

Kid's Slot –August 6-12

Keep Calm and Respect God (Faith of the Roman Commander)

OVERVIEW: Keep Calm and Respect God (Faith of the Roman Commander) • Show respect to God because He's in charge of everything.

PREPARATION: "Cube Templates" Activity Pages, scissors, tape, markers, Bibles

BIBLE STORY & VERSE: *Matthew 8:5-13*

ICEBREAKER:

- What are some ways you would show someone they are important?
- Who is someone you respect?
- Why do you respect them?

READ: Keep Calm and Respect God (Faith of the Roman Commander)

LIFE APPLICATION:

- Why is it hard to remember that God is in control sometimes?
- What is one way or one thing that helps you know God is in control?
- Does anything ever make you doubt that God is in control of everything?
- What can you do when you wonder if God is still in control?
- Like the Commander, do you go to Jesus to ask for help—or yourself and for others?
- Has there been a time when God answered your prayers for help and things got better?
- Will things always be "fixed" after we talk to Jesus like the sick servant was made well in our Bible story today?

Keep Calm and Respect God (Faith of the Roman Commander)

When Jesus taught the crowds, He didn't talk on and on like SOME teachers who were around back then. Instead, when Jesus shared truths about God, He spoke in a way that made everyone want to pay attention! On top of being an incredible storyteller and teacher, He also showed God's power through the miracles He performed. From healing the blind to making people run who couldn't walk, Jesus made it pretty easy for people to pay attention to Him and His message. Soon, even some of the ruling Romans were interested in what He had to say.

One was a Roman military commander who lived in Capernaum. We don't know what his name is, but for today let's call him Atticus. Atticus was in charge of around 100 soldiers. Whenever he spoke to those soldiers, they all jumped to attention and did whatever he said. Along with the soldiers, Atticus had a servant he cared about deeply. We don't know his name either, so we'll call him Julius just for today.

Now, as a servant, Julius likely wasn't in charge of many people in his life. But he was in charge of himself, just like you are responsible for yourself and your actions.

But something happened to Julius, and he became sick—so sick he had to lie down, shaking. Soon he couldn't even move. Atticus was very worried about his servant. But he knew what he had heard about Jesus, and he knew Jesus was the only One who could possibly help him!

Atticus hurried out into the crowded streets where all sorts of people surrounded Jesus, shoving to get near. Because Atticus was a Roman commander, chances are when he marched up, the crowds parted to let him through to see Jesus.

As the last few people stepped aside, Atticus found himself facing someone he knew at once was Jesus. (*Read Matthew 8:6.*) *Lord, . . . my servant lies at home and can't move. He is suffering terribly (NirV),* Atticus spoke to Jesus.

"Shall I come and heal him?" (Matthew 8:7 NirV), Jesus asked Atticus.

Atticus imagined Jesus stepping through the doors of his house. He knew that Jewish law would forbid Jesus from entering the home of a Roman. But Jesus wasn't just any man. Atticus, would you please read Matthew 8:8?

(Reading from the Bible) "Lord, I am not good enough to have you come into my house. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (Matthew 8:8 NIV).

Atticus thought of the way his soldiers obeyed every command instantly and without question. You see, Julius might have just been in charge of himself, but Atticus was in charge of Julius and dozens of men—perhaps a hundred or more.

Listen to what Atticus said to Jesus. Let's read Matthew 8:9."

(Reading from the Bible) "I myself am a man under authority. And I have soldiers who obey my orders. I tell this one, "Go," and he goes. I tell that one, "Come," and he comes. I say to my slave, "Do this," and he does it" (Matthew 8:9 NIV).

What Atticus was saying to Jesus is that even though he, a Roman commander, was in charge of many men, JESUS is in charge of even more. Atticus recognized that Jesus is in charge of everything. He holds all power in His hands.

Atticus recognized the authority that Jesus had, and he knew that just as his soldier recognized and respected his authority and obeyed everything he commanded, so everything and everyone in nature was under the authority of Jesus. The commander believed that all Jesus had to do was say the word, and the commander's servant would be healed!"

