



PRETEEN

MAY 2024

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN COMMITMENT AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

Growing in faith is not something that happens by simply cramming more information about the Bible into a child's brain. All of that knowledge in their head means nothing if we don't help them experience how that knowledge can transform their heart. To experience faith, we want kids to practice their faith, and that takes commitment.

Commitment is part of God's nature and how God interacts with us, keeping promises and putting plans into action. God's commitment to us is just one of the many reasons we can trust God no matter what. Because God's promises and plans came true in Jesus, we can be with God forever. We reflect God's character when we make a plan and stick to it.

This month, we'll help kids discover that one of the best plans they can make is to commit to an ongoing relationship with Jesus. We hope they commit to practicing their faith by reading God's Word, praying to God honestly and consistently, talking about God with others, and living for God in how they show love throughout the everyday moments of their life.

CORE INSIGHT: The theological foundation for COMMITMENT

Connection because of God's love, I live in pursuit of an infinite God who desires an eternal relationship with me.

From the very beginning, God's plan was to have a meaningful relationship with creation. Even when people chose to live life apart from God, God continued to pursue them with unending love. God's ultimate demonstration of love was sending Jesus to make an eternal relationship with God possible for everyone.

Because God loved us first, we can respond in faith and put our trust in Jesus to live forever with God. However, just because we put our faith in Jesus, this doesn't mean we are finished in our faith journey. We can continue to show our commitment to God as we practice our faith and pursue a growing relationship with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

COMMITMENT is making a plan and putting it into practice.

HEADS UP: IDEAS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU TALK ABOUT COMMITMENT WITH KIDS

As you talk about faith skills this month, it's important to have realistic expectations for how kids will put these ideas into practice. We all want kids to prioritize time spent growing in their faith, but it's good to keep in mind that every kid is on a unique faith journey, with their own individual life experiences that impact how they'll connect with God. Be sure to create an atmosphere of grace that doesn't unintentionally shame kids for not spending time working on these faith skills. Some kids may not have chosen to put their faith in Jesus yet. Other kids might experience special needs or developmental diversity that prevents them from being able to practice these faith skills on their own. Not to mention that much of the way elementary kids spend their time is beyond their control. However you find kids in your ministry, meet them where they are and provide attainable next steps for their journey of faith.

This is also a great month for leaders in your ministry to model what it looks like to practice their faith. Be sure to encourage your leaders to share the ways they connect with God through these faith skills. Kids can learn a lot about practicing their own faith from watching and hearing about the diverse ways the adults in their lives practice theirs. We think this could be a powerful month for everyone in your ministry environment to renew their commitment to growing in faith as they head into summer.



WEEK
THREE
MAY 2024

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

WEEK 3

Key Question: **Who do you talk to about God?** If you want to grow in your faith, it's important to talk about what God is doing in your life. However, for kids, this can feel overwhelming, especially if they've never really chatted about their faith with anyone before. This week, let's help kids understand that talking about God with others can be helpful as they grow in their relationship with Jesus. We hope they'll figure out some of the trusted people in their lives who can be a sounding board to help them process their questions and listen to their faith stories.

For week 3, we head to **Matthew 16:13-20**, where Jesus asked his disciples: "Who do you say I am?" After everything they'd seen Jesus do and heard Jesus say, what did they really think about Jesus? This gave Peter the perfect moment to declare what he believed: that Jesus truly is the Son of God.

Bottom Line: **Practice talking about God.** God is continually working in our lives. When we talk about those moments with others, we can actually end up growing in our relationship with God. As kids process their growing faith, they will have questions and doubts. We want them to know that no question is off-limits when it comes to their faith. We hope that as they practice talking about God, they'll discover that sharing about their faith isn't so daunting. We pray that kids will find trusted adults who believe in Jesus who will help them talk through their questions about God.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Speak Now
Peter Says That Jesus
Is the Messiah
Matthew 16:13-20

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

Who do you talk to about God?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Practice talking about God.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come."
1 Timothy 4:8, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

Host

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Host
- 2 easels with large sheets of paper
- Markers

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Theme Slide
- "Pictionary: Training Camp Edition" Title Slide

3. COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Communicator
- Bible
- 2 easels with large piece of paper (from Opener)
- Markers (from Opener)
- Introduction Slide Pictures (see what you do)

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS:

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Theme Background Slide
- Introduction Slides (not provided)



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LARGE GROUP
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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Speak Now
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Matthew 16:13-20

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

Who do you talk to about God?

