

WEEK 4

LESSON GUIDE

ANIMATED

BIG IDEA

Because of God,
I can feel valued.

BIBLE

Nehemiah Rebuilds Jerusalem's Walls:
Nehemiah 2:1-6; 11-18

WELCOME TIME

MUSIC | Animated Praise!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "Abound in Hope" (Seeds Family Worship)
 - "No Matter How I Feel" (Lifetree Kids)
 - "Even When" (Yancy & Little Praise Party)
 - "God Loves You and You and You" (New Wine)

ACTIVITY | Live Animation

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show a video (like [this one](#)) that briefly explains how animation is made. Then, working as a group, create a storyboard for the kids using suggestions from the kids (stick figure drawings are allowed!). Invite a few kids and leaders to come to the front to bring the storyboard to life.
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Read "Harold and the Purple Crayon" together. Lay out a long piece of butcher paper and purple crayons and invite toddlers to scribble on the paper as you read.
- The first step in any animation is to create a storyboard. That means the people who make the movie sit down and plan what the story is going to be about.
- Let's try making our own storyboard right now!
 - **Who should be our main character(s)?**
 - **Where are they going?**
 - **What problem do they have?**
 - **How do they fix the problem?**
 - **What happens at the end?**
- This seems like it's going to be a super fun story! Let's pretend some of you are my drawings that have come to life. **Who wants to act out this story with me?**

ACTIVITY | What is Value?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set out ten different items and use the printable provided to label each item — one being the cheapest (like a pencil) and ten being the most expensive (like a tricycle or something else large). Position a kid at each item and give them the exact amount of play money the item they're standing next to is worth. Or, give kids the money and have them find the item they can buy with the amount of money they're given. You could even position the items around the room, call out instructions like, "I have seven dollars. What can I buy for exactly seven dollars?" and encourage the kids to run to the item that is labeled "seven." Keep going until all ten items have been visited.
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Give toddlers play money and have fun pretending to buy and sell items around the room without worrying about the price. Provide a toy cash register and scanners for extra fun.
- You helped me find what I can buy with the money I have! Now did you notice all the items cost a different amount of money? The things that had a higher number means it has more value — it costs more money.
- **Which of these has more value?** [Pick up two differently labeled items.]
- **Which of these items had the biggest value?** [Point to the item.]
- Did you know people have value, too? Today's Bible story is going to tell us how much value God thinks each of us has!

STORY TIME

SCRIPTURE | Nehemiah 2:1–6; 11–18 (Nehemiah Rebuilds Jerusalem's Walls)

- **Before we read today's Bible story, who wants to watch a part of another animated movie?**
- This video comes from the movie, Toy Story 4.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this](#) clip from "Toy Story 4" before telling the Bible story. For the Scripture readings, feel free to use an easy-to-understand Bible translation of your choice. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- This story about Bonnie and Forky tells us a little bit about value. Value is not always about money. It's about what makes something or someone special and important to someone else.
 - Bonnie was probably feeling very sad at her new school. Nobody seems to want to talk to her or even share supplies.
 - But when Woody gets her a few things from the trash can, she makes a cool new friend, Forky!
 - Forky was special to Bonnie not because he was an expensive toy, but because she made Forky. That's it! Forky thought he was nothing more than pieces of trash, but Bonnie's love for Forky gave him his value.
- The story of Nehemiah from the Bible shows us how God sees value.
- Nehemiah used to live in Jerusalem, but now he lived very far away and had a very important job working for the king of Persia.
 - One day, Nehemiah found out the walls around Jerusalem had been destroyed. His hometown was in trouble and no one was doing anything about it!
 - Hearing this caused Nehemiah to be very, very sad. He prayed to God and asked for help.
- God valued Nehemiah so much, God helped Nehemiah in some big ways!
 - [Read Nehemiah 2:1–6.]
- God helped Nehemiah be brave enough to talk to the king, who was Nehemiah's boss. And even though the king wanted to keep Nehemiah around, he saw that going back to Jerusalem was very important to Nehemiah. So, the king let Nehemiah go back home!

