

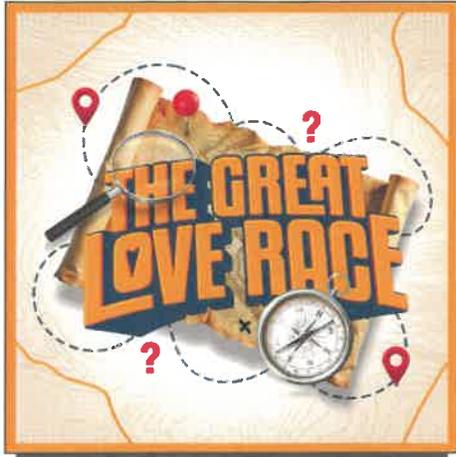
K-1

K-2

brite*
YOUNGER
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

FARMER, MAY I?
SUPPLIES: None

OR

THE LONGEST CHAIN
SUPPLIES: Construction paper (1 per kid), kid scissors (1 per kid), tape (1 per 3 kids), timer, coloring supplies

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

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

ACTING LIKE ANIMALS
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide

OR

HOT PIGGY
SUPPLIES: Bible, toy pig

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

FARAWAY RACES
SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, 2 small toy cars

OR

OPEN ARMS PRAYERS
SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable pages, scissors, colored paper (1 per 2 kids), paper (1 per kid), googly eyes (2 per kid)

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

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies



ACTING LIKE ANIMALS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03).

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:** Can there be an end to God's love?
4. **Say:** God is love. His love is not based on anything we do or don't do. It never ends and never gives up.
5. *Recite the verse together.*
6. **Discuss:** What animals were in our story today?
7. **Say:** Let's keep practicing our verse! I will call out a farm animal, such as a pig, and you will recite the verse while acting like that animal.
8. *Have kids stand up.*
9. *Call out different farm animals and have kids recite their verse. Allow kids a chance to call out different animals as well.*

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

In our story, the prodigal son was living like a farm animal before he decided to go home. His father loved him and was waiting to gladly welcome him home. That's like God's love! God's love never ends and never gives up!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this story show us God is a promise keeper?

Say: God doesn't give up! He has promised that He will always love us. Hebrews 13:5 says: *He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* Just like the father in this story, even when we mess up, our heavenly Father keeps loving us and patiently waits for us to return to Him.

Read Psalm 136:1 directly from the Bible: *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.*

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.



FARAWAY RACES

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, 2 small toy cars

PREP:

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

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Let kids who need extra opportunities for movement hold their car while they wait for their turn.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Gather kids along a wall in the space. Choose two kids to race the cars in opposite directions and see how far they can get them to go from one another.*
2. **Say:** These cars are pretty far from one another!
3. *Allow a few more pairs of volunteers to race.*
4. **Say:** These cars are nowhere near each other anymore!
5. **Discuss:** What does it mean to be far from God?
6. **Discuss:** Does God care about people who are far from Him?
7. **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 their Savior.
8. *Gather everyone close together.*
9. **Read:** Romans 8:38–39.
10. **Discuss:** What can we do when we feel far away from God?
11. **Discuss:** What would it look like to turn toward God?
12. **Discuss:** Whom can you tell this week that Jesus never stops loving us?

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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



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, coloring 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

LOVE YOU TAG

SUPPLIES: None

OR

HOW MUCH DO YOU LOVE...?

SUPPLIES: Painter's tape

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

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

BANDAGE TOSS

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, box of bandages

OR

HEART HUNT

SUPPLIES: Bible, printable page, scissors, 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

MUSICAL RESPONSE

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, music player, upbeat worship music

OR

GRATITUDE PRAYER POCKET

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable pages, scissors, paper plates (1 per 2 kids), stapler

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies



BANDAGE VERSE TOSS

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, box of bandages

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03).

