Beggar): **What do electronic toys need in order to work?** Pause for answers. **Yes, they need batteries. The batteries give them power to do what they're made to do. Who needed God's power in The Big God Story?** Children respond. **Right! The man who couldn't walk needed God's power. God's Spirit gave Peter the power to heal the man, and the man was able to walk again! God's Spirit is powerful.**
- Picture of a big heart (Paul's Conversion): **What do you think of when you see a heart?** Kids will answer. **When I see a heart like this, it makes me think of love. Who was changed because of God's love?** Children respond. **Yes, Paul was changed. At first, Paul wanted to hurt the followers of Jesus, but after Jesus appeared to Paul in a bright light, Paul's life was very different. After that, Paul wanted to share all about God's love with others. God is love!**
- Picture of the church (Church in Antioch): **What's in this picture?** Wait for responses. **That's right. It's a picture of people—the church. The church is a building, but it's also a group of people gathered together who love and believe in Jesus. In The Big God Story, the group of people who made up the church in Antioch heard there would be a famine in the land—which means there wouldn't be much food to go around. What did they do to show God's love to the other churches?** Kids answer. **Yes. They showed God's love by sending money to help other churches during the famine. God is love!**
- Picture of people praying (Peter Freed from Prison): **Why do we have a picture of people praying? What does this remind us of?** Children answer. **In The Big God Story, King Herod put Peter in jail, so the other followers of Jesus got together and prayed for Peter. How did God respond?** Interact with responses. **God sent an angel to free Peter from jail, that's right! God responds.**
- Picture of a block of gold (Heaven): **Hmmm ... where in The Big God Story did we talk about lots of gold? Is there something that's made of gold?** Children will share answers. **There's a place where the streets are made of gold. Can you tell me where that is?** Kids answer. **Heaven, that's right! Who is getting heaven ready for us? Jesus, that's right! Jesus is preparing a place in heaven.**

**Large Group**  
SECTION

**REMEMBER::** 30 min.

**Host/Worship Leader**

*Through a sequence of traditions and play, children are given the opportunity to*

*pause and remember who God is.*

We'll remember God's faithfulness as we look back at what He has shown us about Himself from The Big God Story. Each time we remember together, we'll pause. Children will participate in traditions by connecting with one another and God through music, dance, song, and art as they worship together.

## Chloe's Rules

### SUPPLIES

- [Chloe's Rules](#)

# Remember and Play

Host/Storyteller

## Game Cube

Today as you lead this time of remembering God through The Big God Story, you'll be using a Game Cube to facilitate the festivities.

### SUPPLIES

- [Game Cube images](#) (see Resources)
- [Wacky Wardrobe Game sheet](#) (see Resources)
- [Intro clips: Let's Chat, Mail Time, Sound Effects, Music, Wacky Wardrobe, Wardrobe of Wonder](#) (see Resources)
- [Remember Verse images from Lessons 6–9 and 10–13](#) (see Resources)
- [Celebration sound effect](#) (see Resources)
- [Knocking sound effect](#) (see Resources)
- [What's It images: Empty Wardrobe, Battery-Operated Toy and Batteries, Big Heart, The Church, People Praying, Block of Gold](#) (see Resources)

### PREPARE AHEAD

Print or copy the Game Cube images, cut apart, and attach to the sides of the box. Optional: Use clear contact paper to cover the box once the pictures have been attached to help preserve the life of the images. Print or copy the Wacky Wardrobe Game sheet, fold, and place in an envelope. Label the envelope "Wacky Wardrobe Game."

### SET UP

Place the Wacky Wardrobe Game envelope in the Wardrobe of Wonder. Set the Game Cube on the stage/teaching area.

### RELATE

**Friends, look what I found waiting for us! It's a game cube! We're going to remember what we've learned about God as we play this fun game. Each time we roll this cube, it will tell us what to do next. Let's take a look at our choices.** Review the sides of the cube, allowing the tech volunteer to cue the short intro clip. **Let's play!** Choose your first volunteer to roll the Game Cube.

