

Preteen | W3

Today's Suggested Schedule—June 2026, Week 3

Bible Story: The Story of the Lost Son • *Luke 15:11-32*

Bottom Line: God wants everyone to be part of His kingdom.

Conversation Starter: What is the requirement to be in God's kingdom?

Monthly Memory Verse: *"May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven."* • Matthew 6:10 NIRV

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

Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience

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

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

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

The Story of the Lost Son • *Luke 15:11-32*

Bottom Line

God wants everyone to be part of His kingdom.

Monthly Memory Verse:

"May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven." • Matthew 6:10 NIRV

Conversation Starter:

What is the requirement to be in God's kingdom?







5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Move

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Ball pit balls	Several
 Plastic bins	2
 Small laundry baskets	2
 Scooter boards	2
 Timer (or smartphone or watch)	1

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Dump all the ball pit balls in the center of the room to represent the "pig food."
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Place one empty bin, a laundry basket, and a scooter board on either side of the room for each team.
- Explain the game: This is a life-sized version of "Hungry, Hungry Hippos."
- One person from each team (the "hippo") will lie on their stomach on a scooter board. Another teammate (the "pusher") will hold their feet.
- On "Go," the pushers will push the hippos into the center of the room. The hippos hold their laundry basket upside-down and try to scoop up as many "slop" balls as possible.
- They then get pulled back and dump the balls in their team's bin.
- After a set amount of time (e.g., 60 seconds), the round is over. The team with the most balls in their bin wins.
- Play multiple rounds, and switch out kids for the "hippo" and "pusher" roles so more kids get a chance to play.

What You Say:

"That was awesome! Today we're going to hear a story Jesus told about a father and a son. The son made some choices that led him to some pigs and some pig food, like in our game. In fact, that was the moment everything started to change. Let's go find out what happened."







5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Move

What You Need

	Bibles	1
	Plastic coins	20
	Brown paper lunch bags	2
	Buckets	2
	Robes or large T-shirts	2
	Plastic toy rings	2



EveryChild tips

- Make sure the “robe” is large and easy to get on and off to avoid frustration.
- If running is a challenge for anyone, they can walk or roll. The focus is on participation, not speed.

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Put ten plastic coins in each of the brown paper bags.

During the Activity:

- Give each kid a Bible.
- Demonstrate how to look up Luke 15:11-32 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

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

- Read Luke 15:11-32 together.
- Talk about how Jesus used parables to teach us about God and His kingdom. Ask, “What did you learn from this parable?”
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Set up a simple relay race. On one side of the room, place the buckets for both teams with space in between. Place the props—the robe, the ring, and the paper bag of plastic coins—for each group across the room from their buckets. Instruct the kids to line up near their teams’ props.
- Explain the relay: The first person in line will put on the robe and the ring, grab the paper bag of coins, run to the other side of the room, drop ONE coin in the bucket (representing wasting the money), run back, and take everything off for the next person. That person will repeat. Continue with each kid.
- The relay continues until all the coins are gone.
- The first team to put all their coins in the bucket wins.

What You Say:

“Great job! That relay helps us remember some key parts of the story Jesus told to teach us about God’s love. Let’s review our Bible Story: ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger son spoke to his father. He said, “Father, give me my share of the family property.” So the father divided his property between his two sons’ (Luke 15:11-12 NIV).”

At this time, a son usually received his share of the family property after his father died. So when the younger son demanded his money right away, it was almost like saying he wished his father were dead!

"The father must have been terribly hurt, but he allowed his son the freedom to make mistakes and learn the hard way. *'Not long after that, the younger son packed up all he had. Then he left for a country far away. There he wasted his money on wild living. He spent everything he had. Then the whole country ran low on food. So the son didn't have what he needed'* (Luke 15:13-14 NIV). The younger son bought whatever he wanted when he wanted it. So when a famine came, and food was scarce, the younger son had nothing left. He went from living the party life to starving in a very short time. In fact, the younger son became so desperate that he went to work feeding pigs. This was one of the worst jobs a Jewish young man could do, since pigs were considered to be 'unclean.' But the son was so very hungry that he actually wanted to eat the slop he gave to the pigs! That's when he hit rock bottom.

"The younger son finally understood how he had messed up. He thought he would need to earn his way back into his father's house. But when he approached his father's house, his father did something totally unexpected! *'While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him. He was filled with tender love for his son. He ran to him. He threw his arms around him and kissed him'* (Luke 15:20b NIV). That is such a powerful picture of forgiveness. The father didn't care about the wasted money; he was just so thrilled his son was home.

"The older son had stayed with the father the entire time and had done all of the right things. The older son was upset that the father did such great things for the younger son. But the father wanted the older son to join the party and celebrate too!

"That's a picture of God. God celebrates when we come to Him, no matter what we've done. He loves us and wants us to be part of His kingdom. **[Bottom Line] God wants everyone to be part of His kingdom."**

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Divide the kids into two teams.
- Explain that you're going to read a scenario, and they'll have two questions to answer as a group.
- What would *most* people do in this situation?
- What would God, the loving father from our Bible Story, want you to do?
- Read the first scenario: A kid who was really mean to you last year wants to sit with your group at lunch this year.
- Give the teams a minute to discuss their two answers. Invite them to share their thoughts.
- Continue with the other scenarios:
- A new student joins your class and doesn't know anyone.
- A friend who hurt your feelings last week comes and says they're sorry.
- A kid who doesn't believe in God asks if they can come to your youth group.