LEADER TIP: Play a round where kids recite the verse as fast as they can. Then play another round going in slow motion.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 15:9 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** Is there anyone Jesus doesn't love?
3. **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.
4. **Discuss:** In our story, who was rejected? How did Jesus love them?
5. *Recite the verse together.*
6. **Discuss:** What was wrong with the men from our story?
7. **Say:** Let's keep practicing our verse using some bandages.
8. *Gather kids in a circle. Choose one kid to start and have them say the first word of the verse. Then gently toss the box to someone else. The next kid will say the next word from the verse. Then toss to a different kid. Do this until the verse has been successfully recited.*
9. *Play as many rounds as you have time for.*
10. *Recite the verse all together again.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

We often use bandages to help us heal. These men had a sickness that no bandage could heal. The rest of the world didn't want to be around them. They needed Jesus to heal them. He loved them so much that He did!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this story show us that God is a promise keeper?

Say: When God made His covenant with Abraham, He promised that all nations would be blessed through the Messiah who would come from Abraham's family. Jesus was the Messiah and came for everyone! He showed that promise to be true in today's story by healing a man who was from a place people didn't like and who had a disease people didn't want to be around.

Read Romans 1:16 directly from the Bible: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

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.



MUSICAL RESPONSE

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, music player, upbeat worship music

PREP:

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

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Be mindful of music volume and have noise-canceling headphones available to support kids with sensory sensitivities.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** How can we respond to Jesus' love?
2. **Say:** We can respond to Jesus with praise and gratefulness for all He does for us!
3. **Say:** There are many ways to praise and thank God for all He has done for us. One way to do that is through music.
4. **Read:** Psalm 106:1–2.
5. **Discuss:** How long will God's love last?
6. **Say:** Let's praise and thank God for His never-ending love!
7. *Play music and have kids walk around your space. Pause the music and invite someone to praise God or thank Him for something.*
8. *After the song ends, discuss the questions below.*
 - **Discuss:** How has God shown you love?
 - **Discuss:** How can you share God's love with someone?

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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



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, coloring 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)
- 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



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.

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: 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

SAVE THE ANIMALS

SUPPLIES: 2 large trays with raised edges, painter's tape, plastic animals (1 per kid), 2 tongs, 2 medium plastic bins that fit on trays, water, 2 towels

PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY

SUPPLIES: Printable pages, scissors, blindfold, painter's tape

OR

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

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

VERSE CELEBRATION

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, plastic eggs (1 per kid), dried beans (1 handful per kid), masking tape

BRANCH CELEBRATION

SUPPLIES: Bible, printable pages, scissors, tape

OR

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

STICKY HANDS

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, large bowl, water, paper towels, maple syrup, towel, dish soap

TWIG PRAYERS

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable page, hole puncher, ribbon, twigs (2 per kid), scissors

OR

5 

SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP
(5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies



BRANCH CELEBRATION

SUPPLIES:

Bible, printable pages, scissors, tape

PREP:

Print the printable pages and cut out (1 of each verse and 1 palm branch per kid).

LEADER TIP: Use real palm branches instead of the printable page if possible. Play upbeat worship music as kids wave their palm branches!

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** Should we celebrate God's love? Why?
2. **Discuss:** Why did the people celebrate Jesus?
3. **Say:** The people recognized Jesus as King. He fulfilled Old Testament prophecies to show He was the promised Messiah who came to save everyone!
4. **Discuss:** How did the people celebrate Jesus?
5. *Give each kid a palm branch printable page, two verse strips and tape.*
6. **Say:** Find your verse strip with the number one. Choose a spot on your palm branch to tape your verse and tape it on.
7. **Read:** Zechariah 9:9.
8. **Discuss:** Who is the coming King that the verse is talking about?
9. **Discuss:** How does this verse celebrate the coming King?
10. *Give kids time to find a partner and wave their branches while celebrating and saying, "Hosanna!"*
11. **Say:** Find the second strip and tape it on your branch.
12. **Read:** Psalm 118:25–26.
13. **Discuss:** How was Jesus going to save His people?
14. *Give kids time to find a partner and wave their branches while celebrating and saying, "Hosanna!"*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

God was not slow to fulfill His promise. He sent Jesus and saved His people at just the right time. We celebrate Jesus because He came to save us!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this story show us God is a promise keeper?

