

Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2026, Week 3

Bible Story: Be Humble/Love Your Enemies • *Matthew 5:38-48*

Conversation Starter: How can you show kindness to someone who makes you mad?

Bottom Line: Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* • *Philippians 2:3 NIV*

Supplies NOT Included in the Activity Bags

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot

- Whiteboard and dry-erase marker, or posterboard and marker

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

- Coloring supplies

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

- Bibles
- Paper
- Writing supplies
- gluesticks

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Bible Story Summary

Be Humble/Love Your Enemies

We follow up in Week 3 with Jesus' teaching to "turn the other cheek" and "go the extra mile." Rather than paying back our enemies in kind, we show they can't control us when we choose to love like Jesus ... and trust God to make things right. Bottom Line: Love like Jesus even when it's hard. [BOTTOM LINE] Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

1. Take a Snapshot

What You Need:

- Whiteboard and dry-erase marker

What You Do:

- Tell the group that Jesus didn't just talk about loving others; He showed it. As a group, you're going to brainstorm a simple service project you could do together to "love like Jesus" in a practical way.
- Ask: "What are some ways we could love others like Jesus?"
- Write their ideas on the board.
- Then, brainstorm simple ways your group could show love to one of those groups.
 - Make cards for residents of a local nursing home.
 - Collect socks or toiletries for a local shelter.
 - "Chalk the walk" with kind messages on the sidewalk outside the church.
- Choose one idea that your group is excited about and could realistically do. Make a simple plan to put it into action.

What You Say:

"These are incredible ideas. It's one thing to talk about loving people, but it's another thing to actually do it. When we serve others, we are putting others first. When people see you choosing to love when it's hard, they'll know that you're different. They'll see that you're a follower of Jesus. We are choosing to **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard.** That's humility in action."

2. Bible Story Extension

What You Need:

- “Love Challenge” Activity Page
- “Challenge Stickers” Activity Page
- gluesticks
- Coloring supplies

What You Do:

- Give each kid a “Love Challenge” Activity Page and instruct them to decorate around the exterior of their paper.
- Direct the kids to select 4 hearts from the “Challenge Hearts” to add to their “Love Challenge” Activity Page.
- Let the kids pick 4 hearts from the “Challenge Hearts” and glue them down.
- Instruct kids to color in their hearts as they complete each challenge.

What You Say:

“Jesus said that we should not only love our friends but also love our enemies and pray for those who hurt us (Matthew 5:44). This challenge is about choosing kindness and putting others first, even when it’s hard—that’s how we show the world we are His followers!

“Jesus said that if someone forces you to go one mile, you should go two miles (Matthew 5:41). That means choosing to do more than what is required, especially for someone who might not expect it or even deserve it. When you choose kindness instead of revenge, you are showing the powerful love of Jesus.

“As you go through your week and color in the hearts of the challenges you complete, remember with each one, you are loving like Jesus when it’s easy and when it’s hard. This really captures the ‘upside down’ message Jesus was teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. It’s easy to love people who are nice to you. But loving your enemies? That takes God’s help, big time. And Jesus ended by saying, ‘*So be perfect, just as your father in heaven is perfect*’ (Matthew 5:48 NIV). It’s not our natural reaction to be kind to people who are unkind to us. But Jesus calls us to a higher standard, to be like our Father in heaven. He wants us to **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it’s hard**, because that’s what shows the world what God’s love really looks like.

[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate example of how you showed Jesus’ love, even though it was really hard. For example: “There was a time when someone at work was really unfair to me, and my first instinct was to take revenge and complain about them to everyone. But I remembered this teaching from Jesus. Instead of complaining, I chose to pray for them and even did something nice for them. It was really hard, but it totally changed how I felt, and eventually, our relationship got better.”)

3. Discussion Questions

Ask:

- Jesus said to love your enemies and pray for those who hurt you. Why do you think Jesus wants us to respond to mean or hurtful people with love instead of revenge?
- Going the “extra mile” was a choice the person could make to show kindness. What might it look like for you to “go the extra mile” for someone who isn’t kind to you?
- It’s easy to love people who love us back, but Jesus asks for more. What’s the difference between the kind of love Jesus talked about and the kind of love most people show?
- Jesus said that when we love our enemies, we show we are God’s children. How can showing love to difficult people help others see what God is like?
- Loving others like Jesus can feel impossible sometimes. When it’s really hard to be kind or forgiving, what can you do to let God help you love that person anyway?

4. Verses to Take with You

What You Need:

- Bibles
- Paper
- Writing supplies

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Philippians 2:3 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.
- Give each kid a piece of paper and a marker.
- Assign each person to write down just three or four words of the Memory Verse, Philippians 2:3. (e.g., Kid 1 writes "Don't do anything," Kid 2 writes "only to get ahead," etc.)
- Once they've written their part, invite the kids to crumple their paper into a tight ball.
- Encourage each kid to toss their crumpled paper into a pile in the center of the circle.
- On "Go," instruct everyone to grab a crumpled paper, open it up, and work together as a group to put the verse back in the correct order on the floor.

What You Say:

"Nice teamwork! You unscrambled that verse perfectly. 'Value others more than yourselves' (Philippians 2:3 NIV). That's a tough one. It's the opposite of what the world tells us. But it's exactly what Jesus modeled, and it's the key to being able to love your enemies. Not a single person ever has been perfect, except for Jesus! But with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can grow more and more to be like Jesus as we learn to love our enemies like He does. We can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard.**"

5. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

What To Do:

- Say, "Let's take a minute to have a quiet talk with God. I want you to think about one person who is sometimes hard to love. You don't have to say their name out loud. Just picture them in your mind."
- Give the kids a few moments of quiet.
- Say, "Now, let's ask God to help us love that person. You can just think the words in your heart."
- After another moment of quiet, close the time in prayer.

What You Say:

"It can feel really hard to love people who are not kind to us. But Jesus told us to '*pray for those who hurt you*' (*Matthew 8:44 NIV*). He gives us the strength to love even our enemies. And we can ask Him for help! Let's finish praying."

"Dear God, thank You for loving us. Please help us to love others the way You do, sending sun and rain on everyone. Give us Your strength so we can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard**. We need Your help! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."