

2-3 | W1

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 1

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

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

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

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

Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience

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

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

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Bible Story Review: Act It Out (K–1st grade), Don't Throw the Ball (2nd–3rd grade), Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions (Preteen)

Application Activity: Growing Straw Wrappers (K–1st grade), What Kind of Soil Are You? (2nd–3rd grade), Take a Snapshot (Preteen)

Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Motions (K–1st grade), Illustrate the Story (2nd–3rd grade), Verses to Take with You (Preteen)

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss (K–1st grade, 2nd–3rd grade), Make It Personal with Prayer (Preteen)

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

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

Bottom Line

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

Monthly Memory Verse

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











5 min

Social

5 min

23 Social Activity | Made to Move

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Cardstock	1
 Scissors	1
 Clear tape	1
 Large paperclip	1
 Metal brad	1
 Floor tape	1
 Option 1: Twister® board game in place of the "Garden Twister" and "Garden Twister Spinner" Activity Pages, cardstock, scissors, clear tape, large paperclip, metal brad, and floor tape	1
 Option 2: Construction paper: red, yellow, green, and blue (6 sheets of each) in place of the "Garden Twister" Activity Page	24
 EveryChild Supplies: Tray or table	1



EveryChild tips

- Allow a kid to be the spinner.
- Elevate the game to a tray or table. Place the pictures so a kid can participate by touching the picture as the fruit/vegetable is called.

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Garden Twister" on cardstock, six sets per Small Group.
- Print "Garden Twister Spinner" on cardstock, one per Small Group.
- Cut the arrow from the side of the "Garden Twister Spinner," and attach by taping the arrow to the top of the paperclip. Insert the brad from the bottom up through the board and spinner, bending the ends of the brad outward to secure it on top of the spinner.
- On the floor, create a column with each fruit/vegetable. For the first column, lay the apple pictures (red papers) in a line with a few inches in between each picture. Move over a few inches, and create the next column with the corn pictures (yellow papers). Move over a few inches, and create the third column with the green bean pictures (green papers). Then, complete your game board with the final column of blueberry pictures (blue papers).
- Secure each picture to the floor with floor tape.

During the Activity:

- Welcome kids by name with a high-five, fist bump, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Welcome the kids to the "garden."
- Say, "What do you see in our garden? *(Pause for responses.)* Farmers plant many fruits and vegetables. These are just a few, so we can play a super fun game!" *(Point to the pictures/colors on the floor: apples/red, corn/yellow, green beans/green, blueberries/blue.)*
- Explain how to play the game: When you spin the arrow, you'll call out the fruit/vegetable it lands on and say which hand or foot to place on that picture/color.

What You Say:

"Phew! That was fun and pretty tricky. Today, we're going to hear a story Jesus told to teach us about God and His kingdom. Jesus explained that the soil is like our hearts. When we're the 'good soil,' we don't just hear what God says, we do what He says.

"When you listened to my instructions in the game, like, 'Put your hand on the yellow corn,' you had to move and do it, right? If you just stood there, you wouldn't be playing the game! It's the same with God. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says.** Let's go hear more!"



5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

23 – Don't Throw the Ball | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

 Bible	1
 Floor tape	1
 Construction paper	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Place a line of tape on the floor in the middle of your area to divide your space.

During the Activity:

- Open your Bible to Matthew 13:1-23, and show the kids where the Bible Story is.
- Review the story with the kids by sharing these main points:
 - Jesus was teaching about God's kingdom, and He told this parable, or story, about a farmer.
 - The farmer scattered some seed on the ground.
 - The seed fell in four different types of places on the ground.
 - None of the seeds grew well, except those that fell on the good soil.
 - The seeds that grew in good soil produced a huge harvest!
 - Jesus told this story to show that when people hear God's message about His kingdom and understand it, they produce way more than He planted!
- Divide the kids into two groups, and instruct them to stand on either side of the tape line facing each other.
- Hand each kid a piece of paper, and instruct them to crumple it tightly.
- Say: "Everyone, look at your hand. You are holding a seed! In our Bible Story today, Jesus talked about a farmer planting seeds like these."
- Explain the rules of the game: Kids can't throw (plant) the seed until they hear you say the key word or words.
- Say: "First, I need you to be still like scarecrows until you hear the word 'PATH.' Are you ready? Listen closely."
- Read the following slowly:
 - Say: "While Jesus was on earth, so many people heard Him teach. One day, as Jesus was teaching along the Sea of Galilee, He told this story."
 - Say: "A farmer went out to plant his seed. He scattered the seed on the ground" (Matthew 13:3b-4a NIV).
 - Say: "Some fell on a PATH. Birds came and ate it up" (Matthew 13:4b NIV).
- Say: "Throw your seeds into the garden on the other side! (Pause.) Great job! The seeds are scattered. Now, pick up a seed on your side, and hold it until you hear the key words. This time, listen for the words 'ROCKY PLACES.'"