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But being godly has value in every
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MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Commitment—Making a plan
and putting it into practice**

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters . . .

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "Welcome everyone! Say 'Hi' to someone near you and tell them they look amazing. (pause) Instead of the usual formalities, we're jumping right into things today! I don't know about you . . . but I love a good game of Pictionary. Have you ever played it?"

"Because it's [Name of Environment] we're adding a twist . . . this is 'Pictionary: Training Camp Edition!'"

SLIDE: "PICTIONARY: TRAINING CAMP EDITION"

"Here's how it'll go down . . . not one but TWO people will draw two things simultaneously on TWO sides of the room while TWO groups shout TWO answers at the same time! It's bound to be bonkers! The side of the room that ends up with the most correct guesses—meaning the most points—after 60 seconds OR gets five points first wins!"

Split the room down the middle, creating two equal-ish teams. Face the easels toward the two teams, one for each side.



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PRELUDE	SOCIAL	STORY	WORSHIP	GROUPS	HOME
		25 MINUTES	10 MINUTES		

"All of the Pictionary prompts have a theme . . . which just so happens to coincide with our theme this month. Training! Let's get two people up here and get started!"

Choose a volunteer from each side. Then, show them the same word at the same time. After seeing the word, send them to their respective easels, and on your "Go," start them drawing!

The side that guesses first gets the point. Continue using the suggested list below . . . or feel free to use your own!

Suggested Word List

- Jump
- Gym Shoe
- Sweat
- Weights
- Race
- Team
- Water Bottle
- Coach
- Practice
- (or add your own!)

Play the game until a team reaches 5 points. You can continue if time allows.

After one team reaches 5 points or 60sec have passed, declare a winner and applaud the artists.

"Incredible drawings! Very well done! Me, I can't even draw a stick figure. Be glad I wasn't the one trying to get you to guess. You would've guessed 'an accident' every time.

"Let's keep the creativity going and get on our feet to worship—let's sing!"



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LARGE GROUP
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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY **WORSHIP** GROUPS HOME

10 MINUTES

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "I am so ready to sing and worship with all of you. It's good for us to take time to sing God's praise. It's good for us to tell God how thankful we are. God sent Jesus to be our Savior, and because of Jesus, we can be forgiven! Let's sing this together.

AUDIO: "SING YOUR PRAISE" / TRACK 2 FROM MY LIFE FOR YOU
OPTIONAL VIDEO: "SING YOUR PRAISE" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"Great job, everyone! We're talking about commitment this month, and really, commitment is about putting our faith in action. It's about practicing our faith so we can grow stronger. I want to go wherever God wants me to go. I want to do whatever God wants me to do. Everybody say, 'Make a move.' (Get a response. Repeat as needed.) Yeah! Sing this with me.

AUDIO: "MAKE A MOVE" / TRACK 1 FROM MAKE A MOVE
OPTIONAL VIDEO: "MAKE A MOVE" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"I love it! So good. Listen to these words to God from Psalm 71:8: 'My mouth is filled with praise for you. All day long I will talk about your glory.' (NirV) This song we're about to sing is such an important declaration for us. It's about what we believe. Let's lift our voices and sing."

AUDIO: "WE BELIEVE" / TRACK 1 FROM KIDMIN WORSHIP VOL. 4
OPTIONAL VIDEO: "WE BELIEVE" LIVE LYRICS VIDEO



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25 MINUTES

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey everyone! It’s great to see you all again, and I have to say, this is one of my favorite times of the week. I love spending time teaching and learning and figuring out direction for tough questions. It’s awesome.

“If I asked you who the GOAT was in basketball, who would you say? No, not an actual goat . . . the Greatest Of All Time, GOAT. Who do you think?”

Allow responses.

“Hmm. It’s a tough debate. I think your answer would depend on how old you are. Let’s take a look at some other GOATs and see who you pick!

Show the following slides, and have kids vote and debate on who they think is the GOAT in each particular area.

