

5 min

LG Opener

5 min

Opening Game

What You Need

No supplies needed

HOST: "Hey, everybody! I'm so glad you're here today! This month, we've been learning about a Game Plan for our lives that we can follow to grow closer to God.

"This Game Plan has four parts—talk about God, pray to God, hear from God, and live for God!

"This week, we're looking at the fourth part of that Game Plan—today's Bottom Line is this: **[Bottom Line] Practice living for God.** Say that with me."

KIDS: [Bottom Line] "Practice living for God!"

HOST: "Awesome! Living for God is not just something you do one time. It's something you do every day. Just like you practice to get better at basketball, soccer, video games, or playing an instrument, you practice living for God so you can get stronger in your faith.

"Practice takes time, it takes effort, and sometimes it even feels a little awkward at first. But the more you practice, the stronger you get. To show you what I mean, we are going to play a game called the 'Practice Run Challenge.'

SLIDE: Practice Run Challenge

HOST: "To play this game, I need nine volunteers. Three teams of three. If you want to play, raise your hand!"

Choose nine volunteers from the kids whose hands are raised and invite them on stage.

"Here is how it works. Each team will have three kids. Let me get you into teams. *(Divide the kids into three teams of three.)*

"When I say GO, your team must run to any number. You do not have to go in order, but you must complete all four numbers before you finish.

"When you get to a number, the leader there will read your action and make sure you do it correctly. Everyone on your team must do it! Once the leader says your team has completed the task, you can run to another number.

"The first team to finish all four numbers and sit back down wins the 'Practice Run Challenge.' Does everybody understand? *(Pause for responses and make sure the kids understand.)*

ROUND ONE

HOST: "Alright teams, everybody line up near me. Okay, teams, on your mark, get set, GO!"

AUDIO: Upbeat music

Give fun commentary while the teams run around completing the activities.

"Team 1, you are the fastest birds I have ever seen! Team 2—great hopping! I thought some frogs took over for a bit there! Wow, Team 3's spins are making me dizzy! Keep going, you've got this!"

Cheer for all teams until everyone finishes. Stop the music when everyone finishes.

ROUND 2

HOST: "That was incredible! Let's try it again. I bet you will be even better this time because you already practiced once. Ready? GO!"

AUDIO: Upbeat music

Repeat the game with cheers and encouragement.

HOST: "Wow, you guys crushed it! Did you notice how the second round felt easier than the first? That's because you practiced. Practice makes you stronger. That's exactly what today's Bottom Line reminds us: **[Bottom Line] Practice living for God.** You don't have to be perfect at living for your God. You just keep practicing by praying, reading your Bible, choosing what is right, and loving others. Every time you practice, you grow stronger in your faith."

"In just a moment, we're going to hear a story from the Bible about a man named Levi, you might also know him as Matthew, who had to make a really big choice. Would he keep living the way he always had, or would he start practicing living for God by following Jesus?"

12 min

Worship Option 1 (Amazing Music)

Note: We've suggested worship songs below from Amazing Kids Worship and Orange Kids Music. We've created these songs to be developmentally appropriate for elementary and preteen kids, incorporating simple, direct language, fun dance movements, and upbeat, current arrangements.

We've chosen these specific songs that amplify our teaching content for this month. We recommend that you use these songs as scripted below, or combined with other popular worship songs that your kids know and love. Be sure to share the links to these songs with parents so they can stream them at home or in the car! Songs can be purchased at store.thinkorange.com or for free with APlay.

1 min

Worship Opener

What You Need

No supplies needed

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hey, everyone! Who's ready to worship today? (Pause for cheers.) I know I am. Worship is our chance to tell God how much we love Him. And remember, our Bottom Line today is **[Bottom Line] practice living for God.** One way we practice living for God is by singing and praising Him together."

3 min

Every Move I Make | Worship Song

What You Need

No supplies needed

"Our first song is called 'Every Move I Make.' This song reminds us that Jesus is with us and gives us life and breath, helping us with every move we make. Let's sing about his great big love for us!"

