

Preteen | W2

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 2

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

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

Conversation Starter: "What has God given you?"

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

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

Bottom Line

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

Conversation Starter

"What has God given you?"

Monthly Memory Verse

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




5 min

Social

5 min

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

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Index cards	Several
 Writing supplies	Several

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

What You Do:

During the Activity:

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

What You Say:

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



5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

What You Need

-  Bible 1
-  Soft dodgeballs or foam balls Several

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

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

What You Say:

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

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

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

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

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

Groups 3/5

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Connect

What You Need

 Timer (or smartphone or watch)

1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

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

What You Say:

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

Groups 2/5




5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

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

What You Need

-  Bibles
-  Sticky notes
-  Writing supplies



EveryChild tips

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

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

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

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

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

What You Say:

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

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

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

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions *Uses Minimal Supplies*

What You Need

No supplies needed



EveryChild tips

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

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

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

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
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What You Say:

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

Groups

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

25 minutes

Groups 1/5

5 min

Prayer

5 min

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

What You Need

 Cardstock	1
 Scissors	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

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

During the Activity:

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

What You Say:

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

Prayer:

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

Getting Ready | Preteen Small Group

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

SOCIAL:

Opening Activity

Made to Connect

What You Need:

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

GROUPS:

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

1. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God \ | Application Activity]

Made to Play

What You Need:

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

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Play

What You Need:

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

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God \ | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Connect

What You Need:

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

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

Pray to God \ | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect**What You Need:**

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

What You Do:

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

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

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

Supplies

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

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

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

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

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Connect

	Quantity
1. Timer (or smartphone or watch)	1

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

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

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

	Quantity
1. Cardstock	1
2. Scissors	1