

Gr 2.3

brite*
OLDER
SMALL GROUP

Elementary

MARCH 1



THE PRODIGAL SON

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 15:11-24

FOCUS VERSES: Psalm 136:1; Romans 8:38-39;
John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9

Summary: Jesus told a parable about a father and his two sons. The younger son asked for his inheritance early, left home and wasted all his money. When he was hungry and poor, he decided to return to his father and ask for forgiveness. The father saw him from a distance, ran to him and welcomed him back with love and celebration.



MONTHLY *Memory Verse*

*As the Father has loved Me, so have I
loved you. Abide in My love.*

(JOHN 15:9)

BRITE  *Idea*

**Jesus never stops
loving us.**

HE

CAN THERE BE AN END TO GOD'S LOVE?

God is love. His love is not based on anything we do or don't do. It never ends and never gives up.

WE

DOES GOD CARE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO ARE FAR FROM HIM?

God loves every single person. He wants people who are far from Him to turn away from sin, return to Him and trust in Jesus as Savior.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: UNMET NEEDS

There is a reason behind every episode of misbehavior in kids ministry environments. Sometimes the reason is an unmet need in the kid’s life. Many times we have no idea what these needs are, but they are there nonetheless.

- **Unmet physical needs:** If a kid comes to your space hungry or tired, it will be challenging for them to learn. If you discover that a kid who displays challenging behavior is frequently coming without breakfast, consider having healthy snacks on hand or even beginning the group with snack time.
- **Unmet emotional needs:** Kids need to feel safe and secure. Helping a kid feel like they belong can help fill the gaps they may have emotionally. Give positive attention before kids seek negative attention. Help them feel included and wanted. Build relationships with the kids who are the toughest.
- **Unmet desire for power:** Kids like to feel like they are in control. (Don’t we all?) Kids, especially those who are going through some level of turmoil in their lives, will struggle to feel like they have power over something. If the majority of their life is out of control, they will grab onto control wherever they can.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

Researchers have determined that nearly 25 percent of people live with some kind of family estrangement.* Those damaged relationships take a mental and physical toll on anyone, but especially kids. Many of the kids you lead may have one or several broken relationships with family members. They may exhibit bitterness, or they may put up emotional walls, preventing others from getting close. If kids share about broken relationships, pray with and for them. In today’s lesson, kids will learn about a broken relationship that ended in reconciliation. Help them see that there is always hope through Jesus. These broken relationships may seem impossible to repair, but our God is a God of reconciliation. When our relationship with Him seemed hopelessly broken, He made a way for us to be reconciled to Him through Jesus.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Jesus’ Unconditional Love: love that never changes and always stays the same

Parable: earthly story with a heavenly meaning

Prodigal: wasteful, spending recklessly

Repent: to change your mind, turn away from sin and turn toward God

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/33vUhaefp>

Small Group ROADMAP

1 BELONG
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

PIGPEN RACE
SUPPLIES: 12 pink balloons, 16 chairs

OR

CIRCLE SNORT
SUPPLIES: None

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

THE VERSE THAT NEVER ENDS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors, 2 rolls of painter's tape, 6 sandwich zipper bags

OR

UNENDING LOVE
SUPPLIES: Bibles, printable page, scissors, writing supplies, painter's tape

3  **DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION**
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4 BECOME
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

HEART PILLOWS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, red felt (2x2 feet per kid), polyester fiberfill (1 handful per kid), scissors (1 per kid)

OR

FAR-OUT PRAYERS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies

5  **SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP**
(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



UNENDING LOVE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, printable page, scissors, writing supplies, painter's tape

PREP:

Print the printable page and cut out (2 hearts per kid).

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Be available to assist kids who have difficulty brainstorming with their answers.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** Can there be an end to God's love?
2. **Say:** God is love. His love is not based on anything we do or don't do. It never ends and never gives up.
3. *Distribute two hearts and writing supplies to everyone.*
4. *Lead kids to find Romans 8:38-39 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
5. **Say:** On the first heart, write or draw how you know God's love will never end.
6. *Have kids work together to tape and create an outline of a heart with their small hearts onto a wall.*
7. *Discuss what they wrote.*
8. *Lead kids to find Psalm 136:1 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
9. **Say:** On the second heart, write or draw how you can give thanks for God's never-ending love.
10. *Have kids work together to tape and create a second outline of a heart with their small hearts onto a wall.*
11. *Discuss what they wrote.*
12. **Discuss:** As you think about these verses and the story, how would you describe God's love to a friend?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

God's love never ends! No matter what we do or don't do, He will always welcome us with open and loving arms.



