

Preteen | W4

Today's Suggested Schedule—July 2026, Week 4

Bible Story: The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up • *Luke 18:1-8*

Bottom Line: God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.

Conversation Starter: What do you need to keep doing?

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 Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up
• *Luke 18:1-8*

Bottom Line

God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.

Conversation Starter

What do you need to keep doing?

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 Play

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Egg carton flat	1
 Ping-pong balls	6
 Timer (or stopwatch or smartphone)	1

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.
- Demonstrate how to hold the egg carton on the sides with the line of six ping-pong balls in the row farthest from you. With a quick flick of your wrist, toss the line of ping-pong balls into the air, trying to move them all to the next row. Continue until you move all six to the row closest to you.
- Choose one kid to go first, and start the timer. It's much trickier than it sounds and will require a lot of focus and persistence. Give each kid one minute to try. Once the minute is up, reset and pick another kid to try.
- Continue until every kid has had a turn.

What You Say:

"That was not easy! It's easy to get frustrated and want to quit. The only way to get better is to keep practicing and not give up. The idea of not giving up is at the very center of our Bible Story today. Jesus told a story to teach His followers a powerful lesson about persistence. Let's go hear all about it."

Groups

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

25 minutes

Groups 1/5






5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

What You Need

 Bible	1
 Cardstock	1
 Scissors	1
 Coloring supplies	1
 Glue sticks	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Castle of Parables" on cardstock and cut, one set per kid.

During the Activity:

- Encourage kids to decorate each picture.
 - Ask kids to fold each of their papers in half along the line.
 - Show kids how to connect the pieces of their castle. (See our *Pinterest Board for an example: bit.ly/46pW1VI*)
 - Glue the back of the picture of "The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up" to the back of the picture of "The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast."
 - Glue the back of the picture of "The Story of the Lost Sheep" to the back of the picture of "The Story of the Lost Son."
 - Glue the back of the picture of "The Stories of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl" to the back of the picture of "The Story of the Farmer."
 - Glue the back of the picture of "The Parable of the Bags of Gold" to the back of the picture of "The Story of the Servant Who Had No Mercy."
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- Ask kids to find the picture showing "The Story of the Widow Who Would Not Give Up" from today's Bible Story.
 - Ask for a volunteer to turn to Luke 18:1-8 and summarize this parable.
 - Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast."
 - Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 13:31-34 and summarize this parable.
 - Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Lost Sheep."
 - Ask for a volunteer to turn to Luke 15:1-7 and summarize this parable.
 - Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Lost Son."
 - Ask for a volunteer to turn to Luke 15:11-32 and summarize this parable.
 - Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Stories of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl."
 - Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 13:44-46, and summarize this parable.
 - Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Farmer."
 - Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 13:1-23 and summarize this parable.
 - Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Parable of the Bags of Gold."

- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 25:14-30 (we told this story in the NIV) and summarize this parable.
- Ask kids to turn their castle to find the picture showing "The Story of the Servant Who Had No Mercy."
- Ask for a volunteer to turn to Matthew 18:21-35 and summarize this parable.

What You Say:

"Great job making your castle with some of the stories Jesus told to help teach people about God's kingdom.

"In the parable from today's Bible Story, Jesus told His disciples a story to encourage them to always pray and never give up talking to God. Even the unfair judge finally helped the widow who kept asking. Jesus wanted us to know that God is so much more loving and good than that judge! He always listens and always chooses what is best for us. So keep praying and talking to God, and don't give up! You will grow closer and closer to God the more you talk to Him. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.**"

Groups 3/5




5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

What You Need

 Plastic cups	Several
 Music player	1
 Upbeat music	1

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- In an open space in your activity area, place one set of colored cups up and the other set of colored cups down.

During the Activity:

- Divide the group into two teams: Team Up and Team Down.
- Explain the rules:
- Players from both teams move simultaneously through the field of play.
- Team Up flips any upside-down cup to be right-side up, and Team Down flips any right-side-up cup to be upside-down.
- You can only flip one cup at a time.
- You cannot “guard” cups or hold them; you must flip and move to the next.
- Any cup knocked onto its side doesn’t count for either team at the end of the round.
- When the music stops, all players must immediately freeze and step away from the cups.
- Decide which team has more cups flipped their way at the end.
- Play a few rounds, each round being a few minutes each.

What You Say:

“That was intense! You couldn’t stop for a second because the other team was always working against you.

“In the story Jesus told, the widow kept asking, kept seeking, and kept bothering the judge for what she wanted. In the same way, we are to go to God with our needs and desires and keep asking, over and over and over. That doesn’t mean He will answer right away or even in the way we think is best. Sometimes God says, ‘Yes.’ Sometimes He says, ‘No.’ And a lot of times, God says, ‘Not yet.’ But no matter what, Jesus gives us permission to keep on asking for what we want. Jesus’ story encourages us to be persistent. Don’t stop. Don’t get discouraged. When you keep talking to God and talking to God and talking to God, you will grow closer to Him! **[Bottom Line] God’s kingdom grows when you pray and don’t give up.**”

[Make It Personal] (Share a kid-friendly time when you prayed for a long time about something. For example, you can share something like: “There have been things I’ve prayed about for years. It’s easy to wonder if God is listening. But then I remember this story. It reminds me t

hat my job isn't to figure out God's timing; my job is to be persistent in my relationship with Him and keep bringing my requests to Him.")

