

WEEK

ONE

Preteen | W1

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 1

Bible Story: The Story of the Farmer • *Matthew 13:1-23*

Bottom Line: God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says.

Conversation Starter: What are you going to do with what you've heard?

Monthly Memory Verse: *God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit.* • Romans 14:17 Nlrv

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

The Story of the Farmer • *Matthew 13:1-23*

Bottom Line

God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says.

Conversation Starter

What are you going to do with what you've heard?

Monthly Memory Verse

God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit. • Romans 14:17 Nlrv

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Floor tape	1
 Random things that are available in your Small Group area	Several

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Use floor tape to create a large square on the floor (about 2 x 2 feet).

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Challenge the group to see how many people they can fit inside the square at one time. They can stand, sit, or get creative, but everyone's whole body must be inside the lines.
- After they set their first record, challenge them to do it more quickly the next time.
- Then, play again, but this time, see how many *things* they can fit in the square, along with themselves (shoes, backpacks, Bibles, etc.).

What You Say:

"Great teamwork! It's amazing how much you can fit into a space when you plan it out. We have to be intentional about what we make space for in our lives too.

"When Jesus taught, He often used parables. A parable is a short story using everyday objects and situations to help explain something about God and His kingdom. A parable makes you think and feel. It helps you understand something true for yourself instead of just repeating what someone else told you. Today, we're going to hear a story or parable Jesus told to teach us about making space in our hearts for something really important. Let's go hear this parable Jesus taught!"

Groups

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

25 minutes

Groups 1/5

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

What You Need

	Bible	1
	Paper	1
	Writing supplies	1



EveryChild tips

- Pair kids to work together.*
- Groups 3/5

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "The Word Order Game" on paper, one per kid.

During the Activity:

- Open the Bible to Matthew 13:1-23, and review the story of the farmer.
- Share main ideas, like:
- Jesus was teaching about God's kingdom, and He told a parable, or story, about a farmer.
- The farmer scattered some seed on the ground.
- The seed fell in four different types of places on the ground.
- None of the seeds grew well, except those that fell on the good soil.
- The seeds that grew in good soil produced a huge harvest!
- Jesus told the story to show that when people hear God's message about His kingdom and understand it, they produce way more than He planted!
- Encourage kids to unscramble the words in each line to create a sentence from the Bible Story.

What You Say:

"Nice work! You put the sentences together perfectly. It's a simple parable, but Jesus used it to teach a huge truth. It's not just hearing God and His Word that matters. What we do with it after we hear it changes everything. Matthew 31:23 NIV says, *But the seed that fell on good soil is like those who hear the message and understand it. They produce a crop 100, 60 or 30 times more than the farmer planted.*"

"People with soft hearts hear God's words. They read what God says in the Bible. They listen to the Holy Spirit. They talk to God about what they hear. They ask God for help. And over time, people with soft hearts become more and more like Jesus through the help of God's Spirit inside them. In this way, God's kingdom continues to grow. Jesus explained that some people have hardened their hearts to the truth. They won't accept the truth, even if they hear it directly. But other people have soft hearts. They're ready to hear God's words. This parable helps people understand an important truth about God's kingdom. **[Bottom Line]** God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says."

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

What You Need



Plastic cups

1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Group the kids into pairs, and instruct them to stand or sit face-to-face with the cup on the floor in between them.
- Call out an action: "Head!" "Shoulders!" "Knees!" or "Cup!"
- The kids are to listen carefully and touch their head, shoulders, knees, or grab the cup.
- When you say, "Cup," the kids try to be the first one to grab the cup.
- The kid who grabs the cup first wins the round.
- Reset cups, and continue to call out the actions: "Head!" "Shoulders!" "Knees!" or "Cup!"
- Increase the speed at which you call out the actions, making it more difficult.
- Repeat as time and interest allow.

What You Say:

"That game takes serious listening skills! You couldn't just guess; you had to wait for me to say, 'Cup' before you could act. It's like that with our faith. Jesus asks us to be people who don't just hear what He says, but who actually do what He says. It takes practice to be a good listener and an obedient follower. You can ask God to soften your heart so His words will take root and grow in your life. When you're sad or afraid or frustrated, you can ask God for help and trust that He's always with you so your heart doesn't become hard or bitter. Over time, as you continue to listen to and follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit will grow good fruit, the good fruit of God's kingdom, in your life.

"God, the King of the kingdom, is loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and He has self-control. As you stay close to Him, He will grow His fruit in you. And as God grows His fruit in you, the Holy Spirit can work through you to point to God's kingdom in the world around you.

"And as you live out that fruit God will grow in you—as you're kind, or loving, or honest—you're saying: 'Hey, look! This kingdom is awesome! The King who reigns over it is kind, loving, and honest—just like I was. He loves you and wants you to follow Him as King and be your friend. Do you want to be a part of God's kingdom too? You can! The Bible says that everyone who accepts what Jesus did on the cross for their sins is welcomed into God's kingdom—and God's family—with open arms!