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why would Jesus tell a story about a son who left home and came back?

Say: The story of the prodigal son is a parable, but Jesus based many of His stories on real-life customs people understood. Archaeologists have found papyri from Egypt and legal documents from the Dead Sea Scrolls that show fathers sometimes gave early inheritance to sons, just like in the parable. In cities like Sepphoris, only four miles from Nazareth, excavations have uncovered Roman-style homes, theaters and coins, showing what kind of wealthy, far-off place the younger son might have gone to. Jesus told true-to-life stories rooted in His real world to help people understand. This parable helps us see God's love for those who return to Him.

Read Luke 15:20 directly from the Bible: *But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS?

Discuss: Have you ever gotten into an argument with a friend?

Discuss: What does it feel like when a friend or family member is upset with you?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: You may have friendships or family relationships that have ended because of a fight or disagreement. Because we live in a broken world, sometimes our relationships with other people are also broken. This isn't how God made things to be. It can be hard to live with broken relationships, but Jesus has made our relationship with God right again and He can help repair our relationships with others, too. Even when it seems hopeless, we can pray for those relationships. We can look to His guidance for how to make things right again. Romans 12:18 says: *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.* Sometimes relationships just can't be fixed. Even then, we can trust God is still good and we can be grateful that His love for us never ends.



FAR-OUT PRAYERS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Before the activity, talk with kids who have difficulty with proximity. Give them a designated area to go in case they need space.



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Have kids spread far apart in your space.*
2. **Say:** You all are pretty far from one another!
3. **Discuss:** What does it mean for someone to be far from God?
4. **Discuss:** Does God care about people who are far from Him?
5. **Say:** God loves every single person. He wants people who are far from Him to turn away from sin, return to Him and trust in Jesus as Savior.
6. **Discuss:** How did the father respond when his son returned?
7. *Have kids move closer together.*
8. *Lead kids to find 2 Peter 3:9 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
9. **Say:** Let's pray and thank God for His great love toward us.
10. *Allow kids time to pray silently.*
11. *Lead kids to find John 3:16 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
12. *Have kids move even closer together.*
13. **Discuss:** Why does God want us to trust in Him?
14. **Say:** Let's pray and ask God to help us trust and follow Him.
15. *Have kids pray silently, then pray aloud for the whole group.*



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus never stops loving us. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He’s taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

God, thank You for Your never-ending love for us! You are good and Your love endures forever. Thank You for always welcoming us with open arms. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

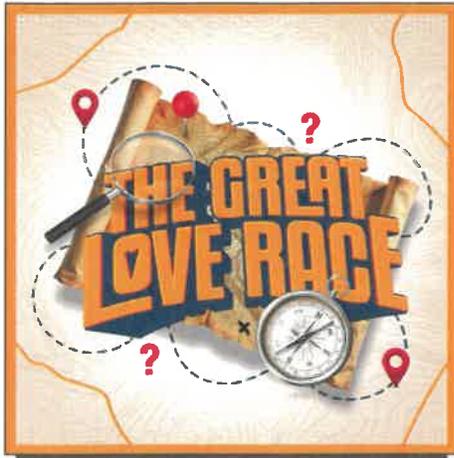
BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room



THE TEN LEPERS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 17:11–19

FOCUS VERSES: Acts 10:34–35; 1 John 3:1a; Psalm 106:1–2

Summary: As Jesus walked toward Jerusalem, He met ten men with leprosy. They called to Jesus for help, and He told them to show themselves to the priests. As they walked away, they were healed. Only one, a Samaritan, returned to thank Jesus. Jesus asked why the others didn't return, then told the man, "Your faith has made you well."



MONTHLY Memory Verse

*As the Father has loved Me, so have I
loved you. Abide in My love.*

(JOHN 15:9)

BRITE  **Idea**

Jesus loves everyone.

HE

IS THERE ANYONE JESUS DOESN'T LOVE?
Jesus loves every single person, no matter who they are and what they've done. Even if the whole world rejects someone, Jesus loves them.

WE

HOW CAN WE RESPOND TO JESUS' LOVE?
We can respond to Jesus with praise and gratefulness for all He does for us.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?
Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service





Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Sometimes we set kids up to fail by having expectations that are not realistic for the kids whom we are serving. When kids fail to meet our expectations, we often view that as misbehavior and we get frustrated.