Groups 2/5






5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

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

What You Need

 Bibles	1
 Butcher paper	2
 - Washable markers	1
 Scissors	1
 Painter's tape	1



EveryChild tips

- For a kid who may be anxious about being put on the spot, you can point to two kids at once and let them say the word together.
- Allow kids to raise their hand or clap instead of standing up if that is more comfortable for them.
- **Groups 5/5**

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- In large letters, write the Memory Verse on a piece of butcher paper, but in several spots of the verse, write a "gotcha" word. (e.g., "God's wisdom is all about eating pizza or boba tea. It is about stopping what is wrong and having peace and pancakes. All joy comes through the Holy Spirit." Acts 14:17 NlrV)
- Roll the paper up, and place it in your Small Group area.
- On a smaller piece of butcher paper, write the correct words (kingdom, not, or drinking, doing, right, joy, this, Romans), and cut each one out.
- Tape the correct words around the room.

During the Activity:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Romans 14:17 NlrV 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.
- Unroll the butcher paper, and ask kids to read the words written on the paper and try to identify the "gotcha" words.
- When a kid finds a "gotcha" word, ask them to yell that word and "Gotcha!" Then, ask them to find the correct word in the room.
- Once kids have the correct word, ask them to place it over the incorrect word.
- Once all the correct words have been placed, read the Memory Verse together.

What You Say:

"Great job figuring out all the 'gotcha' words and replacing them with the correct ones to complete our Memory Verse! That was a fun way

to remember what God's kingdom is all about. God's kingdom is good because He is good! And those good things are things we can ask God for in prayer, persistently, knowing He wants to give them to us. ***[Bottom Line]*** **God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up."**

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

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

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

- **Ask these questions and discuss:**
- Why do you think Jesus told this story specifically to teach about not giving up in prayer?
- Why do you think Jesus chose a widow—someone who was often overlooked and didn’t have much power—as the hero of this story?
- What does the widow’s persistence tell us about what she believed?
- The judge in the story wasn’t motivated by justice, but by being worn out. What motivates God to answer our prayers? (*His love, goodness, and justice*)
- **[Conversation Starter] What do you need to keep doing?**

5 min

Prayer

5 min

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

What You Need

No supplies needed

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Gather the group, and pose this question for discussion: "If God already knows everything we need before we even ask, why do you think He wants us to keep asking?"
- Let the kids share their thoughts. Guide them toward the idea that prayer isn't just a cosmic vending machine where we put in requests to get stuff. It's about relationship.
- Explain that when we keep talking to God, we are building our trust in Him, spending time with Him, and aligning our hearts with His. Persistence in prayer changes *us* as much as it changes our circumstances.

What You Say:

"That's a huge idea to think about. Prayer is more about our relationship with God than just getting answers. Talking to God over and over strengthens your relationship with Him. God wants to hear your heart and invites you to share it with Him. The more you talk with God and stay connected to Jesus, the closer you'll grow to Him. **[Bottom Line] God's kingdom grows when you pray and don't give up.** Let's close our time by talking to Him."

Prayer:

"God, thank You for the story of the widow who would not give up. It reminds us that You aren't like the grumpy judge, but You are a loving Father who delights in hearing from Your kids. Help us to be persistent in our prayers. Help us not to give up when we don't see an answer right away. We trust You, and we know Your kingdom grows when we keep coming to You. 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 Play

What You Need:

- Offering container, one per Small Group
- Egg carton flat, one per Small Group
- Ping-pong balls, six per Small Group
- Timer (or stopwatch or smartphone), 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 Play

What You Need:

- Plastic cups in two different colors, fifty cups per color
- Music player, one per Small Group
- Upbeat music, one per Small Group

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- In an open space in your activity area, place one set of colored cups up and the other set of colored cups down.

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God \ | Bible Story Review

Made to Create

What You Need:

- Bible, one per Small Group
- "Castle of Parables" Activity Page, one per kid
- Cardstock, two pieces per kid
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group
- Coloring supplies, several per kid
- Glue sticks, one per kid

What You Do:

- Print "Castle of Parables" on cardstock and cut, one set per kid.

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
- Butcher paper, one per Small Group
- Washable markers, several per Small Group
- Scissors, one pair per Small Group
- Painter's tape, one roll per Small Group

What You Do:

- In large letters, write the Memory Verse on a piece of butcher paper, but in several spots of the verse, write a "gotcha" word. (e.g., "God's wisdom is all about eating pizza or boba tea. It is about stopping what is wrong and having peace and pancakes. All joy comes through the Holy Spirit." Acts 14:17 NIV)
- Roll the paper up, and place it in your Small Group area.
- On a smaller piece of butcher paper, write the correct words (kingdom, not, or drinking, doing, right, joy, this, Romans), and cut each one out.
- Tape the correct words around the room.

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

Pray to God \ | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

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 Play

	Quantity
1. Offering container	1
2. Egg carton flat	1
3. Ping-pong balls	6
4. Timer (or stopwatch or smartphone)	1

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

	Quantity
1. Bible	1
2. Cardstock	1
3. Scissors	1
4. Coloring supplies	1
5. Glue sticks	1

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Plastic cups	Several
2. Music player	1
3. Upbeat music	1

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

	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Butcher paper	2
3. - Washable markers	1
4. Scissors	1
5. Painter's tape	1