

## Today's Suggested Schedule—May 2024, Week 2

**Today's Bible Story:** You Say (The Lord's Prayer) • *Matthew 6:9-13*

**Today's Key Question:** How do you pray to God?

**Today's Bottom Line:** Practice praying to God.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.* 1 Timothy 4:8 (ESV)

**Monthly Virtue:** Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice

**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 visit your group for the first time. Use the outline of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 to guide your prayer time. Ask God to help each kid begin to develop a habit of praying that draws them into deeper conversations and connection with God.*

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**

Have you ever been friends with someone you never talked to or communicated with?

If you want to know someone, you talk to or communicate with them. You say things and they listen. They say things and you listen. It's how you get to know each other.

The same is true when it comes to God. If you want to know God, pray to Him. And here's the really great news – because of Jesus, you aren't just praying to some far-off, mysterious, unknown god. You're praying to someone who really understands.

Here's something you might not know:

Before Jesus came to earth, the Israelites-God's people- would connect to God through priests. The priest would regularly offer things like animals to God to make up for the bad decisions of the Israelites. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would walk through a curtain into a very holy place in the temple and offer a sacrifice to God to make up for all the sins of the people.

On the day that Jesus died, actually at the exact moment Jesus died, that curtain-the one that separated the very holy place in the temple from the rest of the world-was torn. The separation between God and people was over. Jesus defeated sin and changed the way we connect with God from then on.

Now, Jesus is like our High Priest. **READ HEBREWS 4:15-16**

Isn't that incredible? You connect with God through prayer because of Jesus. And Jesus understands what it's like to live on this planet, feel hurt, and be tempted.

He understands. Not only because He's God and He knows everything. He understands because He has walked on this planet and experienced life in a human body. But He did not sin. Instead, he defeated sin.

That means you can come to Him. Anytime. Anywhere. Boldly.

And because you know a little bit about Jesus, you already know who you are talking to. So, remember this: If you want to know God, pray to Him. Make it a habit. Still not sure how to start? That's ok. Here are some ways you can pray.

### **Read Matthew 6:6:**

Prayer is your way to connect to God. It's your time to show that you are thankful for everything from your favorite sweatshirt to Jesus paying for your sins. It's your time to be open and honest about things you're having trouble with and to listen to what His Spirit has to say. You just might be surprised by what can happen when you find space to pray alone. So, this week, go into your room, close the door and pray to God. You can pray out loud, silently or write your prayers out.

Read Matthew 6:7-8

Quick question. Which prayer is God more likely to listen to?

- “O dearest Heavenly Father, who art residing among the heavens, as of late I have found myself in dire need of assistance and wisdom as it pertains to the relations between myself and my mother.”
- “God, help me not to fight with my mom so much.”

Trick question! God hears both prayers! (Of course, one of those prayers might seem a little more normal for you). Either way, God already knows your fighting with your mom. He knows you need help studying for your test. He knows your friend is sick. So when you pray, remember you aren't connecting with a far-off Someone in the sky. You connecting with a Father who is closer to you than your own skin. So don't pray to God and try to impress or put on a show, pray to the one true God who knows you.

Prayer is a conversation with God, and He delights in hearing from His children. Don't worry about using fancy language or getting everything "right." Just come to God with sincerity and humility, knowing that He loves you and desires to be in relationship with you. Pray with gratitude for all God has done, Pray honestly (He already knows), and pray for forgiveness. Forgiveness should be a big part of our conversations with God. We're telling Him we messed up and we need His help, not only to clean up the mess we made with our sin, but to remind us to give others the same forgiveness He has given us.

Here are other some Bible verses about prayer:

- Philippians 4:6-7
- James 5:16b
- Matthew 21:22
- Matthew 7:7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17

## 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: “Commit Skit” Activity Page

#### What You Do:

- Divide the group into four different teams.
- Hand each team a card from the “Commit Skit” Activity Page.
- Explain each team will read the scenario on their card together. Then, they will create a short skit to demonstrate the commitment that is needed in that scenario.
  - Tell kids to somehow include prayer in their skit. Remind them that prayer can happen anywhere at any time!
  - Encourage kids to assign everyone on the team a different part to play. They can come up with actions and dialogue for each character or assign a narrator to explain.
- Once kids have had time to create their skits, give each team a turn to perform it for the entire group.
- After every team has performed their skit, lead the group in a discussion about how important it is to make a plan and put it into practice. Ask:
  - Why is making a plan so important when it comes to the things we are committed to?
  - What is a plan worth if we aren’t willing to put it into practice?
  - How can you make a plan to pray?
  - What’s the benefit of putting our plan to pray into practice?
- ***[Make it Personal] Tell about a time when you committed to praying about something, and share how God answered your prayer.***