"You can point to God's kingdom as you live out the fruit He will grow in you! Remember, **[Bottom Line]** God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says."

[Make It Personal] (Share how you do what you can to make your heart "good soil." You can say something like: "Sometimes when I read the Bible, God shows me something I need to do, like apologize to someone. It's easy to just close my Bible and forget about it. But I've learned that when I actually do what I heard, that's when my faith really grows. It's not always easy, but it's always worth it.")

Groups 2/5

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Create

What You Need

	Bibles	1
	Spray bottles	Several
	Water	Several
	Lima beans	1
	Paper towels	1
	Resealable sandwich bags	1
	Permanent marker	Several
	EveryChild Supplies: Spoon or pipette	1



EveryChild tips

- In place of a spray bottle, provide a spoon or pipette to use to add water to the paper towel.
- **Groups 5/5**

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Fill the spray bottles with water.

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Romans 14:17 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Read the Memory Verse out loud together several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Give each kid a lima bean. Tell them this bean is like the seed in the parable.
- Give each kid a paper towel, and have them spray their paper towel so it's slightly wet (not dripping).
- Ask kids to fold the paper towel and place it in their bag.
- Ask kids to place their lima bean in the bag on the side of the paper towel, then seal the bag.
- Ask kids to write their name on the bag with the marker.
- Challenge them to take their "seed" home and tape it to a sunny window. Tell them that in a few days, it should start to sprout.
- Invite kids to take an additional lima bean home for a parent or adult as well and see whose lima bean grows first.

What You Say:

"This little seed is a great reminder of our Bible Story. Right now, it doesn't look like much. But if we give it what it needs, water and sun, it will grow. Our hearts are the same. When we give our hearts what they need by reading the Bible, praying, and listening to God, our faith will grow. As you continue to listen to and follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit will grow good fruit, the good fruit of God's kingdom, in your life."

"Our Memory Verse today tells us that God's kingdom is full of good things—righteousness, joy, and peace. That's because the King is good. And that's the good fruit, the good fruit of God's character, that He wants to grow and grow in you.

"As you watch this seed grow, ask God to make your heart good soil, to grow His good fruit in you."

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

No supplies needed

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

- **Ask these questions and discuss:**
- Why do you think Jesus used a story about farming instead of just explaining about God's kingdom plainly?
- What do the seeds represent in this story?
- What does it mean that the good soil produced 30, 60, or 100 times more?
- **[Conversation Starter]** What are you going to do with what you've heard?

Groups 4/5

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Music player | 1 |
|  Soft music | 1 |

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Invite the kids to find a comfortable spot in the room. You can dim the lights if you'd like.
- Ask them to close their eyes and think about the four kinds of soil Jesus talked about.
- Lead them through a time of quiet reflection with these prompts. Pause for about 30 seconds after each one.
- Hard path: "When do I ignore God?"
- Rocky soil: "When do I quit when things get hard?"
- Thorny soil: "What distracts me most?"
- Good soil: "Where am I growing?"
- Now invite them to take time to pray quietly for the piece they need to ask God's help with.
- After the quiet time, close in prayer for the whole group.

What You Say:

"Let's pray together and ask God to help us be like the good soil."

Prayer:

"God, thank You for this time to be quiet and listen. We want our hearts to be like the good soil—soft, ready, and prepared for Your words to grow. Forgive us for the times we ignore You, give up too easily, or let other things become more important than You. Help us to be people who not only hear what You say, but actually do it. We want to be part of Your growing kingdom. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | Preteen Small Group

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll per Small Group
- Random things that are available in your Small Group area, several per Small Group

What You Do:

- Use floor tape to create a large square on the floor (about 2 x 2 feet).

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God \ | Application Activity]

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Plastic cups, one for every two kids

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Bible, one per Small Group
- "The Word Order Game" Activity Page, one per kid
- Paper, one piece per kid
- Writing supplies, one per kid

What You Do:

- Print "The Word Order Game" on paper, one per kid.

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God \| Memory Verse Activity

Made to Create

What You Need:

- Bibles, one per kid
- Spray bottles, several per Small Group
- Water, several per Small Group
- Lima beans, at least one per kid
- Paper towels, one per kid
- Resealable sandwich bags, one per kid
- Permanent marker, several per Small Group

EveryChild Supplies:

- Spoon or pipette

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Fill the spray bottles with water.

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

Pray to God \| Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- Music player, one per Small Group
- Soft music, one per Small Group

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: **Parent Cue App**.

