

Lesson Plan

March 29th, 2026

This Month's Truth: I Am Meant To Know God—God Leads Me To Hope

Bible Story: Jesus entered Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-10; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19)

Theme Verse: This is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and the one You have sent—Jesus Christ. (John 17:3)

Teachers rally with your team a few minutes before kids start to arrive: Rally is a pre-service time for you to be expectant and equipped before the kids start arriving. Go over the lesson and any ideas for the day! Pray over your space and for the kids that will be coming that they will be connected to the person of Jesus!

Share: We are celebrating Palm Sunday this Game Changer! When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, people celebrated that the Savior God promised had finally arrived. (Read John 12:15-16.) Kids will learn that they, too, can celebrate the hope we have in Jesus. When we trust and follow Him, we can always look forward to a relationship with God now and forever.

Pray: Thank God for the joy and privilege of serving Him, kids, and families!

Pre Service

Arrival time, please use this time to build relationships with kids and encourage them to build relationships with one another.

Service

What To Do:

- **Teacher** Start 5-minute countdown **5 minutes prior to service start time.** The Countdown Video is meant to be played as a signal to transition to Large Group. The video is fun and interactive with opportunities for the kids to respond and cheer. Help kids engage and interact with the video by calling out what's happening, asking for their guesses, and cheering with them.

Community Big Kids

Teacher Opener: Helllloooooo, everyone, and welcome to an unbelievably spectacular day that we like to call Game Changer! Everyone, say, “Oh yeah!” (Oh yeah!) My name is _____, and we are going to have the best game-changing day of all time as we talk about how Jesus changes the game! If you are ready, say, “Let’s gooooo!” (Let’s gooooo!)

Guess the Move

Game Rules:

1. Start the video.
2. Challenge kids to match one of the three poses on the screen, locking in their pose before the seven-second timer runs out.
3. Ask kids who did *not* match the pose to quickly sit or bend down so Team Leaders can count how many kids on their teams *did* match the pose. Each correct match is worth one point. Leaders will keep track of their teams’ points.
4. Instruct all kids to stand again and choose their next move. Continue playing until the video ends (seven rounds total).

What You Say: Let’s play a game called “Guess the Move!” Guess the what? (*Move!*) In this game, you will choose a move or pose, like the figures you see on the screen. You will have seven seconds to choose and lock in your move. How many seconds? (*Seven!*) Right! At the end of seven seconds, one of those figures you see will be the only one on the screen. If you did not guess the move by matching it, you will hurry to bend down or sit. If you *did* guess the move by matching it, stay in that pose! Team Leaders, you will count all the players on your team who guessed the move and give your team a point for every matching player. Keep track of your team’s points! Let’s stand up and go over those moves right now. (*Allow time.*)

You can choose a move like the first figure by lifting your arms high in the air. Let’s try!
(*Demonstrate and allow kids to copy.*)

You can choose a move like the second figure by reaching your hands out to the sides. Go ahead and try. (*Demonstrate and allow kids to copy.*)

Finally, you can choose a move like the third figure by reaching your hands down low. Try it with me. (*Demonstrate and allow kids to copy.*)

Great job! Remember, you will only have seven seconds to lock in your move. Then you cannot change it. If you do not match the move, bend or sit down quickly so your Team Leaders can count the points. Say, “Guess the Move!” to get our game started in 3-2-1! (*Guess the Move!*)

Leader Tip: Keep the energy high by calling out the moves and encouraging kids to move quickly. Assist leaders with tallying points as needed.

Keep It Going: Consider playing a round in the opposite way where kids try to correctly guess the move that will come onto the screen.

