

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Build Your Kingdom Here

Ezra and the Rebuilding
of the Temple
Ezra 3:10-13

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate each step of the way.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"A cheerful heart makes
you healthy. But a broken
spirit dries you up."
Proverbs 17:22, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate
what God is doing

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.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> or a visual on some of the activities.

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: Celebration Builders
Application Activity: Small Group Leader, May I?
Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Hopscotch
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Thank God for some of the things God has done in your life. Ask God to help the kids of your group discover that God can help them keep going and be joyful all throughout their lives.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, butcher paper, "J" and "OY" Activity Pages, and wall tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive.
- Encourage kids who've brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Tape the "OY" Activity Page to the center of the butcher paper.
- Hang the butcher paper on the wall with the wall tape at a kid's eye level.
- Point out the "OY" and talk about what's missing. The "J!"
- Give each kid a J card from the "J" Activity Page.
- Help the kids roll a piece of tape to place on the back of their "J" card.
- Instruct the kids to line up about five feet away from the butcher paper.
- One at a time, direct the kids to close their eyes, approach the butcher paper, and try to stick their "J" in the correct location on the butcher paper.
 - After their attempt, instruct kids to open their eyes to see where their "J" landed.
- Continue in the same way, allowing each kid a turn.
- If time allows, invite the kids to remove their "J"s and play again.
- This round, establish new parameters for the game, such as: kids are to use their non-dominant hand, spin them around three times first, etc.
- Play as many rounds as time and interest allow.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

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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 with others and build on their understanding



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Crepe paper, cookie sheets or flat pieces of cardboard, scissors, string or twine, colored duct tape, and a permanent marker

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into groups of three.
- Give each group of three a roll of crepe paper, a cookie sheet or flat cardboard, and scissors.
- Demonstrate how to wrap the crepe paper around and around the cookie sheet or cardboard.
- Direct one kid from each group of three to wrap the crepe paper around the cookie sheet/cardboard seven or eight times.
- Help each group slide the crepe paper off the cookie sheet and tie the crepe paper in the center with the string or twine, leaving the ends of the string or twine hanging.
- Instruct the other kids in each trio to do the same so everyone has a tied bundle.
- Once everyone has their crepe paper loops, instruct the kids to use the scissors to cut the loops at each end.
 - Provide help as needed.
- Tear off a piece of colored duct tape about eight inches long and fold in half, sticky sides together.
- Help the kids use the ends of the twine to tie the tape loop to the center as a handle.
- Use the permanent marker to write each kid's name on their party shakers.
- Lead the kids to shake their party shakers in celebration together.
- Invite kids to take turns sharing different things they're celebrating—lead the rest of the group to cheer each time.
- Collect the party shakers for the "Celebration Builders" Activity after Large Group.
- For a visual of this activity click this link or scan the QR code below:
<https://bit.ly/3l2Stff>



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MONTHLY VIRTUE

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BASIC TRUTH

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"These party shakers are so fun! You can use these to celebrate at your next party. **[Transition]** In our Bible Story today, we'll talk about how we don't have to wait until a specific day or time or party to celebrate. We can **[Bottom Line]** celebrate each step of the way. Let's go."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
 25 MINUTES

MADE TO IMAGINE
 an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



*** 1. CELEBRATION BUILDERS**
[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Jenga game, and party shakers from Opening Activity; *Optional: store-bought pom-pom shakers*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Set the Jenga blocks in the center of your small group area.
- Give each kid the party shaker they made in the Opening Activity. *(Or hand out store-bought pom-pom shakers.)*
- Encourage the kids to work together to build a tall tower as you review the Bible Story.
- As you talk through the following review points, stop the kids from building where indicated and lead them to pick up their pom-poms, and point out something good a friend has done to celebrate.
 1. The Israelites were captured and taken to Babylon. Babylon eventually was taken over by the kingdom of Persia. About 70 years after God's people were conquered, the Persian King Cyrus allowed God's people to return to their homeland. More than 40,000 Jewish people traveled home to Jerusalem.
 2. They settled in towns outside of Jerusalem and started to rebuild their lives. But the most important task was to rebuild the temple, where the people could come to worship and honor God.
 3. **LET'S CELEBRATE!** *(Select a kid to point out a friend and share something that friend did to help in the building. Lead kids to shake their shakers and celebrate!)*
 4. God's people built a beautiful altar where they could make offerings to God. Here they could celebrate feasts and festivals that God wanted them to celebrate.
 5. **LET'S CELEBRATE!** *(Select a kid to point out a friend and share something that friend did to help in the building. Lead kids to shake their shakers and celebrate!)*
 6. God's people had a ton of work to do to rebuild the temple and the city walls. It was a BIG job!
 7. After they built the altar, they built the foundation of the temple. Then they stopped to celebrate.
 8. **LET'S CELEBRATE!** *(Select a kid to point out a friend and share something that friend did to help in the building. Lead kids to shake their shakers and celebrate!)*
 9. The priests and Levites, who led the people in worship, stood before the temple foundation, and played their trumpets and cymbals to lead the people in praising God.
 10. There was still a lot of work to do, and the foundation of the new temple wasn't as impressive as the foundation of the first one. The people were still SO happy and filled with joy knowing that they'd completed one big step in rebuilding everything!

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TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE
 Celebrate each step of the way.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE
"A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up."
 Proverbs 17:22, NIRV

MONTHLY VIRTUE
Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

BASIC TRUTH
I can trust God no matter what.