Supplies:

- EveryChild Supplies: Spoon or pipette

Supplies

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Offering container	1
2. Floor tape	1
3. Random things that are available in your Small Group area	Several

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Bible	1
2. Paper	1
3. Writing supplies	1

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Plastic cups	1

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Create

	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Spray bottles	Several
3. Water	Several
4. Lima beans	1
5. Paper towels	1
6. Resealable sandwich bags	1
7. Permanent marker	Several
8. EveryChild Supplies: Spoon or pipette	1

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Music player	1
2. Soft music	1

WEEK

TWO

Preteen | W2

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 2

Bible Story: The Parable of the Bags of Gold • *Matthew 25:14-30 NIV*
Bottom Line: God's kingdom grows when you use what He's given you.
Conversation Starter: "What has God given you?"
Monthly Memory Verse: *God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit.* • Romans 14:17 NIV

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Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience

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Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

The Parable of the Bags of Gold • *Matthew 25:14-30 NIV*

Bottom Line

God's kingdom grows when you use what He's given you.

Conversation Starter

"What has God given you?"

Monthly Memory Verse

God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit. • Romans 14:17 NIV

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Connect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Index cards	Several
 Writing supplies	Several

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each kid an index card.
- Instruct them to write down three "talents" or skills. Two must be true, and one must be a lie. (e.g., 1. I can speak a little Spanish. 2. I can juggle three tennis balls. 3. I can bake awesome chocolate chip cookies.)
- One at a time, invite each kid to read their three talents aloud.
- The rest of the group will then discuss and vote on which talent they think is the lie.
- The kid will then reveal which talent is the lie.

What You Say:

"That was fun! I learned something new about each of you! It's cool to hear about the real talents you all have. God has given every single one of us unique gifts and abilities. In our Bible Story today, Jesus told a story or parable about what we're supposed to do with the things God has given us. Let's go learn more!"

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

What You Need

 Bible	1
 Soft dodgeballs or foam balls	Several

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Open the Bible to Matthew 25:14-30 NIV, and review the parable of the bags of gold.
- Share:
- Jesus told us this story to teach about God's kingdom.
- In the story Jesus told, a rich man went on a long trip and left three servants in charge of bags of gold while he was gone.
- The rich man gave each servant an amount of bags based on that servant's ability. The first servant got five bags of gold, the second servant got two bags of gold, and the third servant got one bag of gold.
- Two of the three servants doubled the bags of gold the rich man had entrusted them with while he was on his trip, and the rich man was so happy! He told the two servants they were "good and faithful" (Matthew 25:21, 23 NIV).
- The third servant put the bag of gold he was given into the ground because he said he was afraid. He did nothing with it. And when the rich man returned, he was upset with the servant who didn't use what he had been given.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Play a game of dodgeball, but with a review twist.
- Every time a player is hit, before they go "out," they must answer a review question about the parable of the bags of gold.
- How many bags of gold did the first servant get? (*Five*)
- What did the second servant do with his two bags? (*He put them to work and gained two more.*)
- Why did the third servant say he hid his bag? (*He was afraid.*)
- What did the master call the first two servants? (*Good and faithful*)
- If they get the answer right, they can stay in the game. If they get it wrong, they're out.
- The last team with the most players remaining wins.

What You Say:

"Great game! In the Bible Story, the first two servants were not afraid to take a risk and use what they were given. The third let fear stop him.

"Jesus told this story to teach us about God's kingdom. He is the master who is going on a long journey. Jesus is in heaven right now, but He's coming back! And in the meantime, He wants us to use every little thing He has given us.

"So be bold with your gifts. Be bold with every little thing God has given you. Maybe you really like to bake, and when you look in the pantry, you find all the ingredients to bake cookies. You can ask yourself, 'How can I make Jesus happy with those ingredients and my baking skills?' Maybe bake some cookies and share them with a lonely neighbor. Or share them with your brother or sister, who is really hard to get along with sometimes.

"Every single situation you enter in, ask yourself, 'How can I use this to make God happy?' Ask yourself that in swim practice, when you pick up a gaming controller, or when your family is rushing somewhere to get to the next thing.

"God doesn't give you talents for you to keep them hidden. He doesn't give you opportunities for you not to use them. When you use what God has given you, He will do great kingdom things! **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you use what He's given you.**"

Groups 3/5

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Connect

What You Need

 Timer (or smartphone or watch)

1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Tell the group you're going to do a quick-fire "Skill Show and Tell."
- Give them 60 seconds to find a partner.
- In their pairs, each kid has 30 seconds to share one thing they feel they are good at or are "becoming an expert" in. It could be anything from a sport to a video game to being a good listener to making people laugh.
- After the minute is up, bring the group back together.
- Ask a few kids to share what their partner's skill is.