- Say: *"Some seed fell on ROCKY PLACES, where there wasn't much soil. The plants came up quickly ... When the sun came up, it burned the plants" (Matthew 13:5-6a NIV).*
- Say: *"Throw your seeds into the garden on the other side! (Pause.) Great job! The seeds are scattered. Now, pick up a seed on your side, and hold it until you hear the key word. This time, listen for the word 'THORNS.'"*
- Say: *"Other seed fell among THORNS. The thorns grew up and crowded out the plants" (Matthew 13:7 NIV).*
- Say: *"Throw your seeds into the garden! (Pause.) Great job! The seeds are scattered. Now, pick up another seed from your side, and hold it until you hear the key words. This time, listen for the words 'GOOD SOIL.'"*
- Say: *"Still other seed fell on GOOD SOIL. It produced a crop 100, 60 or 30 times more than what was planted" (Matthew 13:8 NIV).*

What You Say:

"In the Bible Story, Jesus explained that the 'seed' is God's truth, and the 'soil' is our heart. The path is the people who don't understand. The rocky soil is people who accept God's truth but quit when things get hard. The thorny soil is people who worry too much about other things. And the good soil is the people who HEAR the message and UNDERSTAND it.

"Just like you listened to me, so you knew when to throw your seeds, we have to listen to God. Over time, as you continue to listen to God and follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit will grow fruit, the good fruit of God's kingdom, in your life. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says."**

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

23 – What Kind of Soil Are You? | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

 Cardstock

4

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "What Kind of Soil Are You?" on cardstock, one set per Small Group.

During the Activity:

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Place the four pictures in the middle of your group: two on the top, two on the bottom.
- Review what each picture means from the Bible Story.
- Explain that you will read a short sentence, and they need to slap the picture that matches the "heart" in the story.
- Read the following simple scenarios:
 - "Jayden isn't listening to his mom." (*Hard path*)
 - "June shares her toy with a friend." (*Good soil*)
 - "Zoe starts to clean her room, but then stops to play." (*Rocky soil*)
 - "Amari gives his dad a big hug." (*Good soil*)
 - "Carson is distracted by worries instead of relying on God to help." (*Thorny soil*)
 - "Luke is honest when it would be easier to lie." (*Good soil*)
- After each one, briefly and simply explain why it matches.
- End by asking: "Which soil do we WANT to be? Slap the picture of the soil we want to be!" (Have everyone slap the "good soil" picture!)

What You Say:

"The good news is that each of us can become good soil! You can ask God to soften your heart so His words will take root and grow in your life. When you're sad or afraid or frustrated, you can ask God for help and trust that He's always with you so your heart doesn't become hard or bitter. Over time, as you continue to listen to and follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit will grow good fruit in your life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. As you have soft hearts and listen to God, He will grow His good fruit in you.

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

"When you live like Jesus, you are showing the world God's good kingdom! **[Bottom Line]** God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says."






5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

23 – Illustrate the Story | Made to Create *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

 Bibles	1
 Permanent marker	1
 Posterboard	3
 Coloring supplies	Several
 Wall tape	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- On each piece of posterboard, write the following words from the Memory Verse:
- Posterboard 1: "God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking.
- Posterboard 2: It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy.
- Posterboard 3: All this comes through the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17 NIV)

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible, and direct them to look up Romans 14:17.
- Demonstrate how to look up the Memory Verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses for 2nd-3rd graders: Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list. When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

- Repeat 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.
- Group kids into three groups.
- Assign one of the Memory Verse posterboards to each group to illustrate.
- Posterboard 1: "God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking.
- Posterboard 2: It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy.
- Posterboard 3: All this comes through the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17 NIV)
- Once the illustrations are complete, hang them up on the wall.

What You Say:

"We used what we had to create a beautiful illustration of our Memory Verse. We'll leave it up all month as a reminder that: *God's kingdom is n*

ot about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit' (Romans 14:17 NIV). God's kingdom is full of good things because God, the King, is so good! **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says."**








5 min

Prayer

5 min

23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

What You Need

 Clear cup or jar	1
 Tray	1
 Water	1
 Plastic spoon	1
 Baking soda	1
 Popcorn kernels	1
 Cold white vinegar	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Place the cup/jar on the tray.
- Pour one cup of water into the cup/jar.
- Mix one teaspoon of baking soda into the water.

During the Activity:

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give each kid one popcorn kernel to hold.
- Say: "This little seed reminds us of the seeds in our Bible Story. We want our hearts to be good soil, ready for God's words to grow."
- Say: "Let's prepare our soil." (*Slowly add the vinegar to the water and baking soda mixture—you may not need the entire cup of vinegar to create the desired effect.*)
- Tell them you will pray, and when you're done, they can put their seed in the cup as their way of telling God, "I want to listen to You."
- Lead the group in a simple prayer.
- Pass the cup around, and let each kid drop their seed in.

What You Say:

"Let's pray and ask God to help us be like the good soil so we can point to God's kingdom!"

