

## Today's Suggested Schedule—May 2024, Week 4

**Today's Bible Story:** All I Have to Give (The Widow's Offering) • Mark 12:41-44

**Today's Bottom Line:** Practice living for God.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come.* 1 Timothy 4:8 (NIV)

**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. Reflect on the ways Jesus showed us how to live for God through loving others. Ask God to help show each kid ways they can give of their time, money, abilities, and attitude to live for 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

Bottom Line

Prayer

Closer

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

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

Bible Story Review: Giving Toss

Application Activity: Cheerful Givers

Memory Verse Activity: Live It Out

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**

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the Temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”

In this passage, Jesus is observing people as they make their offerings in the Temple. He sees rich people donating large sums of money, which seems impressive at first glance. However, he then sees a poor widow who gives just two small coins, an amount that appears insignificant compared to the large donations from the wealthy.

#### **Jesus’ Teaching:**

Jesus uses this moment to teach a powerful lesson. He tells his disciples that the widow’s small offering is actually greater than the large sums given by the rich people. Why? Because the rich gave from their surplus—they had plenty more money where that came from. The widow, on the other hand, gave everything she had, even though it was very little.

#### **Key Points:**

**True Generosity:** The widow’s offering was more valuable in God’s eyes because it represented true sacrifice and generosity. She gave all she had, showing her deep faith and trust in God. This teaches us that real generosity isn’t about the amount we give, but the spirit and sacrifice behind it.

**Heart Over Amount:** God values the heart behind the giving more than the actual amount. This can be applied to many areas of life—time, talents, kindness, etc. What matters is the willingness to give wholeheartedly, even if it seems small.

**Trust in God:** The widow’s act demonstrated her trust in God to provide for her needs. For teens, this is a reminder to rely on faith, even when things seem tough or resources are limited.

#### **Applying the Lesson:**

**Be Generous:** Look for ways to be generous in your own life. It could be with your time, talents, or even just being kind to others.

**Check Your Motives:** When you give or help others, think about why you’re doing it. Are you doing it for recognition, or because you genuinely care?

**Trust in Hard Times:** Remember the widow’s faith when you face challenges. Trust that God sees your efforts and will take care of you.

Jesus is teaching us to value and practice genuine, heartfelt generosity and to trust in God’s provision, no matter our circumstances.

## \* 1. Giving Toss

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

*Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:** Bible (marked at Mark 12:41-44), Hula-Hoops®, beanbags, paper, and markers

#### What You Do:

- Ask for four kids who would like to read aloud.
- Open the Bible to Mark 12:41-44.
- Invite the four kids to take turns reading one verse each from Mark 12:41-44 to review the Bible Story.
- Ask: “What are some other ways you can live for God, other than giving money?”
- Write out the following words, each on a different piece of paper,: (Steer kids towards these ideas as they are naming ways they can live for God, if needed.)
  - money
  - time
  - attitude
  - talents
- Set out four Hula-Hoops on one side of your small group area.
- Place a paper with a different word inside each Hula-Hoop.
- Direct kids to gather a few feet away from the Hula-Hoops.
- Give each kid a beanbag.
- Instruct the kids to take turns tossing their beanbag into one of the Hula-Hoops.
- As each kid tosses their beanbag, encourage them to share an example of how they can give some of their money, time, attitude, or talents to show God’s love to others (depending on which Hula-Hoop their beanbag lands in).
  - Prompt with examples listed below, if needed.
- As one kid gives an example, encourage the other kids to listen.
- Examples:
  - **Money:** give an offering at church, pay for someone’s lunch at school, buy a birthday present for your brother, save up money for a gift to get your adult
  - **Time:** help a neighbor weed their flowerbed, help a classmate with their homework, help your grandma cook dinner
  - **Attitude:** stay positive even if you didn’t get your way, be forgiving if someone admits a mistake, take a deep breath and stay calm if you feel angry
  - **Talents:** consider playing an instrument to cheer someone up, be a good teammate when you’re playing sports, give your very best in all of your extracurricular activities

#### What You Say:

“Everyone did a great job coming up with ways we can live for God. One of the ways we can live for God is to love others. In our Bible Story today, we know that even though the widow gave the least amount of money, she actually gave the most because she didn’t keep anything back. Jesus knew that it was easy for the rich men to give lots of money. They’d never miss it. But the poor widow gave up everything that she had to honor God.

“We can give our very best to God—sometimes that might include money, but it can also be our time, attitude, and talents. What matters most is our heart behind it. In all of these ways, we can **[Bottom Line]** practice living for God.”

**[Make It Personal]** (Share about ways that you, personally, have lived for God—either by giving your money, time, attitude, or talents. If you can, explain how giving your very best in those situations has shown others that you love them, and that God does too!)