What You Say:

"It's awesome to hear about the incredible variety of gifts in this room! In the Bible Story, the 'bags of gold' or 'talents' aren't just about money; they represent the gifts God has given us. That includes our abilities, our time, and our resources—everything we have. Jesus' story reminds us that these aren't just for our own benefit. When we use what God has given us, He will do great kingdom things with what we do. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you use what He's given you.**"

Groups 2/5

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Connect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

-  Bibles
-  Sticky notes
-  Writing supplies

1
3
1

EveryChild tips

- Encourage kids to work in pairs to help one another.
- Groups 5/5

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Romans 14:17 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Read the Memory Verse out loud together several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Give each kid three sticky notes.
- Ask them to think about the Memory Verse in terms of "Who," "What," and "Where."
- On the first sticky note, have them answer: **WHO** does this verse apply to? (*me, Christians, everyone*)
- On the second sticky note, have them answer: **WHAT** does this verse tell me to focus on? (*doing what is right, having peace, having joy*)
- On the third sticky note, have them answer: **WHERE** can I live this out this week? (*at home, at school, on my team, etc.*)
- Let them stick their notes on a wall and briefly share one of their answers with the group.

What You Say:

"Great thoughts! This verse is a powerful reminder of what our real mission is: living in God's kingdom. And God's kingdom is full of good things—like things that are right, peace, and joy—because God, the King, is so good! And as we stay close to the Holy Spirit, He will grow those good things in us. We don't have to grow them on our own!"

"As you stay close to the Holy Spirit, those good things will grow in you and spread all around you like the atmosphere. So just stick close to the King, and let Him grow His good kingdom!"

"Then, as God grows those things in you, you can live them out everywhere! And everyone can see that the good King you follow is so worth following!"

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

No supplies needed



EveryChild tips

- Provide a "think time" of 15-20 seconds after you ask a question before calling on anyone. This helps kids who need more time to process their thoughts.
- Groups 4/5
- **Made to Connect**
- **Uses Minimal Supplies**

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

- **Ask these questions and discuss:**
- Why do you think the master in the Bible Story gave different amounts to each servant? Does that seem fair?
- What mattered more to the master—the amount of money the servants earned, or the fact that they were faithful with what they were given? Why?
- The third servant acted out of fear. What are some things that can make us afraid to use our talents or speak up for God or use the opportunities God has given us?
- **[Conversation Starter] What has God given you?**
- How can trusting God help you take brave steps to use what He's given you?

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each kid an index card.
- Instruct them to write down three "talents" or skills. Two must be true, and one must be a lie. (e.g., 1. I can speak a little Spanish. 2. I can juggle three tennis balls. 3. I can bake awesome chocolate chip cookies.)
- One at a time, invite each kid to read their three talents aloud.
- The rest of the group will then discuss and vote on which talent they think is the lie.
- The kid will then reveal which talent is the lie.

What You Say:

"That was fun! I learned something new about each of you! It's cool to hear about the real talents you all have. God has given every single one of us unique gifts and abilities. In our Bible Story today, Jesus told a story or parable about what we're supposed to do with the things God has given us. Let's go learn more!"

Groups

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

25 minutes

Groups 1/5

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

 Cardstock	1
 Scissors	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Kingdom Challenge Cards" on cardstock and cut, one card per kid.

During the Activity:

- Invite each kid to draw one challenge card to take home.
- Tell them this is their personal "investment" for the week—a way to use what God has given them.
- Close by praying for the group.

What You Say:

"This week, your challenge is to be like the first two servants in the Bible Story—take what you have, and put it to work for God's kingdom! Let's pray that God will help us with our challenges."

Prayer:

"God, thank You for giving us so many good gifts. Forgive us for the times when we're afraid to use them, or we forget they're from You. Help each of us with the challenge we're taking home this week. Give us the courage to 'invest' our talents and our time for You so You can grow Your kingdom. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | Preteen Small Group

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- Index cards, one per kid
- Writing supplies, one per kid

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God \ | Application Activity]

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Timer (or smartphone or watch), one per Small Group

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Bible, one per Small Group
- Soft dodgeballs or foam balls, several per Small Group

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God \ | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- Bibles, one per kid
- Sticky notes, three per kid
- Writing supplies, one per kid

5. Make It Personal with Prayer**Pray to God \ | Prayer Activity****Made to Reflect****What You Need:**

- "Kingdom Challenge Cards" Activity Page, one card per kid
- Cardstock, eighth of a page per kid
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group

What You Do:

- Print "Kingdom Challenge Cards" on cardstock and cut, one card per kid.

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: **Parent Cue App**.

Supplies

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Connect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Offering container	1
2. Index cards	Several
3. Writing supplies	Several

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Bible	1
2. Soft dodgeballs or foam balls	Several

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Connect

	Quantity
1. Timer (or smartphone or watch)	1

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Connect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Sticky notes	3
3. Writing supplies	1

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Cardstock	1
2. Scissors	1

WEEK

THREE

Preteen | W3

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 3

Bible Story: The Servant Who Had No Mercy • *Matthew 18:21-35*

Bottom Line: God's kingdom grows when you forgive.

Conversation Starter: What and who do you need to forgive?

Monthly Memory Verse: *God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit.* • Romans 14:17 NIV

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

The Servant Who Had No Mercy • *Matthew 18:21-35*

Bottom Line

God's kingdom grows when you forgive.

Conversation Starter

What and who do you need to forgive?

