

Preteen | W5

Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2026, Week 5

Bible Story: Palm Sunday / Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet • *John 12:9-19, 13:1-17*

Bottom Line: Jesus showed us how to be humble.

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*

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

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 minutes)

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story (sections from God's Big Story are listed as optional)

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Bible Story Review: Jesus Thaumatrope (K-1st grade), Build the Story (2nd-3rd grade), Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions (Preteen)

Application Activity: Humble Feet (K-1st grade), Cheer for Jesus (2nd-3rd grade), Take a Snapshot (Preteen)

Memory Verse Activity: Your Best Foot Forward (K-1st grade), Hopscotch Memory (2nd-3rd grade), Verses to Take with You (Preteen)

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss (K-1st grade, 2nd-3rd grade), Make It Personal with Prayer (Preteen)

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

Palm Sunday / Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

• *John 12:9-19, 13:1-17*

Conversation Starter

Jesus showed us how to be humble.

Bottom Line

Jesus showed us how to be humble.

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*

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

 Offering container	1
 Paper	1
 Coloring supplies	Several

What You Do:

- Give each kid a sheet of paper and something to draw with.
- Invite the kids to create their own sketch of the disciples based on what they think those followers of Jesus might have looked like.
- Offer gentle hints as needed:
 - "Some disciples were fishermen—what might they look like after spending long days on the water?"
 - "One was a tax collector—maybe he dressed differently or carried tools for counting money."
 - "Some were younger, some older."
 - "One was known for being very curious and asking lots of questions."
- Let kids share their drawings and explain why they drew each disciple the way they did.

What You Say:

"These drawings are awesome! It's interesting to imagine what the disciples may have looked like. They were all regular people, fishermen, a tax collector, young men, curious learners. And yet Jesus chose them to be part of His team. **[Transition] Today, we're going to hear a story about how Jesus, the most powerful King, did something surprising and humble for these very people you've drawn. Let's find out what happened."**

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

What You Need

 Paper plates	1
 Marker	1
 Music player	1



EveryChild Tips

- *Emphasize that there are no "outs" in this game to reduce anxiety for kids who dislike competition.*
- *If movement is a challenge, kids can sit in a circle and pass the plates around. When the music stops, they talk about the plate they are holding.*

Before group time:

- On each paper plate, write a simple act of humble service. Examples:
- Let someone else go first in line.
- Give a genuine compliment to someone.
- Listen to someone's story without interrupting.
- Help with a chore at home without being asked.
- Clean up a mess you didn't make.
- Create as many plates as you have kids in your Small Group.

What You Do:

- Set the prepared plates in a circle on the floor.
- Play a version of musical chairs. When the music stops, instruct all of the kids to find a plate to stand on.
- Instead of anyone being "out," go around the circle and invite each kid to read the act of service on their plate.
- Ask them to share when or how they could do that humble act this week.
- Remove one plate and play again. Now, kids will have to share plates, practicing humility in the game itself.

What You Say:

"It's one thing to talk about being humble, but it's another thing to actually do it. These are all practical ways we can put others first. Now, showing humility like Jesus is tough, because the world tells us we're supposed to get ahead and be important. You'd think a king would ride into town in a chariot or on a powerful war horse, right? But Jesus had already fulfilled so many prophecies. And now He chose to fulfill another by riding into Jerusalem on a humble young donkey. Then, instead of ordering His followers to serve Him, Jesus took off His outer clothes, knelt down, and began to wash their feet. **[Bottom Line] Jesus showed us how to be humble**, and He wants us to follow His example."

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Connect

What You Need

Large sheet of butcher paper	1
Washable markers	Several

What You Do:

- Spread the butcher paper on the floor.
- Challenge kids to try and write a word from today's story, like "JESUS," "HUMBLE," or "SERVE" on the paper by holding a marker between their feet.
- It will be awkward, silly, and probably messy. Let them laugh and have fun with how difficult it is.
- Gather them to discuss:
 - How did that feel? Was it easy or hard?
 - How do you think this activity relates to our story about Jesus today?

