

## 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 Key Question:** How can you live for God?

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

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. Take a Snapshot

### [Live for God | Application Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Dry erase board, dry erase marker, dry eraser

#### What You Do:

- Ask kids to sit where they can see the white board and choose a kid to be the first artist.
- Explain that you will whisper something in the artist's ear (from the list below) so that no one else in the group hears.
- Direct the artist to use the dry erase marker to illustrate what you whispered on the dry erase board.
- Lead the rest of the group to guess what the artist is drawing.
- Once the correct answer is guessed, allow the artist a chance to explain to the group how they can use whatever they drew to live for God.
- Whoever guesses correctly will get to be the next artist.
- Continue playing until everyone has had a chance to draw or as time allows.
- Drawing prompts:
  - Time
  - Money
  - Food
  - Music
  - Sports
  - School work
  - Art
  - Smile
  - Positive attitude
  - Writing
- When finished drawing, encourage kids by telling them they can live for God in so many ways!
- Remind kids what we have talked about practicing all month as ways to grow in their faith. See if kids can list:
  - Practice hearing from God.
  - Practice praying to God.
  - Practice talking about God.
  - Practice living for God.
- Explain that they are all connected. If they practice hearing from God, praying to God, and talking about God, then they will truly be living for God!

## 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:** no supplies

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

- What book of the Bible was our story from today? (Mark)
- Why did the religious leaders want to get rid of Jesus? (because He was challenging the way they had always done things, and He was a threat to their power)
- What warnings did Jesus give about teachers of the law? (They like to be greeted with respect. They love to have the most important seats and places of honor. They take over the houses of widows. They say long prayers to show off.)
- What did the widow give for her offering? (two small copper coins)
- Why was the widow's offering worth more? (Even though the rich men gave more money, it wasn't a sacrifice for them. The widow gave everything she had. She was honoring God.)
- What was today's Bottom Line? (Practice living for God.)
- What is one way you can live for God? (Answers will vary.)
- What one word have we been talking about this month? (commitment)
- What is the definition of commitment? (making a plan and putting it into practice)
- What is this month's Memory Verse?
- Share one commitment you have, and why it requires hard work. (Answers will vary.)
- Share one way that you can practice living for God. (Answers will vary.)
  
- Ask:
  - Was today's Bible story only about money? Why or why not?
  - Why was the widow able to give everything she had?
  - When it comes to living for God, where can you start?
- Encourage kids by telling them that if we focus our hearts on living for God, we will discover that it's easier to be generous with everything we have, whether it's money, time, resources, talents, etc.

### 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:**

- 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?

## 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:** Bibles

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

- Look up the following verses:
  - Colossians 1:9-11
  - Matthew 25:35-40
  - Micah 6:8
  - Colossians 3:23-24
  - Ephesians 4:32
  - 1 Timothy 4:8
- Divide your group up into teams. Explain they will use their Bible to look up one of the passages and read it together. *(Tell them not to close their Bible after reading it, because they will also be reading it for everyone later.)*
  - After they read the passage, they should discuss what it has to say about how to live for God.
- Call out each Bible reference, one at a time, for each group to read to the group and explain what they wrote on the lines of their puzzle piece. Discuss answers.
- Once every passage has been read and discussed, ask kids to raise their hands if they have ever put together a large puzzle. Ask:
  - How long did the puzzle take to complete?
  - Did you ever want to give up during the process?
  - Why does putting a puzzle together take commitment?
  - Why does it take commitment to live for God?
- Emphasize 1 Timothy 4:8—*“It promises help for the life we are living and the life to come.”*
  - If we have a relationship with Jesus, living for God benefits us right now and when we will one day live with God forever. Most things we are committed to require a focus on an end goal that may seem far off.

## 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:** "Faith Skills" Activity Page, pens or pencils, pieces of paper, marker, painter's tape

#### What You Do:

- Use the marker to write the following words on each of the four pieces of paper:
  - HEAR
  - PRAY
  - TALK
  - LIVE
- Use the tape to post each piece of paper at four different locations in your group space as prayer stations.
- Briefly review each faith skill you've talked about practicing this month:
  - Practice hearing from God.
  - Practice praying to God.
  - Practice talking about God.
  - Practice living for God.
- Tell kids to choose one of the 4 stations and sit down in that area. Help distribute kids evenly among the 4 stations.
- Give each kid a copy of the "Faith Skills" Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- Explain that they will spend time at each of the 4 prayer stations.
  - During their time at each station, they should journal a prayer to God, asking for help with practicing each of those faith skills. (*i.e.: If they are at the "TALK" station, they can write down a prayer about how they can practice talking about God to certain people in their life.*)
- Give kids 2-3 minutes at each station.
- Once everyone has had a turn at all 4 stations, gather everyone together.
- Say a prayer for the entire group. Encourage them to take their paper home to use as a guide during their own prayer time this week.

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

**What You Need:**

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

#### **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:**

- No supplies

#### **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:**

- Bibles, six for each Small Group
- Pens or pencils, size 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:**

- Print "Faith Skills" Activity Page on paper, one for each kid
- Pens or pencils, one for each kid
- Paper, four sheets for each Small Group
- Marker, one for each Small Group

- Painter's tape, one roll for each Small Group

### **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**