

23 | W2

Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2026, Week 2

Bible Story: A Roman Commander Has Faith • *Matthew 8:5-13*

Bottom Line: Remember God is most important.

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: Act It Out (K-1st grade), Puppet Show Retell (2nd-3rd grade), Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions (Preteen)

Application Activity: Who's Who (K-1st grade), Application Roll (2nd-3rd grade), Take a Snapshot (Preteen)

Memory Verse Activity: Color by Number (K-1st grade), Memory Verse Balloon Bop (2nd-3rd grade), Verses to Take with You (Preteen)

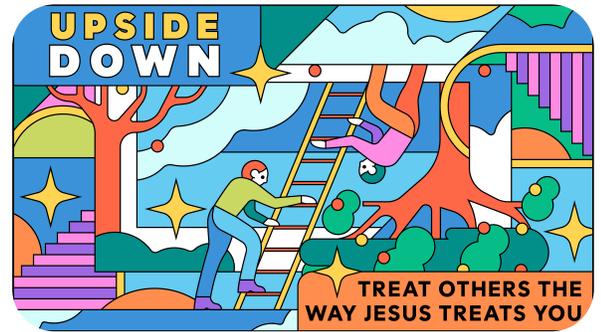
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss (K-1st grade, 2nd-3rd grade), Make It Personal with Prayer (Preteen)

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

A Roman Commander Has Faith • *Matthew 8:5-13*

Conversation Starter

How do you show that God is important?

Bottom Line

Remember God is most important.

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

23 Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

👤 Offering container



1

EveryChild Tips

- *Keep the patterns very simple (e.g., just clapping, or just patting).*
- *For a child with hearing impairments, make the movements visual.*

What You Do:

- Welcome the kids by name with a high five or fist bump!
- Invite the kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Explain to the kids that you are going to be the leader, and they need to copy your rhythm.
- Start a simple pattern, like patting your knees twice and then clapping once. (*pat, pat, clap*)
- Encourage the whole group to do the rhythm with you several times.
- Then, point to one kid to be the new leader. Encourage them to make up a new, simple pattern.
- Instruct the rest of the group to copy the new leader's pattern.
- Give every kid who wants a turn a chance to be the leader.

What You Say:

"You are all fantastic at repeating the rhythm! You listened to the leader and did what they did. You followed their lead. **[Transition]** In our true story from the Bible today, we're going to meet a Roman commander, a leader of many soldiers, but he knew who the most important leader of all was—the One with the most authority. Let's go find out who!"

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

23 – Puppet Show Retell | Made to Imagine

What You Need

	Prepared craft-stick puppets from the "Puppet Show" Activity Page	4
	Optional: a small cloth or washcloth (for the sick person's bed)	1
	Craft sticks	4
	Masking tape	1
	Scissors	1

What You Do:

- Give the puppets to different kids.
- Tell the story of the Roman commander again and instruct the kids to act it out with the puppets.
- Use simple prompts:
 - "The commander came to Jesus in the town of Capernaum."
 - "The commander was sad because his servant was suffering terribly. Can the sick person puppet lie down on the blanket?"
 - "The commander had strong faith. He said, *'Just say the word, and my servant will be healed!'*" (Matthew 8:8 NIV).
 - "And Jesus did! The servant was healed at that very moment!" (*Direct the sick puppet to jump up.*)
- As time allows, switch the puppets and tell the story again so more kids get a turn.
- Print "Puppet Show" Activity Page on cardstock and cut, one set for each Small Group
- Craft sticks, four for each Small Group
- Masking tape, one roll for each Small Group
- Scissors, one pair for each Small Group
- *Optional: a small cloth or washcloth (for the sick person's bed), one for each Small Group*
- *Before group time:*
- *Tape craft sticks to the back of the four images from the "Puppet Show" Activity Page.*

What You Say:

"What a great puppet show! The Roman commander was a very important soldier; he was even in charge of around one hundred other soldiers! That's a lot of soldiers! No one would have ever expected a Roman commander to talk with a humble Jewish teacher—much less to ask for help! Yet, here he was, pleading with Jesus. That's because the Roman commander knew that Jesus was way more than a humble Jewish teacher. The commander knew that Jesus is most important. Everything answers to Him. And Jesus helped right away! Jesus was amazed by the commander's faith. The Roman commander showed us that we should always **[Bottom Line] remember God is most important.**"

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

23 – Application Roll | Made to Connect

What You Need

 Large die

1

What You Do:

- Explain that the kids will take turns rolling the die. The number they roll will match a question you ask.
- Let the first kid roll the die. If they roll a 3, ask them question #3 from the list.
- Continue rolling the die and asking questions until everyone who wants a turn has had one.