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(* 1. CELEBRATION BUILDERS, CONTINUED)

- 11. **LET'S CELEBRATE!** *(Select a kid to point out a friend and share something that friend did to help in the building. Lead kids to shake their shakers and celebrate!)*
- 12. Collect the party shakers to use during the prayer activity.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"You did a great job, builders! God's people took an opportunity to stop and praise God all along the way! Rebuilding the temple and the city of Jerusalem was a GIGANTIC job, but they found joy in working hard and made time to honor God. And we did the same thing as we took time to celebrate our friends as we worked on our tower!

"When we follow Jesus, God gives us joy through the Holy Spirit so we can celebrate every moment along the way. When anything we have to do seems too big or hard for us, we need to remember that God is with us! Let's remember to take time to **celebrate each step of the way.**"

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE
an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



2. SMALL GROUP LEADER, MAY I?
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]
WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

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- WHAT YOU DO:**
- Instruct the kids to line up, shoulder to shoulder, on one side of your group area.
 - Stand on the opposite side of the group area with your back turned to the kids.
 - Lead kids to play a version of "Small Group Leader, May I?" (like "Mother May I?")
 - Explain that you will call out a name and that kid will ask to take any type of step like, "Take ten baby steps."
 - Before the kids move, instruct them to ask, "Small Group Leader, may I take...?" each time, and then move toward you once you say, "yes."
 - Call out the first name.
 - Periodically turn around, move to the children before they reach you, and stop to celebrate!
 - Lead the kids to cheer and clap.
 - Say: "God is always with you, so we can stop and celebrate!"
 - After a few seconds, return to your original spot, back turned, and call out the next name.
 - Continue in the same way until the kids have reached you and celebrate together!

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE
Celebrate each step of the way.

WHAT YOU SAY:
"That was so fun! Normally when you play this game, you don't celebrate until you reach the end! But the end isn't the ONLY time we can celebrate! We find joy all along the way, especially when the job is a big one!"

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE
"A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up."
Proverbs 17:22, NIRV

"When we stop to give thanks for what God has already done, it can give us the joy to keep going! Friends, as you grow, you'll face big jobs, challenging jobs that require you to work hard and keep going. But the good news is, you aren't alone! Remember when you follow Jesus, God gives you joy through the Holy Spirit so you can **celebrate each step of the way.**"

MONTHLY VIRTUE
Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

[Make It Personal] (Share why you come to church each week. Include that being surrounded by other followers of Jesus is a way to stop each week and celebrate what God has done.)

BASIC TRUTH
I can trust God no matter what.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

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



3. MEMORY VERSE HOPSCOTCH
[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible marked at Proverbs 17:22, "Hopscotch Verse" Activity Pages, and floor tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Select a volunteer to open the marked Bible to Proverbs 17:22.
- Read the verse aloud and lead the kids to repeat each line of the verse after you.
- Talk about the part of the verse, "a broken spirit" (NIRV).
 - Or "a crushed spirit" in the NIV.
- Say: "A broken (or crushed) spirit is the opposite of joy. It's a spirit that's filled with sadness from the inside. God wants to fill us with joy—the kind of joy that lasts!"
- Lay out the "Hopscotch Verse" Activity Pages in a hopscotch pattern on the floor of your group area and secure with tape.
- Point out the words of the verse as you repeat them with the kids together.
- One at a time, invite the kids to take turns jumping from one page to the next as you say the words.
- Encourage the kids to repeat after you with each jump.
 - Point out the numbers on each page to help kids jump in order.
- Continue until every kid has a turn.

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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Proverbs 17:22, NIRV

WHAT YOU SAY:

"I love this month's Memory Verse! It reminds us that God gives us real joy. When we remember that God is with us and that God loves us no matter what, we can find joy. That's why we can be cheerful instead of having a broken (or crushed) spirit. No matter what we face—even when it's a really big job—we can stop and **celebrate each step of the way.**"

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



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

WHAT YOU NEED: Party or pom-pom shakers from the Celebration Builders Activity

WHAT YOU DO:

- Instruct the kids to stand in a circle.
- Give each kid their party shaker (or a pom-pom shaker) from earlier.
- Lead kids in a call-and-response prayer (see below).
- Instruct the kids to walk in a circle.
- Anytime you pause when saying the prayer below, invite the kids to shake their shakers and say, "Thank You, God!"
- Instruct the kids to continue cheering until the end of the prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Start walking in a circle, friends! Let's pray together. When I pause, we'll celebrate and say, 'Thank You, God!'"

SGL: "Dear God, thank you for helping us when we need it."

KIDS: "Thank You, God."

SGL: "For encouraging us when we're sad, we say:"

KIDS: "Thank You, God."

SGL: "For caring about the things we care about, we say:"

KIDS: "Thank You, God."

SGL: "For loving us no matter what, we say:"

KIDS: "Thank You, God."

SGL: "We love You, God. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to show off their shakers and talk about how we can thank God as we **celebrate each step of the way.**

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

- Offering container
- Butcher paper
- Print "J" Activity Page on cardstock, one for each kid
- Print "OY" Activity Page on cardstock, one for each Small Group
- Wall tape, one roll for each Small Group

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Crepe paper, one roll for every three kids
- Cookie sheets or flat pieces of cardboard, one for every three kids
- Scissors, one for every three kids
- String/twine, one long piece for every kid
- Colored duct tape, one roll for each Small Group
- Permanent marker, one for each Small Group

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. CELEBRATION BUILDERS

[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:

- Jenga blocks, one set for each Small Group
- Party shakers from Opening Activity
 - If you did not do the Opening Activity, use store-bought pom-pom shakers instead.

2. SMALL GROUP LEADER, MAY I?

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

3. MEMORY VERSE HOPSCOTCH

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

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 Proverbs 17:22
- Print "Hopscotch Verse" Activity Pages on paper, one set for each Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

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:

- Party or pom-pom shakers from the Celebration Builders 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.**