

Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2024, Week 3

Today's Bible Story: The Peacemaker (Abigail Intervenes) • 1 Samuel 25:1-35

Today's Bottom Line: You can help others make peace.

Monthly Memory Verse: *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.* Romans 12:18 (ESV)

Monthly Virtue: Peace—Proving you care more about each other than winning at argument

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Reflect on how Jesus made a way for us to be forgiven and to be in relationship with God. Thank God for this peace. Pray that the kids in your group would be open to finding peaceful solutions to the problems they face. Pray for opportunities for them to become peacemakers in their relationships with others.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

LARGE GROUP (35 minutes)

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

Hang Time

Welcome/Opener

Worship

Bible Story

Bottom Line

Prayer

Closer

SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Story Exploration

Bible Story Review: Comic Book Story Review

Application Activity: Places for Peace

Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Word Scramble

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Use this if kids have questions about following Jesus.

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

If a child has expressed interest in following Jesus, please let the parents know so they can be a part of the conversation that their child is having about faith.

What Now?

If you put your trust in Jesus Christ and believe in Him as the One who forgives your sins and makes it possible for you to know God, we are so proud of you! There is no greater single decision that you could make.

We believe that baptism is an important next step for you. Baptism is your way of telling your friends and family, “Hey, I'm a follower of Jesus!” If you're interested in learning more or participating in baptism, talk to a staff member about the next steps you should take.

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Story Exploration

Read 1 Samuel 25:1-35 about Abigail, David and Nabal.

Who was Abigail?

What problem did Abigail solve in the story?

How did Abigail show wisdom in the situation?

Why do you think Abigail chose to help David instead of being angry with him?

What can we learn from Abigail about solving problems and making peace?

Abigail, a woman of wisdom and courage, found herself caught between two opposing forces: David, who sought revenge, and her husband Nabal, who provoked David's anger. In this tense situation, Abigail chose the path of peace. She demonstrated remarkable humility, wisdom, and compassion as she intervened to prevent bloodshed.

Abigail's actions echo the teachings of Jesus, who proclaimed, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). Just as Jesus reached out to heal divisions and reconcile humanity to God, Abigail sought reconciliation between David and Nabal. She exemplified the essence of following Jesus – embodying love, mercy, and forgiveness.

In our own lives, we often encounter conflicts, whether in our families, communities, or even within ourselves. It's tempting to respond with anger, retaliation, or avoidance. Yet, Jesus calls us to a higher standard – to be agents of peace and reconciliation.

Here are some ways that choosing peace can point others to Jesus:

Reflecting Jesus' Character: When we exhibit peace in the midst of conflict or tension, we reflect the character of Jesus, who is often described as the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). By embodying the peace that Jesus offers, we demonstrate to others what it means to be followers of Christ.

Witnessing through Actions: Our actions can speak louder than words. When we respond to difficult situations with grace, kindness, and a desire for reconciliation, we provide a tangible example of the transformative power of Jesus in our lives. Others may be drawn to Jesus by observing the peace that He brings to our hearts and relationships and may ask you about it.

Inviting Others to Experience God's Peace: By showing peace, we invite others to experience the peace that comes from a relationship with Jesus. When people witness the peace that surpasses understanding in our lives (Philippians 4:7), they may be curious to learn more about the source of that peace and be drawn closer to Jesus.

Breaking Down Barriers: Peace has the ability to break down barriers and build bridges between people. When we choose peace over conflict, we create opportunities for understanding, reconciliation, and unity. In doing so, we demonstrate the reconciling work of Jesus, who came to bring peace between God and humanity (Colossians 1:20).

Mending relationships: Showing peace can be a powerful means of bringing healing to broken relationships and wounded hearts. Just as Abigail's actions prevented bloodshed and brought

reconciliation between David and Nabal, our efforts to promote peace can be instruments of healing and restoration in the lives of others, pointing them to the ultimate healer, Jesus Christ.

In summary, showing peace in our lives not only reflects the character of Jesus but also serves as a compelling testimony to His transformative power and the peace that He offers to all who trust in Him.

1. Comic Book Story Review

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: “Comic Book Template” Activity Page, “Comic Book Cut Outs” Activity Page, scissors, and glue sticks; *Optional: crayons or markers*

What You Do:

- Give each kid a “Comic Book Template” Activity Page, a “Comic Book Cut Outs” Activity Page, and a pair of scissors.
- Encourage the kids to cut apart the “Comic Book Cut Outs” Activity Page.
- Together, talk about each of the four panels.
- Set out the glue sticks.
- Guide the kids to glue the cut outs from the “Comic Book Cut Outs” Activity Page in order onto the “Comic Book Template” Activity Page as you review the Bible Story.
- The scenes should be glued in the following order:
 - Scene 1: David and his men protected Nabal’s flocks.
 - Scene 2: Nabal threw a big party.
 - Scene 3: David got angry, and gathered 400 men—ready for a fight.
 - Scene 4: Abigail gathered gifts to take to David to make peace.
- If time allows, set out the crayons or markers and invite the kids to color their comic book scenes.

What You Say:

“Abigail saw what was happening and decided to step in to try and bring peace. She did what she knew she could do to help. And because of her quick thinking, Nabal’s men and David’s men avoided a big fight.

“Abigail was able to find a peaceful solution to a big problem. Jesus did the same thing! He made a way for us to be forgiven, so that we could find peace with God. This week, when you see friends having trouble getting along, ask God to help you so that **[Bottom Line] you can help others make peace.**”

[Make It Personal] (Tell the group about a time as a kid when you helped bring peace to a certain situation. Maybe your siblings or friends were fighting. What did you do to help them look past their anger to find peace?)