Say: Jesus fulfilled all of the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. How could a prophet know hundreds of years before that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey? Only God could keep such a specific promise!

Read Zechariah 9:9 directly from the Bible: *Behold, your King is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

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.*



STICKY HANDS

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, large bowl, water, paper towels, maple syrup, towel, dish soap

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Fill a large bowl with water and a few drops of dish soap.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: A piece of paper and tissue can be used instead of hands for kids who are sensitive to messiness.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place the bowl in the center of your space with a towel underneath.
2. Gather kids in a circle around the bowl and put a drop of maple syrup in one of their palms. Remind them not to eat it and wait for instructions.
3. **Read:** Romans 6:23.
4. **Discuss:** Why do we need to be saved?
5. **Say:** We all sin and are separated from God. We need to be saved from sin and death, which Jesus did when He took our place, died on the cross and rose again.
6. **Say:** Your hands are very sticky!
7. **Discuss:** Can you use your other hand to clean your sticky hand?
8. Have kids attempt to use their other hand to clean off the syrup.
9. **Say:** Just like you can't clean the syrup off yourself, we can't clean ourselves from sin. We need a Savior to save us.
10. Allow kids to wash their hands in the soapy water and dry with a paper towel.
11. **Read:** Acts 16:31.
12. **Discuss:** How can we be saved?
13. **Discuss:** How can we use what we learned 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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



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, coloring 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

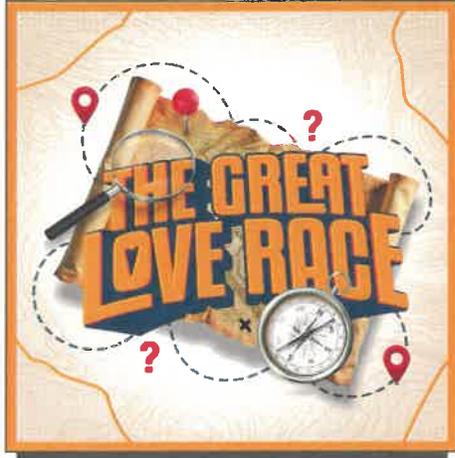
BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

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.

HE

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

WE

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.

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: 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

RIGHT OR WRONG?
SUPPLIES: None

OR

WHAT DO YOU LOVE?
SUPPLIES: Ball

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

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

COUNT THE DICE
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, die

OR

CHECK IT OFF
SUPPLIES: Bible, printable pages, scissors, 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

TRADING IT IN
SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, sticky notes (2 per kid), painter's tape

OR

MUSICAL PRAYERS
SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, large craft sticks (1 per kid), music player, soft worship music

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

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies



COUNT THE DICE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, die

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03).

LEADER TIP: Use a large foam die!

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: To increase engagement, have a few dice and split kids into smaller groups.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 15:9 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** How did Jesus show love in our story?
3. **Say:** Jesus loves what is right!
4. **Discuss:** How is Jesus righteous?
5. **Say:** Jesus is completely good and does nothing wrong. He loves what is right and always follows God's way.
6. **Say:** Let's keep practicing our verse!
7. *Gather kids in a circle.*
8. **Say:** Each of you will have a chance to roll the die. Once the die has landed, you will count the numbers on the die. You will say that many words from the verse. Then the next person will roll and continue the verse. We'll do this until the whole verse is recited!
9. *Play a few rounds and make sure everyone has a chance to roll. Help kids keep track of how many words they are saying.*
10. *Recite the verse all together again.*
11. **Discuss:** Why is loving Jesus the right choice?

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this story show us God is a promise keeper?

Say: In Malachi 3, God said that His Messiah would come and purify the temple, getting rid of sin so people could truly worship God. Many scholars believe this is a prophecy of exactly what Jesus did in our story today. God always does what He says!