Application Questions:

1. Name one person who is important to you.
2. Name one thing that is important in our room.
3. Who made the whole world? (*God!*)
4. Who is more powerful than a superhero? (*God/Jesus!*)
5. Who is a very important person in the world?
6. Who is the most important person in the whole universe? (*God/Jesus!*)

What You Say:

"Those are great answers! There are lots of important people and things in our lives. But our true story from the Bible today about the important Roman commander helped us learn to **[Bottom Line] remember God is most important**. The commander knew Jesus' authority was bigger than anyone's, and Jesus was so amazed by his faith!

"So what does this mean for us? It's remembering what the Roman commander knew—God is more important and more powerful than anything. God is in charge! If there is something that you're scared of at nighttime, you can ask God for help. If there is something bothering you at school, ask God for His help. If you are having a hard time with a friend, ask God for help. God is the King of everything! **[Bottom Line] Remember God is most important.**"

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

23 – Memory Verse Balloon Bop | Made to Move

What You Need

-  Bibles 1
-  Air-inflated mylar balloon 1

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible and direct them to look up Philippians 2:3.
- Demonstrate how to look up the verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses for 2-3rd graders: Guide them 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, lead them to find the name of the book in the list. When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

- Repeat the verse aloud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Guide the kids to put their Bibles aside.
- Invite the kids to stand in a circle.
- Toss the balloon into the air.
- Explain that the goal is to keep the balloon from touching the floor. Each time someone bops the balloon, everyone should shout one word of the Memory Verse.
- Start the game: You bop the balloon and shout, "Don't!" Instruct the next kid to bop it and shout, "do!" and so on.
- Keep playing, working together to say the verse, and keeping the balloon up.

What You Say:

"Great job! That was fun! This verse reminds us to be humble. The Roman commander was humble when he told Jesus, 'Lord, I am not good enough to have you come into my house' (Matthew 8:8 NIV). Being humble means knowing God is in charge. It helps us to **[Bottom Line] remember God is most important**. We can learn this verse and remember it all week long. We can use this verse to remind us to be humble and put others first by giving up what we want."

5 min

Prayer

5 min

23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

What You Need

-  Index cards 0
-  Pens or pencils 1
-  Small bag or bowl 1

What To Do:

- Instruct each kid to write their name on an index card.
- Place all the name cards into the bowl.
- Pass the bowl around the circle and let each kid draw one name card (make sure they don't get their own name).
- Explain that you are going to pray for each other.
- Go around the circle. When it's a kid's turn, instruct them to hold up the name card they drew, and the whole group will pray together: "Dear God, please help [name on card]."
- Continue until you have prayed for every kid.

[Make It Personal] Include your own name card in the bowl.

What You Say:

"It's so good to pray for our friends. Praying for others is a way to put others first and show them the love of Jesus. The Roman commander asked Jesus to help his servant. He had faith that Jesus could help, because Jesus is the most important."

"Dear God, thank You for all my friends. Thank You for being bigger and more important than anything. Help us to remember that You have all the authority over everything and that we can trust You no matter what. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | 23

Small Group

GETTING READY

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 Minutes)

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Opening Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Offering container

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.

1. Puppet Show Retell

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Imagine

What You Need:

- Print "Puppet Show" Activity Page on cardstock and cut, one set for each Small Group
- Craft sticks, four for each Small Group
- Masking tape, one roll for each Small Group
- Scissors, one pair for each Small Group
- *Optional: a small cloth or washcloth (for the sick person's bed), one for each Small Group*
- *Before group time:*
 - *Tape craft sticks to the back of the four images from the "Puppet Show" Activity Page.*

2. Application Roll

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- Large die, one for each Small Group

3. Memory Verse Balloon Bop

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one for every kid
- Air-inflated mylar balloon, one for each Small Group

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- Index cards, one for every kid
- Pens or pencils, one for every kid
- Small bag or bowl, one for each Small Group

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

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- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource, the **Parent Cue App**.

Supplies

23 Social Activity | Made to Play Quantity

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|
| 1. | Offering container | 1 |
|----|--------------------|---|

23 – Puppet Show Retell | Made to Imagine Quantity

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Prepared craft-stick puppets from the “Puppet Show” Activity Page | 4 |
| 2. | Optional: a small cloth or washcloth (for the sick person’s bed) | 1 |
| 3. | Craft sticks | 4 |
| 4. | Masking tape | 1 |
| 5. | Scissors | 1 |

23 – Application Roll | Made to Connect Quantity

- | | | |
|----|-----------|---|
| 1. | Large die | 1 |
|----|-----------|---|

23 – Memory Verse Balloon Bop | Made to Move Quantity

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| 1. | Bibles | 1 |
| 2. | Air-inflated mylar balloon | 1 |

23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect Quantity

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|
| 1. | Index cards | 0 |
| 2. | Pens or pencils | 1 |
| 3. | Small bag or bowl | 1 |