3 min

Worthy | Worship song

What You Need

No supplies needed

"Awesome! You sounded amazing. Now, let's keep going with another song called 'Worthy.' This song reminds us that God is worthy of every song we could ever sing. No one is more deserving and worthy of our praise.

"So let's keep our voices strong and sing this one together!"

5 min

Memory Verse

What You Need

No supplies needed

"That was awesome. You did such a great job singing those songs. Worship is not just about singing here. It's something we can practice all week long. We can worship God by the way we live, the way we treat people, and the choices we make every day.

"And that's what our Memory Verse is all about this month. It reminds us that just like athletes train their bodies, we can train ourselves to follow God. Let's read this month's Memory Verse together."

SLIDE: Memory Verse

KIDS and WORSHIP LEADER: *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

WORSHIP LEADER: "Great job! Let's say it again, even louder!"

KIDS and WORSHIP LEADER: *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

WORSHIP LEADER: "Now let's try it one more time without looking at the screen."

KIDS and WORSHIP LEADER: *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

WORSHIP LEADER: "Awesome! Just like athletes train their bodies, we can train ourselves to follow God. And one way we do that is by practicing living for Him. That's our Bottom Line for today: **[Bottom Line]** Practice living for God."

6 min

Worship Option 2 (Orange Kids Music)

Note: We've suggested worship songs below from Amazing Kids Worship and Orange Kids Music. We've created these songs to be developmentally appropriate for elementary and preteen kids, incorporating simple, direct language, fun dance movements, and upbeat, current arrangements.

We've chosen these specific songs that amplify our teaching content for this month. We recommend that you use these songs as scripted below, or combined with other popular worship songs that your kids know and love. Be sure to share the links to these songs with parents so they can stream them at home or in the car! Songs can be purchased at store.thinkorange.com or for free with APlay.

3 min

Everything to Me | Worship Song

What You Need

No supplies needed

3 min

I Run to You | Worship Song

What You Need

No supplies needed

24 min

Bible Story (Video)

12 min

StoryLab Bible Story | Video

What You Need

No supplies needed

12 min

So and So Show Bible Story | Video

WORSHIP LEADER: "Guess what time it is? It's time for worship! Stand up and let's sing this together."

WORSHIP LEADER: "I love to worship with you. Sing this out!"

What You Need

No supplies needed

33 min

Bible Story (Live)

3 min

Introduction

What You Need

No supplies needed

Make sure the table is set on stage so the Storyteller can place their Bible on it and read from it.

"Hi, you guys! I'm so excited that you're here today! Today we're finishing up something we've looked at all month long—it's a Game Plan to get closer to God!

"There are four parts to this Game Plan—talk about God, pray to God, hear from God, and live for God—and we've looked at three of the four this month. They're all things Jesus taught us about while He was on earth.

"Today we're going to look at the last part of this Game Plan—live for God! Yay!

"But before we get into our true story from the Bible, let me tell you about something that we've been doing this whole year since August! We're going through key stories in the Bible from cover to cover!

"But are we going through the Bible just so we'll learn the awesome stories in the Bible? Not exactly! One of the reasons God gave us the Bible is so that we can get to know Him. He wants us to be His friends! So as we go through the Bible this year, our hope is that we learn about Him.

5 min

GOD'S BIG STORY OPENER (OPTIONAL)

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "We're going to go through God's Big Story in the Bible together so we can learn about God! (Gesture to slide.)

SLIDE: *God's Big Story*

"Let me catch you up on where we've been in God's Big Story so far!

"You might remember that, in the beginning, God created everything. He made the world, the animals, people ... everything! God made the first people for the same reason He made all people—to be His close, close friends. But sadly, the first people God made chose to turn away from Him and sin. God wanted people to be close to Him, but they couldn't anymore. Pain, sickness, and death entered the world too.

"But God didn't want to leave things that way. So He put His rescue plan in motion right from the start!

