

# 23 | W3

## Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2026, Week 3

**Bible Story:** Be Humble/Love Your Enemies • *Matthew 5:38-48*

**Bottom Line:** Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

**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*

### **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> for a visual on some of the activities.

Note: This leader guide is created with inclusion in mind. It supports children with learning differences, disabilities, or special needs as they participate alongside their peers. Look for the highlighted sections for extra tips to help welcome and include every child. For more resources, check out our free *A Place at the Table* course with Kim Botto and EveryChild Curriculum. ([joinamazing.com/everychild](http://joinamazing.com/everychild))

### **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 about God's Big Story are listed as optional)

Prayer

### **Small Group (25 minutes)**

#### **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect**

Bible Story Review: Light the Story

Application Activity: Upside Down Hearts

Memory Verse Activity: Prayer Chain

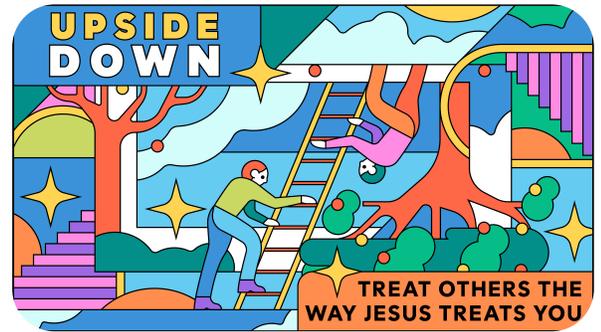
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

### **Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience**

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



### **Bible Story**

Be Humble/Love Your Enemies • *Matthew 5:38-48*

### **Conversation Starter**

How can you show kindness to someone who makes you mad?

### **Bottom Line**

Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

### **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
-  Hula Hoops® (1 for every 5 kids) 1



### EveryChild Tips

- If a kid has mobility challenges, the group can gently help guide the Hula Hoop over them while they remain stationary.*

### 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.
- Instruct the kids to stand in a circle, holding hands.
- Place a Hula Hoop over one pair of clasped hands.
- (If you have a larger group, feel free to make smaller groups and give each group a Hula Hoop. Groups of five work great!)
- Challenge the group to move the Hula Hoop all the way around the circle without anyone letting go of their friends' hands. (The kids will have to step through the Hula Hoop and move their bodies to pass it along.)
- Cheer them on as they work together to get the Hula Hoop all the way around the circle.

### What You Say:

"You did it! That was a real challenge, but you worked together! Sometimes, being friends and loving each other can be a little tricky! **[Transition]** Today, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is going to teach us a brand-new way to do something that can feel upside-down: how to love people who are unkind to us. Let's go listen!"

5 min

# Bible Story Review

5 min

## 23 – Bible Story Telephone | Made to Play

### What You Need

No supplies needed

### What You Do:

- Encourage the kids to join you and sit in a circle.
- Explain the game of Telephone. You'll whisper a short sentence from the story into one kid's ear, and they'll whisper it to the next, and so on.
- Use these simple sentences from the story:
  - "Jesus said, 'Love your enemies.'"
  - "Be kind to people who are mean."
  - "Pray for people who hurt you."
  - "This shows you are children of your Father in heaven."
  - **"[Bottom Line] Love like Jesus even when it's hard."**
- Whisper the first sentence to the first kid.
- When the sentence gets to the end of the circle, encourage the last kid to say it out loud.
- Talk about whether the message stayed the same. Play again with the next sentence.

### What You Say:

"Great job! It can be tricky to get the message right. The message Jesus gave us in our story is so important, we want to get it right! Jesus said: *'Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. Then you will be children of your Father who is in heaven. He causes his sun to shine on evil people and good people. He sends rain on those who do right and those who don't'* (Matthew 5:44-45 NIV).

"Did you hear that? Jesus didn't just say: 'Don't be mean to your enemies.' He told us to love our enemies. That's completely upside down, right?! But showing love to an enemy—that's just what God does. God shows kindness to everyone. And God says He wants us to show the world that we are His children by doing the same. He wants us to **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard.**"

5 min

# Application Activity

5 min

## 23 – Rhythm Repeat | Made to Play

### What You Need

No supplies needed

### What You Do:

- Encourage the kids to join you in a seated circle.
- Explain that you are going to build a rhythm together.
- Start by doing one simple action, like clapping twice.
- The kid to your right is to repeat your action (clapping twice) and add their own simple action (like snapping once).
- The next kid in the circle is to do both actions in order (clapping twice, snapping once) and add a new one (like patting their knees twice).
- Continue around the group, with each kid repeating the whole pattern and adding one new move.
- See how long you can keep the pattern going!

