

# March Preteen | W3

## Today's Suggested Schedule—March 2026, Week 3

**Bible Story:** Be Humble/Love Your Enemies • *Matthew 5:38-48*

**Bottom Line:** Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* • *Philippians 2:3 NIV*

### **Prelude: Setting the Tone for the Experience**

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Note: This leader guide is created with inclusion in mind. It supports children with learning differences, disabilities, or special needs as they participate alongside their peers. Look for the highlighted sections for extra tips to help welcome and include every child. For more resources, check out our free *A Place at the Table* course with Kim Botto and EveryChild Curriculum. ([joinamazing.com/everychild](http://joinamazing.com/everychild))

### **Small Group (15 minutes)**

#### **Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction**

Opening Activity

### **Large Group (35 minutes)**

#### **Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways**

#### **Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God**

Opener

Worship

Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)

Prayer

### **Small Group (25 minutes)**

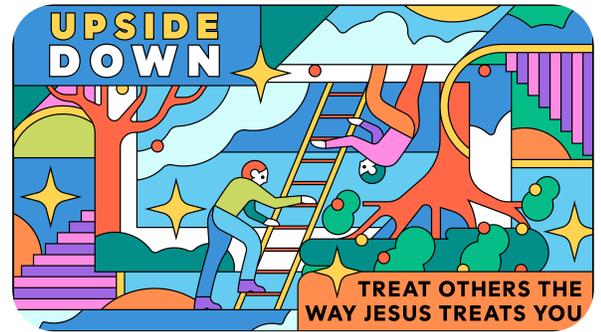
#### **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect**

Bible Story Review

Application Activity

Memory Verse Activity

Prayer Activity



### **Bible Story**

Be Humble/Love Your Enemies • *Matthew 5:38-48*

### **Conversation Starter**

How can you show kindness to someone who makes you mad?

### **Bottom Line**

Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

### **Monthly Memory Verse**

*Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* • *Philippians 2:3 NIV*

5 min

# Social

5 min

## Social Activity | Made to Play

### What You Need

-  Offering Container 1
-  Hula Hoops® (1 for every 5 kids) 1



### EveryChild Tips

- If a kid has mobility challenges, the group can gently help guide the Hula Hoop over them while they remain stationary.*

### What You Do:

- Welcome the kids by name with a high five or fist bump!
- Invite the kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Instruct the kids to stand in a circle, holding hands.
- Place a Hula Hoop over one pair of clasped hands.
- (If you have a larger group, feel free to make smaller groups and give each group a Hula Hoop. Groups of five work great!)
- Challenge the group to move the Hula Hoop all the way around the circle without anyone letting go of their friends' hands. (The kids will have to step through the Hula Hoop and move their bodies to pass it along.)
- Cheer them on as they work together to get the Hula Hoop all the way around the circle.

### What You Say:

"You did it! That was a real challenge, but you worked together! Sometimes, being friends and loving each other can be a little tricky! **[Transition]** Today, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is going to teach us a brand-new way to do something that can feel upside-down: how to love people who are unkind to us. Let's go listen!"

5 min

# Bible Story Review

5 min

## Bible Story Telephone | Made to Play

### What You Need

No supplies needed

### What You Do:

- Encourage the kids to join you and sit in a circle.
- Explain the game of Telephone. You'll whisper a short sentence from the story into one kid's ear, and they'll whisper it to the next, and so on.
- Use these simple sentences from the story:
  - "Jesus said, 'Love your enemies.'"
  - "Be kind to people who are mean."
  - "Pray for people who hurt you."
  - "This shows you are children of your Father in heaven."
  - **"[Bottom Line] Love like Jesus even when it's hard."**
- Whisper the first sentence to the first kid.
- When the sentence gets to the end of the circle, encourage the last kid to say it out loud.
- Talk about whether the message stayed the same. Play again with the next sentence.

### What You Say:

"Great job! It can be tricky to get the message right. The message Jesus gave us in our story is so important, we want to get it right! Jesus said: *'Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. Then you will be children of your Father who is in heaven. He causes his sun to shine on evil people and good people. He sends rain on those who do right and those who don't'* (Matthew 5:44-45 NIV).