- **Remember the age group.** Sometimes we expect fifth graders to sit in preschool-sized chairs or give preschoolers an activity designed for older kids. Help kids succeed by ensuring that the environment and activities fit the age group.
- **Remember attention spans.** Plan on a few minutes of attention for every year of the kid’s age. Five-year-olds can’t sit still for a 30-minute story.
- **Remember learning styles.** Not every kid will learn from a lecture. Get kids involved and use varied activities.
- **Remember kids are not adults.** Kids won’t behave, pay attention or respond like adults do. Meet them at their level instead of expecting the opposite.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: UNGRATEFULNESS

According to a 2021 survey, 81 percent of parents do not believe today’s generation of kids are grateful for what they have.* Sometimes kids can come across as entitled or ungrateful, and they really don’t even realize they are doing it. In today’s lesson, kids will learn about one man out of ten who came back to thank Jesus for a life-changing miracle. Look for opportunities to help kids in your group focus on gratitude rather than complaining. Coach them to say “thank you” to each other when appropriate. Also, as you take time for prayer requests, consider asking for things your group can thank and praise God for.

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/ag6CnxX3n>

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Jesus’ Unconditional Love: love that never changes and always stays the same

Leper: a person with leprosy, a terrible skin disease

Mercy: compassion, kindness that is not deserved

Partiality: to treat someone better than someone else

Small Group ROADMAP

1 BELONG
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

TEN OF A KIND
SUPPLIES: Dice (2 per 4 kids)

OR

BRICK LOVE
SUPPLIES: LEGO® bricks (1 handful per 3 kids)

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

VERSE HEARTS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, painter's tape (1 per 4 kids), sticky notes (1 pad per 4 kids), writing supplies

OR

ORIGAMI HEARTS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, printable page, 6x6-inch squares of paper (1 per kid)

3  **DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION**
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4 BECOME
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

REAL-LIFE ILLUSTRATION
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, cups (1 per 4 kids), cardstock (1 per kid), paintbrushes (1 per kid), water, watercolor paints (1 per 4 kids), paper towels

OR

PRAYER STATIONS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, sticky notes (1 per kid), self-adhesive bandages (1 per kid), permanent markers, party hats (1 per kid), paper (1 per kid), painter's tape

5  **SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP**
(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



ORIGAMI HEARTS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, printable page, 6x6-inch squares of paper (1 per kid)

PREP:

Print the printable page (1 per kid). Make an example origami heart.

LEADER TIP: Check this out for step-by-step instructions: <https://pin.it/1idqVKNGy>.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** Is there anyone Jesus doesn't love?
2. **Say:** Jesus loves every single person, no matter who they are and what they've done. Even if the whole world rejects someone, Jesus loves them.
3. **Discuss:** In our story, who was rejected? How did Jesus love them?
4. *Lead kids to find Acts 10:34–35 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
5. **Say:** Partiality means to treat someone better than someone else.
6. **Discuss:** How were the 10 lepers treated by everyone? How did Jesus treat them?
7. *Lead kids to find 1 John 3:1a in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
8. **Discuss:** How did we see God's love toward the 10 lepers?
9. **Say:** Let's make some origami hearts to help us remember Jesus loves everyone, no matter how others may feel about them.
10. *Distribute squares to each kid. Walk them through making an origami heart.*
11. **Discuss:** How do you think experiencing God's love changed the lepers?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

God loves every single person the same. He has no favorites, and His love does not depend on anything we do. That is something to thank God for!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why do you think people were afraid of leprosy in Bible times?

Say: The Bible says Jesus healed 10 men with leprosy, a disease that forced people who had it to live apart from everyone else. Archaeology and ancient records help us understand this better. In places like Qumran and Jerusalem, archaeologists have uncovered ancient mikvahs (ritual baths) and leper burial sites outside the city walls, showing how people with skin diseases were separated, just like the Bible indicates. Writings from ancient Jewish texts such as the Mishnah explain how lepers had to stay far away and shout "Unclean!" Jesus' healing broke through fear and isolation, and archaeology confirms how real that healing would have felt.

Read Luke 17:15 directly from the Bible: *Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... UNGRATEFULNESS?

Discuss: Is it easier to be thankful or to complain?

Discuss: Why might it be hard to remember to be thankful?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: We live in a culture where people focus on what they think they're entitled to have and also complain about what they don't have. It is easy to focus on those things instead of being grateful for all the many things God has given us. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says: *Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* God calls us to have a grateful heart. God gives us so many amazing blessings! We can challenge ourselves to focus on the good of what He has provided instead of grumbling.



