

## Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2024, Week 3

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

**Today's Key Question:** How can you be a peacemaker?

**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 an 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 (Communicator Script)

Key Question

Prayer

### **SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)**

**GROUPS:** Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Story Exploration

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

## 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. Take a Snapshot

### [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:** Dry-erase board, dry-erase marker, and dry-erase eraser

#### What You Do:

- Invite the group to sit where they can all see the dry-erase board.
- Ask for a volunteer.
- Give the volunteer the dry-erase marker.
- Instruct them to draw a large peace sign on the dry-erase board (big enough for you to write in), and then sit back down with the group.
- Ask kids to take a moment to think about examples of a conflict.
  - This could be a hypothetical, but likely, scenario.
  - They could also think of something that has actually happened recently in their lives.
- Once the kids have had time to think, invite kids (one at a time) who would like to share their conflict example with the group.
- After the first kid finishes explaining the scenario, allow kids to discuss one side of the conflict.
- Briefly write down an explanation of that side of the conflict in the left half of the peace sign.
- Invite kids to discuss the other side of the conflict.
- Briefly write down an explanation of that side of the conflict in the right half of the peace sign.
- Once you have discussed both sides of the conflict, allow kids to come up with creative solutions to help the two sides make peace.
  - Be sure to facilitate respectful discussion, allowing kids to take turns and listen to one another.
- If there are several solutions suggested, invite the group to vote on what they think the best option is.
- Briefly write down an explanation of that solution in the bottom section of the peace sign.
- If time allows, erase everything but the peace sign and invite another kid to share a conflict.
- Repeat the process.
- Ask:
  - Why does conflict feel so uncomfortable?
  - Is it challenging to step in and be a peacemaker? Why or why not?
  - Are there times when you should not be the peacemaker?
- Remind kids that when we are brave, bold, and creative to help others come up with peaceful solutions, we are living like Jesus and showing His love to those around us.
- Be sensitive to any kids in your group who may be experiencing or witnessing conflict that requires an adult to step in. Encourage them to ask an adult who they trust for help.

## 2. Bible Story Extension

### [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:** “Peace Power” Activity Page, pencils

#### What You Do:

- Invite kids to spread out.
- Give each kid a copy of the “Peace Power” Activity Page and a pencil.
- Instruct the kids to put the lettered events at the bottom of the page in order on the numbered lines moving up the lightbulb.
  - Suggest that kids read over each event entirely before deciding where to place them on their “Peace Power” Activity Page.
- Once everyone has had time to complete the page, take turns asking different kids to share each of the events that happened in order from the story.
  - Make sure everyone agrees on the correct order that the events belong on the “Peace Power” Activity Page. (The proper order of events is listed below.)
- Ask:
  - What are some of Abigail’s character traits that equipped her to be a peacemaker? (*For example: She was brave, creative, patient, etc.*)
  - How can we have those same character traits that Abigail had?
- Remind kids that when we have a relationship with Jesus, we have the power of the Holy Spirit to help us work toward becoming peacemakers.
- **[Make It Personal] (Tell the kids a story about a time when you had to be a peacemaker. Do your best to explain the conflict in a way that kids can relate, and then share how your relationship with Jesus influenced your ability to make peace.)**

#### Order of Events:

- a. Nabal lived in Carmel with his wife, Abigail, and his many goats and sheep.
  - i. Nabal was rich, mean, and selfish. Abigail was wise and kind.
- b. David and his men were camped out near Nabal’s flocks, and took care of them, keeping them safe from harm.
- f. When it was shearing time, Nabal was going to throw a big party. David thought he and his men deserved to be included since they had helped protect the sheep.
- c. David sent some of his men to ask Nabal for anything he wanted to share with them since they had helped keep Nabal’s sheep safe.
- g. Nabal responded with anger, instead of assistance. He sent David’s men back empty-handed.
- e. David responded with anger as well and made plans to attack Nabal’s home.
- h. Abigail heard of the feud, and packed a bag of food and supplies to bring to David and his men.
- d. Abigail made peace with David. Because of her courage and kindness, she prevented a terrible fight between him and Nabal.

### 3. Discussion Questions

#### [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

#### **What You Do:**

##### **Ask:**

- What would have happened if Abigail did nothing?
- How did David trust God by listening to Abigail? (she reminds David that God will fight your battles for you. Taking matters in your own hands will only lead to regret.)
- Why is it challenging to help others make peace?
- How can peace point others to Jesus?
- Would you want someone to help you make peace if you're in a conflict?
- How can you be a peacemaker?
- Should you always take on the responsibility of being a peacemaker for others?
- When can you know that it's time to let someone else help?

## 4. Verses to Take with You

### [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, pencils, “Bible Buzzer” Activity Page, buzzer (or tap light)

#### What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Invite the teams to sit together on opposite sides of your group space.
- Place the buzzer (or tap light) in the center of the group space, equidistant from both teams.
- Give each team a Bible and a pencil.
- Place a copy of the “Bible Buzzer” Activity Page face down near each team and tell them not to turn it over yet.
- Instruct each team to select a teammate who will be the one to race to the buzzer (or tap light).
- Explain that when you say, “Go,” each team should work together to:
  - Flip over the “Bible Buzzer” Activity Page.
  - Read number one.
  - Use the Bible to look up the first verse.
  - Talk about the answer to the first question.
  - Send their buzzer ringer to the middle to ring the buzzer (or turn on the tap light).
- Once the first buzzer does this, ask for their team’s response.
- If the team’s answer is correct, assign that team two points.
- If the team answers the question incorrectly, allow the other team a chance to provide their answer.
- If the other team answers the question correctly, assign that team one point.
- If that team answers the question incorrectly, tell the group what the correct answer is.
- Move on to the next round.
- Repeat until all five questions have been answered.
- Answers to the questions:
  1. *Your mouth (tongue/lips)*
  2. *Joy*
  3. *Faith in Jesus*
  4. *Jesus died on the cross*
  5. *Everyone*
- Direct each team to add up their points and declare the winning team!

## 5. Make It Personal with Prayer

### [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?
- How does this story help me to live on mission?

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

#### What You Do:

- Divide kids into pairs.
- Invite the pairs to spread out with their partners in your group space.
- Direct each pair to share with each other a conflict they have going on in their lives right now.
- Instruct each pair to brainstorm creative solutions for how they can be peacemakers in their situations.
- After each pair of kids has had time to share and discuss, say: "It's incredibly important to have people you can trust who you can talk to about what's going on in your life. One of the purposes of being in a Small Group is to have people who provide a safe place for this very reason."
- Invite the pairs to pray for each other, asking God to help them know how to bring peace in the situation they're facing.
- Encourage the kids to try to remember to pray for their partners throughout the week ahead.
- Close your group time in prayer, asking God to help everyone bring peace in their situations.

## 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.)**

### Story Exploration – No Supplies

#### 1. Take a Snapshot

**[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:**

- Dry-erase board, one for each Small Group
- Dry-erase marker, one for each Small Group
- Dry-erase eraser, one for each Small Group

#### 2. Bible Story Extension

**[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 “Peace Power” Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Pencils, one for each kid

#### 3. Discussion Questions

**[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]**

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:**

- No supplies needed

#### 4. Verses to Take with You

**[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:**

- Print “Bible Buzzer” Activity Page on paper, two copies for each Small Group
- Buzzer (or tap light), one for each Small Group
- Bibles, two for each Small Group
- Pencils, two for each Small Group

#### 5. Make It Personal with Prayer

**[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]**

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

**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 resources: **Parent Cue app**