"God was going to rescue everything through a family! God chose a man named Abraham and promised that his family would bless the whole world. Abraham had a great-grandson named Joseph, who became a leader in Egypt and saved his family—God's people. Over time, God's people grew but were enslaved by a new Pharaoh. 'Help us!' they cried out to God. God freed His people and brought them to the super-nice home He had designed for them, the Promised Land.

"Some time after God's people were settled in the Promised Land, they asked for a king like the other nations around them. God gave them a king, and then many more kings (and one queen) followed. Sadly, after a long time of turning away from Him, God allowed His nation to be split in two—into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Prophets spoke for God saying, 'Come back to Me!' But the northern kingdom of Israel was destroyed, and the southern kingdom of Judah was taken captive. Oh no! After years in exile, some of God's people returned to rebuild their homeland, while others stayed in foreign lands.

"During that sad time, God kept sending messages to His people about the Rescuer He had promised long ago. 'God's Rescuer is going to come like this!' the prophets said. But for years and years, nothing happened.

"And then it did! God sent Jesus, the Rescuer we needed, just like He promised! While Jesus was on earth, He showed us who God is because He is God!

"And that's where we are in God's Big Story!"

5 min

SETTING UP THE STORY

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "This week we're continuing on our journey through the Bible. We're at the part of the Bible where Jesus lived on Earth. Jesus came to Earth to show us who God is and to teach us about God's Kingdom.

"Let's read about something that happened during Jesus' time on Earth and what we can learn about it.

"First, let's talk about choices. We all have a lot of decisions we have to make in our lives. It doesn't matter what age we are—whether we're 8 or 88—we all have things we need to choose each day!

"And typically, when we say yes to something, we're saying no to something else. Or when we say no to something, we're saying yes to something else. Let me show you what I mean.

"I've got some fun choices to make, but I need a volunteer to come and help me make my first one. Who wants to come up?

Choose a volunteer and invite them to the front of the room.

"I'm going to put up two choices, and you can only pick one. You can't pick both. Got it? Let's try it out.

SLIDE: Would You Rather: Disney World or LEGOLAND

"Would you rather have a free year of access at Disney World or a free year of access at LEGOLAND? Shout out your choice!

Let the kid respond. See how the crowd would respond too. Comment on their responses.

"Wow! Those are such well-thought-out choices. Thank you for sharing your choice with us [kid's name]! Let me get another volunteer up to make another choice. Who wants to choose?

Choose a volunteer and invite them to the front of the room.

"Alright, here is your next choice!

SLIDE: Would You Rather: Trampoline park or water slide

"Would you rather have a trampoline park in your backyard or a giant water slide? Shout out your choice!

Let the kid respond. See how the crowd would respond too. Comment on their responses.

"Awesome! I am so coming to your house! Thank you for sharing, [kid's name]! Let me get another volunteer up to make another choice. Who wants to choose?

Choose a volunteer and invite them to the front of the room.

"Alright, here is your next choice!

SLIDE: Would You Rather: Road trip or pool

"Would you like to do a road trip every weekend or go to the pool every single day? Which would you choose?"

Let the kid respond. See how the crowd would respond too. Comment on their responses. Thank the kid for volunteering and encourage them to move to their seat.

STORYTELLER:

"These are hard questions! Think about it. You can't be in two places at once. You can't be at Disney and at LEGOLAND at the same time. You have to say no to one. You can't be at the pool every single day and on a road trip at the same time. You have to pick one!"

"We all have choices, and when we say yes to something, we say no to something else. There was a man who we're going to read about in the Bible who had to make a decision. What was he going to say yes to?"

"Here's how we'll follow the story. Whenever I give you a choice, you'll show me with your hands. Thumbs up if you'd say YES. Thumbs down if you'd say NO.

"Ready? Let's practice. Would you eat pizza every day for a week? Thumbs-up or thumbs-down?

Pause as the kids respond.

"Mmm. I could do it for the sake of cheese! Woohoo! You guys have the motions down!

"Now let's see what choices a man in the Bible had to make. The Bible calls him Levi, but you might also know him by another name we use for him—Matthew!

