

Today's Suggested Schedule—February 2024, Week 2

Today's Bible Story: Family Ties (Ruth and Naomi) • *Ruth 1–2*

Today's Key Question: When is it hard to be kind?

Today's Bottom Line: Be kind to the people closest to you.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.* Colossians 3:12 (ESV)

Monthly Virtue: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray for any difficult family situations your few might be navigating. Ask God to give everyone patience and grace to extend to those they see most often. Pray that kids would take time to notice and thank the people who do kind things for them. Ask God to give them ideas for how they can make sure those people know they are valuable.

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

Hang Time

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 Ruth happened during the time of the judges. Naomi and her family went to the land of Moab. Naomi's sons married women from Moab. One of those women, Ruth, decided to stay with Naomi when she went back to her home in Israel.

God provided a redeemer for Ruth. Ruth was gathering leftover grain in a field when she met Boaz. Boaz was a wealthy man and a relative of Naomi's dead husband. Boaz redeemed Ruth—he agreed to take care of her—and he married her.

Let me tell you more about Boaz. Boaz was the son of a man named Salmon (SAL mahn) and a woman named Rahab. Do you remember Rahab (Joshua 2)? She welcomed the Israelite spies into her home when they scouted out Jericho. The Israelites kept Rahab and her family safe, and she became part of God's people.

Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble. Boaz was kind to Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation by taking our punishment when He died on the cross.

A thousand years before Ruth lived, God promised Abraham that He was going to bless his family. Ruth was part of that family. Ruth and Boaz had a son named Obed, who grew up and had a son named Jesse. Jesse was the father of King David! Through this family, God planned to bring His Son, Jesus, to be the Savior of the world.

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Ruth 1. Tell kids that today's Bible story comes from the Book of Ruth. Explain that the Book of Ruth is the third book of Old Testament History. It follows the Book of Joshua. Challenge kids to name the first eight books of the Old Testament.

The events of Ruth happened during the time of the judges, sometime after Joshua died. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Ruth 1:1-2. Remind kids that Naomi's family was from Bethlehem. Because of the famine, they moved to Moab. That's where they met Ruth and her sister Orpah.

- **Why do we need Jesus to be our Redeemer?**

Guide kids to recognize that without Jesus, we are slaves to sin and need someone to redeem us or pay the price to set us free. Jesus paid the penalty for sin by dying on the cross. He rose from the dead. Everyone who trusts in Him is freed from sin and death.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 6:6-7.)

- **Why do you think Jesus loves all people?**

Remind kids that God created all people in His image, and Jesus does not want anyone to be separated from Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 2 Pet. 3:9.)

- **What evidence of God's grace have you seen in your own life?**

Lead kids to recall that grace is God's goodness toward those who deserve only punishment. As sinners, we deserve death but God—by His grace—provides salvation through His Son, Jesus. God also graciously and freely gives us good gifts. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Eph. 2:4-7.)

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: Craft sticks, permanent markers, sandwich bags

What You Do:

- Set out the craft sticks and permanent markers.
- Ask kids to think of 1-5 people they feel closest to and would choose to be with on a camping trip.
- Instruct the kids to use the marker to write the names of one friend or family member on each stick. (One name per stick.)
- One by one, invite the kids to “introduce” the people they named by going through their sticks and telling a little bit about each person.
- Ask:
 - Why did you choose those five people over others?
 - What are some kind things you have done for those people?
 - How have these people shown kindness to you?
 - If you had to spend a rainy day cramped inside of a tent with those people, what would kindness look like? When might it be hard to be kind?
 - Why is it sometimes a lot harder to be kind to the people we see all the time and easier to be kind to strangers or people we don’t know very well?
- **[Make It Personal] Join kids in this activity by naming some of the people you feel closest to. Share how you show kindness to them.**
- Give each kid a sealable sandwich bag.
- Instruct the kids to place their craft sticks in the bag.
- Direct the kids to use the marker to write their name on the outside of the bag.
- Collect the bags to redistribute later in prayer time.

2. Bible Story Extension

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Fly swatters, and “Swat the Fly” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to share what they remember from the story of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz.
- Divide your group into two or three teams.
- Set out each of the three cards from the “Swat the Fly” Activity Page on the floor.
- Choose one kid from each team to gather around the “Swat the Fly” Activity Page at an equal distance—give each of those kids a flyswatter.
- Explain that you will read a statement that is true of either Ruth, Naomi, or Boaz.
- Instruct the kids with the flyswatters to swat the fly on the picture of the correct person from the Bible story—Ruth, Naomi, or Boaz—to earn a point for their team.
 - Explain if they swat the fly before the statement is completely read, they must also complete the statement correctly or lose their turn.
- After each statement, give a point to the winning team.
- Instruct the kids with the flyswatters to pass the flyswatter to one of their teammates.
- Read one of the Story Statements below to start the game.
- Repeat until all Story Statements have been read.