## 2. Bible Story Extension

### [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:** “Lord’s Prayer” Activity Page, pens or pencils

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

- Invite kids to sit in a circle.
- Lead a discussion to recap today’s Bible Story:
  - What do we call the event that was happening in the story today? (*Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount*)
  - What did Jesus say about who is part of God’s Kingdom? (*The spiritually needy and humble; Those who ask for help; People who are sad; People who make peace and show mercy*)
  - What specific thing did Jesus give instructions for? (*How to pray.*)
- Put kids in pairs. Hand each pair a “Lord’s Prayer” Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- Explain that kids should work together with their partner to translate portions of the Lord’s Prayer into their own words, making it more relevant and understandable to them.
- When everyone has had a chance to finish their page, bring the group back together.
- Read through each section of the prayer, allowing kids to take turns sharing what they wrote.
- Remind kids that this prayer is not necessarily the exact words to say when we pray to God. Instead, it’s a guideline that helps us think about the kinds of things we can pray about.

### 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:**

- Is there a right way to pray?
- How do you pray to God?
- When can you pray?
- Is it difficult to make time for prayer? Why or why not?
- Why does prayer take practice?
- Why should you pray to God?

## 4. Verses to Take with You

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

*Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:** Four prepared bags with Bibles, prepared index cards; infinity cube, stuffed animal or blanket, first aid bandage or adhesive bandage, hand weight

#### What You Do:

- Divide the kids into four groups and direct each group to sit together.
- Hand each group one of the prepared bags.
- Explain that each group should first find the index card in their bag then work together to use the Bible to look up the verse on their card. They should choose someone to read the verse out loud so that everyone in their group can hear.
- After reading their verse, direct groups to look at the item that was placed in their bag. They should discuss what the item has to do with the verse they read.
- Once all groups are ready, give each group a chance to read their assigned verse out loud for the entire group, show their item, and share how it relates to their verse.
- After all groups have shared, ask kids the following questions:
  - Were there any of these verses that you found particularly helpful or comforting?
  - If so, why? And how do you feel like that verse can help you?
- Explain that the Bible has so much to say about prayer. Today, we heard about a structure we can use for prayer.
- Point out that these verses everyone looked up either give us more guidance for prayer or show us why it benefits us to spend time in prayer.



## 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:** "Prayer Plan" Activity Page, pens or pencils

#### What You Do:

- Put kids in pairs and encourage them to spread out in your group space with their partner.
- Hand each kid a copy of the "Prayer Plan" Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- Explain that they will be spending time creating their own prayer plans, which can help guide them to pray in the days ahead.
  - They can work together with their partner to think of ideas for their plan, but each kid should create their own unique plan.
- After kids have finished their prayer plans, give them time to share a prayer request with their partner, if they would like to. Encourage them to take a moment to pray for each other.
  - Kids can fill in their partner's prayer request on their "Prayer Plan" Activity Page.
- Once everyone has prayed, bring the group back together.
- Explain that just like we have discussed how there is no right or wrong way to pray, it's also important to remember that prayer can happen by ourselves, as well as with others. It's great to have time in our lives where both of those can happen.
- Help kids understand their plans should simply be a reminder to help them pray. They can pray anytime! Not only during designated times on their plans.
- Remind kids how with any commitment, it requires making a plan and putting it into practice. Prayer is no different! It is a skill that takes planning and practice. And we will also benefit from it as a way to grow in our faith.
- Encourage kids to use their prayer plans in the week ahead.

## 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.)**

#### **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:**

- Print "Commit Skit" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, 1 set for each Small Group

#### **2. Bible Story Extension**

**[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:**

- Print "Lord's Prayer" Activity Page on paper, one for every two kids
- Pens or pencils, one for every two kids

#### **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 Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:**

- Medium-sized plain gift bags with handles, 4 for each Small Group
- Bibles, 4 for each Small Group
- Infinity cube, 1 for each Small Group
- Small stuffed animal or blanket, 1 for each Small Group
- First aid bandage or adhesive bandage, 1 for each Small Group
- Small hand weight, 1 for each Small Group
- Index cards, 4 for each Small Group
- Before group time: Write one of the following verse references on each index card: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6, Romans 8:26, and 1 Timothy 4:8.
- Before group time, prepare the bags by placing a Bible and index card in each one. Place the following items in the bag with each index card listed below:
  - Place the infinity cube in the bag with 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.
  - Place the stuffed animal or blanket in the bag with Philippians 4:6.
  - Place the bandage in the bag with Romans 8:26.
  - Place the hand weight in the bag with 1 Timothy 4:8.

## 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:

- Print “Prayer Plan” Activity Page on paper, 1 for each kid
- Pens or pencils, 1 for each kid

### 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**