"Did you hear that? Jesus didn't just say: 'Don't be mean to your enemies.' He told us to love our enemies. That's completely upside down, right?! But showing love to an enemy—that's just what God does. God shows kindness to everyone. And God says He wants us to show the world that we are His children by doing the same. He wants us to **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard."**

5 min

## Application Activity

5 min

### Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Connect

### What You Need

 Whiteboard and dry-erase marker, or posterboard and marker

### What You Do:

- Tell the group that Jesus didn't just talk about loving others; He showed it. As a group, you're going to brainstorm a simple service project you could do together to "love like Jesus" in a practical way.
- Ask: "What are some ways we could love others like Jesus?"
- Write their ideas on the board.
- Then, brainstorm simple ways your group could show love to one of those groups.
  - Make cards for residents of a local nursing home.
  - Collect socks or toiletries for a local shelter.
  - "Chalk the walk" with kind messages on the sidewalk outside the church.

5 min

# Memory Verse Activity

5 min

## Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Play

### What You Need

-  Bibles 1
-  Paper 1
-  Writing supplies 1

- Choose one idea that your group is excited about and could realistically do. Make a simple plan to put it into action.

### What You Say:

“These are incredible ideas. It’s one thing to talk about loving people, but it’s another thing to actually do it. When we serve others, we are putting others first. When people see you choosing to love when it’s hard, they’ll know that you’re different. They’ll see that you’re a follower of Jesus. We are choosing to **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it’s hard.** That’s humility in action.”

### What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Philippians 2:3 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

**Finding verses with 4th-5th graders:** Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they’re looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it’s in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they’re looking for. If it’s in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they’re looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they’re looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they’ve already found.

- Read the Memory Verse together out loud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Give each kid a piece of paper and a marker.
- Assign each person to write down just three or four words of the Memory Verse, Philippians 2:3. (e.g., Kid 1 writes “Don’t do anything,” Kid 2 writes “only to get ahead,” etc.)
- Once they’ve written their part, invite the kids to crumple their paper into a tight ball.
- Encourage each kid to toss their crumpled paper into a pile in the center of the circle.
- On “Go,” instruct everyone to grab a crumpled paper, open it up, and work together as a group to put the verse back in the correct order on the floor.

### What You Say:

“Nice teamwork! You unscrambled that verse perfectly. ‘Value others more than yourselves’ (Philippians 2:3 NIV). That’s a tough one. It’s the opposite of what the world tells us. But it’s exactly what Jesus modeled, and it’s the key to being able to love your enemies. Not a single person

5 min

## Discussion Questions

5 min

### Preteen Discussion Questions

#### What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

## Prayer

5 min

### Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

#### What You Need

No supplies needed

ever has been perfect, except for Jesus! But with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can grow more and more to be like Jesus as we learn to love our enemies like He does. We can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard.**"

#### Ask:

- Jesus said to love your enemies and pray for those who hurt you. Why do you think Jesus wants us to respond to mean or hurtful people with love instead of revenge?
- Going the "extra mile" was a choice the person could make to show kindness. What might it look like for you to "go the extra mile" for someone who isn't kind to you?
- It's easy to love people who love us back, but Jesus asks for more. What's the difference between the kind of love Jesus talked about and the kind of love most people show?
- Jesus said that when we love our enemies, we show we are God's children. How can showing love to difficult people help others see what God is like?
- Loving others like Jesus can feel impossible sometimes. When it's really hard to be kind or forgiving, what can you do to let God help you love that person anyway?

#### What To Do:

- Say, "Let's take a minute to have a quiet talk with God. I want you to think about one person who is sometimes hard to love. You don't have to say their name out loud. Just picture them in your mind."
- Give the kids a few moments of quiet.
- Say, "Now, let's ask God to help us love that person. You can just think the words in your heart."
- After another moment of quiet, close the time in prayer.

#### What You Say:

"It can feel really hard to love people who are not kind to us. But Jesus told us to 'pray for those who hurt you' (*Matthew 8:44 NIV*). He gives us the strength to love even our enemies. And we can ask Him for help! Let's finish praying."

"Dear God, thank You for loving us. Please help us to love others the way You do, sending sun and rain on everyone. Give us Your strength so we can **[Bottom Line] love like Jesus even when it's hard**. We need Your help! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

# Supplies

Social Activity   Made to Play	Quantity
1. Offering Container	1
2. Hula Hoops® (1 for every 5 kids)	1

Preteen – Take a Snapshot   Made to Connect	Quantity
1. Whiteboard and dry-erase marker, or posterboard and marker	0

Preteen – Verses to Take with You   Made to Play	Quantity
1. Bibles	1
2. Paper	1
3. Writing supplies	1