



WEEK
ONE
APRIL 2023

SMALL GROUP
K-5
STARTER

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

NOTE: This version of the curriculum is designed especially for churches with fewer leaders and kids. You may want to use it if you have just one or two leaders and if you combine all your kids in both Large and Small Group time.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Washed by the Water
Palm Sunday/Jesus Washes
His Disciples' Feet
John 12:9-16; 13:1-17
(Matthew 21:1-11)

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus put others first.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves."
Philippians 2:3, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Humility—Putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

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
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: Big Shoes to Fill
Application Activity: After You
Memory Verse Activity: Dig Out the Verse
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Ask for God's guidance as you begin to talk about humility and how to put others first. Thank God for the opportunity you have to put your few first each week as you lead their group. Pray that you would be able to model what it looks like to put others ahead of yourself.

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1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, green streamer paper, and safety scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet kids as they arrive and welcome them to a new month.
- Tell the kids they'll be learning all about growing this month!
- Invite kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Talk about things that may be growing in your area during April—your growing season may be year round or it might not have started, yet!
- Give each kid some green crepe paper streamers and scissors.
- Guide kids to cut the streamers into six-inch lengths.
- Show kids how to carefully cut small slits (fringe) along one side of the streamers to look like grass.
- Gather the grass and save it for the end of the month to use in Week 5.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Terra cotta flower pots; potting soil; trowel; grass seed; spray bottle of water; permanent markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a planter and set out the markers. (Carefully supervise younger kids if they need it.)
- Encourage kids to write their names and today's date on the pots.
- If time allows, invite the kids to decorate the pots.
- Direct the kids to carefully fill their pots almost full of the potting soil.
- Instruct each kid to sprinkle a handful of grass seed evenly over their soil and gently mist it with the spray bottle.
- Set aside the pots for "Pray and Dismiss."

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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Palm Sunday/Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet
John 12:9-16; 13:1-17
(Matthew 21:1-11)

WHAT YOU SAY:

"These are some great growing planters! It will take about a week for your grass to grow. So you can expect to see some sprouts by Easter! *(Adjust the following if your kids ministry doesn't meet on Sundays.)* **[Transition] Let's go hear what makes this whole week—from this Sunday to next Sunday—so important to us!**"

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus put others first.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



*** 1. BIG SHOES TO FILL**

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Two pairs of prepared "big foot" sandals and markers; *Optional: two pairs of flip-flops or salon sandals*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Give each team a set of "Big Feet."
- Put the markers on both sides of the room.
- Instruct the teams to stand on opposite sides of the room.
- Direct one kid from each team to wear the sandals and stand in the middle of their team.
- Instruct all of the kids on both teams to link arms.
- Tell kids that the object of the game is to make it all the way to the other side of the room without breaking arms or the sandals coming off.
- When a team gets to the opposite side, direct the kid wearing the sandals to take a marker and write on one foot a way that Jesus put others first then sign their name.
- Instruct another kid to put on the sandals and travel with their team to the other side of the room to repeat the process.
- The first team to have all kids wear the sandals and write on them, wins, but let both teams fully finish the game.
- Collect the sandals to review the Bible story.

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Humility—Putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve

BASIC TRUTH

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"These were some big feet to fill! When we follow someone's actions, sometimes it's called 'trying to fill their shoes.' Jesus gave the ultimate example, the biggest shoes to ever fill, in our Bible story today. How did **Jesus put others first?** (Pause for responses.) Yes! Jesus washed His disciples' feet! That was considered a gross job, and I'm not sure I'd want to wash 24 sweaty, smelly feet by hand. How about you? (Invite responses.)

"But Jesus wasn't just doing a personal chore to show that He was nice. He was giving us an example. Jesus was showing us that no matter who you are or how important you are, you can put others first and show humility.

"What kind of chores do you do at home? (Invite responses.) I'll bet they're not easy! And some of them are pretty yucky jobs, too. How do those chores help you follow in Jesus' footsteps? (Invite discussion.) How are you serving your family or friends by doing them?"

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



2. AFTER YOU
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Green construction paper

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into two teams. (Try to vary teams if you played the "Big Shoes to Fill" game.)
- Give each team two pieces of green construction paper.
- Direct the teams to line up on one side of your Small Group area.
- Direct the first kid from each team to put down a green paper and the second kid on the team to step on it.
- Then direct the first kids to put down another paper in front of the second kids, then they step on those.
- Then the first kids pick up the first sheet and set it down for the second kids, again.
- The first two kids on each team continue this process until they get to the far side of the room.
- Once the two kids reach the other side, instruct them to switch places, with the second kid places papers on the floor and the first kids stepping on them all the way back.
- Once they get back to their team, direct the next two kids on the team to take their turns.
- Play until all kids on one team get across the room and back.
- Remind kids to put their friends first by making sure they don't step on anyone's hands!

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

Humility—Putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve

BASIC TRUTH

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"In this game, it took some work to put your partner first! You had to scramble to make sure they were never out of paper to step on. This reminds me of our Bible story today. Who can guess which part? (*When people laid their coats and palm branches down for Jesus.*) Yes, Jesus came into the city and people put green palm branches on the ground in front of Him. After Palm Sunday, there was no doubt that Jesus was a BIG DEAL.