Well done, everyone! You guessed the moves! Take a seat. Team Leaders, how many points did your teams earn? *(Allow Team Leaders to share their points.)* Great job! Looks like the _____ Team got the most points. Do not worry, though—this is our Game Changer, and there are more games in store, so you can win more points! Say, “Game Changer!” *(Game Changer!)* In our game, we had to guess what pose was coming up next, but in life, we do not have to guess who God is. Ask, “Why?” *(Why?)* Because we are all meant to know God! He makes the way for us to know Him through His Son, Jesus! That is why Jesus changes the game. Everyone, say, “I am meant to know God!” *(I am meant to know God!)* Say, “Jesus changes the game!” *(Jesus changes the game!)*

Transition Script to go into the Intro Video: What do you think would help more if you were on a game show—being fast or being patient? Let me hear your answer in 3-2-1! *(Allow responses.)* Well, we will get to find out in the Game Changer Show! Get our video started by calling, “Game Changer!” in 3-2-1! *(Game Changer!)*

Play Intro Video

What You Say: “Au revoir” (or-eh vwar) is how to say “Goodbye!” in French. Everyone, let’s say “Au revior, Pauline!” in 3-2-1! *(Au revior, Pauline!)* We will see Pauline later in the bonus round of the Game Changer Show! Even better than Pauline making it to the bonus round is learning the truth that God leads us to hope. Hope is when we can trust that something good will happen. Let me hear you say, “God leads me to hope!” *(God leads me to hope!)* We are all meant to know God, and we can always look forward to and trust who God is and everything He is doing!

Worship

What You Say: Let’s worship together this morning! Come up front with me!

What To Do:

- Turn lights off
- 2-3 songs of worship
- **Teachers and Small Group Leaders worship with the kids, modeling what it looks like to give God our praise. Stand in the front of the room, or next to the kids- but not in the back.**
- Dismiss the kids back to their seats when the songs are over

What To Do:

- Have the kids **open up** a physical Bible and find the Bible story for that day.
- Use the Bibles provided in the classroom if a kid does not have their own Bible with them.

Transition Script to go into the Bible Story Video: (Open the Bible to Matthew 21:1-10.) Now we get to hear a story from the Bible—God’s true message about Himself. In the Bible, we can see who God is and how He provides for us. We are meant to know God, and the Bible helps us do just that! I can’t wait for us to know God better as we hear a special story about God’s Son, Jesus. Say, “Game Changer!” to get our Bible story started in 3-2-1! (Game Changer!)

Play Bible Story Video

Questions to consider asking after the video:

- What is something that you learned about God from the video?
- What is something that you learned about people?
- What can you take away from the video?
 - How can you apply the lesson from today into your life?

Making The Connection Script: What a surprise that God’s Son rode into Jerusalem, not in a chariot or on a big fancy horse. Jesus rode in on a donkey! A what? (A donkey!) When He rode in, people called out, “Hosanna!” What did people call out? (Hosanna!) They said, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” Hosanna means, “Save us!” People were filled with hope because they knew they needed to be rescued, and they knew Jesus was the One who could rescue them!

The people were filled with so much hope when Jesus rode into town. They trusted and were looking forward to God keeping a promise He gave long ago. God promised He would send a Savior, and Jesus was that Savior. But Jesus did not save the people from the things they thought

they needed saving from. Jesus came to save people from their sins. Sin is when we choose to do what we think is best rather than follow what God says is best. Sin breaks our relationship with God, and sin deserves to be punished. But Jesus came to take the punishment for sin that we deserve by dying on a cross and coming back to life on the third day. Jesus showed that He is more powerful than sin and death and that following Him is the way we can have a forever relationship with God. We are meant to know God, and Jesus made the way for us to do just that!

When we wonder if there is anything we can always look forward to and know for sure will happen, we can remember that God leads us to hope. Our hope comes from knowing that God, who created the world and everything in it, loves us enough to make the way for us to know Him. That is the biggest Game Changer of all! Say, “God leads me to hope!” (God leads me to hope!)

Let’s watch this video to learn a little bit more about how Jesus changes the game and takes us from a broken relationship with God to a forever relationship with God.

Play Three Circles Video:

What You Say: It is such a Game Changer that Jesus gave up His life for us so that we could know God and love Him forever. That is worth celebrating, and it definitely leads us to hope! We can always have hope and look forward to the truth that God is with us, He loves us, and one day we will get to enjoy life with Him forever. The people in our Bible story celebrated that God kept His promise and sent a Savior. We can celebrate and have hope that Jesus makes the way for us to have a relationship with God!