The crowd was probably silent at this point, intensely curious to hear what Jesus would say to this important Roman. But instead of answering Atticus, Jesus turned to the others around Him. Listen to what He said. *(Open your Bible and read Matthew 8:10) When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. He said to those following him, "What I'm about to tell you is true. In Israel I have not found anyone whose faith is so strong" (NIV).*

Atticus was probably astounded at Jesus' words, and so grateful that

Jesus had seen such faith in him, an outsider. But he still desperately wished for his servant to be made well. But Jesus wasn't done.

(Read Matthew 8:13) "Then Jesus said to the Roman commander, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment (NIV).

I bet Atticus was so happy because Jesus had healed his servant. I imagine him rushing back through the crowds, retracing his steps home, and running through the door to find Julius alive and completely healed!

Even though Atticus was an important man himself—he was in charge of many other men, after all—he had seen that Jesus, God's Son, was more powerful still. Atticus knew Jesus was in charge of everything and everyone, and He was worthy of the Roman commander's complete respect. We can learn something really important from the Roman commander.

Show respect to God because He's in charge of everything. I don't know about you, but I think it's really awesome that we get to follow a God that made everything and is in charge of everything. Let's tell God what we think about that now.

Pray

"Dear God, thank You for creating us and for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to save us. You are so important—in fact, You're the most important—and You are worthy of our respect. Help us to remember that and to show others how much we respect You with our actions. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen."

Respect Roll

What You Need: “Cube Templates” Activity Pages, scissors, tape, markers, Bibles

What You Do:

- Give kids a Bible and look up the memory verse: 1 Peter 2:17. Read the verse together.
- Give each kid a “Cube Template” and instruct them to write their name in the square containing the Bible verse reference.
- Let kids cut along the solid lines of the template and then fold along the dashed lines to create a cube. (If you have fewer than 12 kids, make some extra cubes while kids are putting their own cubes together.)
- Help kids put tape along the edges to hold the cube together.
- Divide the group into two teams. Each team needs at least six cubes between them.
- In their teams, kids take turns rolling all of their team’s cubes until they get the first word of the memory verse.
- Whichever cube lands on the first word gets taken out of the pile of cubes and set aside.
- Then teams continue rolling the remaining five cubes until they get the second word in the verse.
- The cube that lands on the second word gets taken out of the pile of cubes and set aside.
- Continue in this manner until each team ends up with all cubes lined up in the correct order of the verse.
- The first team to complete the memory verse and jump up and say the verse out loud wins.

What You Say:

“Let us say our verse together: *Show proper respect to everyone*, 1 Peter 2:17. Who should you show respect to? (*Pause.*) So does that mean you should respect your friends? Your family? What about the lady standing in line in front of you at the grocery store? She is a stranger and you will never see her again. Should you respect her? (*Pause.*) Okay, what about the kid that drives you nuts in class because they talk all the time? Surely ‘everyone’ doesn’t include people you find annoying, does it? (*Pause.*) So you are saying everyone means everyone! Since God made everyone in His image and He loves everyone, it makes sense He would want you to respect everyone. Sometimes it will be hard to respect everyone but you should want to show everyone how important God is. God created everyone and everything, and when you remember to **[Bottom Line] show respect to God because He’s in charge of everything**, you will want to show proper respect to everyone.”

Pat, Pat, Clap

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Sit in a circle with the kids. Show them how to do a “pat, pat, clap” rhythm (pat your legs twice, and then clap). Give them a chance to join you and keep the pattern going.
- Then explain that you’re going to list things about God, while continuing the rhythm. For example: “God” (pat) “is” (pat) “love” (clap), OR “God” (pat) “is” (pat) “creator” (clap).
- Let everyone have a chance to say at least one thing. It’s okay if they repeat something or if they’re not quite on the beat.
- Finish the game by saying “God’s in charge” to the rhythm.

What You Say:

“That was a fun game, and it was great to hear all of those things about God. (*Repeat some of the things the kids said.*)

RETURN:

Return to the Life Group and have the kids share their **Bible Verses or Craft Activity**. The children then join in the prayer and fellowship time. Or, you could watch one of the many, many awesome kids’ videos available to you on www.rightnowmedia.org – it’s free!