### What You Say:

"That was amazing! It got really hard to remember the whole pattern! It can also be hard to remember to be kind when someone is not kind to us. Showing love to someone you don't get along with feels upside-down. But that's why it's so important and so powerful. God loves everyone. When people see you choosing to love when it's hard, they'll know that you're different. They'll see that you're a follower of Jesus.

"Loving people who are hard to love is one of the most powerful ways that you can live like Jesus. It's not always easy, but you can pray and ask God for help. When you began to follow Jesus, His Holy Spirit, Jesus' very Spirit, who loves His enemies, moved inside of you. And He can help you so you can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard.**"

5 min

# Memory Verse Activity

5 min

## 23 – Tic Tac Memory Verse | Made to Play

### What You Need

	Bibles	1
	Print "Tic Tac Memory Verse" Activity Page on cardstock	1
	Floor tape	1
	Beanbags or other small toys to use as markers, in two different colors	5

### Before group time:

- Use the floor tape to create a large Tic-Tac-Toe board on the floor.
- Tape the four verse papers from the "Tic Tac Memory Verse" into four of the Tic-Tac-Toe squares.

### 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.
- Divide the kids into two teams, "X" and "O."
- Give both teams five beanbags (or markers).
- Encourage a kid from the first team to toss a beanbag onto the board.
- If the beanbag (or marker) lands on a square with part of the verse, instruct the whole group to read that part aloud.
- If the beanbag (or marker) lands on a blank square, encourage the team to leave their beanbag (or marker) there.
- Teams take turns trying to get three in a row.
- After the game, say the whole Memory Verse together. (Don't forget to add the verse reference—Philippians 2:3!)
- Play several rounds if desired.

### What You Say:

"Great game, everyone! Our Memory Verse tells us to be humble and put others first. That's a huge part of how we can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard**. That's what humility looks like. Be humble and value others more than yourselves. When we do that, we **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard**."

5 min

# Prayer

5 min

## 23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

### What You Need

No supplies needed

### What To Do:

- Say, "Let's take a minute to have a quiet talk with God. I want you to think about one person who is sometimes hard to love. You don't have to say their name out loud. Just picture them in your mind."
- Give the kids a few moments of quiet.
- Say, "Now, let's ask God to help us love that person. You can just think the words in your heart."
- After another moment of quiet, close the time in prayer.

### What You Say:

"It can feel really hard to love people who are not kind to us. But Jesus told us to '*pray for those who hurt you*' (*Matthew 8:44 NIV*). He gives us the strength to love even our enemies. And we can ask Him for help! Let's finish praying."

"Dear God, thank You for loving us. Please help us to love others the way You do, sending sun and rain on everyone. Give us Your strength so we can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard**. We need Your help! 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
- Hula Hoops®, one for every 5 kids

#### **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. Bible Story Telephone**

**[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]**

##### **Made to Play**

##### **What You Need:**

- No supplies needed

#### **2. Rhythm Repeat**

**[Live for God | Application Activity]**

##### **Made to Play**

##### **What You Need:**

- No supplies needed

#### **3. Tic Tac Memory Verse**

**[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]**

##### **Made to Play**

##### **What You Need:**

- Bibles, one for every kid
- Print "Tic Tac Memory Verse" Activity Page on cardstock, one set for each Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- Beanbags or other small toys to use as markers, in two different colors; five for each Small Group
- *Before group time:*
  - Use the floor tape to create a large Tic-Tac-Toe board on the floor.
  - Tape the four verse papers from the "Tic Tac Memory Verse" into four of the Tic-Tac-Toe squares.

#### **4. Pray and Dismiss**

**[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]**

##### **Made to Reflect**

##### **What You Need:**

- No supplies needed

#### **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, the **Parent Cue App**.



# Supplies

23 Social Activity   Made to Play		Quantity
1.	Offering Container	1
2.	Hula Hoops® (1 for every 5 kids)	1

23 - Tic Tac Memory Verse   Made to Play		Quantity
1.	Bibles	1
2.	Print "Tic Tac Memory Verse" Activity Page on cardstock	1
3.	Floor tape	1
4.	Beanbags or other small toys to use as markers, in two different colors	5