

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2024, Week 3

Today's Bible Story: I Keep Forgettin' (Golden Calf) • *Exodus 32:1-35*

Today's Key Question: What can you think about when it's hard to wait?

Today's Bottom Line: When you have to wait, remember what's true.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!* Psalm 27:14 (ESV)

Monthly Virtue: Patience—Waiting until later for what you want now

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might be visiting your group for the first time. Reflect on any ways you've fallen short of showing patience this week. Ask for forgiveness and for the continued gift of growing in patience. Pray that during group time, your few would embrace and remember God's love and God's provision as truths to help them wait well.

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

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

The story of Exodus 32:1-35, involving the Israelites' creation and worship of the Golden Calf during Moses' absence on Mount Sinai, can be related to the Gospel in several profound ways. Each aspect of the story can be seen as both a reflection of human nature and a precursor to the themes of sin, judgment, intercession, and redemption that are central to the Gospel message.

1. Human Sinfulness and Idolatry

- **Exodus 32:** The Israelites create and worship the Golden Calf, demonstrating their quick turn to idolatry when not directly led by Moses.
- **Romans 1:25:** "...They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator..." This verse underscores the human tendency towards idolatry, which is not limited to physical idols but includes anything that takes the place of God in our hearts.

2. God's Righteous Anger Against Sin

- **Exodus 32:10:** God expresses His anger towards the Israelites' sin, contemplating destroying them but is petitioned by Moses.
- **Romans 2:5-8:** The New Testament speaks of God's righteous judgment against those who are self-seeking and reject the truth. God's response to sin is consistent across both testaments, emphasizing His holy nature.

3. Intercession

- **Exodus 32:11-14:** Moses intercedes for the Israelites, pleading with God not to destroy them despite their sin.
- **1 Timothy 2:5:** "For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus." Just as Moses stood in the gap for Israel, Jesus stands in the gap for humanity, interceding on our behalf before the Father.

4. Atonement and Forgiveness

- **Exodus 32:30-32:** Moses offers to atone for the people's sin, highlighting the need for atonement and sacrifice for sin.
- **1 John 2:2:** "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." Jesus is the fulfillment of the need for atonement, offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice to reconcile us with God.

5. The Consequence of Sin and the Need for Repentance

- **Exodus 32:35:** God sends a plague as a consequence of the Israelites' sin with the Golden Calf.
- **Acts 3:19:** "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord." The New Testament calls for repentance as the response to God's offer of forgiveness through Christ, emphasizing that turning away from sin is essential for reconciliation with God.

6. The New Covenant

- **Exodus 34:1:** Following the Golden Calf incident, God instructs Moses to chisel out two new stone tablets, symbolizing the renewal of the covenant.
- **Luke 22:20:** During the Last Supper, Jesus speaks of the cup as the "new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." This signifies the establishment of a new covenant through Jesus' sacrifice, fulfilling and surpassing the old covenant.

The story of the Golden Calf, therefore, not only demonstrates the depth of human sin and the seriousness with which God views idolatry but also foreshadows the coming of Jesus as the ultimate mediator and sacrifice for sins, offering a way back to God through repentance and faith.

* 1. Remember What's True

[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: Bible marked with “Remember What's True” Activity Page bookmarks, and playdough

What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Ask questions to briefly review the Bible Story. Try to touch on the following key points:
 - After God rescued the Israelites from Egypt, the people promised to obey God.
 - God wanted to give Moses a special set of rules that would help the people stay connected to God and keep them safe. So God called Moses to come up on the mountain.
 - Moses and his helper, Joshua, went up the mountain. While Joshua waited, Moses spoke with God. They were there for FORTY days and nights.
 - The Israelites became impatient. They forgot all the ways God had provided for them. They forgot they had promised to obey.
 - The people brought all their gold earrings, and Aaron melted them together and formed a statue of a calf—a golden calf. They called it their god!
 - When Moses and Joshua came down from the mountain, they saw the people dancing in front of the golden calf.
 - Moses was so angry he threw the tablets on the ground, and they broke! He took the golden calf and burned it in the fire. Then he scattered the ashes in the water and made the Israelites drink it. It was a bitter reminder of what they had done.
- Say: “When the Israelites became impatient, they forgot all that God had done. They forgot to remember what's true. God can help us remember what's true.”
- Choose a kid and give them the marked Bible.
- Invite them to open the Bible to one of the marked pages.
- Read the verse to the group, then invite the kid with the marked Bible to read the “Remember What's True” bookmark.
 - Invite the kid to read the strip aloud or point to each word as you read it aloud.
- Instruct the kid to hold on to the bookmark and give the marked Bible to another kid in the group.
- Invite that kid to open the Bible to another of the marked verses.
- Repeat for each marked verse.
- Ask: “What are some other things that are true about God?”
 - If the kids are stumped, prompt them with responses, like:
 - God loves us.
 - God made the world and everything in it.
 - God is always with us, etc.
- Give each kid a lump of playdough.
- Invite the kids to sculpt something that is true about God.
 - Here are some ideas:
 - They can make a flower to show that God made the world.
 - They can make a heart to express God's never-ending love, etc.
- **[Make It Personal] Sculpt something that is true about God too.**
- Invite kids to share what they made with the group.

What You Say:

“In our story today, the Israelites forgot what God had done for them by bringing them out of Egypt. They forgot that God was with them, and that they could trust God to lead them.

[Bottom Line] “When you have to wait, remember what’s true. Remember the ways God has helped you. Remember God loves you more than you could ever imagine. Remember God is always with you. So, remember: **[Bottom Line]** when you have to wait, remember what’s true!”