## 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:

- How can you live for God?
- Does living for God cost you anything?
- When you live for God, how can it affect others?
- How did Jesus set an example for how we can live for God?
- When we do something for others, how is it like doing something for God?
- How do you live for God after you messed up/sinned?
- Think about your relationship with God. How committed are you to practicing the things that help you grow spiritually?
- Do you have a relationship with God? The first step of obedience after accepting Jesus as your Lord, is baptism. Do you need to do either of those?

## 2. Cheerful Givers

### [Live for God | Application Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Envelopes, index cards, markers or pens, and stickers

#### What You Do:

- Give each kid an envelope, index card, and marker or pen.
- Instruct the kids to write down on an index card one example of something they could give to God this week.
- Recall the ways that we can give to God that were talked about in the previous activity: our money, time, attitude, or talents
  - Invite kids to fill out more than one index card if they have additional ideas and if time allows.
- Once kids have finished writing, encourage any volunteers who would like to share with the group.
- Direct kids to place their index cards inside their envelopes.
- Set out the markers and stickers.
- Give kids time to decorate their envelopes.
- As the kids are working, ask: “Where are some places you could put this envelope that could help remind you to love others by living for God?”

#### What You Say:

“Wow! I’m so amazed by the number of ways you came up with to **[Bottom Line] practice living for God!** It’s not about *what* we give, it’s about the *heart* behind it. If you keep your eyes open and pay attention, you can find ways to give your all to God in everything you do—whether it’s at home, at school, at a friend’s house, or during your daily activities. Jesus showed us how to live for God by loving others, and anytime we do something for other people, it’s like we’re doing it for God. In everything we do, we can **[Bottom Line] practice living for God.**”

### 3. Live It Out

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

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

**What You Need:** Bibles, poster board, and markers

#### What You Do:

- Divide the group into 2-3 teams.
- Give each team a Bible.
- Direct each team to look up the Memory Verse, 1 Timothy 4:8, using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

**Finding verses with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders:** Guide kids 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 “1 Timothy” in the list under “New Testament.” When the kids find 1 Timothy, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find 1 Timothy. Help the kids find the page. When they find 1 Timothy, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 4. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 8 in chapter 4.

- Give each team a poster board.
- Set out some markers near each team.
- Direct each team to copy the Memory Verse on their poster board.
  - Kids can take turns writing or can choose one kid to write for their team.
- When teams have finished writing the verse, instruct them to work together to agree on five key words that stand out to them the most and circle them on their poster board.
- When teams have finished choosing their words, direct them to work together to recite the verse and choose a motion for each of the five words their team circled.
- Give the teams time to repeat the verse with the motions several times.
- Bring all of the groups back together so each team can recite the verse and show their chosen motions.

#### What You Say:

“I loved seeing which words stood out to you from this month’s Memory Verse! To me, the best part was seeing you decide which motions to act out for each word. Just like you practiced acting out God’s Word, it reminded me that we can also **[Bottom Line] practice living for God** in our daily lives too. The more we practice giving our best to God, the more we can show others that we love them. And the more we can show others that we love them, the more we can show them how much God loves them!”

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

**What You Need:** Pennies or fake coins from the Opening Activity

#### What You Do:

- Give each kid a penny or fake coin.
- Invite the kids to find a quiet place in the room to pray.
- Instruct the kids to quietly flip their coins.
- If the coin lands on heads, direct the kids to start a prayer with "Thank You, God, for . . ."
- If the coin lands on tails, direct the kids to start a prayer with "God, I ask for . . ."
- Continue as time and interest allows.
- Close your group time in prayer.

#### What You Say:

"This month, we talked about so many different ways we can grow in our faith. First, we talked about how we can practice hearing from God. Then, we talked about how we can practice praying to God. Then, we talked about how we can practice talking about God. And finally, today we talked about how we can **[Bottom Line] practice living for God**. These are things that we can practice all the time, every day. The more we practice, the more we can grow closer to God and grow in our faith. And when we **[Bottom Line] practice living for God**, we can show others how wonderful God is and how much God loves them too!"

"Dear God, thank You for the encouraging story about the woman who gave You everything. Please show us how we can use our money, time, attitudes, and talents for You. We want to show You we love You by the way we live. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to share their Giving Envelopes to let adults know how they plan to live for God this week by loving others.



## 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. Giving Toss**

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

*Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:**

- Bible, one for each Small Group
  - Before group time: Mark the Bible at Mark 12:41-44
- Hula-Hoops®, four for each Small Group
- Beanbags, one for each kid
- Paper, four for each Small Group
- Markers, one for each Small Group

#### **2. Cheerful Givers**

**[Live for God | Application Activity]**

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

**What You Need:**

- Envelopes, one for each kid
- Index cards, 2-3 for each kid
- Markers or pens, enough for a Small Group to share
- Stickers, enough for a Small Group to share

#### **3. Live It Out**

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

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

**What You Need:**

- Bibles, 2-3 for each Small Group
- Poster board, 2-3 for each Small Group
- Markers, enough for a Small Group to share

#### **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:**

- Pennies or fake coins from the Opening Activity, one 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**