Story Statements:

1. My husband and sons all died in the land of Moab. (*Naomi*)
 2. I went with Naomi to the land of Bethlehem. (*Ruth*)
 3. I told Naomi, “Your people will be my people, your God my God.” (*Ruth*)
 4. I owned land in Bethlehem. (*Boaz*)
 5. I am related to Boaz. (*Naomi*)
 6. I told my workers to leave extra grain in the field for Ruth. (*Boaz*)
 7. I asked permission to pick grain from the field of Boaz. (*Ruth*)
 8. I married Ruth. (*Boaz*)
 9. I gave birth to the future grandfather of King David. (*Ruth*)
 10. Bonus: I told friends to call me BITTER. (*Naomi*)
- After reading all the Story Statements, declare a winner.
 - Collect the fly swatters and set them aside.
 - Ask:
 - How did Ruth show Naomi she was valuable?
 - Why is Ruth’s choice to stay with Naomi considered an act of kindness?
 - Do you think the decision to leave Moab and go to Bethlehem with Naomi was easy or hard for Ruth? Why or why not?
 - What do you see in this story that reminds us how kindness is not always easy?
 - Even with our favorite people we love the most, kindness can be hard. Share some ways we can express kindness in everyday ways to those we’re with the most.
 - What is one thing you can tell a family member or friend that would really impact them in a good way? Describe how this could change that person’s life for the better.

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:

- Describe the kind of relationship you want to have with your family. How might the kindness you show today impact that?
- BE KIND. If everyone in the world followed this one rule, how would it change the things that happen around us?
- What are things you can do to remember to show kindness to family and friends?
- When is it hard to be kind?
- When you're in a bad mood and everything is just annoying, what can you do to successfully be kind in that situation?
- How does a relationship with Jesus impact kindness?
- Why do you think kindness is a fruit of the Spirit?

4. Verses to Take with You

[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, markers, paper

What You Do:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible. (Or a Bible App on their phone.)
- Invite kids to look up and read Luke 6:31. Use the Bible Navigation Tips below as needed.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. (New) Since it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book of Luke. Once they find the book of Luke, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find chapter 6. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse, verse 31, within the chapter they've already found.

- Many kids may be familiar with this verse already. Say: "The truth in this verse is sometimes known as the 'Golden Rule.'"
- Invite the kids to say the verse together from memory.
- Ask:
 - If your family made this their motto or rule, how would it change things at home?
 - When you think of the people you're with each day, what are some situations when you might need to remember this verse most often?
 - Without saying a name out loud, who is a person who is most difficult for you to show kindness to? Silently insert their name into the verse as we say it together. ("Do to _____ as you want _____ to do to you.")
- Ask: "Have you ever toasted marshmallows over a campfire? If so, tell me about it. And how do you like your marshmallow cooked?"
- Direct the kids to get into pairs.
- Invite kids to make some paper marshmallows.
- Give each pair of kids 12 squares of white paper and a pen.
- Direct each pair to write out Luke 6:31 by putting one word of the verse on each piece of paper including one piece for the reference.
- Instruct the kids to crumple each piece of paper into a ball about the size of a large marshmallow.
- Direct the pairs to exchange their paper marshmallows with another team.
- At your signal, challenge the pairs to begin unwrapping each paper wad and arranging the words of the verse in order.
- Instruct the team to shout out the verse when they have the papers in order.
- Direct the remaining teams to continue even after other teams have finished.
- Take note of which team was the first to finish. If the verse is in the correct order, they are the winner!

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: Bags of craft sticks from "Take a Snapshot" activity

What You Do:

- Give each kid their bag of craft sticks from the "Take a Snapshot" activity.
- Invite kids to hold their craft sticks one at a time and ask God for help with something specifically related to being kind to that close family member or friend when it's not easy for them to do so.
- If your group feels comfortable, divide your kids into groups of two or three.
- Invite each group to pray for one another.
- Once finished, close your group time in prayer.

What You Say:

"Dear God, thank You for showing us how to love our family and friends with kindness in ways that please You. Teach us how to show others they are valuable through the words we use and the way we act toward them. Help us to choose to be kind to our families and friends by treating them the way we want to be treated. We love You. Amen."

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

What You Need:

- Craft sticks—five for each kid
- Permanent markers—one for each kid
- Sealable sandwich bags—one for each kid

2. Bible Story Extension

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need:

- Fly swatters—two or three for each Small Group
- Print “Swat the Fly” Activity Page on cardstock—one set for each Small Group

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

What You Need:

- Bibles
- Markers
- Paper
 - Before group time: Cut three sheets of paper into four squares each, one set for every two kids.

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:

- Bags of craft sticks from “Take a Snapshot” activity