



WEEK ONE – MAY 2024 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *God's Word Is A Light | Psalm 119:105*

Key Question: *How can you hear from God?*

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 + the life to come." – 1 Timothy 4:8*

Virtue: *Commitment – Making a plan and putting it into practice*

Basic Truth: *I need to make the wise choice*

Series Overview: 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.

Key Question: How can you hear from God? When kids are taught that they should learn to hear from God, they might have some big questions. As concrete thinkers, they still process what they learn about the world quite literally. And while they might not audibly hear God speak, they might wonder if hearing from God is even possible. Thankfully, we can point them to the Bible—or other people who can read and understand the Bible to help them discern how God might be speaking to them. We hope this question gives kids a chance to wrestle with what it means to hear from God and discover that hearing from God might not be as difficult as they might have thought.

9:05 - 9:20 | 11:05 – 11:20 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Balloon

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a fist bump or high five
- Ask kids to stand and form a circle in your group space.
- Talk with the kids about commitment. Share with them that this month we are focusing in on commitment which is making a plan and putting it into practice.
 - Invite kids to share things they are committed to.
 - Give examples of different things people can commit to (training for a race, studying for a test, learning how to roller skate, playing an instrument, etc.).
- Inflate a balloon and tie it.
- Explain that you are going to tap the balloon into the air, and the group will need to work together to continue tapping the balloon to stay in the air.
- Each time someone taps the balloon, they should name something that people commit to.
- If someone taps the balloon but cannot think of anything to say, they should sit out for the remainder of the round.
- Continue playing until either the balloon hits the ground, there is no one left standing, or you run out of commitments to mention.

What You Say:

“[Transition] Today, we will discover how God has provided us with instructions and guidance for how we should live.

9:20 - 9:50 | 11:20 – 11:50 | LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: We start the month with **Psalm 119:105**, where David wrote, “*Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me.*” When we read what the authors of the Bible wrote, we can find out how God wants us to live. It’s like we’re listening to God. God offers us wisdom throughout the pages of the Bible that can guide us to not only discover more about ourselves, but also how to love God, trust Jesus, and treat others well.

9:50 – 10:10 | 11:50 – 12:10 | SMALL GROUP

Bible Story Extension

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: “Acrostic Verses” Activity Page, dry erase board, dry erase marker, Bibles, pens or pencils

What You Do:

- Talk with the group about the book of Psalms by asking the following questions:
 - What was unique about the way Psalm 119 was written? (*It’s very long! It was written in the form of an acrostic: each chapter begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet.*)
 - Are there any well-known verses from the Book of Psalms that you can think of? (*Prompt kids with the following verses, if needed.*)
 - *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. —Psalm 23:1, KJV*
 - *Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. —Psalm 34:8, NIV*

- *Find delight in the Lord. Then he will give you everything your heart really wants. —Psalm 37:4, NIrV*
- *The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? —Psalm 27:1, NIV*
- *Be still, and know that I am God. —Psalm 46:10, NIV*
- *He heals those who have broken hearts. He takes care of their wounds. —Psalm 147:3, NIrV*
- On the dry erase board, write the letters H-E-A-R vertically.
 - Using the letter, “H,” write the word, “Hebrews.”
 - Using the letter, “E,” write the word, “Ephesians.”
 - Using the letter, “A,” write the word, “Acts.”
 - Using the letter, “R,” write the word, “Romans.”
- Divide kids into four groups and give each group a Bible, one of the “Acrostic Verses” Activity Page, and a pen or pencil.
- Explain that groups will work together to form an acrostic, like Psalms, by looking up the verses on their page and writing down what those verses say about God.
- Once each group has finished their Activity Page, invite each group to share what the verses they looked up had to say about God.
 - Write down some of the things they share next to that letter on the dry erase board.
- Remind kids that even though we may not physically be able to see God, we can hear from God through the words in the Bible.

Discussion Questions

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Ask:
 - How can you hear from God?
 - How can you know when you are hearing from God or another voice?
 - How can reading about Jesus' life help you hear from God?
 - What gets in the way of spending time reading the Bible?
 - Is it possible to hear from God in ways other than reading the Bible?

Make It Personal With Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

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

What You Need: “Scripture Prayers” Activity Page; writing utensils

What You Do:

- Invite kids to sit together in your group space.
- Explain how prayers are written throughout scripture. Many Bible verses are prayers to God that people wrote.
 - For example, Psalm 119:105 was written as a prayer, thanking God for how God's Word brings us light.
- Give each kid a copy of the “Scripture Prayers” Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- Before you begin reading, encourage kids to listen to each verse and circle any of the prayers that stand out to them.
 - Explain that this could mean a verse resonates with them for some reason, and they may want to use it as guidance for their own prayer time later.
- Ask for volunteers to take turns reading each of the verses on the Activity Page out loud for the entire group.
- After all the verses have been read out loud, invite kids to spread out and find a place to pray silently.
 - Encourage them to use the verses they circled to guide what they pray about. They can also talk to God about anything in their life they may be committed to right now. They can spend time asking God for help with their commitment.

- After everyone has had several minutes to pray silently, close by saying a prayer for the entire group.

As adults arrive to pick up, make sure to hand out Week 2 of the Devos to the kids + say that if they bring it back next week completed/signed by parents, they will get a prize!