Monthly Memory Verse

God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit. • Romans 14:17 NIV

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

	Offering container	1
	Paper	1
	Writing supplies	1



EveryChild tips

- *Group kids to work in pairs or small groups.*
- **Groups**
- **Creating a Safe Place to Connect**
- **25 minutes**
- Groups 1/5

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "The Big Oops" on paper, one per kid.

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each kid a "The Big Oops" Activity Page and a pencil or marker.
- Ask kids to come up with the words, then fill in the blanks.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to read their Mad Libs out loud.

What You Say:

"Those stories were pretty ridiculous! It's funny how a few random words can completely change a story. In our Bible Story today, Jesus told a parable or story to change His friends' understanding of something huge: forgiveness. Let's go hear about it."

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

What You Need

 Bible	1
 Paper	1
 Marker	1
 Table	1
 Bells or buzzers	2

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Open the Bible to Matthew 18:21-35, and show the kids where the Bible Story is.
- Review the parable of the servant who had no mercy by sharing these key points:
 - Peter asked Jesus how many times he needed to forgive someone.
 - Jesus answered, and then He told a story to share how God's kingdom works.
 - In the story, a king decided to get everyone who owed him debts to pay him.
 - One servant had a huge debt and begged and begged the king for time to pay.
 - Instead of making the servant pay back the humongous debt, the king forgave it! Completely!
 - But that same servant had someone who owed him a little debt.
 - Instead of forgiving the person who owed him, like the servant had been forgiven, that servant put the person who owed him in prison and demanded that he pay him his tiny debt.
 - The king heard that the servant wouldn't forgive the person who owed him, and the king was so upset. He threw the servant in jail until he could pay his huge debt.
 - Jesus said that we should forgive people who hurt us because we have been forgiven of so much.
- Divide the kids into two teams.
- Ask the teams to come up with a team name.
- On the paper, create two columns, and write the team names at the top of the columns.
- Position the bells/buzzers on either end of the table.
- Have one person from each team come to the front and stand by their team's bell/buzzer.
- Explain you're going to play "Kingdom Feud."
- Read a review question from the list below. The first person to hit the buzzer gets to answer.
- According to Peter, how many times should you forgive someone? (*seven times*)
- In the parable, how much did the first servant owe the king? (*a huge amount/ten thousand bags of gold*)
- Did the king make the servant pay it back? (*No, he canceled the debt.*)
- How much did the second servant owe the first servant? (*a small amount/100 silver coins*)

- What did the first servant do to the second servant? (*choked him/threw him in jail*)
- If they get the answer right, their team gets a point. If they get the answer wrong, the other team gets a chance to steal. Record each team's points on the paper.
- Play until you've gone through all the questions.

What You Say:

"Great job! That was a close game. This story Jesus told was intense. He used these huge, crazy numbers to make a point we can't miss: the forgiveness God gives us is infinitely bigger than any forgiveness we could ever be asked to give someone else.

"When Peter asked how many times he should forgive someone, suggesting up to seven times, Jesus replied, '77 times,' meaning we should always forgive.

"To explain further, Jesus told a story about a servant who was forgiven an enormous, impossible-to-repay debt by a merciful king. However, that same servant refused to forgive a much smaller debt owed to him and had the other servant thrown into prison. When the king found out, he punished the unforgiving servant, teaching that we must forgive others from the heart just as God has forgiven us.

"Jesus taught that God's kingdom grows through love and forgiveness, not power or force. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you forgive."**

Groups 3/5

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Reflect

What You Need

	Index cards	1
	Coloring supplies	1
	Optional: Music player and soft, reflective music	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Ask the kids to spread out and find a quiet space in the room.
- Give each kid an index card and some coloring supplies.
- *Optional: Play some soft music if it helps create a reflective mood.*
- Ask kids to think quietly for a minute about the Conversation Starter: "What and who do you need to forgive?"
- Tell them they don't have to share this with anyone. This is between them and God.
- Instruct them to write down the person or situation on one side of the card. They can write a name, a word, or draw a symbol.
- Give them a minute of quiet to sit with that thought and talk to God about it.
- After that quiet moment with God, ask them to flip the card over. On the other side, invite them to write or draw what they need to do or who they need to forgive.
- Give them another minute of quiet to sit with that thought and talk to God about it.

What You Say:

"Forgiveness is one of the hardest parts of being a follower of God. It's uncomfortable, and it doesn't always feel fair. Holding onto anger is like carrying a heavy weight, but forgiving sets you free.

"Jesus told the story we heard about today to teach us that God is like the good king who completely forgave a huge amount of money. When we trust that Jesus paid for our sin on the cross and choose to follow Him, God wipes out our sin debt. We were completely tied up in our sin, but now we're free! Because God has forgiven us of such a giant sin debt, He wants us to pass that forgiveness on to the people around us. Like Jesus told Peter, we can continue to forgive without putting limits on it.

"Forgiving someone doesn't mean what they did was okay or you should let them keep doing it. It doesn't even mean you have to keep being friends with them. If someone hurts you or makes you uncomfortable, tell a grown-up you trust!