* 2. Places for Peace

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: “Places for Peace” Activity Pages, “Items for Each Place” Activity Page, and wall tape

What You Do:

- Hang the “Places of Peace” Activity Pages on the wall around your small group area, or set them out on the floor.
- Place the cards from the “Items for Each Place” Activity Page face down in front of their “place.”
 - Playground: swing, slide, sand toys
 - Classroom: pencil, books, desk
 - Home: plate of cookies, toys, TV remote
- Call out one of the three places.
- Direct the kids run to find that place.
- Once the kids arrive, invite a kid to select a card and show to the rest of the group the item on it.
- Invite discussion with the following:
 - How could this item cause a problem between people?
 - Give me an example.
 - If kids are stumped, some ideas are listed below.
- Once a kid has given an answer, invite the rest of the group to brainstorm a way they could bring peace to that situation.
 - Playground
 - Swing:** Two friends are fighting over the open swing.
 - Slide:** One friend is claiming the other friend pushed her down the slide.
 - Sand toys:** Two friends are having trouble sharing the toys.
 - Classroom
 - Pencil:** One friend says the other took their pencil without asking.
 - Books:** Someone knocked over a stack of books and is refusing to clean it up.
 - Desk:** The teacher said you can pick a new seat. Two friends are fighting over the same desk.
 - Home
 - Plate of cookies:** Your sister claims she hasn’t had a cookie yet. Your brother is arguing that he saw her eat one.
 - Toys:** Your brother left toys all over the living room, and he won’t clean them up.
 - TV remote:** Your sister says it’s her turn to pick the show. Your little brother says it’s his turn.
- Continue moving from place to place until all cards have been flipped over and discussed.

What You Say:

“No matter where we go, we’ll probably see conflict, or trouble, at some point. We just don’t get along all of the time. We argue and fight over small and big things. But you could be the one to help bring peace to a situation that really needs it!

“This week, when you see a conflict, ask God to help you find a solution so everyone is protected. Remember, you can always ask an adult for help if the situation isn’t getting better. No matter where you go this week, with God’s help, look for ways that **[Bottom Line] you can help others make peace**

3. Memory Verse Word Scramble

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Bibles, “Romans 12:18 Cards” Activity Page, and playground or foam balls

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up Romans 12:18 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

Finding verses with kindergartners: Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word *Romans* at the top of the page as you say “Romans” aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 12 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 12 for the little 18; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

Finding verses with 1st 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 Romans in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that Romans starts with the letters R-O. When the kids find Romans, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Romans. Help the kids find the page. When they find Romans, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 12. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 18 in chapter 12.

- Point out the part of the verse about how we are to live at peace as much (or as far) as we can.
- Lay out the cards from the “Romans 12:18 Cards” Activity Page in a line in order.
 - NOTE: If you have more than eight kids in your group, divide into two teams with two sets of cards and run this game as a relay race.
- Point out the numbers on the cards for pre-readers.
- Instruct the kids to form a line.
- Hand the first two kids in line a ball.
- When you say, “Go!,” instruct the first kid in line to run to bounce the ball on the first card of the verse.
- Read the words on the card as the kid bounces the ball, and invite the kid to repeat them.
- Direct the kid to run back to tag the next friend in line.
- Repeat with the remaining words of the verse—running to bounce the ball in order on each card as you repeat the verse together.
- As kids return to the line, direct them to hand off the ball to the next kid in line without one, then join the back of the line.
- Continue until the entire verse has been reviewed.
- After the first round, mix up the cards so they are no longer in order.

What You Say:

“God wants you to live in peace with everyone, and to do that as MUCH as you can. That means that you must keep calm and look for solutions, instead of worrying so much about winning an argument or proving your way is the right way. It’s hard when you think you’re right, but bringing peace means stopping to listen and understand the other person’s point of view. And when you see two friends not getting along, remember that **[Bottom Line] you can help others make peace.** If you ask for help, God will help you be a peacemaker!”

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Say:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember?
- How do they help me trust and love God?

What You Need: "Places for Peace" Activity Pages from Places for Peace activity

What You Do:

- If you've already taken them down or did not do the Places for Peace activity, set out the "Places of Peace" Activity Pages around your group space.
- Instruct the kids to run to one of the "Places for Peace" pages.
- Invite the kids to pray on their own, asking God to help them be peacemakers in that place this week.
- After a few moments of prayer, instruct the kids to switch to a new "place" and pray again.
- Direct the kids to continue until they've cycled through all three places.
- Instruct the kids to return to the middle of your small group space and form a circle.
- Remind the kids that **[Bottom Line] you can help others make peace.**
- Close your group time in prayer.

What You Say:

"God, thank You for the story of Abigail and how she did everything she could to bring peace. This week, when we're at the playground, or school, or at home—or wherever we go—help us to look for ways to bring peace and to help others make peace too. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, point out the "Places for Peace" pages and encourage the kids to share two ways **[Bottom Line] you can help others make peace** in those places this week.

GETTING READY

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

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Story applies to real-life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

Story Exploration – No Supplies

1. Comic Book Story Review

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need:

- Print “Comic Book Template” Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Print “Comic Book Cut Outs” Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Scissors, one pair for each kid
- Glue sticks, several for a Small Group to share
- *Optional: crayons or markers, enough for a Small Group to share*

*** 2. Places for Peace**

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need:

- Print “Places for Peace” Activity Pages on paper, one set for each Small Group
- Print “Items for Each Place” Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Wall tape, one roll for each Small Group

3. Memory Verse Word Scramble

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need:

- Bibles, marked at Romans 12:18 for Kindergarteners, one for each kid
- Print “Romans 12:18 Cards” Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one to two sets for each Small Group, depending on group size
- Playground or foam balls from Early Arriver activity

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need:

- “Places for Peace” Activity Pages from the Places for Peace activity

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 resources: **Parent Cue app**