

A Night to Remember – All Wins – by Marcy Lytle

Kids have a hard time with not winning, from board games, to games on the field, to even trying to get a stuffed animal from a machine for a buck. Kids sometimes pray to win their game and when they lose, they don't understand and don't think God heard them. So for devo time this month, we're looking at a portrait of a life with all wins...and no losses...and how that's just not a good life at all. But we also know that we serve a God that has won the biggest battle of all...and that should bring us joy!

Preparation: You will simulate different "games" where some kids win and some lose. Just follow along below. You'll need a coin or dollar, some paper and crayons, and a balloon to blow up.

Hold a dollar (or a coin) in one of your closed fists and ask a family member to pick a fist to win the dollar. If they win, ask, "How did that make you feel?" What about your sibling that lost?

In every game on earth, there is a winner or a loser, or a tie. It's always a good feeling when we win, but there's always one that loses, and it's not a good feeling.

Play a game of tic-tac-toe drawn on paper or if you have a game, use it. Play a game and see who wins. It's going to be the one who understands the game. The littles will just guess and most likely lose. Sometimes we win games based on our skills and knowledge.

Suppose you win every single tic-tac-toe game you play. Would that feel good, when you have friends playing that never win a game?

Blow up a balloon and toss it around, trying to keep it off the ground. How many tosses can you get to, before it does? Sometimes it might be 2-3 or other times over 10! Isn't it the most fun when you can keep the balloon in the air? But sometimes it falls, or even pops, and that's no fun at all.

Balloons fall and pop, games are won or lost, and sometimes we play our best and still lose because of all sorts of reasons. There is no reason to hang our heads, or to strut around as if we are the best, because both are no way to respond when playing games!

What happens when you win all the time and never make a mistake and always win the trophies? (Let the kids answer as you help them – you're happy, but you can also become too proud and look down on others.)

Life is full of wins and losses when we play games, when we do school work, when we try out for parts, when we even try to make friends. But life isn't about winning at all of those things, all the time. We learn a lot from losing.

What happens when we have a good attitude about losing a game, and what does that look like? (Let the kids answer – we congratulate the winner, we try harder next time, we laugh and enjoy our day.)

God has promised and told us in his word that he has won the biggest game or battle of all of life, and that is the battle over sin and death.

I Corinthians 15 says this,

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

This means that no matter how many losses we have on earth, the ultimate win has taken place in our hearts and lives through Jesus. When we love Him and serve Him, and believe in Jesus and repent of our sins, it's like winning the biggest game of all – we get to live forever and never worry about pain or suffering again!

Next time we play a game, let's remember that all wins are not expected or even good in this life, and that the one team it's important to be on is the one where Christ is the coach and He is the winner for all eternity. And that kind of win is the best!