"Forgiving someone says you're trusting God to make things right. And when you forgive, it frees *you* from staying angry and becoming hard and bitter. Forgiveness isn't a feeling, it's a choice. And when you ask God for help and choose to forgive, you are showing your world God's good heart of forgiveness. And God will do great kingdom things when

you choose to forgive. **[Bottom Line]** God's kingdom grows when you forgive."

Groups 2/5

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need



Bibles

1



Latex-free balloons

1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Romans 14:17 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Read the Memory Verse out loud together several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Give each kid a balloon.
- Tell them the balloon is like us. It can have the *potential* for doing what's right, peace, and joy, but on its own, it's just flat. It can't do anything.
- Ask: "What does the balloon need to fly?" (*air/breath*)
- Say: "The breath is like the Holy Spirit. He is the power that helps us live out the stuff of God's kingdom."
- Instruct the kids to blow up their balloons. On the count of three, have everyone let their balloon go and watch them fly all over the room.

What You Say:

"Just like the air makes the balloon go, the Holy Spirit is the power that helps us do what is right and feel God's peace and joy. We can't do the kingdom stuff on our own! We need help from the Holy Spirit.

"You can pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you forgive. Forgiving someone says you're trusting God to make things right. And when you forgive, it frees *you* from staying angry and becoming hard and bitter. Forgiveness isn't a feeling, it's a choice. And when you ask God for help and choose to forgive, you are showing your world God's good heart of forgiveness. And God will do great kingdom things when you choose to forgive. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you forgive.**"

Groups 5/5

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

No supplies needed



EveryChild tips

- Provide a "think time" of 15-20 seconds after you ask a question before calling on anyone. This helps kids who need more time to process their thoughts.
- Groups 4/5

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

- Ask these questions and discuss:
- Why do you think Jesus used a story about money and debt instead of just saying, "Forgive each other."?
- What do you think Jesus wanted Peter to understand by saying "77 times"?
- Why did Jesus compare our sin to a huge debt that we could never pay back?
- The first servant probably thought the king's mercy was awesome—until he was asked to show mercy himself. Why is it sometimes easy to accept forgiveness but hard to give it?
- What does this story teach us about what God is like?
- **[Conversation Starter] What and who do you need to forgive?**

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

No supplies needed

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Ask the kids to find a partner.
- Tell them to think about one area where it's hard for them to forgive. They don't have to share the specifics with their partner.
- Lead them in a "breath prayer." It's a simple way to pray by syncing words with your breathing.
- Model it for them:
 - As you breathe IN, say to yourself, "God, You forgive me."
 - As you breathe OUT, say to yourself, "Help me forgive others."
- Instruct the pairs to do this quietly together three or four times.
- Close in prayer for the whole group.

What You Say:

"Every single one of us has sinned against God. We have done and said things that go against God and His ways—including the laws or rules that He gave because He made us and loves us and knows the best way for us to live. God is so amazing and perfect and holy that any sin creates a giant debt, like the money the first servant owed the king in the Bible Story. But Jesus loves us so much that He paid our giant debt we owed because of sin. When we realize how much we've been forgiven, it changes everything. Let's close our time together with prayer and thank God for His ultimate forgiveness."

Prayer:

"God, thank You for the story Jesus told. It's a hard story to hear because it shows us how much we need Your help to forgive. Thank You for forgiving us for our huge debt of sin. Help us to be people who pass that forgiveness on to others. When it's hard, remind us of Your great mercy for us. We want Your kingdom to grow. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | Preteen Small Group

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- "The Big Oops" Activity Page, one per kid
- Paper, one piece per kid
- Writing supplies, one per kid

What You Do:

- Print "The Big Oops" on paper, one per kid.

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God \ | Application Activity]

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- Index cards, one per kid
- Coloring supplies, several per kid
- *Optional: Music player and soft, reflective music; one per Small Group*

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Bible, one per Small Group
- Paper, one piece per Small Group
- Marker, one per Small Group
- Table, one per Small Group
- Bells or buzzers, two per Small Group

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God \ | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one per kid
- Latex-free balloons, one per kid

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

Pray to God \ | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: **Parent Cue App**.

Supplies

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Offering container	1
2. Paper	1
3. Writing supplies	1

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Bible	1
2. Paper	1
3. Marker	1
4. Table	1
5. Bells or buzzers	2

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Reflect

	Quantity
1. Index cards	1
2. Coloring supplies	1
3. Optional: Music player and soft, reflective music	1

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Latex-free balloons	1

WEEK

FOUR

Preteen | W4

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 4

Bible Story: The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up • *Luke 18:1-8*

Bottom Line: God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.

Conversation Starter: What do you need to keep doing?

Monthly Memory Verse: *God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit.* • Romans 14:17 NIV

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up
• *Luke 18:1-8*

Bottom Line

God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.

Conversation Starter

What do you need to keep doing?