PRAYER STATIONS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, sticky notes (1 per kid), self-adhesive bandages (1 per kid), permanent markers, party hats (1 per kid), paper (1 per kid), painter’s tape

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable pages and tape them on the walls around your space. Keep the leader guide with you. Place the matching supplies by each printable page station.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Play soft, quiet worship music in the background to help create a calming environment for kids to think and connect.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find Psalm 106:1–2 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** How long does Jesus’ love last?
3. **Discuss:** How can we respond to Jesus’ love?
4. **Say:** We can respond to Jesus with praise and gratefulness for all He does for us. One way we can respond to Jesus’ love is through prayer! Let’s spend some time doing that.
5. **Say:** Each group will take some time visiting each station in our space. Read the instructions on the wall to know what to do at that station.
6. *Divide kids into groups of four and direct each group to a different station.*
7. *Give kids time to pray and perform the action at each station before rotating to a new one. Have kids rotate through all the stations.*
8. *Gather kids back together.*
9. **Discuss:** How can you respond to Jesus’ love with praise this week?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus loves everyone. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the “Me Question” box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He’s taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

God, You are good! You love us with a forever love. Thank You for Your love. Help us remember Your love and kindness and show it to others. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
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 - Close PowerPoint
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TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:1-11

FOCUS VERSES: Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:25-26;
Romans 6:23; Acts 16:31

Summary: Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah that said the coming King, or Messiah, would humbly enter on a donkey. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the crowds spread cloaks and branches and shouted "Hosanna!" to honor Him. The people celebrated that Jesus was the King God promised!



MONTHLY Memory Verse

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love.

(JOHN 15:9)



BRITE Idea
Jesus came to save us.

HE

WHY DID THE PEOPLE CELEBRATE JESUS?
The people recognized Jesus as King. He fulfilled Old Testament prophecy and showed He was the promised Messiah who came to save the people.

WE

WHY DO WE NEED TO BE SAVED?
We all sin and are separated from God. We needed to be saved from sin and death, which Jesus did when He took our place, died on the cross and rose again.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?
Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the "overlooking." Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

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Arrival

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Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: UNAWARE OF THE RULES

Sometimes kids misbehave because they truly don't know what is expected of them. Perhaps they have never been to church before. Perhaps rules differ between different church environments. Perhaps things may be okay at home that aren't permissible in your group.

- **Have consistent, clear expectations.** Determine three or four guidelines for your group. It is even better if these expectations can be consistent throughout the kids ministry environment.
- **Remind kids of expectations.** Review your expectations every time kids are in the group. Pretend it is everyone's first time, every time. Then visitors or kids who haven't attended in a while will be on the same page as everyone else.
- **Correct with grace and seek understanding.** Don't immediately assume a kid's misbehavior is intentional. It could very well be, but take the opportunity to connect, learn why they did what they did and then gently remind them of the group expectations.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: PRAISE OF OTHERS

Today's kids are growing up in a culture where self-worth is often defined by social media likes and YouTube subscribers. Kids have always sought the approval of their peers, but this desire is exacerbated by the instantaneous feedback they get through electronics. In today's lesson, kids will learn about the crowd's praise of Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. Kids can identify with how good it feels to be praised. However, kids can learn that Jesus is the only One who truly deserves our praise and adoration. As you hear kids discuss social media, point them to the truth that all of that is temporary. Remind them that their worth is found in God's love for them, not in the number of social media likes. Instead of focusing on praise for ourselves, we can live lives focused on praising Jesus.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Hosanna: save us

Jesus' Unconditional Love: love that never changes and always stays the same

Prophet: a person who gives God's messages to His people

Small Group ROADMAP

1 BELONG
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

YOU'RE A LIFESAVER!
SUPPLIES: Life Savers® candy (1 handful per 4 kids)

OR

TRIUMPHAL RELAY
SUPPLIES: Paper (1 per kid), 2 chairs

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

BRANCH SORT
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors, timer

OR

CONNECT IT
SUPPLIES: Bibles, printable pages, scissors, painter's tape (1 roll per 4 kids)

3 

DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4 BECOME
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

SPREAD IT
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, ping-pong balls (1 per kid), permanent marker, washable marker, disinfectant wipes

OR

KEYCHAIN REMINDERS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, string, grey beads (1 per kid), red beads (1 per kid), clear beads (1 per kid), yellow beads (1 per kid), green beads (1 per kid), key rings (1 per kid), scissors