"You might never have a chance to make THAT big of an entrance, but there are people who would be super encouraged by having you put them first. Who could you put first? (*Invite responses—a younger family member, a neighbor friend, a teammate, a kid in a younger grade at school, a parent, teacher, or coach.*) **Jesus put others first.**"

[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate way that you have recently shown humility by putting someone first—as simple as considering your spouse's preference for dinner or taking a disliked chore at home or work. When was the last time you did something you didn't have to do so that someone else didn't have to do it?)

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



3. DIG OUT THE VERSE

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Verse Reveal" Activity Pages in the prepared buckets; two empty buckets; trowels or large spoons; and Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Using the Bible navigation tips below, look up Philippians 2:3 together.

***Finding verses with a multi-age group:** 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, ask a middle elementary kid (2nd–3rd grade) to find "Philippians" in the list under "New Testament." When the kid finds Philippians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word and say it, explaining that the number tells them on what page they can find Philippians. Ask older elementary kids (4th–5th grade) to help younger ones find the correct page in their Bibles. When they all find Philippians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Ask a kindergartner or 1st grader to find chapter 2, and give time for all kids to turn the pages to find it. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers and ask a middle elementary kid to find verse 3 in chapter 2. Then, read the verse aloud slowly, especially for your pre-readers; or ask older elementary kids to read it to the group.*

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Direct each team to line up shoulder to shoulder.
- Give each kid a trowel or large spoon.
- Place a full bucket on one end of each team's line and the empty bucket on the other end.
- Instruct the kid closest to the full bucket to take a scoop of filler and pass it to the outstretched spoon of the kid next to them who passes it to the spoon beside them, etc.
- Direct the kid at the empty bucket end to put their spoonful of filler into it.
 - For an older kid variation, instruct the first kid to run to the empty bucket after they pass on their spoonful so they become the last person as well.
- Keep playing until one team empties their "full" bucket and reveals the "Verse Reveal" page on the bottom.
- Ask kids to work together to clean up the mess from the game if necessary.
- Remind them to show HUMILITY as they decide who does which part of the clean-up.

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

Humility—Putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve

BASIC TRUTH

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"We're growing in humility this month, and that means putting others first. How did you have to put others first in this game? (Invite responses—thinking of how much filler was best for my friends to pass not just for me to scoop; waiting for the next person to be ready before dumping my scoop into their spoon, etc.)"



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(3. DIG OUT THE VERSE, CONTINUED)

“Games like this give us a good chance to consider others and think of what they need, not just what we need, like our verse says. We also heard in our Bible story that **Jesus put others first**. What are some other ways we can put others first this week?” (*Invite responses—do a chore for a sibling or parent, wait your turn in school or on a team, clean up a mess you didn’t make, etc.*)

Optional Discussion Questions for Older Kids

If you lead 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- When was the last time you did something you didn’t HAVE to do just so it wouldn’t become someone else’s job or chore? How did that feel?
- Has anyone ever done a big job for you just so you didn’t have to do it? How did that feel?



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal processing and application



4. PRAY AND DISMISS
[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Flower pots/planters made during "Opening Activity"

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid their planter.
- Make sure everyone knows to carefully water them every other day with just enough water to keep the soil moist.
- Encourage kids to listen to stories they hear this week at other church services about ways that **Jesus put others first.**
- If your church has Good Friday or other Holy Week services and opportunities, let kids know about them.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Dear God, thank You that **Jesus put others first** during His time on Earth and when He rescued us from sin. Please help us listen to the stories around us this week and look for ways to do the same. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, make sure kids take their flower pots/planters home. Invite families to any Holy Week services or activities.

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HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

(Choose one or both of these activities.)

1. EARLY ARRIVER

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Interesting offering container like an empty flower pot
- Green streamer paper
- Safety scissors for kids

NOTE: Make sure the streamers cut by the kids in this activity are saved for the end of the month.

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Small terra cotta flower pots/planters—one for each kid
- Potting soil to fill flower pots
- Trowel
- Grass seed (This works best if you pre-germinate the seeds by wrapping them in a damp paper towel for two to three days.)
- Spray bottle of water
- Black permanent markers

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. BIG SHOES TO FILL

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Scissors
- Duct tape
- Markers
- Four posterboards
 - On each posterboard, draw a large footprint to turn into a giant sandal.
 - Make sandal straps with the duct tape by sticking two long pieces of tape to each other and attaching each end of the strap to each side of the foot where the arch would be so that kids can slide their socked feet into the giant sandals.
- *Optional: two pairs of flip-flops or salon sandals*
 - *If you use the flip-flops, tape each sandal to a big foot cutout.*

2. AFTER YOU

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Four pieces of green construction paper

3. DIG OUT THE VERSE

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Verse Reveal" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two sets for each small group.
- Bibles
- Trowels or large spoons—one for each kid
- Four buckets
- Material to fill the buckets at least halfway—sand or soil, pom-poms, shredded paper, beads, etc.
 - Before group time, place a set of "Verse Reveal" cards on the bottom of two buckets and cover them with the filling material so the bucket is about half full.



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HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Flower pots/planters made during "Opening 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 resource:
Parent Cue app.

“Don’t do anything only to get ahead. Don’t do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.”

Philippians 2:3 (Nlrv)

“Don’t do anything only to get ahead. Don’t do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.”

Philippians 2:3 (Nlrv)

What to Do:

Print on cardstock and cut apart, two verses for each small group.

“Verse Reveal, Nlrv” Activity Page

April 2023, Week 1, K-5 Starter

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“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”

Philippians 2:3 (NIV)

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