

## 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. Take a Snapshot

### [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:** No supplies needed

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

- Direct the group to sit in a circle.
- Explain that kids will take turns talking about patience and impatience as long as possible with one breath.
  - They can tell a true story, make up a story, give a definition, share a verse related to the topic, tell what they have learned so far this month, and so on.
  - The challenge is that kids must take a deep breath then begin talking until they completely run out of breath. ***[Make it Personal] Join the kids in this activity by sharing insights, stories, or challenges you've faced that kids can relate to.***
- If needed, offer a few starters such as the ones below to prompt ideas:
  - When I get upset, I need to take a deep breath and remember that . . .
  - Impatience reminds me of . . .
  - A patient kid . . .
  - I hate it when I have to wait for . . .
  - Something I don't understand about God (or the Bible) . . .
  - One thing I'd tell someone about God is . . .
  - I think patience matters because . . .
  - One thing I know to be true is . . .

## 2. Bible Story Extension

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

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

**What You Need:** Bible, “Burger or Dog” Activity Page, paper plates, index cards, pens; *Optional: prepared hamburger and hot dog buns or toy food*

#### What You Do:

- Open Bibles to Exodus 32 and help kids navigate to the book and verses.
- Invite kids to share what they remember from today’s Bible story.
  - Refer to Exodus 32:1-35 to clarify any questions or reinforce any details of the story they might have missed.
- Give each kid two index cards and a pen.
- Divide kids into two groups.
- Ask kids in one group to write one true statement about something that happened in today’s Bible story on one index card and one false or made-up statement about the story on the other.
- Ask kids in the other group to write a true statement about God or the Bible on one of their index cards and one untrue statement on the other.
- Collect the cards.
- Place the “Burger or Dog” cards (or sealed buns/toy food) on the paper plates (one on each plate).
- Ask one kid from each team to sit across from one another with the paper plates between them.
- Explain that you will read a statement from the stack of index cards.
  - If they believe the statement is true, they must try to be first to grab the **hamburger** card, bun, or selected toy food.
  - If they think the statement is not true, they must grab the **hot dog** card, bun, or selected toy food.
  - If they grab one before you finish, they must complete the statement.
  - If they can’t complete it correctly, the other kid is given the full statement and the opportunity to decide if it’s true or false to earn the winning point.
- Give an extra point whenever a team can correct a false statement and make it true.
- If kids disagree with whether a statement is true or false, allow them to explain their view. Ask leading questions or provide insight as to why particular statements are true or false.
- Continue by having each team send a different kid to the paper plate to compete.
- Refer to additional True or False statements below, if needed.
- After the review, ask:
  - Based on everything God had shown Israel in the past, what should they have known to be true about God?
  - If you could step back in time and join the Israelites as they waited for Moses to return, what might you have said to help them remember what’s true?
  - What are some things you know are true about God that can help you wait?

#### Additional True or False Statements:

- God gives the Holy Spirit to help believers make the wise choice. (*True*)
- The Israelites made the image of a horse. (*False*)
- Patience is waiting until later for what you want now. (*True*)

- Aaron went up Mount Sinai with Moses. (*False*)
- The people gave Aaron gold to use to make an idol. (*True*)
- Instead of God, the people worshiped the image made from their jewelry. (*True*)

### 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:**

- Name three things you believe to be true about God. If you can, include a Bible verse or Bible story to support it. (*Encourage kids to think back on today's story if they can't think of other verses or stories.*)
- How might those truths help when you're in a situation that's stressful, annoying, or when you must wait longer than you want?
- When we mess up, what can we do to make things right or better after we lose our patience?
- How does a relationship with Jesus help you grow in patience?
- How can you showing patience point others to Jesus?
- How is God patient with you?

## 4. Verses to Take with You

### [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Bibles, index cards, pens

#### What You Do:

- Invite kids to look up and read Psalm 62:1-2.

***Finding verses with 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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.

- Discuss the verse using the prompts below to initiate group conversation.
  - A truth I need to remember when I must wait is . . .
  - I think this verse is helpful because . . .
  - This verse challenges me to . . .
  - I need to remember that God is strong when I . . .
  - I think finding rest in God means . . .
- Challenge kids to come up with additional "It is surely true . . ." statements about what they believe about God that can help them when they need to be reminded to wait with patience.
- Give each kid an index card and a pen.
- Ask them to write down one thing they feel is important to remember when they are feeling impatient but must keep waiting by starting with, "It is surely true . . ."
- Set index cards aside for the Make it Personal with Prayer activity.
- Remind kids to refer to their cards this week to remember what's true.



## 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:** Index cards from Verses to Take with You activity

#### What You Do:

- Invite kids to review what they wrote on paper plates or index cards during the Verses to Take with You activity.
- If willing, encourage kids to share with the group what they wrote.
- Remind kids that one of the best things to do while waiting is to remember and think about what they know to be true about God.
  - If we take time to focus on what's true and think of the ways God has helped us or those we know, it can turn WAITING into WORSHIP.
- Challenge kids to use what they wrote on their paper plates to form a prayer of thanks to God.
- Point out that when we give thanks, we're recognizing the truth that God is with us and caring for us, even when we're stuck waiting for something to stop, change, move, or get better.
- Allow a few minutes for kids to pray silently but also encourage those who are willing to pray aloud.
- Tell kids to place their plates on the floor when they're done praying.
- When everyone is done, close with a short prayer.

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

**What You Need:**

- No supplies needed

#### 2. Bible Story Extension

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

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

**What You Need:**

- Bible
- Paper plates, two for each Small Group
- Index cards, two for each kid
- Pens
- Print and cut apart “Burger or Dog” Activity Page on cardstock, one for each Small Group OR:
  - *Optional: Hamburger and hot dog buns sealed in separate sandwich bags or toy food of any kind that might be served at a cookout in your area*

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

**What You Need:**

- Bibles
- Small paper plate (or index card), one for each kid
- Pens, one for each kid

#### 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:**

- Paper plates or index cards from Verses to Take with You 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**