What You Say:

"That was pretty awkward, right? It felt weird to use your feet for something they aren't designed for. Imagine how the disciples felt when Jesus, their teacher and King, knelt down to wash their dirty feet. It was completely upside down and unexpected. Jesus, the true King of the universes, chose to take on this humble job. Jesus even washed the feet of Judas Iscariot, whom He knew was about to betray Him to the religious leaders!"

[Bottom Line] "Jesus showed us how to be humble. He never used His power or authority to make people do stuff for Him. He asked people to join Him—He didn't force them. Now, showing humility like Jesus is tough, because the world tells us we're supposed to get ahead and be important. If you need help being humble, ask Jesus to help! When you began to follow Jesus, His very Spirit, the Holy Spirit, came to live inside of you. The Holy Spirit knows how to be humble, and He will help you!"

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Connect

What You Need

 Bibles

1

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Philippians 2:3 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

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. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Read the Memory Verse together out loud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Instruct everyone to hold their Bible.
- Explain that you are going to call out a Bible verse reference, and they are going to race to see who can look it up in the Bible and read it first.
- First, call out this month's Memory Verse: "Philippians 2:3!"
- Instruct the first kid to find it to stand and read the verse(s) aloud.
- Then, look up a few bonus verses about humility and serving. After each one, ask how it connects to our story.
 - Matthew 23:11 NIV ("The most important person among you will be your servant.")
 - 1 Peter 5:5 NIV ("In the same way, I'm speaking to you who are younger. Follow the lead of those who are older. All of you, put on a spirit free of pride toward one another. Put it on as if it were your clothes. Do this because Scripture says, 'God opposes those who are proud. But he gives grace to those who are humble.'")
 - John 13:14-15 NIV ("I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you should also wash one another's feet. I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you.")

What You Say:

"The Bible has so much to say about humility! It's clearly a big deal to God. It's the 'upside down' way of Jesus and His kingdom. The world says to be first, but Jesus says to be a servant. Jesus modeled what it means to put others first. **[Bottom Line] Jesus showed us how to be humble**, and the Bible is our guide to learning how to live that way."

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

Ask:

- Jesus is the King of the universe, yet He chose to ride a humble donkey and wash His disciples' feet. Why do you think Jesus chose humility over showing His power in those moments?
- Jesus washed the feet of Judas Iscariot, even though He knew Judas would betray Him. What does this teach us about serving others, even when they don't deserve it or might hurt us?
- Peter didn't understand at first why Jesus washed his feet. Why do you think God sometimes asks us to do things that don't make sense at first? How can trusting Him help us grow?
- Jesus gave an example of putting others first and told His followers to do the same. In your daily life, what are some ways you can practice humility and serve others like Jesus did?
- The world often tells us to be the most important or to get ahead. How is following Jesus' example of humility different from the ways the world measures success, and why does it matter?

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect

What You Need

 Green construction paper	Several
 Markers	1
 Scissors	1
 Bowl	1

Before group time:

- Cut green construction paper into the shape of palm leaves, one for every kid.

What You Do:

- Give each kid a paper leaf and a marker.
- Instruct the kids to write their names on one side of the leaf.
- Encourage the kids to fold their leaves and put them into the bowl.
- Mix up the leaves.
- Pass the bowl around and have each person draw one leaf. (If they get their own, they should put it back and draw again.)
- Tell them to take that leaf home and put it somewhere they will see it this week—like their mirror or desk.
- Their mission is to pray for the person whose name is on their leaf every day this week.

What You Say:

"Now, showing humility like Jesus is tough, because the world tells us we're supposed to get ahead and be important. But we know Jesus is most important! We need the help of the Holy Spirit inside us to set aside what we want in order to serve others like Jesus. When we ask Jesus to give us the ability to be humble, He will do it! One of the best ways to be humble and put others first is to pray for them. It's a humble act of service that makes a big difference. When you pray for the person on your leaf, you're following Jesus' example. Let's pray!

"Jesus, thank You for being the ultimate example of humility. Thank You for serving Your friends and giving Your life for us. It's amazing. Help us to follow Your example. Give us the strength to put others first this week, starting with the person on our leaf. Help us to show the world what Your 'upside down' love looks like. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."