Jesus brought hope to people who knew they needed a Savior. Say, “God leads me to hope!” (God leads me to hope!) Jesus is the Savior who loved us so much that He gave up His life for us. Because of Jesus, we can have hope of a relationship with God that lasts forever. This relationship comes from believing that Jesus is God’s Son who died for our sin and rose from the dead. We can ask Jesus to forgive us, turn away from our sin, and trust Him to rescue us as we follow Him. Trusting Jesus changes everything—it truly changes the game. If you have questions about this, please find me or one of your other leaders, and we would love to keep talking with you about this!

Offering

What To Do:

- Play video explaining offering to kids
- Play offering time video while kids pass the bucket
- Ask a student(s) to come up and pray over the offering

Theme Verse Review:

Choose between the Video-Led Theme Verse option or the Host-Led Theme Verse option.

Theme Verse Motions:

This is eternal life: (Bring both your hands around in front of you with palms up, then drop them.)

that they may know you, (Bring your right hand around with your palm up, then drop it.)

the only true God, (Bring your left hand around with your palm up, then drop it.)

and the one you have sent—Jesus Christ. (Bring your right hand around with one finger up, then point up to sky.)

John 17:3 (Hold both your hands out like a book.)

Option #1: Put the memory verse slide on the screen.

What You Say: We are meant to know God, and we can know God through the Bible! Let's learn our Theme verse, which can help us remember that God leads us to hope. Stand up and let's learn this verse together!

Repeat after me: (Use the motions above.)

Search me, God, (Search me, God,)

and know my heart ... (and know my heart ...)

lead me in the everlasting way. (lead me in the everlasting way.)

Psalm 139:23-24 (Psalm 139:23-24)

That was great, everyone! Now, let's say it with extra loud voices, celebrating like the people in our Bible story. Ready?

Search me, God, (Search me, God,)

and know my heart ... (and know my heart ...)

lead me in the everlasting way. (lead me in the everlasting way.)

Psalm 139:23-24 (Psalm 139:23-24)

This Bible verse gives us hope! It shows us that not only are we meant to know God, but God also knows us, loves us, and can lead us to everlasting life. God knows what we need, so He sent Jesus. Through Jesus, we can enjoy life with God now and forever! That is such good news! Everyone, say, "God leads me to hope!" (God leads me to hope!)

Option #2: Play Memory verse video

What You Say: We are meant to know God, and we can know God through the Bible! Let's learn our Theme verse, which can help us remember that God leads us to hope.

Play Memory Verse Video

What You Say: This Bible verse gives us hope! It shows us that not only are we meant to know God, but God also knows us, loves us, and can lead us to everlasting life. God knows what we need, so He sent Jesus. Through Jesus, we can enjoy life with God now and forever! That is such good news! Everyone, say, "God leads me to hope!" (God leads me to hope!)

Large Group Closing:

What You Say: Not only did we have fun today, but we also got to learn that we are meant to know God. He is the God who created the whole world and everything in it, and He made us to know Him. God leads us to hope because He knows what we need, and we can always look forward to God's care and love. Say, "God leads me to hope!" (God leads me to hope!) God promised to send Someone to rescue us from sin and make the way for us to have a relationship with Him, and that Someone is Jesus! Having a forever relationship with God through Jesus is a Game Changer that leads us to hope! Say, "Jesus changes the game!" (Jesus changes the game!) Let's pray and talk with God in 3-2-1.

Closing Prayer: God, we love You, and we thank You that we get to know You. Help us see how awesome You are and how much You love us. Forgive us for when we do what we think is best rather than following what You say is best. Help us see that there is hope even when we sin because You love us and forgive us. Thank You for sending Jesus to take the punishment we deserve and change the game for us forever. Amen.

Transition to Small Group Time: Split the kids into small groups. This can be done either by age, grade, or gender.

Small Group Time:

Option #1: Connection Questions

What To Do: Let's talk about how Jesus is the ultimate Game Changer!