2. When You Have to Wait

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: “When You Have to Wait” Activity Page, prepared paper plates, markers or crayons, stapler and staples

What You Do:

- Give each kid two prepared paper plates.
- Set out the markers or crayons.
- Invite the kids to decorate the back, outside of their plates with the markers or crayons.
- As kids work, talk about things that are true about God. Here are some ideas:
 - God loves us.
 - God is always with us.
 - God made the world and everything in it.
 - God is powerful.
 - God is good, etc.
- Demonstrate how kids can put their plates together, and invite them to put their plates together, rim to rim.
- Staple the edges of the two plates together.
- Give each kid a label from the “When You Have to Wait” Activity Page to attach to their frisbee.
- Read the Bottom Line that is on the label out loud, encouraging the kids to say it with you.
- Invite kids to toss their frisbees back and forth with a partner, saying the Bottom Line as they do.
 - Instruct the first partner to say: **[Bottom Line] “When you have to wait . . .”**
 - Instruct the second partner to answer: **[Bottom Line] “. . . remember what’s true!”**
- Check out this link for a visual or scan the QR code below: <https://bit.ly/4auOsNS>



What You Say:

“The thing to remember this week is this: **[Bottom Line] when you have to wait, remember what’s true!** Remember God loves you more than you could ever imagine. Remember God is good. Remember God is always with you and that God will help you.

“It can be hard to wait sometimes! While we’re waiting for something, we can think about the ways that God has helped us before. What are some ways God helps us? (*Invite responses, like: God loves us, is always with us, puts people in our lives to love and help us, etc.*)

[Make It Personal] (Tell kids something true that you remember when you have to wait—whether it’s God loves you, God is with you, God is faithful, or God has a plan.)

“So remember: **[Bottom Line] When you have to wait, remember what’s true!”**

3. Go Sandwich

[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: Prepared “PB&J Cards” Activity Pages; *Optional: pre-folded paper plates*

What You Do:

- Divide your group into groups of four.
 - If you have some groups of three, a group of three will work as well.
- Instruct each group to get in a circle.
- Give each group a prepared deck of “PB&J Cards” and place it face down in the circle.
 - *Optional: Give each kid a folded paper plate.*
- Instruct each kid to take five cards from the top of the deck.
 - *Optional: Kids can use the folded paper plate to help them hold their “hand.”*
- Lead kids to play a variation of “Go Fish!”
- Share that the goal of the game is to make as many PB&J sandwiches as possible with two bread cards, one peanut butter card, and one jelly card.
 - Choose one kid from each team to go first.
 - Instruct that kid to start the game by asking another kid for a card they need.
 - “_____ do you have any peanut butter?”
 - If the other kid has that card, direct them to give it to the requester.
 - If they don't have the card, direct them to say, “Go Sandwich.”
 - If a kid says, “Go Sandwich,” instruct the requester to draw a card from the pile of cards in the middle.
 - Play continues around the circle to the left.
 - When a kid has a complete PB&J Sandwich, instruct them to set the cards in front of them.
- Play until each kid has at least one PB&J Sandwich.
- Guide kids to put their “Sandwich Set” in verse order.
- Read the verse aloud with the kids.
- Play again if time allows.

NOTE: Save the prepared “PB&J Cards” Activity Pages for Week 4.

What You Say:

“Did Aaron and the Israelites *wait for the LORD (Psalm 27:14)*? (No!) No, they didn't! They became impatient and lost hope that Moses and Joshua would come back. They forgot ALL the ways God had provided for them. They forgot they had promised to obey.

“Waiting well can be hard. When you have to wait, remember that you don't have to do it on your own! When you follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live with you. And patience is a gift from God's Spirit. So **[Bottom Line] when you have to wait, remember what's true.** Remember God loves you. Remember God is always with you. Remember God cares for you. **[Bottom Line] When you have to wait, remember what's true!**”

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: Bible marked at Psalm 27:14

What You Do:

- Use the conversation below as a guide to lead kids into a responsive prayer.

What You Say:

"Remember, **[Bottom Line] when you have to wait, remember what's true.** One thing that's true is that the Bible is God's Word. So when being patient seems hard, remember our verse, Psalm 27:14. *(Read the verse from the marked Bible.)*

Instruct the kids to echo you as you pray the prayer below:

"Dear God, *(Dear God,)*
You are good. *(You are good.)*
You are kind. *(You are kind.)*
You are loving. *(You are loving.)*
You are powerful. *(You are powerful.)*
You are the one and ONLY God. *(You are the one and ONLY God.)*
When we have to wait *(When we have to wait)*
help us remember what's true. *(help us remember what's true.)*
In Jesus' name we pray, *(in Jesus' name we pray,)*
Amen." *(Amen.)*

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to share one thing that's true about God.

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 #1.*

*** 1. Remember What's True**

[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 "Remember What's True" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Bible, one for each Small Group
 - Before group time:
 - Use the "Remember What's True" Activity Pages to mark the location of each verse listed on the bookmark in the Bible.
- Playdough, enough for each kid to have a small lump

2. When You Have to Wait

[Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need:

- Print "When You Have to Wait" Activity Page onto Avery® 5160 labels or equivalent, one label for each kid
- Paper plates, two for each kid
 - Before group time:
 - Cut a large circle out of the center of each plate.
- Markers or crayons
- Stapler and staples

3. Go Sandwich

[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 "PB&J Cards" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, 10 sets for every four kids.
 - Before group time, create a deck of cards by shuffling together ten sets of cards for every four kids.
 - Keep each deck separate.
- *Optional: paper plates, one for each kid*
 - *Before group time, fold each plate in thirds, burrito-style.*

NOTE: Save the prepared "PB&J Cards" Activity Pages for Week 4.

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:

- Bible marked at Psalm 27:14

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**