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Topic – New Year's

Bible: 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Romans 8:28

So, another year has come and another year is gone.

With the New Year we like to throw awesome parties to celebrate.

But what I have always wondered about is what should we really be celebrating?

I know we are celebrating the great year we just had. But was it really a great year?

I mean, sure there was probably a lot of fun and cool things that happened, but we tend to forget those and only remember the hard times. Or maybe we are celebrating the New Year that is coming and all the great stuff it has in store for us?

So what do preteens celebrate, do they know what to celebrate, or even how to celebrate?

We need to make sure we teach our preteens what they should be celebrating. Teach them that we should be celebrating the things God has done for them over the past year.

Then, teach them to celebrate the amazing things God has in store for them in the new upcoming year.

I tried to figure out a good way to do this and I think I have done it.

Here is an energizing game to play with your preteens to help them know what and why we celebrate the New Year. Go all out with this one to really celebrate the Greatness of God.

Opening Game: New Year's Confetti Crazyiness

Supplies:

- Different Colored Card Stock: 8 1/2 x 11
- Lots of Pictures of things that were celebrated with in the last year. Make personal if you can, but use anything you can find. Ex: holidays, vacations, birthdays, sporting Events, things from your own ministry that you celebrated, and/or anything you could have had a celebration for.
- Large black Garbage Bag or trash can
- Party Hats and Party Horns (enough for every preteen)
- Video of a count down from at least ten (something like a News Years count down)
- Youtube clip – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv4VvtAIV9Y>
- Youtube clip – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj92-uWm1GI>

Directions:

- Paste each picture onto a different color card stock, can use the same color card stock just one picture per piece.
- Cut the pictures into 6-8 different pieces any shape or size
- Put all the picture confetti pieces into the garbage bag or trash can
- Divide your preteens in groups of 3-4
- Pass out party hats and horns

Place the preteen teams in groups forming a large circle around the trashcan or bag. All the preteens must be wearing the hats and have their horn ready. Tell them they must stay still until they hear the word “GO”. Start the count down, as it gets to ten everyone should start counting down. When the clock hits zero, everyone blows their horns, and leaders will begin to throw the picture confetti up into the air in celebration.

When all the confetti has been dumped out and thrown around,

YELL: GO, GO, GO.

Each team, one member at a time, will grab one picture piece at a time. Then they will begin putting together pictures of the great things that were celebrated this past year. The team that puts three pictures back together has to blow their party horns. A leader will check to make sure the pictures are correct and crown a winner.

Teach – New Year’s Lesson

Say: First, can I have everyone stand up and celebrate the awesomeness of the winning team or teams?

It’s fun to celebrate stuff isn’t it? In the game we had lots of pictures of things we love to celebrate. There are holidays, birthdays, sports teams and events, and then some of the things in our personal lives we celebrate.

What about how we celebrate? We have parties with cake for birthdays, we give presents and hang out with family and friends during Christmas, we wear our favorite team’s colors and watch them play when we can.

But what about all the stuff we don’t celebrate and maybe we should? What about celebrating God’s love for us? Or what about celebrating the great things God has done in our lives this past year? Even celebrate the things that maybe were not so great this past year. Finally, what about celebrating the great things God is going to do for us in the next year.

It is ok to celebrate those fun things we had pictures of. But, we need to remember that God is the maker and Creator of all things. He is in control and has amazing things he wants to use us for. We need to remember that we need to celebrate these things more than anything else.

Ask:

- Who celebrates Thanksgiving? Why?
- How do you celebrate the fourth of July?
- Who celebrates Easter? Why?
- Do you feel like celebrating when you get a bad grade?
- Has anyone ever celebrated when mom or dad punish you?
- What about when you lose a game in sports, do you celebrate?
- Have you ever thought about celebrating God just because he is awesome?
- Do you ever celebrate not knowing what God has in store for you?

Say: We celebrate a lot of different things, and when we celebrate we are showing that we are excited and thankful for something. However, the bible tells us to be thankful in all things.

Read this verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

Say: The Bible tells us to be thankful in ALL circumstances, not just the ones that make us happy or feel good. There are a lot of things in our lives we are thankful for. When we love to talk about and tell others about things in our lives we are in a way celebrating them.

We need to remember that God will put things in our lives that are hard to do, or seem impossible to handle. He does this sometimes so we learn to lean on him in these times.

Read 1 Peter 1:6-7

So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

Hard times allow us the opportunity to rely on God and have faith in Him.

Read Philippians 4:4 (MSG)

Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him!

When we revel in God and celebrate in Him all day and every day he is filled with joy. See, God loves us and he knows what we need and when we need it. So remember to always celebrate God no matter what.

Give each preteen a balloon and marker and then have them inflate the balloon and tie it off. Now explain to the preteens that you want them to write some of the things God has done for them in this past year.

Once they are all done, have them all stand up and yell “HAPPY NEW YEAR” and throw the balloon up into the air. If they still have their party hats and horns have them blow them and celebrate the amazing things God has done for them last year.

Give them 3-4 minute to celebrate and then begin to have them take off the hat, put down the horns, and leave the balloons on the floor alone.

Say to them we have celebrated the great things God has done this past year, now we look up to him and begin to celebrate the great things he has in-store for us this year.

Everyone yell out to the Lord, “We love you and have faith in you”.

Close in Prayer.