1. What is something that you look forward to every year? Why do you look forward to it? (Allow kids to answer and share your own answer.)
2. A countdown timer can remind us how exciting it is to look forward to something, even while you are waiting. How do you think the people in Jerusalem felt as they waited for the Savior to come and rescue them? (Allow kids to answer and share your own answer.)
3. The Bible tells us we are meant to know God. Knowing God leads us to hope, which means we can always count on Him. Let's open our Bibles to Matthew 21:8-9 and read about it together. (Invite kids to open their Bibles. Read the passage aloud or invite a kid who volunteers to read the passage aloud. Be sure to have Bibles available for kids who need one. Help kids find the passage so everyone can follow along together.) When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, people celebrated because the Savior they had hoped and waited for finally arrived! How can we still celebrate Jesus as our Savior today? (We can thank Him. We can trust and follow Him. We can tell others about Him.)
4. Jesus is our Savior because He took the punishment we deserved for sin. Jesus makes the only way for us to be forgiven and have a relationship with God. When we trust and follow Jesus, we can have hope and trust that we can live in God's love now and forever. How is the hope we have because of Jesus different than just wishing for something good that may or may not happen? (We can know that life with God through Jesus will happen for sure.) Do you have any questions about what it means to trust and follow Jesus? (Allow kids to answer.) If anyone would like to ask questions or make the decision to trust and follow Jesus, you can talk with me.
5. The Bible tells us that we are meant to know God, but we also see that our relationship with God is broken because of sin. Jesus changed the game when He entered Jerusalem because He showed the people that their King and Savior had arrived! What is something you learned today? Is there anything you have questions about? (Allow kids to answer and share your own answer.)

Option #2: Handy Palm Branches

Leader Prep: Write God leads me to hope on the dry erase board.

Community Big Kids

1. Trace and cut out five copies of your hand on green construction paper.
2. Write one word of the Main Idea on the outer edge of each paper hand: God leads me to hope.
3. Glue the paper hands to the top half of the craft stick, fanning them out like palm branches.

What To Do: Let's make palm branches to help us remember that God leads us to hope! First, use your pencil to trace your hand five times on your green construction paper. How many times? (Five!) Make sure you start on the top of your paper so you have space to trace your hand multiple times. After you trace your hand five times, cut them out so you have five green paper hands. (Allow time.)

Now toward the outer edge of each hand, write one word of today's Main Idea: God leads me to hope. (Allow time, assisting as needed.)

Great job! Now glue your hands to your craft stick one at a time. Make them fan out so it looks like a palm branch, and so you can read the words! (Allow time, assisting as needed.)

Keep It Going: Walk around the room, waving your palm branches in the air and calling, "Hosanna!" and "God leads me to hope!"

Loud And Clear: These palm branches look so good! Today we read about how people in Jerusalem used palm branches to celebrate Jesus as He entered the city riding on a donkey. Jesus came to be the Savior of the world. He is the One who rescues us from what we deserve—a life separated from God—and gives us hope for a relationship with God. When we wave our palm branches, we can have hope that God loves us and saves us, like the people in our Bible story!

Option #3: Activity Page

What To Do: This activity page helps us remember some big things we've learned about today. As you color and work on activities, talk to a friend about some of your favorite parts of our time together.

Leader Tip: Get to know the kids better. Ask them what they remember about the Bible story or remind them that God leads us to hope when we trust and follow Jesus. We are meant to know God through Jesus, and that is a Game Changer!

Loud And Clear: God leads us to hope. When we wonder who we can count on and what we can look forward to, we can have hope in Jesus! God sent Jesus to make the way for us to have a relationship with Him. Trusting and following Jesus changes the game!

Close out in prayer:

What To Do:

- Ask for any specific prayer requests
- Pray with the group
- Lead the group in the prayer below.

What You Say: God, thank You for loving us and giving us a true hope of a forever relationship with You. Thank You for Jesus being the Savior we need to rescue us. Help us love You and know You more every day. Amen.

Dismissal:

Leader Tip: Work with your team to dismiss the kids in a fun, manageable, and safe way. As kids leave, make sure they have all of the crafts and papers. Share with the person picking them up something positive you observed today. Invite them back next week.