Encourage the kids to call out someone different if they don’t agree with the options. Slides come up as the Communicator asks for them.

SLIDE(S): **LEBRON JAMES / MICHAEL JORDAN**

SLIDE(S): **VENUS WILLIAMS / SERENA WILLIAMS**

SLIDE(S): **TOM BRADY / PATRICK MAHOMES**

SLIDE(S): **RONALDO / MESSI**

SLIDE(S): **BABE RUTH / SHOHAI OHTANI**

SLIDE(S): **CAPTAIN AMERICA / IRON MAN**

SLIDE(S): **BATMAN / SUPERMAN**

SLIDE(S): **BERT / ERNIE**

“Ooh. Hot debate between puppets. You know they’re not real, right? And Bert has a unibrow? That should make him the GOAT by default.

“Have you ever wondered what makes someone the GOAT? I guess there are a lot of things we could judge that by. Most of these are because of some great accomplishments. Others for being cooler than the other one. Others because it’s just the right choice, like Captain America.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “Crazy enough, but debates like these raged in biblical times as well. Not about superheroes or ballplayers—but about God.

“People argued all the time. What rules should we follow? Which commandment is the greatest of all time? Whose god was stronger than other people’s gods? Or who really was in charge around here?”



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PRELUDE

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HOME

25 MINUTES

"When it comes to the GOAT of all GOATs, you may think it's Jesus. But how do you know that? He said He is the Son of God . . . but what does that really mean? You weren't there, and all you have is this book (*hold up the Bible*), and this person (*point to yourself*) telling you things.

"How do you know? And if you *do* know, how do you talk about Jesus to someone who believes exactly the opposite? How do you talk to others about God and what God is doing in your life? Yeah. It's a big one today. Thankfully, what we read in the Bible can offer us some direction. Let's go there now!"

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: "Today we head to a familiar place, too—right in the heart of the book of Matthew.

"For three years, Jesus traveled from town to town, sharing about God's Kingdom, serving, and healing people. As they traveled, Jesus' closest followers saw Him do some pretty incredible things. There was no doubt there was something special about Him. But people weren't quite sure what to think about Jesus. In fact, people offered all sorts of differing opinions about who Jesus really was.

"Jesus was travelling to Caesarea Philippi with His disciples. This was a spot out of town . . . away from the hustle and bustle of the crowds. The town was named after Caesar Augustus, a Roman ruler who many (*because he suggested it*) considered him a god—and called him such.

"There were quite a few false gods that were worshipped in this town. Interesting that Jesus took His disciples here. Also, interesting fact, nothing ever really got by Jesus. He seemed to know and hear everything, especially when others were talking about Him.

Open the Bible to Matthew 16:13-14 (NIRV) and read.

"Jesus went to the area of Caesarea Philippi. There he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?'

They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Still others say Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.'

"Let's pause here for a moment and talk about this title . . . 'Son of Man.' That may seem confusing. Because which man? All men? That's odd. Is it a big deal just because it's capitalized??"

"It refers to a prophecy spoken by Daniel, recorded centuries earlier.

"Daniel spoke about a Rescuer. A Messiah. A Savior. Someone who God would send one day, who would be called the 'Son of Man.'

"Centuries later, Jesus was fulfilling Daniel's prophecy. Jesus would often use this title, 'Son of Man,' to describe Himself. He was saying that He was the Person Daniel had foretold about.

Walk over to one of the Pictionary easels from the Opener and grab a marker.

"Now let's take a closer look at this verse. Who was the first option that some people thought Jesus might be? (*Pause for responses*) Right. John the Baptist. Do you mind writing that down for me?"

Ask a volunteer to write 'John the Baptist' on the easel.



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25 MINUTES

(To volunteer) "Thanks! Hang out here for one second. *(To the Large Group)* Huh. This one seems kind of strange. Why on earth would people think Jesus was John the Baptist? This was a bit strange considering that John the Baptist was no longer alive. How would that even be possible?

"Earlier in the book of Matthew, Matthew wrote that Herod himself thought John the Baptist, who had, in fact, been executed, must've been raised from the dead and was now doing miraculous works in this Person of Jesus. So, this was a real thing, thinking Jesus was actually zombie John the Baptist.