## "Let's Chat" Side

- Roll #1: **Turn to the person next to you and tell him your favorite animal. Why is that animal your favorite?**
- Roll #2: **Turn to the person next to you and tell her about a place you'd like to visit someday.**

## “Mail Time” Side

- Roll #1: *Tech: Cue Remember Verse Lesson 6–9 image.* **Let’s all stand and say our Remember Verse together in a robot voice. Ready, set, go. Good job! Okay, you can all sit down again.**
- Roll #2: *Tech: Cue Remember Verse Lesson 10–13 image.* **Everyone on your feet! We get to say another Remember Verse together. This time let’s say it in a whisper. Ready, set, go! Good job. Everyone can have a seat.**

## “Sound Effect” Side

- Roll #1: **What part of The Big God Story had this sound?** *Tech: Cue Celebration sound effect.*
- Roll #2: **What were we learning about from The Big God Story when we heard this sound?** *Tech: Cue Celebration sound effect.* We went through The Big God Story and celebrated that Jesus died for our sins and then came back to life.
- Roll #3: **What part of The Big God Story had this sound?** *Tech: Cue Knocking sound effect.*
- Roll #4: **What does this part of The Big God Story tell you about God?** God responds.

## “Music” Side

Lead children in a worship song of their choice.

## “Wacky Wardrobe” Side

**Friends, you rolled the Wacky Wardrobe! Do you know what that means? We need to see what’s inside the wardrobe. I bet it’s something wacky!** Open the wardrobe and take out the envelope. Read the game that’s inside. **Hello, dear friends. Welcome to the Wacky Wardrobe. Today, each time you roll the Wacky Wardrobe, we’re going to jump up, wave our hands, and cheer!** Lead children in cheering.

## “Wardrobe of Wonder” Side

- Roll #1: *Tech: Cue Empty Wardrobe image.* **Friends, why did we have an empty wardrobe instead of a clue?** Children respond. **That’s right! It reminds us of the empty tomb Jesus’ friends found on Easter morning. Why were Jesus’ friends looking for Him in a tomb? Jesus died, but He didn’t stay dead. Jesus is alive! That’s really great news.**
- Roll #2: *Tech: Cue Battery-operated Toy and Batteries image.* **What would this toy do if it didn’t have batteries?** Children answer. **So this toy needs power to do what it’s supposed to do, right? Whom did God put His power into to heal a man who couldn’t walk? Yes, Peter. When the power of the Holy Spirit healed the man, the people paid attention to Peter so Jesus’ followers could spread the good news about Him. God’s Spirit is powerful!**
- Roll #3: *Tech: Cue Big Heart image.* **When you see a heart, what do you think of?** Children respond. **We usually think of love, right? We all have people who love us, but whose love is the most important? Yes, God’s love is the most important and the most powerful. Paul was a man who tried to stop Jesus’ disciples from telling others about Jesus. But Jesus appeared to Paul on a road and Paul’s life was changed. Soon he began telling everyone about Jesus. God is love!**
- Roll #4: *Tech: Cue The Church image.* **Friends, what did we call this group of people in this picture?** Children answer. **That’s right, the church! The Bible gave us an example of the church being more than just a building—it’s a group of people who love and believe in Jesus. The church in Antioch responded to the needs of the churches around them by giving money for food. They did all this because of God’s love! God is**

love.

- Roll #5: *Tech: Cue People Praying image.* In what part of The Big God Story were people praying really hard for someone? Children respond. **Yes, the church prayed for Peter to be released from prison. What happened? God sent an angel to help Peter leave the prison without anyone noticing. The church was still praying for Peter's release when Peter started knocking at their door. They almost didn't believe that he was actually standing outside! They were so surprised and happy. God responds.**
- Roll #6: *Tech: Cue Gold Brick image.* There's a part of The Big God Story that talks about a golden city and golden streets. **Where is this place? Wait for answers. Yes! Heaven is the place where those who believe in Jesus and follow Him will be with God forever. It will be the most beautiful and joyous place. Jesus is preparing a place in heaven!**

## Questions

1. Who would like to say one of our Remember Verses for us? What do you like about this verse? What have you learned about God from this verse?
2. What is your favorite thing God made? Why is this your favorite?
3. What is one thing you love about God? Why?
4. What is one thing God has given you that you're thankful for?
5. What are some things you would like us to pray for together?

## BLESS:: 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.*

### RELATE

Gather children in a circle. **God has given us so many good things. Many of those things we've remembered and celebrated together today. Before we leave, we're going to take a moment to give a blessing to the person on our left. Which side is your left?** Children will respond. **Good job. When we bless someone, we tell him something that's true about God and the special person God has made him to be. Today, when it's our turn to bless our neighbor, we'll turn to him and say, "God loves you very much, and He is always with you." Let's say that together.** Repeat this a couple times with the children. Then begin the time of blessing by leading by example. **I'll go first.** Turn to the child on your left and say, "(Child's name), **God loves you very much, and He is always with you.**" Encourage the child you just blessed to turn and bless the person on her left.

Once every child has been blessed, speak a final blessing over the whole group:

**Children, may you remember that God's love and forgiveness sets you free.**