Monthly Memory Verse

God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit. • Romans 14:17 NIV

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Egg carton flat	1
 Ping-pong balls	6
 Timer (or stopwatch or smartphone)	1

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Demonstrate how to hold the egg carton on the sides with the line of six ping-pong balls in the row farthest from you. With a quick flick of your wrist, toss the line of ping-pong balls into the air, trying to move them all to the next row. Continue until you move all six to the row closest to you.
- Choose one kid to go first, and start the timer. It's much trickier than it sounds and will require a lot of focus and persistence. Give each kid one minute to try. Once the minute is up, reset and pick another kid to try.
- Continue until every kid has had a turn.

What You Say:

"That was not easy! It's easy to get frustrated and want to quit. The only way to get better is to keep practicing and not give up. The idea of not giving up is at the very center of our Bible Story today. Jesus told a story to teach His followers a powerful lesson about persistence. Let's go hear all about it."

Groups

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

25 minutes

Groups 1/5

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

What You Need

 Bible	1
 Cardstock	1
 Scissors	1
 Coloring supplies	1
 Glue sticks	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Castle of Parables" on cardstock and cut, one set per kid.

During the Activity:

- Encourage kids to decorate each picture.
- Ask kids to fold each of their papers in half along the line.
- Show kids how to connect the pieces of their castle. (See our [Pinterest Board for an example: bit.ly/46pW1VI](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/46pW1VI/))
- Glue the back of the picture of "The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up" to the back of the picture of "The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast."
- Glue the back of the picture of "The Story of the Lost Sheep" to the back of the picture of "The Story of the Lost Son."
- Glue the back of the picture of "The Stories of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl" to the back of the picture of "The Story of the Farmer."
- Glue the back of the picture of "The Parable of the Bags of Gold" to the back of the picture of "The Story of the Servant Who Had No Mercy."
- Ask kids to find the picture showing "The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up" from today's Bible Story.
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Luke 18:1-8 and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 13:31-34 and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Lost Sheep."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Luke 15:1-7 and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Lost Son."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Luke 15:11-32 and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Stories of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 13:44-46, and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Farmer."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 13:1-23 and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Parable of the Bags of Gold."

- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 25:14-30 (we told this story in the NIV) and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Servant Who Had No Mercy."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 18:21-35 and summarize this parable.

What You Say:

"Great job making your castle with some of the stories Jesus told to help teach people about God's kingdom.

"In the parable from today's Bible Story, Jesus told His disciples a story to encourage them to always pray and never give up talking to God. Even the unfair judge finally helped the widow who kept asking. Jesus wanted us to know that God is so much more loving and good than that judge! He always listens and always chooses what is best for us. So keep praying and talking to God, and don't give up! You will grow closer and closer to God the more you talk to Him. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up."**

Groups 3/5

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

What You Need

 Plastic cups	Several
 Music player	1
 Upbeat music	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- In an open space in your activity area, place one set of colored cups up and the other set of colored cups down.

During the Activity:

- Divide the group into two teams: Team Up and Team Down.
- Explain the rules:
- Players from both teams move simultaneously through the field of play.
- Team Up flips any upside-down cup to be right-side up, and Team Down flips any right-side-up cup to be upside-down.
- You can only flip one cup at a time.
- You cannot "guard" cups or hold them; you must flip and move to the next.
- Any cup knocked onto its side doesn't count for either team at the end of the round.
- When the music stops, all players must immediately freeze and step away from the cups.
- Decide which team has more cups flipped their way at the end.
- Play a few rounds, each round being a few minutes each.

What You Say:

"That was intense! You couldn't stop for a second because the other team was always working against you.

"In the story Jesus told, the widow kept asking, kept seeking, and kept bothering the judge for what she wanted. In the same way, we are to go to God with our needs and desires and keep asking, over and over and over. That doesn't mean He will answer right away or even in the way we think is best. Sometimes God says, 'Yes.' Sometimes He says, 'No.' And a lot of times, God says, 'Not yet.' But no matter what, Jesus gives us permission to keep on asking for what we want. Jesus' story encourages us to be persistent. Don't stop. Don't get discouraged. When you keep talking to God and talking to God and talking to God, you will grow closer to Him! **[Bottom Line]** God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up."

[Make It Personal] (Share a kid-friendly time when you prayed for a long time about something. For example, you can share something like: "There have been things I've prayed about for years. It's easy to wonder if God is listening. But then I remember this story. It reminds me t

hat my job isn't to figure out God's timing; my job is to be persistent in my relationship with Him and keep bringing my requests to Him.")