Getting Ready | 23

Small Group

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

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- "Garden Twister" Activity Page, six sets per Small Group
- "Garden Twister Spinner" Activity Page, one per Small Group
- Cardstock, twenty-five pieces per Small Group
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group
- Clear tape, one roll per Small Group
- Large paperclip, one per Small Group
- Metal brad, one per Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll per Small Group
- *Option 1: Twister® board game in place of the "Garden Twister" and "Garden Twister Spinner" Activity Pages, cardstock, floor tape, scissors, metal brad, large paperclip, and clear tape*
- *Option 2: Construction paper: red, yellow, green, and blue (6 sheets of each) in place of "Garden Twister" Activity Page*

EveryChild Supplies:

- Tray or table

What You Do:

- Print "Garden Twister" on cardstock, six sets per Small Group.
- Print "Garden Twister Spinner" on cardstock, one per Small Group.
- Cut the arrow from the side of the "Garden Twister Spinner," and attach by taping the arrow to the top of the paperclip. Insert the brad from the bottom up through the board and spinner, bending the ends of the brad outward to secure it on top of the spinner.
- On the floor, create a column with each fruit/vegetable. For the first column, lay the apple pictures (red papers) in a line with a few inches in between each picture. Move over a few inches, and create the next column with the corn pictures (yellow papers). Move over a few inches, and create the third column with the green bean pictures (green papers). Then, complete your game board with the final column of blueberry pictures (blue papers).
- Secure each picture to the floor with floor tape.

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Don't Throw the Ball

[Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review]

Made to Play**What You Need:**

- Bible, one per Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll per Small Group
- Construction paper, one piece per kid

What You Do:

- Place a line of tape on the floor in the middle of your area to divide your space.

2. What Kind of Soil Are You?**[Live for God \ | Application Activity]****Made to Play****What You Need:**

- "What Kind of Soil Are You?" Activity Page, one per Small Group
- Cardstock, four pieces per Small Group

What You Do:

- Print "What Kind of Soil Are You?" on cardstock, one set per Small Group.

3. Illustrate the Story**[Hear from God \ | Memory Verse Activity]****Made to Create****What You Need:**

- Bibles, one per kid
- Permanent marker, one per Small Group
- Posterboard, three pieces per Small Group
- Coloring supplies, several per kid
- Wall tape, one roll per Small Group

What You Do:

- On each piece of posterboard, write the following words from the Memory Verse:
- Posterboard 1: "God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking.
- Posterboard 2: It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy.
- Posterboard 3: All this comes through the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17 NIV)

4. Pray and Dismiss**[Pray to God \ | Prayer Activity]****Made to Reflect**

What You Need:

- Clear cup or jar, one per Small Group
- Tray, one per Small Group
- Water, one cup per Small Group
- Plastic spoon, one per Small Group
- Baking soda, one teaspoon per Small Group
- Popcorn kernels, one per kid
- Cold white vinegar, one cup per Small Group

What You Do:

- Place the cup/jar on the tray.
- Pour one cup of water into the cup/jar.
- Mix one teaspoon of baking soda into the water.

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:

- Offering container
- "Garden Twister" Activity Page
- "Garden Twister Spinner" Activity Page
- Cardstock, twenty-five pieces per Small Group
- Scissors
- Clear tape
- Large paperclip
- Metal brad
- Floor tape
- Option 1: Twister® board game in place of the "Garden Twister" and "Garden Twister Spinner" Activity Pages, cardstock, floor tape, scissors, metal brad, large paperclip, and clear tape
- Option 2: Construction paper: red, yellow, green, and blue (6 sheets of each) in place of "Garden Twister" Activity Page
- Bible
- Floor tape
- Construction paper
- "What Kind of Soil Are You?" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Bibles
- Permanent marker
- Posterboard
- Coloring supplies (several per kid)
- Wall tape
- Clear cup or jar
- Tray
- Water
- Plastic spoon
- Baking soda
- Popcorn kernels
- Cold white vinegar
- EveryChild Supplies: Tray or table

Supplies

23 Social Activity | Made to Move

Quantity

1.	Offering container	1
2.	Cardstock	1
3.	Scissors	1
4.	Clear tape	1
5.	Large paperclip	1
6.	Metal brad	1
7.	Floor tape	1
8.	Option 1: Twister® board game in place of the "Garden Twister" and "Garden Twister Spinner" Activity Pages, cardstock, scissors, clear tape, large paperclip, metal brad, and floor tape	1
9.	Option 2: Construction paper: red, yellow, green, and blue (6 sheets of each) in place of the "Garden Twister" Activity Page	24
10.	EveryChild Supplies: Tray or table	1

23 – Don't Throw the Ball | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

Quantity

1.	Bible	1
2.	Floor tape	1
3.	Construction paper	1

23 – What Kind of Soil Are You? | Made to Play *Uses Minimal Supplies*

Quantity

1.	Cardstock	4
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23 – Illustrate the Story | Made to Create

Uses Minimal Supplies

Quantity

1.	Bibles	1
2.	Permanent marker	1
3.	Posterboard	3
4.	Coloring supplies	Several
5.	Wall tape	1

23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

Quantity

1.	Clear cup or jar	1
2.	Tray	1
3.	Water	1
4.	Plastic spoon	1
5.	Baking soda	1
6.	Popcorn kernels	1
7.	Cold white vinegar	1