- [Read Nehemiah 2:11–16.]
- When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem and saw with his own eyes how badly everything was destroyed, it was so much worse than he thought.
- And no one, not one single person, was doing anything about it. But God gave Nehemiah a plan.
 - [Read Nehemiah 2:17–18.]
- Building the wall again wasn't Nehemiah's job at all. He probably didn't think he was important enough to rebuild the walls.
 - **Do you think you could rebuild a big wall on your own without any help?**
- Well, Nehemiah prayed to God for help and direction, and God once again helped Nehemiah.
- Nehemiah was able to do all of this because he knew God was with him. And because of this, Nehemiah felt valued by God!

BIG IDEA | Because of God, I can feel valued.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create two speech bubbles (or get [these](#)) with poster board and write "Because of God" on one and "I can feel valued." on the other. Invite volunteers to hold up each speech balloon and freeze in a funny, cartoon pose. Have the volunteers unfreeze and say what's in their respective balloons when the kids yell, "Animate!"
- Let's all say the Big Idea together: **Because of God, I can feel valued.**

VIDEO | Animated, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Cali's World](#).

ACTIVITY | Rebuild the Wall

- Just like Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, we're going to play a game where we build a wall, too!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the kids into two even teams. Each team will compete to build a wall using ten to twenty [cardboard bricks](#) in a circle around the whole team. If you have a large group, divide into several teams and take turns. Whichever team builds the wall the fastest using all the bricks wins!
 - ✳ **TODDLER HACK:** Allow toddlers to play with the cardboard bricks freely. Have them try different ways of building, such as stacking them on top of each other, lining them end to end, or standing them up like dominoes.
- You were all helpful and valuable to your team! But we're not valued just because we can do something. God values us and loves us always, no matter what.
- **Because of God, I can feel valued.**

PRAYER

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before prayer time each week, play this emoji music video, "[Jesus Loves Me](#)," and have kids sing along.
- God, thank you for giving me value. I know I am valued because you made me and you love me. Help me to value others just as much as you value me. Amen.

SHARING TIME

SNACK | Wafer Wall

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a handful of wafer cookies and a dollop of frosting and invite them to stack them up like a wall before enjoying their treat! Remind kids what they heard about today while they eat.

ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** While sitting in a circle, ask review questions of the Bible story. Pass around a salad [serving spork](#) or a [Forky plush](#) to remind the kids of Forky and Nehemiah's story.
- **What happened to Nehemiah's hometown of Jerusalem?**
- **What did Nehemiah ask the king?**
- **Who lets us know we're valued?**

ACTIVITY | Stone Painting

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** In this activity, kids will paint stones to take home to remind them of the stones Nehemiah used to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. (See a worked example [here](#).)
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Toddlers can paint rocks, using [taste-safe paint](#), not acrylic craft paint.
- To help remind us of the stones Nehemiah used to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, we're going to be painting stones today that you can take home.
- You can paint it your favorite color, rainbow colors, whatever you want!
- When you take your stone home, put it somewhere safe. Whenever you see this stone, remember what we talked about today: **Because of God, I can feel valued!**

MEMORY VERSE | Romans 15:13a (NIV)

- **"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have the kids sing Romans 15:13a to the tune of a famous animated movie song. To get things started, we recommend "[Heigh Ho](#)" from "Snow White," but you can also select a more recent and fun option your kids know. Alternatively, feel free to repeat any of the memory verse activities from previous weeks that your kids especially enjoyed.

PLAY TIME

ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute the coloring page along with crayons or markers. As the kids color, you can review today's Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse.

ACTIVITY | Sound Effects Stations

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare a box filled with all sorts of instruments. You can also make noisemakers using toilet paper rolls filled with dried beans, rice, or beads. Talk with the kids about how animated movies have sound effects, where people use ordinary objects to make sounds like horses galloping, rain, doors closing, and music.

ACTIVITY | Rocks and Stones Sensory Bin

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using a large, shallow, plastic tub, create a sensory experience for kids to play in using rocks, stones, gravel or pebbles. Consider adding small, plastic play tools (safety goggles, hammers, chisels).