Groups 2/5

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

	Bibles	1
	Butcher paper	2
	- Washable markers	1
	Scissors	1
	Painter's tape	1



EveryChild tips

- For a kid who may be anxious about being put on the spot, you can point to two kids at once and let them say the word together.
- Allow kids to raise their hand or clap instead of standing up if that is more comfortable for them.
- **Groups 5/5**

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- In large letters, write the Memory Verse on a piece of butcher paper, but in several spots of the verse, write a "gotcha" word. (e.g., "God's wisdom is all about eating pizza or boba tea. It is about stopping what is wrong and having peace and pancakes. All joy comes through the Holy Spirit." Acts 14:17 NlrV)
- Roll the paper up, and place it in your Small Group area.
- On a smaller piece of butcher paper, write the correct words (kingdom, not, or drinking, doing, right, joy, this, Romans), and cut each one out.
- Tape the correct words around the room.

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Romans 14:17 NlrV using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Read the Memory Verse out loud together several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Unroll the butcher paper, and ask kids to read the words written on the paper and try to identify the "gotcha" words.
- When a kid finds a "gotcha" word, ask them to yell that word and "Gotcha!" Then, ask them to find the correct word in the room.
- Once kids have the correct word, ask them to place it over the incorrect word.
- Once all the correct words have been placed, read the Memory Verse together.

What You Say:

"Great job figuring out all the 'gotcha' words and replacing them with the correct ones to complete our Memory Verse! That was a fun way

to remember what God's kingdom is all about. God's kingdom is good because He is good! And those good things are things we can ask God for in prayer, persistently, knowing He wants to give them to us. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up."**

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed



EveryChild tips

- Provide a "think time" of 15-20 seconds after you ask a question before calling on anyone. This helps kids who need more time to process their thoughts.
- Groups 4/5

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

- Ask these questions and discuss:
 - Why do you think Jesus told this story specifically to teach about not giving up in prayer?
 - Why do you think Jesus chose a widow—someone who was often overlooked and didn't have much power—as the hero of this story?
 - What does the widow's persistence tell us about what she believed?
 - The judge in the story wasn't motivated by justice, but by being worn out. What motivates God to answer our prayers? (*His love, goodness, and justice*)
- **[Conversation Starter]** What do you need to keep doing?

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

No supplies needed

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Gather the group, and pose this question for discussion: "If God already knows everything we need before we even ask, why do you think He wants us to keep asking?"
- Let the kids share their thoughts. Guide them toward the idea that prayer isn't just a cosmic vending machine where we put in requests to get stuff. It's about relationship.
- Explain that when we keep talking to God, we are building our trust in Him, spending time with Him, and aligning our hearts with His. Persistence in prayer changes *us* as much as it changes our circumstances.

What You Say:

"That's a huge idea to think about. Prayer is more about our relationship with God than just getting answers. Talking to God over and over strengthens your relationship with Him. God wants to hear your heart and invites you to share it with Him. The more you talk with God and stay connected to Jesus, the closer you'll grow to Him. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.** Let's close our time by talking to Him."

Prayer:

"God, thank You for the story of the widow who would not give up. It reminds us that You aren't like the grumpy judge, but You are a loving Father who delights in hearing from Your kids. Help us to be persistent in our prayers. Help us not to give up when we don't see an answer right away. We trust You, and we know Your kingdom grows when we keep coming to You. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | Preteen Small Group

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- Egg carton flat, one per Small Group
- Ping-pong balls, six per Small Group
- Timer (or stopwatch or smartphone), one per Small Group

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God \ | Application Activity]

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Plastic cups in two different colors, fifty cups per color
- Music player, one per Small Group
- Upbeat music, one per Small Group

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- In an open space in your activity area, place one set of colored cups up and the other set of colored cups down.

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Create

What You Need:

- Bible, one per Small Group
- "Castle of Parables" Activity Page, one per kid
- Cardstock, two pieces per kid
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group
- Coloring supplies, several per kid
- Glue sticks, one per kid

What You Do:

- Print "Castle of Parables" on cardstock and cut, one set per kid.

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God \ | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one per kid
- Butcher paper, one per Small Group
- Washable markers, several per Small Group
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group
- Painter's tape, one roll per Small Group

What You Do:

- In large letters, write the Memory Verse on a piece of butcher paper, but in several spots of the verse, write a "gotcha" word. (e.g., "God's wisdom is all about eating pizza or boba tea. It is about stopping what is wrong and having peace and pancakes. All joy comes through the Holy Spirit." Acts 14:17 NIV)
- Roll the paper up, and place it in your Small Group area.
- On a smaller piece of butcher paper, write the correct words (kingdom, not, or drinking, doing, right, joy, this, Romans), and cut each one out.
- Tape the correct words around the room.

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

Pray to God \ | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: Parent Cue App.

Supplies

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Offering container	1
2. Egg carton flat	1
3. Ping-pong balls	6
4. Timer (or stopwatch or smartphone)	1

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

	Quantity
1. Bible	1
2. Cardstock	1
3. Scissors	1
4. Coloring supplies	1
5. Glue sticks	1

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Plastic cups	Several
2. Music player	1
3. Upbeat music	1

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies*

	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Butcher paper	2
3. - Washable markers	1
4. Scissors	1
5. Painter's tape	1