What You Say:

"Those are tough situations. It's easy to react like the older brother and think, 'They don't deserve a second chance!' But Jesus told this story to show us that God's kingdom works differently. It's a kingdom of grace and second chances.

"Sometimes, we're like the younger son. We do what we want instead of what God wants. We don't feel like we've earned God's love. But that's the whole point! You can't earn God's love. God's love is deeper than your greatest sins or your biggest mess-up. There is nothing you can do that will make God love you any less. And the moment you turn back to God, you'll find that He's running to meet you. God is so excited when you return to His love that all of heaven celebrates! God wants you close to Him!

"And sometimes, we're like the older son. We feel like we've done all the right things and earned God's love, so we deserve for Him to give us what we want. But you can't earn God's love in those times, either! God wants you to rest in His love and all the good things He's already given you.

"No matter who you are or what you've done, no matter whether you're like the older son or the younger son, God loves you. God sent His own Son, Jesus, to make a way for you to be close to Him. Our Kingdom Quest is to show that same kind of grace to others, welcoming them

in just like the father welcomed his sons. Because **[Bottom Line] God wants everyone to be part of His kingdom.**"





5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Play

What You Need

 Bibles	1
 Paper	1
 Scissors	1
 "Scripture Scramble" Activity Page	1

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Scripture Scramble" on paper and cut, two sets per Small Group.

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Matthew 6:10 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

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

- Read the Memory Verse out loud together several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Give each team a scrambled set of the Memory Verse word strips.
- On "Go," teams race to assemble the verse in the correct order.
- The first team to correctly assemble the verse and read it aloud wins.
- Play again, but this time, challenge them to do it with one hand behind their back or without talking.

What You Say:

"Great teamwork! You worked together to put that important prayer back together. When we pray, 'May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven' (Matthew 6:10 NIV), we're saying, 'God, let more of Your goodness and love show up right here.'

"The story of the two lost sons is a perfect example of what God's kingdom is like—it's a kingdom of celebration, forgiveness, and welcoming everyone home. No matter who you are or what you've done, God loves you. God sent His own Son, Jesus, to make a way for you to be close to Him forever. And you can pass on that love to other

people because **[Bottom Line]** God wants everyone to be part of His kingdom."

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

- **Ask these questions and discuss:**
- Why do you think Jesus told this parable? What did He want us to learn?
- Have you ever felt like the older brother in the story?
- Have you ever done something wrong? Is there anything you could do to make God stop loving you?
- What is the requirement to be in God's kingdom?




5 min

Prayer

5 min

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

What You Need

	Posterboard or butcher paper	1
	Coloring supplies	Several
	Optional: Party horns or hand clappers	Several

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Write "Praise Report" at the top of the posterboard/butcher paper.
- Remind the group how the father celebrated when his son came home. The whole house was filled with joy.
- Ask the group: "What are some things you've been praying about that you've seen God answer? It could be something big or small. What is a 'praise report' you can share?"
- As kids share, write their praises on the poster, or allow them to write or draw it.
- After each person shares a praise, let them make some noise to celebrate God's goodness together!
- *Optional: Give everyone a party horn or hand clapper to celebrate with.*

What You Say:

"This is incredible! It's so good to stop and celebrate all the ways God is working. This is what heaven is like when someone turns back to God—it's a party! Luke 15:23-24 NIV says, '*But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattest calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. This son of mine was dead. And now he is alive again. He was lost. And now he is found."* So they began to celebrate.' The father in our story honored his son and threw an epic welcome-home party! God is so excited when you return to Him that all of heaven celebrates! Let's end with one big celebration prayer."

Prayer:

"God, we celebrate You! Thank You for being a good Father who welcomes us home. Thank You for all the amazing things You're doing in our lives that we wrote on this poster. We praise You because You are good, and You are forgiving. Help us to have hearts like Yours and to welcome everyone, because we know You want everyone to be part of Your kingdom. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | Preteen Small Group

GETTING READY

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

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- Ball pit balls, one large bag/container per Small Group
- Plastic bins, two per Small Group
- Small laundry baskets, two per Small Group
- Scooter boards, two per Small Group
- Timer (or smartphone or watch), one per Small Group

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one per kid
- Robes or large T-shirts, two per Small Group
- Toy plastic rings, two per Small Group
- Plastic coins, twenty per Small Group
- Brown paper lunch bags, two per Small Group
- Buckets, two per Small Group

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Put ten plastic coins in each of the brown paper bags.

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one per kid
- "Scripture Scramble" Activity Page, two sets per Small Group
- Paper, two pieces per Small Group
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Scripture Scramble" on paper and cut, two sets per Small Group.

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

- Posterboard or butcher paper, one per Small Group
- Coloring supplies, several per Small Group
- *Optional: Party horns or hand clappers*

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

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

Supplies

Preteen Social Activity Made to Move	Quantity
1. Offering container	1
2. Ball pit balls	Several
3. Plastic bins	2
4. Small laundry baskets	2
5. Scooter boards	2
6. Timer (or smartphone or watch)	1

Preteen – Bible Story Extension Made to Move	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Plastic coins	20
3. Brown paper lunch bags	2
4. Buckets	2
5. Robes or large T-shirts	2
6. Plastic toy rings	2

Preteen – Verses to Take with You Made to Play	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Paper	1
3. Scissors	1
4. "Scripture Scramble" Activity Page	1

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer Made to Reflect *Uses Minimal Supplies*	Quantity
1. Posterboard or butcher paper	1
2. Coloring supplies	Several
3. Optional: Party horns or hand clappers	Several