5 

SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP
(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



BRANCH SORT

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors, timer

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03). Print two copies of the printable pages and cut them out.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Some kids may feel anxious during timed activities, so consider offering a group that will not be timed.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 15:9 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** What does this verse tell us about God’s love?
3. **Discuss:** How was God’s love shown as Jesus entered Jerusalem?
4. *Divide kids into two groups and give each group a set of verse cards.*
5. **Say:** Work together to put your verse in order. Practice putting it together first. Then I will time you to see which group can put their verse in order the fastest!
6. *Give groups time to practice putting their verse in order. Recite the verse together multiple times. Time the groups to see which group is fastest. Cheer for groups as they assemble their verse.*
7. *Challenge kids to recite the verse in their groups without looking at the cards, then celebrate one another.*
8. **Discuss:** Should we celebrate God’s love? Why?
9. **Discuss:** Why did the people celebrate Jesus?
10. **Read:** Zechariah 9:9.
11. **Say:** The people recognized Jesus as King. He fulfilled Old Testament prophecy and showed that He was the promised Messiah who came to save the people.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Jesus is the King whom God promised! Let’s keep celebrating our King who came to save us!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: What would it be like to see a whole crowd cheering for someone riding a donkey?

Say: The Bible says Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and crowds welcomed Him with palm branches, shouting, "Hosanna!" Archaeologists have found the path leading from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem (still walkable today!), and it matches the Bible's description. Stones from the first-century road have been uncovered, along with parts of the eastern city gate that Jesus likely entered. Palm branches were common in that area, and Jewish coins from that time even show palm images, linking them to worship and celebration. These discoveries show the triumphal entry happened in real places with real people, just like the Bible says.

Read Matthew 21:9 directly from the Bible: *Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... PRAISE OF OTHERS?

Discuss: What are some ways that people show what they like on social media?

Discuss: Do kids ever base how they feel about themselves on what others say?

Discuss: What does God say about seeking people's praise?

Say: It can be easy for us to focus on what other people think about us. You may have heard kids talk about how important it is to have likes or follows on social media. Maybe you've worried about what friends, teachers or coaches say about you. It always feels good when other people praise us, but it's a problem when it becomes too important to us. Galatians 1:10 says: *For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.* We should be most concerned about what God thinks of us instead of other people. We can point all praise and attention to Jesus, instead of trying to get it for ourselves.



KEYCHAIN REMINDERS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, string, grey beads (1 per kid), red beads (1 per kid), clear beads (1 per kid), yellow beads (1 per kid), green beads (1 per kid), key rings (1 per kid), scissors

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable pages and cut out (1 color guide per kid). Keep the instructions with you. Cut the string into 12-inch pieces (1 per kid).

LEADER TIP: Make an example ahead of time.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find Romans 6:23 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** Why do we need to be saved?
3. **Say:** We all sin and are separated from God. We needed to be saved from sin and death, which Jesus did when He took our place, died on the cross and rose again.
4. **Say:** Jesus came to save us! Let's make some keychains to remind us of this truth and spend time in prayer responding to God for His goodness.
5. *Distribute one color bead, string and keychain to everyone.*
6. *Explain what each color stands for and have kids follow along on their cards.*
7. *Refer to the instructions and lead kids through making their keychain. Place the first three beads on.*
8. **Say:** Let's pray and thank God for fulfilling His promise by sending Jesus.
9. *Place the next two beads on.*
10. **Say:** Let's thank God for His gift of salvation. Ask God to help you shine His light to others this week.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus came to save us. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He’s taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

God, thank You for being exactly who You say You are and doing exactly what You say You will do. Thank You for coming to save us. Help us believe and trust in You. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

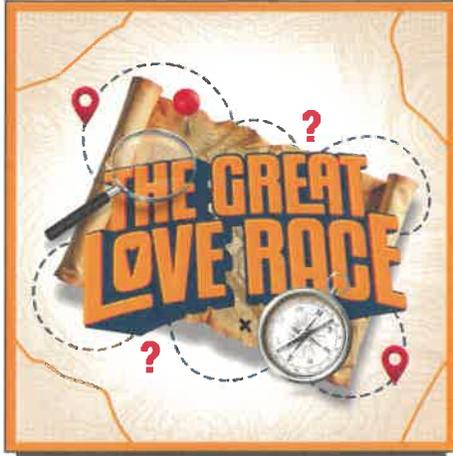
BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room



CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-18

FOCUS VERSES: Psalm 103:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:21;
1 Peter 2:24

Summary: Jesus entered the temple and drove out the money changers and merchants who had used the temple of the Lord as a way to fill their pockets. He said to them: "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." The chief priests and scribes heard this and began to search for a way to get rid of Him because they feared the impact His teaching was having on the crowds.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love.