"What was the second option? *(pause)* Yep. Elijah. Do you mind jotting that one down?

Ask the volunteer to write 'Elijah' on the easel.

"And the next? *(wait for responses)* Perfect. Jeremiah. One more for the list!

Ask the volunteer to write 'Jeremiah' on the easel.

"Anyone have a guess as to who these guys were? The next bit in the Scripture gives a bit of a clue. *(Pause for responses)* Yes! They were prophets, and people thought Jesus was one of those . . . or maybe another prophet they hadn't heard of yet.

"A prophet, like Elijah or Jeremiah, was a person who spoke important messages from God. They were often telling people to quit sinning and get their lives right . . . but they also foretold of amazing things that would be accomplished by a Savior, a Messiah. Basically, they spoke God's messages to God's people. Maybe Jesus was one of them who came back . . . or a different prophet.

"Jesus then pushed further. He had heard what others were saying about Him. But now, He wanted to hear what His very own disciples, the ones who had been with Him side-by-side, had to say about Him. Would they say He was just a good teacher? Did they think He was just some nameless prophet?

Open the Bible to Matthew 16:15 (NIRV) and read.

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

"Jesus wouldn't have to wait long for an answer.

Open the Bible to Matthew 16:16 (NIRV) and read.

"Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah. You are the Son of the living God.'

(To volunteer) "In really big letters, write 'Messiah.' And when you're done doing that, put a big fat X through the others up there.

Pause while the volunteer does so. Then, high-five the volunteer and have them sit back down.

"Peter! Coming in clutch with a bang-on answer!



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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

“Peter didn’t even hesitate. He said it boldly. He declared that Jesus was the Messiah. The Son of the Living God. Jesus wasn’t just a teacher, or prophet, or zombie John the Baptist. Jesus was THE Son of God. And because Peter had boldly declared what he believed about Jesus, Jesus made a bold declaration to Peter as well.

Open the Bible to Matthew 16:17-19 (NIV) and read.

“Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah! No mere human showed this to you. My Father in heaven showed it to you. Here is what I tell you. You are Peter. On this rock I will build my church. The gates of hell will not be strong enough to destroy it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What you lock on earth will be locked in heaven. What you unlock on earth will be unlocked in heaven.’

“Wow. That was huge. After all of this, Jesus did something that seems a little out of place. He asked them not to say anything about it to anyone else. After Peter’s declaration that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus blessed him . . . but then told them to keep it a secret.

“Jesus did this because He was getting ready to show everyone who He really is, but it wasn’t the right time yet. The people weren’t ready yet. The disciples were, in this moment, but the majority of people weren’t. Jesus knew this, and He chose to talk about these things with those He trusted the most.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “In time, Jesus would let everyone know who He is through His miracles, teaching, preaching, correcting church leaders, overturning tables, loving His enemies, and lighting the way.

“And now we’re in a position to do the same. We can talk to others about Jesus. About God. About the things we’ve experienced and the things we’ve seen and heard.

“But how do you do that, especially now when the world is so divided? It seems like conversations are out the window if someone disagrees with you.

“Simple. Practice. Everyone’s terrible at something the first time. But the more you do it, the easier it will get.

“You can practice by telling people what Jesus means to you. You can practice talking about God as part of everyday conversation with your family and friends. When you choose to talk about God, it reminds you to keep your eyes open and see what God is doing . . . and helps other people see who God is and how God is working, too.

“God wants us to grow and continue to learn about who God is—and at the same time, God wants that for everyone else as well. God wants a relationship with everyone, and one way that others will know God is by hearing us—you and me—talk about God!

“But for some of us . . . actually all of us . . . that will take practice. We can even practice doing that here in our groups, with one another.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “Today as you go to groups, think about this:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION



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LARGE GROUP
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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

“Who do you talk to about God? When have you had conversations about God with other people before? How are you practicing talking about God? You might not be sure how to talk about your faith in God, and that’s okay, too. You’ll have a chance to chat with your Small Group about all of this and more. But before you head out, let’s pray and ask God to help us be like Peter . . . bold to talk about Jesus and how much God is working in our lives. Let’s pray!”

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Dismiss students to their small groups.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP