

Preteen | W2

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2026, Week 2

Bible Story: On the Road to Emmaus • *Luke 24:13-35*

Bottom Line: You can have joy because there's a bigger story.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!* • *Philippians 4:4 NlrV*

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 (sections from God's Big Story are listed as optional)

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Bible Story Review: Bigger Story Joy (K-1st grade), Two Kids and a Stuffie (2nd-3rd grade)

Application Activity: Walk the Walk (K-1st grade), Help to See (2nd-3rd grade)

Memory Verse Activity: Freeze Memory Verse (K-1st grade), Joy Uncovered (2nd-3rd grade)

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

On the Road to Emmaus • *Luke 24:13-35*

Conversation Starter

How does knowing that Jesus is alive bring you joy?

Bottom Line

You can have joy because there's a bigger story.

Monthly Memory Verse

Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! • *Philippians 4:4 NlrV*



5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Prepared "Road to Emmaus Puzzle" Activity Page puzzle pieces in a resealable bag	1



EveryChild tips

Provide visual pictures to cue kids of an item for those who may struggle to think on the spot.

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high five, fist bump, or wave.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- As kids arrive, give them one puzzle piece each.
- Ask them to look at their piece and try to guess what the whole picture is.
- Say, "Can you tell what the picture is just by looking at your one piece?"
- After everyone has arrived and guessed, instruct the kids to put all their puzzle pieces together to reveal the full picture.

What You Say:

"Great job, everyone! It was pretty hard to guess the picture from just one little piece, right? It looked like a blob or a random line. But when we put it all together, we saw the big picture. Life can be like that. Sometimes we can only see one sad or confusing piece, and we forget there's a bigger story God is telling. Let's dive into today's Bible Story about two friends who needed help seeing the big picture."




5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

What You Need

 Bible	1
 Blindfold	1
 Prepared tape maze on the floor	1



EveryChild tips

- Provide gloves for kids with sensory sensitivities.

What You Do:

- Ask for volunteers and choose two from the kids who have their hands raised.
- Choose one volunteer to be the "traveler" and blindfold them.
- Choose the other volunteer to be the "guide."
- The guide must use only their voice to direct the traveler through the maze from start to finish. (e.g., "Take two steps forward." "Stop." "Turn left." "Turn right.")
- The rest of the group must stay silent.
- Continue with more rounds if time allows. Ask for two new volunteers at the start of each round.

What You Say:

"Wow, great job, you guys! Navigating that maze without seeing was tough, right? The traveler had to trust the guide who could see the whole path—the bigger picture. In our Bible Story today, Cleopas and his friend were the travelers, and they were lost in their sadness. They thought the story was over. But Jesus came alongside them as a guide. He walked with them and showed them the bigger story, which was that He, the Messiah, HAD to suffer on the cross and rise again. It was all part of God's rescue plan. When Jesus gave up His life and then rose again on the third day, He defeated the power of sin and death. Now when we believe in Jesus and accept what He's done for us, we can be forgiven and walk in close relationship with God forever. When the two friends saw the big picture, their sadness turned to joy! And just like them, **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because there's a bigger story.**"

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Explore

What You Need

No supplies needed



EveryChild tips

- *Remind kids to select a motion that all kids in the group are able to do.*

What You Do:

- Invite the group to stand in a circle.
- Explain that one person is going to do a very small, subtle motion (like winking their eye, wiggling their finger, tapping their toe, or twitching their nose).
- Instruct the rest of the group to watch closely to “see” what the person is doing.
- Ask for volunteers and choose one kid from those with their hands raised. Instruct the volunteer to begin their motion.
- When someone thinks they spot what it is, direct them to shout, “I SEE! I SEE!” and identify the motion.
- If they’re right, they get to be the next person to do a motion.
- If the group can’t guess after a minute, the person reveals their motion, and you say, “We needed help to see!”
- Play several rounds. Ask for new volunteers at the start of each round.

What You Say:

“Great job! You all had to look really closely to see what was happening, right? In our Bible Story today, the two friends walked with Jesus for miles but didn’t recognize Him. They needed help to see the truth. As people, we usually focus on our little piece of the story, like that test that didn’t go so well, or the mean thing your friend just said, or how you have to start at a new school where you don’t know anyone. We all face difficult or confusing things like that every single day. But God has given us a huge gift: we get to know the bigger story that we’re living in.

“And the bigger story is this: God loves us so much that, from the very beginning, He had a plan to rescue us from the terrible curse of sin so we could be close to Him. All of history points to the time that God sent Jesus to rescue us. Sometimes we get so focused on our problems or sadness that we miss what God is doing. And that’s when we need to remember to step back and look for the bigger story. God is ALWAYS working, even when we can’t see it at first, and that’s why **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because there’s a bigger story!**”






5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Play

What You Need

 Bibles	1
 Sandal or shoe	1
 Music player	1
 Fun, upbeat music	1
 EveryChild Supplies: Stop sign	1



EveryChild tips

- Use a stop sign or other visual cue to signal when it is time to stop.

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Philippians 4:4 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 together out loud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Instruct the group to sit in a circle.
- Pass the sandal or shoe around the circle while the music plays.
- When the music stops, instruct the kid holding the sandal to stand up and say the Memory Verse: "Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! Philippians 4:4."
- If they need help, the group can say the Memory Verse with them.
- Start the music again and continue playing.

What You Say:

"You guys are pros at this verse! The first part says: 'Always be joyful.' That sounds impossible, right? How can we be joyful when bad things happen? The key is the next part: 'because you belong to the Lord.' Because we belong to God, we are part of His story.

"We're living in God's big story right now! This doesn't mean that you won't face hard times or that you can't ever be sad or angry. But it does mean that you go through it all with God. That gives us a deep joy that doesn't go away, even on bad days. That's why **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because there's a bigger story!**"

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

Ask these questions:

- If you were walking with Jesus, what questions would you ask Him?
- Why do you think Jesus chose to show up right in the middle of the two friends' sadness instead of waiting until they felt better?
- How do you think Cleopas and his friend were different after their walk with Jesus compared to before it?
- How does knowing that Jesus is alive help you have joy—even in confusing or painful times?
- What is one way you can look for God's bigger story this week?