(JOHN 15:9)

BRITE Idea

Jesus loves what is right.



HOW IS JESUS RIGHTEOUS?
Jesus is completely good and does nothing wrong. He loves what is right and always follows God's way.



IS GOD ANGRY WHEN WE SIN?
Sin does make God angry because He is righteous, but He always loves us. When we trust in Jesus as Savior, He takes our sin and gives us His righteousness. God sees the righteousness of Jesus in us.



HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?
Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the "overlooking." Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: A LITTLE TOO COMFORTABLE

We desire to create environments where kids feel safe and feel like they fit. Sometimes when kids feel really comfortable, their behavior or attitudes will push boundaries.

- **Don't aim to be BFF's.** Yes, connect with kids and build deep relationships. However, remember that your role isn't to be their best friend. Be the loving, caring adult who sets boundaries.
- **Everyone needs boundaries.** Even the kids who practically live at the church need limits and loving correction, just like every other kid.
- **Show grace and love to everyone.** Sometimes the kids who are super-comfortable at church, especially kids of church staff members, get tougher discipline. While they do need boundaries, they don't need higher expectations than other kids.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: ANGER

In a recent survey, 38 percent of parents indicated that their child had negative experiences directly connected to the child's anger.* Anger is an emotion kids struggle with, and some experience intense anger outbursts. In today's lesson, kids will learn about Jesus' righteous anger in the temple and how He turned over the tables. You can help kids discover that anger itself is not wrong—it is a God-given emotion. However, the way we react in anger can be sinful. Help kids brainstorm healthy ways to deal with anger, such as taking a break from a situation, yelling into a pillow, talking it out with someone or taking some deep breaths.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Jesus' Unconditional Love: love that never changes and always stays the same

Righteous: always doing what is right in the sight of God

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/3mxaUjG2E>

Small Group ROADMAP

1 BELONG
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

FLIP IT
SUPPLIES: 2 filled water bottles, 2 half-filled water bottles

OR

ACT IT OUT
SUPPLIES: None

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

TABLE VERSE
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, painter's tape, scissors

OR

THE HEART OF JESUS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, sticky notes (2 per kid), writing supplies

3 

DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4 BECOME
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

LIGHTEN THE LOAD
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, 2 empty backpacks, 6 heavy books

OR

PRAYER ILLUSTRATIONS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, paper (1 per kid), coloring supplies, painter's tape

5 

SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP
(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



THE HEART OF JESUS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, sticky notes (2 per kid), writing supplies

PREP:

None

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find Psalm 103:8–10 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** How is Jesus righteous?
3. **Say:** Jesus is completely good and does nothing wrong. He loves what is right and always follows God’s way.
4. *As a group, brainstorm ways that Jesus was righteous, loved what was right and followed God’s ways. Remind kids of stories you have recently learned that demonstrate the righteousness of Jesus (how He healed people, miraculously fed more than 5,000 people, wanted a relationship with Mary and Martha above all else, loves people like the father in the prodigal son parable, wasn’t afraid to be around men with leprosy, didn’t give in to temptation, etc.).*
5. *Divide kids into pairs. Give each kid two sticky notes and a writing supply.*
6. **Say:** Take your first sticky note and draw a large heart. What does it tell us about Jesus that He loves what is right? Inside your heart, write your answer. Then take turns sharing what you wrote with your partner.
7. *Lead kids to find 1 John 3:5 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
8. **Say:** Think about the story and what was going on in the temple. Knowing that Jesus is righteous, why were the people’s actions and behaviors in the temple so unacceptable? Write down your answer on your second sticky note.
9. *Have kids share their answers with their partner.*
10. *Gather kids back together.*



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Jesus loves what is right! He is completely good and is the ultimate example of how we should follow God!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: What do you think Jesus saw that made Him so upset in the temple?

Say: The Bible says Jesus entered the temple and flipped tables, driving out those buying and selling. Archaeologists have uncovered the massive southern steps and outer courts of the Temple Mount, exactly where vendors and money changers would have set up. In that area, archaeologists have found first-century coins, stone money jars and animal bones, showing that trade for sacrifices was common. They also discovered a limestone warning inscription written in Greek, telling Gentiles not to go beyond the outer courts, which matches the temple layout in the Gospels. These archaeological finds confirm that the temple was exactly as described when Jesus boldly cleared it.

