

JOY OPENING SESSION | DAY 5



Key Question	How do I find joy?
Life Application	True joy is found in Jesus.
Bottom Line	Knowing Jesus is worth celebrating.
Basic Truth	I can choose joy by getting to know Jesus better.

DAY 5: Will You Come Closer?

I can have a relationship with Jesus.

Supplies:

- Party supplies: a welcome/party banner, more decorations, and an invitation card + glow stick for every camper (just says “you’re invited”)
- Loud music playing right away, high energy
- Stuffed animals and fish puppets for “fish”
- Fish nets
- Clothing for Jesus + disciples

VESPER: Hello everyone, and welcome to the party!! I can’t believe we’re already on day five of camp, and that the time to celebrate Jesus is already here!

Host: It is pretty crazy, Vesper. I’ve been so encouraged by watching each of you campers grow in confidence and excitement as we near our showcase today. Vesper, do you want to lead all of us in a party game?

VESPER: I would love that! We’re learning about following today, so I wanted to play a game called Follow the Leader! Whatever I do, you do. Are you ready?

- Pretend you’re carrying a giant birthday cake
- Freeze like a statue
- Do your best dance move
- Pretend you’re fishing and casting a fishing rod
- Pull in the biggest fish you’ve ever seen
- Celebrate like you just won a prize
- Point to a friend and give them a thumbs up
- Put your hands over your eyes like you’re searching for something
- Follow an invisible star across the room
- Wave both hands in the air
- Spin around once
- Touch your nose
- March in place like you’re in a parade
- Pretend to eat a giant slice of pizza
- Strike your best superhero pose
- Hop on one foot three times
- Pretend you’re swimming through the ocean
- Roar like a lion
- Tiptoe as quietly as a mouse
- Make a heart with your hands

START THE PARTY!

DAY 5: WILL YOU COME CLOSER?



VESPER: Thank you all for playing that game with me! I've been planning today constantly for the past four days, and I'm so glad you're all here to celebrate with me. _Host's name_, I actually had one more thing I wanted to do as part of the party... can we do it?

Host: Sounds great, Vesper. What do you have in mind?

VESPER: Well, I was reading in my Bible yesterday. And the Bible is... TRUTH! And I found one more story about Jesus that I thought was super important for the campers to hear. (crew leaders come up to tell the story) Are you all ready? (wait for a response)

Cue Bible Story Time SFX

VESPER: Before Jesus had any followers, there were a bunch of fishermen who were working hard at catching fish. One night, the fishermen worked all night to try to catch fish, and they didn't catch any! Can you believe it?

VESPER: Then suddenly, Jesus arrived on the scene. I knew that as soon as Jesus was there, things were going to get crazy. Jesus told the fishermen to put their fishing nets into the water again to try and catch fish! One man named Peter told Jesus that they'd been fishing all night and hadn't caught anything, but he listened to what Jesus said and put the nets down again.

(put nets down over side of stage)

VESPER: Suddenly, the fish were caught in their nets even though they hadn't been caught all night! There were so many that their bags even began to break. Campers, I want you all to show this! Everyone, grab one stuffed animal and put it in the net.

(every camper gets a stuffed animal and puts it into a net)

VESPER: The fishermen were shocked; this was a miracle! Everyone was waiting to see what Jesus would do next. And you know what happened, campers? Jesus told Peter to follow him... and he did! Peter couldn't believe that Jesus cared about someone ordinary like him. Peter and some other fishermen left everything behind and followed Jesus, because they saw that Jesus was special and knew that it was important for them to get to know him.

Host: Wow, that is a great story. Let's give our crew leaders a hand – and thank you all for helping with all of that fish!

START THE PARTY!

DAY 5: WILL YOU COME CLOSER?



VESPER: I love this story because I love imagining how Peter felt. He must have been so happy to have seen a miracle, and then to be invited to follow the person who performed the miracle. _Host's name_, do you think that I can follow Jesus? Does Jesus invite people to get to know him today?

Host: Vesper, that is such a great question – Jesus does invite people to follow him today! He wants to love every one of us and build a relationship with us, like we talked about yesterday. We can get to know him as a friend; the more time we spend with him, the more we know about him, and the more we become like him. And following Jesus doesn't mean that life will be perfect; Peter and Jesus's other followers dealt with a lot of hard times after following Jesus. But they knew that Jesus loved them and was always with them, and their relationship with Jesus made them so joyful.

VESPER: Wow, that is so awesome to hear! I want Jesus to be my friend, too. That sounds pretty joyful!

Got some joy to share? Share it everywhere!

Host: Campers, Jesus's invitation is still open to you! Just like Peter, Jesus still invites ordinary people like us to know him, follow him, and experience true joy with him. If you want to learn more about what that means, you can talk to a crew leader or another staff today. Let's talk to God now and invite him into our lives.

Dear God, we need you. We know you love us. Today, I want you to know that I am sorry for any mistakes I've made. I know that you love me even when I make choices that hurt myself or others. Thank you for being you! And thank you for inviting me to experience your joy. I love you and I want to live my life for you – a life full of joy and loving others. Help me to keep learning how to have Jesus as a friend. You are awesome, God! Amen.

START THE PARTY!