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.



MUSICAL PRAYERS

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, large craft sticks (1 per kid), music player, soft worship music

PREP:

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

LEADER TIP: Have kids take home the last stick they used to pray and keep it to remember to pray for that person during the week.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Read:** 2 Corinthians 5:21.
2. **Discuss:** Is God angry when we sin?
3. **Say:** 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.
4. *Distribute craft sticks and coloring supplies.*
5. **Read:** 1 Peter 2:24.
6. **Discuss:** What has God done for us?
7. **Discuss:** How can we respond to what He has done for us?
8. **Say:** Let's thank God for always loving us!
9. *Lead kids to silently pray and thank God for His love and sacrifice on the cross.*
10. *Instruct kids to draw a picture on their stick, thanking God for His love.*
11. **Say:** God is always with us! He hears our prayers and answers them in the way He knows is best. He asks us to pray for each other. Let's pray for one another!
12. *Play music and have kids move around your space and switch craft sticks with each other. When the music stops, have them freeze and pray for the person who is holding their craft stick.*

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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



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, coloring 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.**

HE

DOES JESUS KNOW WHAT WE DO?

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

WE

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.

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: 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

WHO HAS THE COIN?
SUPPLIES: Coin

OR

UNDO THE MESS
SUPPLIES: Paper (1 per kid), coloring supplies, timer

2 BELIEVE
(10 MINUTES)

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

WALKING SCRIPTURE
SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide

OR

SILENT SWITCH
SUPPLIES: Bible, paper (1 less than amount of kids), 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

GOD FORGIVES
SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, milk, container, food coloring, dish soap, bowl, cotton swab, table, paper towels

OR

FINGER PRAYER
SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, pipe cleaners (1 per kid)

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

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies



WALKING SCRIPTURE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03).

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: The leader can choose stationary moves to match their phrase if this supports the physical needs of your group.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 15:9 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** Did Jesus love Judas?
3. **Discuss:** Did Jesus know Judas would turn against Him?
4. **Discuss:** Does Jesus know what we do?
5. **Say:** Jesus knows everything about us, including everything we think, say and do, yet He still loves us.
6. **Say:** Let's keep practicing our verse!
7. *Choose someone to be the leader.*
8. *Have kids line up behind the leader.*
9. *Instruct the leader to walk in a silly pattern around your space, saying phrases from the memory verse and have kids repeat the phrases.*
10. *Each round, add more words for the kids to repeat until they can repeat the entire verse, including the reference. Choose a new leader each time you add a new phrase.*
11. *Recite the verse all together once more.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Jesus loves us no matter what! He knows everything about us and still loves us unconditionally! His love never ends.



Discipleship DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this story show us God is a promise keeper?

Say: Jesus still served Judas by washing his feet even though He knew Judas was betraying Him. Judas messed up, but we all mess up as well. No matter what we do, God loves us.

Read 2 Timothy 2:13 directly from the Bible: *If we are faithless, He remains faithful.*

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.



FINGER PRAYER

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, pipe cleaners (1 per kid)

PREP:

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

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give every kid a pipe cleaner.
2. **Discuss:** How does Jesus feel about us when we sin?
3. **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.
4. **Read:** Romans 5:8.
5. **Say:** We all sin. Think about something that you need to ask forgiveness for. As you are thinking, wrap the pipe cleaner around your index finger.
6. **Say:** This twisted pipe cleaner reminds me of sin. Sin can get us all twisted up.
7. **Say:** Talk to God and ask for His forgiveness. Once you have done that, thank Him for showing His love by sending Jesus to die in our place! As you are talking to God, unwind the pipe cleaner from your finger. Unwinding it represents how God loves and forgives us! We don't have to live twisted up!
8. Give kids time to quietly pray with their pipe cleaners. Pray aloud for the entire group, thanking Jesus for His love and forgiveness.
9. **Say:** Jesus loves us no matter what, even when we sin. Let's seek to live the best way this week, His way!

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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



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, coloring 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