Read Matthew 21:13 directly from the Bible: *He said to them, 'It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you make it a den of robbers.'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... ANGER?

Discuss: What are some things that make you angry?

Discuss: What do you do when you get angry?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: We all get angry sometimes! Anger is an emotion that God gave us. In our story today, even Jesus was angry about sin. Ephesians 4:26 says: *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.* It is not a sin to feel anger, but sometimes the things we do because we are angry are wrong. If we hurt someone physically or emotionally or hurt ourselves, we are not handling our anger God's way. When we feel angry, we can talk to a trusted adult or friend. We can get in the habit of taking a "timeout" from situations that are upsetting us. We can pause to take deep breaths. Even yelling into a pillow is better than yelling at a person! Most importantly, we can talk to God and ask for His help in dealing with our anger.



LIGHTEN THE LOAD

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, 2 empty backpacks, 6 heavy books

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: If possible, give each kid an opportunity to feel the two backpacks. Some kids learn best by interacting!

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Say:** Jesus loves what is right!
2. Choose a volunteer to put on one of the empty backpacks.
3. **Say:** These books represent different sins that people may commit.
4. Have volunteers gently place some books inside the backpack while naming sins that everyone commits.
5. **Discuss:** How would it feel to carry this backpack around all the time?
6. **Say:** Sin weighs us down.
7. **Discuss:** Is God angry when we sin?
8. **Say:** Sin does make God angry because He is righteous, but He always loves us.
9. Lead kids to find Psalm 103:8-10 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.
10. **Say:** When we trust in Jesus as Savior, He takes our sin and gives us His righteousness. God sees the righteousness of Jesus in us. It's like we switch backpacks with Jesus!
11. Take off the heavy backpack and replace it with the empty one. Discuss the difference between the two backpacks.
12. Lead kids to find 2 Corinthians 5:21 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.
13. **Discuss:** How can you celebrate God's love for you this week?

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus loves what is right. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

God, thank You for loving what is right. You deserve all our love and praise. Help us to trust in You. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room



JUDAS BETRAYS JESUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 22:1-6, 39-53; John 13:1-17

FOCUS VERSES: Hebrews 4:13; Romans 5:8;
Ephesians 3:17-19

Summary: The religious leaders plotted against Jesus, and Judas Iscariot agreed to betray Him for silver. During the Passover meal, Jesus foretold His suffering and betrayal. Later, in the garden, Jesus prayed, but His disciples slept. Judas led a mob to arrest Jesus and betrayed Him with a kiss. Jesus was arrested and taken away.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love.

(JOHN 15:9)

BRITE Idea

Jesus loves us while we are still sinners.



DOES JESUS KNOW WHAT WE DO?

Jesus knows everything about us, including everything we think, say and do, yet He still loves us.



HOW DOES JESUS FEEL ABOUT US WHEN WE SIN?

Jesus loves us always, no matter what. However, because He loves us, He wants us to ask forgiveness and seek to live life His way.



HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the "overlooking." Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: KIDS ARE STILL KIDS

You can do all the right things and still have kids who do something they are not supposed to do. Why? Because they are kids! Proverbs 22:15 reminds us that “folly is bound up in the heart of a child.” Kids will always have some level of mischievousness.

- **God made them to be kids.** Their behavior is not always going to match what we grown-ups want it to be. Yes, kids have a lot of maturing and learning to do, but right now they are exactly who God created them to be.
- **We can’t expect them to act like tiny adults.** First, that would be boring! Secondly, if that’s what we truly wanted, we shouldn’t be working with kids.
- **Laugh.** Some behaviors just aren’t worth getting upset about. Enjoy the goofiness. Discipleship is serious business but don’t take yourself so seriously that you can’t appreciate the joy of childhood.
- **Remember that we all sin.** Romans 3:23 reminds us we all fall short. Kids mess up because they are sinners. Adults mess up because they are sinners, too. We all need Jesus!