5 min

JESUS CHOSE MATTHEW

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "We'll start our true story from the Bible during Jesus' life on Earth. Jesus was doing things that people normally didn't see. He was doing miracles, He was helping people, He was calling out to sinners to change and follow Him. He had even made a miraculous catch of fish. And when fishermen Peter, Andrew, James, and John saw Him do that—they were all in as Jesus' disciples!"

SLIDE: 1_Jesus Performs a Miracle of Fish

"After some of the other disciples joined Him, Jesus saw a man who was a tax collector. Now here's the thing about tax collectors during Jesus' time. They didn't have the best reputation. The Jewish people didn't want to be around them because they saw them as traitors. Tax collectors worked for the Roman government, and the Roman government ruled over the Jewish people. Being a tax collector was choosing to work for the enemy. Some tax collectors took more money than they were supposed to from the Jewish people. So all that to say, most people didn't like tax collectors very much.

"But that didn't stop Jesus. Let me read you what the Bible says:

Open the Bible to Luke 5:27 (NIV) and read.

After this, Jesus ... saw a tax collector sitting at the tax booth. The man's name was Levi. "Follow me," Jesus said to him.

SLIDE: 2 Matthew Meets Jesus

"Can you imagine all the people watching saw Jesus talk to someone whom they all avoided? And Jesus didn't just not avoid Matthew. Jesus called Matthew to follow Him. To spend every day with Him."

5 min

FOLLOW ME

What You Need

No supplies needed

"Thumbs up if you think Jesus made a good choice talking to Matthew. Thumbs down if you think this was a bad choice." (Pause for the kids to show their choices.)

STORYTELLER: "Jesus came up to Matthew and simply said, 'Follow me.' That's a very powerful statement!"

"Remember the choices we had to make earlier? When you say yes to something, you typically say no to something else. Matthew had a choice too. If he chose to follow Jesus, he would be walking away from everything else. From his job and his life."

"Matthew probably had a good amount of money, a job, and a life. But here came Jesus, and Jesus said, 'Follow me.' Not many people probably talked to Matthew unless they had to. This was a big deal for Jesus to come up to him! But Jesus loved Matthew, even if a lot of people disliked him."

"Jesus loved Matthew so much that He chose to walk over, see him, and say, 'Follow me.'

"And look what the Bible says happened:

Open the Bible to Luke 5:28 (NIV) and read.

Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

"Matthew left his tax collector booth behind!

"Notice Matthew didn't stand there and ask questions like, 'Jesus, could I still work part-time and the rest of the time follow You?' Or, 'Hey Jesus, I gotta get some things done at home and work, but could I meet up with you all in a couple of months?'

"No! Matthew didn't say any of that. He just chose. He got up, leaving everything behind, and started following Him."

"This was a dramatic change for Matthew."

"Thumbs up if you think Matthew made the best choice. Thumbs down if you think he should've followed Jesus only part-time." (Pause as the kids respond.)

5 min

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "Matthew hosted a grand banquet for Jesus. Tons of other tax collectors and other guests came!"

SLIDE: 3 Matthew Hosts a Feast

"When you start following Jesus, it's not enough for you to follow Him. You want others to know the joy of following Him too!"

"So Jesus got to hang out with all these other people. During the banquet, the Pharisees saw Jesus eating and hanging out with them, and they were shocked. These people Jesus was with had bad reputations. The Pharisees said to Jesus, 'Why do you eat with tax collectors and sinners?'

"Jesus responded:

SLIDE: 4_Jesus Explains

Open the Bible to Luke 5:31-32 (NIV) and read.

"Healthy people don't need a doctor. Sick people do. I have not come to get those who think they are right with God to follow me. I have come to get sinners to turn away from their sins."

"Jesus' mission was to invite the people who were sick inside their hearts, for those people to turn around and have a restored relationship with God!

SLIDE: 5_Jesus Returns to the Banquet

"Jesus returned to the banquet, and everyone thought about what He said.

"Matthew's story reminds us that Jesus didn't just call Matthew to follow Him. He calls me. He calls you.

