



WEEK FOUR – APRIL 2019 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *All I Ask of You* • John 20:19–29

Key Question: *What questions do you have for God?*

Memory Verse: *“In this world, you will have trouble. But be encouraged! I have won the battle over the world.” – John 16:33b NIRV*

Life App: *Hope – Believing that something good can come out of something bad*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what.*

Summary: Next, we head to an incredible moment John records in John 12:9–16. God’s people had waited for generations for God to send the Messiah. They were overwhelmed when Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. God kept His promise. The mission to save the world was happening. This didn’t go exactly how they expected, but God was up to something bigger than they could imagine!

8:50–9:00 | 10:20–10:30 | 11:50–12:00 – SOCIAL ACTIVITY

1. Just For Fun

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Paper; pens

What You Do:

- Hand out paper strips and pens.
- Instruct kids to write down a question or two that they would like to know about the other kids in the group.
- When they have written their question, have them fold it up and put it in the bowl.
- Invite kids to take turns pulling a question from the bowl and answering it.
- You may want to write down a few of questions to supplement, such as:
 - What is your favorite color?
 - What book did you last read?
 - If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?
 - What is your favorite game to play?
 - If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
 - What is your favorite season and why?
 - What has someone done for you that made you feel good?

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

9:10–9:45 | 10:40–11:15 | 12:10–12:45 – LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Key Question: *What questions do you have for God?* The preteen years are often the first time kids will start to have questions about their faith. They may wonder if it's okay to ask the questions, so we decided to come out and ask them what they're thinking about. We want kids to understand that the church can be the safest place for them to ask hard questions. Help the preteens in your church start to unpack the questions they have for God, and offer suggestions for how they can find the answers.

9:45–10:05 | 11:15–11:35 | 12:45–1:05 SMALL GROUP

1. Bible Story Extension

[Bible Story Review]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: Bibles, pens; hand wipes

What You Do:

- Break your group into partners
- Give each student a pen and a Bible to each set of partners (or let students use a Bible App on their phones).
- Assign each group a portion of John 20:19–29 to look up and read with their partner.
- Ask the first partner to write a question about their passage on the palm of the second partner.
- Ask the second partner to write the answer to the question on the palm of the first partner.
- Review the story by inviting teams to take turns holding out their palms and asking their questions to the others.
- Check the answers with what's written on the palms of the other partner's hands. Let them refer to their Bible passage to clarify any answers.
- Hand out the wet wipes so students can clean the pen marks from their hands.
- After the review, ask students if they think it was wrong for Thomas to doubt that Jesus was alive until he saw the nail marks on Jesus' hands. Challenge them to give reasons for both sides of the argument.
- Encourage students with the fact that, like Thomas, we all have faith questions at some point. We should look for answers to our questions and know that God wants to help us trust Him when we have doubts.
- Ask the group to suggest questions people might have for God in the following situations:
 - The Bible doesn't make sense.
 - My friends don't believe the Bible is true. They say it's just an outdated book that doesn't apply to today.
 - Mean people get away with being bad.
 - Bad things happen to people who don't deserve it.
 - Someone you love has disappointed you.
- ***Pro Tip: Provide a safe atmosphere for students to freely share any faith questions they struggle with. Give answers when you are able to and continue to follow up in the weeks ahead. Encourage questions even if you don't always know the answer. It's likely that some of your students will ask questions that there aren't answers to! Encourage conversation around these questions and help students understand that it's okay to have big questions.***

2. Discussion Questions

[Application Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Ask:
 - Why is it important to ask hard questions about the Bible, God, and our faith?
 - Is it okay to doubt? Why or why not?
 - What should you do when you have questions and doubts about your faith? Where can you go to find answers to your faith questions? Who can you talk to?
 - What questions do you have for God right now?

3. Verses to Take With You

[Memory Verse Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Bible, “Hope Mail” Activity Page, envelopes, stationary, pens,

What You Do:

- Give each person a pen, envelope, sheet of paper or stationary, and one of the “Hope Mail” cards. If your group is less than five students, consider giving more than one “Hope Mail” card to each student.
- Ask students to write their names at the top of the stationary then pass it to the left.
- Tell them to write on the stationary whatever their “Hope Mail” card suggests then pass the stationary to the left.
- Continue writing and passing until the papers have reached the final student. Note that they will be writing the same thing on each page. Let them know it’s okay to write on both sides of the paper if needed.
- When the paper reaches the student seated next to the person whose name is on the top of the paper, have them write on the stationary then fold it and place it in an envelope.
- Pass the envelope to the left and let that students write his or her name and address on it. (This should be the person whose name is at the top of the stationary.)
- Explain that you will put the envelopes in the mail and students will receive them sometime during the week.
- As you close, read John 16:33b aloud.
- Challenge the students to read through the things their friends wrote when they receive their “Hope Mail” and to remember that even during the dark times of life, there is a bright side for those who know Jesus.

4. Make It Personal With Prayer

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Envelopes from “Verses to Take with You” activity

What You Do:

- Give each person one of the addressed envelopes from the previous activity (“Verses to Take with You”).
- Invite students to pray for the person whose name is on the envelope.
- Lead them in a silent prayer with the following prompts and pauses:
 - Thank God for creating this friend in His image.
 - Think of a promise God has made then pray that promise for this friend.
 - Pray that if this friend doesn’t have a relationship with Jesus yet that he or she will know and believe that Jesus died for our sin and rose from the dead.
 - Ask God to help this friend find answers to his or her faith questions and grow in trust of God and his Word.

What You Say:

“Dear God of hope, YOU are the reason there is a bright side. YOU give us hope in every dark day. YOU give promises that you keep. YOU have created us to be in a relationship with You and made a way for that to happen through Jesus’ death and resurrection. YOU help us when we doubt, give answers to our faith questions, and never stop working in our lives. Give us hope in YOU—no matter what. In Jesus’ name, amen.”