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: FAILURE

High school kids’ class failure rates dramatically increased following the pandemic.* Failing grades can result in low self-esteem, behavior issues and additional mental health issues. You may have kids in your group who are struggling with failing school grades or who are experiencing failure in some other area of their lives. There may be kids in your group who have exhibited behavior problems, and the reason is they are struggling with feeling like a failure in another area of their lives. As a loving, caring adult in their lives, you have the opportunity to point them toward the hope we have in Jesus. Build an environment where mistakes aren’t shamed and where forgiveness happens quickly. You can model in your group what kids will discover in the lesson today. Their mistakes don’t have to define them. Jesus’ love is bigger than their biggest mistakes.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Jesus’ Unconditional Love: love that never changes and always stays the same

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/5KiQdjLiT>

Small Group ROADMAP

1 BELONG
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

COINS IN THE BUCKET
SUPPLIES: 60 coins, 2 buckets

OR

TIC-TAC-TOE
SUPPLIES: Printable page, coloring supplies

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

DISAPPEARING WORDS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, whiteboard, dry-erase marker, dry-eraser

OR

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
SUPPLIES: Bibles, printable page, writing supplies

3 

DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4 BECOME
(10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

CORNERS OF HIS LOVE
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, paper (1 per kid), kid scissors (1 per kid)

OR

COIN FLIP PRAYERS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, coins (1 per 2 kids)

5 

SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP
(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, printable page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the printable page (1 per kid).

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Let kids work in pairs so they have a thinking buddy to crack the code.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Say:** We are learning that God loves us while we are still sinners. The Bible is full of verses that point us to His unconditional love!
2. *Distribute printable pages, Bibles and writing supplies to everyone.*
3. **Say:** On the page in front of you, there is a secret code you'll need to crack to find the Scriptures that point to God's love!
4. *Give kids time to work on cracking the code.*
5. *Once kids have had a chance to crack the code, take turns reading the Scripture references together.*
6. **Discuss:** Did Jesus know what Judas was about to do?
7. **Discuss:** Does Jesus know what we do?
8. **Say:** Jesus knows everything about us, including everything we think, say and do, yet He still loves us.
9. **Discuss:** How do these verses show us how big God's love is?
10. **Discuss:** How does God's love change the way we look at our struggles and temptations?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Jesus still loves us even while we are still sinners. His love for us does not depend on what we do or don't do!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why do you think someone would betray their own friend?

Say: The Bible says Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 silver coins. Archaeologists have found silver shekels from Tyre, the type of coin most likely used in the betrayal. These coins were common in the temple and had high silver purity, perfect for large payments. The places in the story are real, too. The Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane still exist today, and olive presses have been found in the area, showing it was truly a garden used for pressing olives. These discoveries confirm the setting of Judas' betrayal and help us see that the Bible's history is accurate.

Read Luke 22:48 directly from the Bible: *But Jesus said to him, 'Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... FAILURE?

Discuss: Share about a time you failed a test or failed at something.

Discuss: How does it feel to fail at something big?

Discuss: What does God have to say about our failures?

Say: The world often labels us by our failures: "She's not a good reader"; "He always misses the pass"; "She is a troublemaker at school." God doesn't look at us and see us as failures. He looks at us and sees His people, whom He loves so much that He sent His Son to rescue us. God loves us even when we fail. He loves you if you struggle with reading or aren't good at math. He even loves us when we fail and sin against Him. He forgives us and restores us back to a right relationship with Him. Proverbs 24:16 says: *For the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.* When the world tries to tell you that you are a failure or not good enough, remember you are deeply loved by the God who gives second chances.



CORNERS OF HIS LOVE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, paper (1 per kid), kid scissors (1 per kid)

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Distribute a piece of paper and a pair of scissors to each kid.*
2. **Discuss:** How many corners are on your paper? How many will there be if you cut one off?
3. *Instruct kids to cut one corner off the paper by making one angled cut.*
4. **Discuss:** How many corners are there now?
5. **Say:** If you keep cutting off corners, instead of fewer corners, you get more and more.
6. *Instruct kids to cut a couple more times to see the number of corners increase.*
7. *Lead kids to find Ephesians 3:17–19 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
8. **Discuss:** How does Jesus feel about us when we sin?
9. **Say:** Jesus loves us always, no matter what. However, because He loves us, He wants us to ask forgiveness and seek to live life His way.
10. **Say:** Your corners multiplied, which reminds us of how God’s love multiplies the more He gives it away to us. Jesus doesn’t take His love away when we sin, He continues to give us His love!
11. **Discuss:** How can we live God’s way this week?



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus loves us while we are still sinners. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the “Me Question” box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He’s taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

God, thank You for Your love. Help us to seek after You. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, “What are you looking forward to this week?” or “What do you do for fun?”

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, Blue Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room