"Jesus has said, 'Follow me' to you too!

"And as we follow Jesus, something awesome will happen—we will spread His Kingdom. He is a King of a Kingdom. And we can spread that Kingdom anytime we live out the ways of the King. God is kind, so when we are kind, we spread His Kingdom. God is joyful, so when we are joyful, we spread His Kingdom. God is trustworthy, so when we are honest, we spread His Kingdom!

SLIDE: 6_Someone Is Kind

"If you are a Jesus follower, He's called you right where you are to follow Him. In your life, with what is in front of you that day. And as you choose to follow Him, you make the world look more like His Kingdom!

"So, every day, let's make the choice to live for God. Let's make choices that Jesus would make! Let's, like our Bottom Line says, **[Bottom Line] practice living for God!**

SLIDE: Bottom Line

"Say that Bottom Line with me!

Host enters and joins in.

KIDS, STORYTELLER, AND HOST: [Bottom Line] "Practice living for God."

5 min

GOD'S BIG STORY CLOSER (OPTIONAL)

What You Need

No supplies needed

HOST: "Let's take a look at the progress we made in God's Big Story this week!"

SLIDE: *God's Big Story*

"This week, we're up here in the part of this picture of God's Big Story—the picture that says, 'Jesus' Life.' In our story today, we saw when Jesus called Matthew to follow Him.

"As we saw this week, we're all like Matthew. Jesus has said to all of us: 'I want you as My friend.' God wanted us close to Him, but we had the curse of sin in the way. But God didn't let that stop Him. Jesus loves us so much that He gave His life to pay for the sin that was keeping us from being close to God. The God of the universe has picked you to be His Friend—that's been His key motivation throughout His Big Story. God worked for years and years to send us Jesus. The Jesus who wants us to be His friend would give His life to rescue us all. Our friendship means so much to Him.

"Let's put the next image on our timeline!"

SLIDE: *Week 4 Timeline Image*

If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's Timeline Image on the clothesline.

"This week, we learned about when Jesus called Matthew to follow Him!"

8 min

Closing

5 min

WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

What You Need

No supplies needed

HOST: "What an amazing story from Jesus' life today!"

"One of the first choices we saw Matthew or Levi make was to follow Jesus. Matthew was a sinner, just like we are. And just like Matthew needed Jesus, we all need Jesus. So if you want to follow Jesus, like Matthew, and you haven't made that choice yet, talk to your Small Group Leader or a parent about it!"

"Another amazing thing we saw in our story is that just like Matthew, or Levi, God wants us to make the initial choice to follow Him, and then He wants us to 'follow Him' every day in the choices we make. We get to choose to follow Jesus every day."

"When we have a choice to be kind, He wants us to choose to be kind, like He would. When we have a choice to be honest, He wants us to choose to be honest, like He would. When we have a choice to be

compassionate, He wants us to choose to be compassionate, like He would!

"Every day of our lives is filled with choices, and God wants us to choose to live like Him!

"When we **[Bottom Line] practice living for God**, when we do those things, we will be living just like the King, and we'll be making the world look more like God's Kingdom!"

3 min

PRAYER

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER or HOST: "Let's go ahead and take a moment and talk to the King of that Kingdom, the One who wants us to 'follow Him.' Everyone, bow your heads and close your eyes."

Pause to give kids a chance to settle quietly.

STORYTELLER: "Before I pray, I just want to ask you a question. Are you following Jesus? If you aren't, you can choose to start following Him today. Don't forget to talk to your Small Group Leader or a parent about that!"

"Jesus, we love You so much. Thank You that You see us and that You love us. Thank You, Jesus, that You came to help the sick people, the ones who knew their hearts needed help—that's us. Thank You that You died for us on a cross and then rose again so that we could be freed from sin and be Your friend forever. We want to follow You today. We love You so much. In Jesus' name we pray.

"Great job, everyone. You can look up. That was such an important prayer. Remember, following Jesus is not just one decision. It's something we practice every single day. That is our Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] Practice living for God.**"

Dismiss kids to their small groups.