

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Opening Activity

What You Need

Offering Container	1
"Don't Touch" Activity Page	1

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name with a high-five or fist bump.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Place the four pictures from the "Don't Touch" Activity Page on the floor in the center of your group space.
- Invite the kids to stand in a circle around the pictures.
- Explain that you will call out one of the pictures. When you do, the goal is to touch any picture but not the one that was called out.
- To start the game, call out one of the pictures (e.g., "Heart!").
- Kids are to touch one of the pictures, but not the one you called out. (e.g., Bible, Jesus, or Cross)
- Instruct any kid who touched the picture of the word you said to be out.
- Play until one kid remains as the winner.
- Play several rounds.

What You Say:

"That was tricky! You had to really focus to NOT touch the picture I called out. It takes practice to have that kind of control. **[Transition]** Today, we're starting a new series about how we can practice our faith to get stronger. In our true story from the Bible today, we'll see Jesus as a Kid, already practicing and growing in His faith. Let's go check it out."

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Reflect

What You Need

- Whiteboard and dry-erase marker Several (or large paper and marker)

What You Do:

- Ask your group: "Who remembers what Jesus was doing when Mary and Joseph found Him in the temple?" (*Listening to the teachers and asking them questions.*)
- Say, "Jesus was a Kid, just like you, and He had questions. It's okay to have questions about God. In fact, asking questions is a great way to learn and grow."
- Ask the group: "What are some questions you have about God, Jesus, or the Bible?"
- As kids share, write their questions on the whiteboard (or on the paper). Don't worry about answering them all right now. The goal is to create a safe space for curiosity.
- Validate every question, saying things like, "That's a great question," or "I've wondered that too."
- After you have a good list, ask:
 - "When you have questions like these, who can you talk to?"
 - "How can asking questions to other people who follow Jesus help you **[Bottom Line] practice talking about God?**"

What You Say:

"These are amazing questions. It's so important to be curious and to ask questions! Jesus set a great example for us. He wasn't afraid to ask questions and talk about God. There are people in your life who know God, and you can talk to them about the questions you have about God! Jesus' friends are all on the same journey to get to know Him better, so ask your questions! Asking other Jesus-followers questions is a great way to **[Bottom Line] practice talking about God!**"

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

What You Need

👤	One new dental mouth guard (like from the game "Speak Out")	1
👤	Resealable Bag	1
👤	Hand Wipes	Several

What You Do:

- Assure the group that only YOU, the leader, will be using the mouth guard.
- Explain that you are going to say some things about God, and their job is to figure out what you're saying.
- Put in the mouth guard.
- Say one of the sentences from the list below and have the kids guess what you're saying.
 - "God has a plan for you."
 - "You can trust God no matter what."
 - "The Bible helps us know God."
 - "I can pray and talk to God."
 - "Practice talking about God."
- After you've said each sentence, and the kids have guessed, take the mouth guard out, place it in the bag, and wipe your hands.
- Ask: "Was it easy or hard to understand me? Why

What You Say:

"It was pretty hard to understand me, right? It can feel that way the first time when we try to talk to other people who know Jesus about their friendship with God! It can feel awkward. And it can be intimidating because we're not sure what to say!

"But the more you talk about God with other people who are following Jesus, the easier it will get. It won't be so intimidating! So ask fellow Jesus-followers questions about following Him. Talk to them about their friendship with Him. Everyone who follows Jesus is trying to get to know Him better, so we are all on the same journey! When you talk with someone else who is following Jesus, you're basically saying, 'Oh, you're on the same journey as me? We can talk about our Friend together!'

"Learning from other people who are on the same journey to know Jesus can be so helpful. We can all **[Bottom Line] practice talking about God.**"

[Make It Personal] (Share a true, age-appropriate story about someone God put in your life who was also following Him. Talk about how you learned so much from them about following Him. Share how they showed you how to pray, where to go in the Bible for certain answers, or anything they did that helped you know Jesus better! Share how it was such a sweet gift from God for Him to give you someone who was on the same journey to get to know Him as you!)

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move

What You Need

 Bibles

1

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up 1 Timothy 4:8 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.

- Instruct the group to put their Bibles aside, stand up, and spread out.
- Explain that you're going to create motions together for this month's Memory Verse.
- Say the first line, "Training the body has some value," and ask for ideas for a motion. (e.g., jogging in place, lifting pretend weights).
- Agree on a motion and practice the line with it.
- Continue through the whole verse, getting the kids' input for each motion.
 - *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*

What You Say:

"Great job practicing those motions! It's true that practicing a sport or an instrument makes you better at it. It's the same with our faith. The more we learn about God and **[Bottom Line] practice talking about God**, the stronger our friendship with Him will become."

January - Week 1

- Once you have motions for the whole verse, practice it together several times, speeding up each time for a fun challenge

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Why do you think Jesus wanted to stay in the temple and talk with the teachers instead of going home right away?
- What do you think it means for you to "be in your Father's house" or spend time with God today?
- Who are some people in your life who are getting to know Jesus whom you could talk to about Him?
- Jesus asked the teachers who knew God good questions to learn more about Him. What's one question you'd like to ask about God or faith?

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect

What You Need

 Paper	1
 Pens	1
 Coloring Supplies	Several

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of paper.
- Set out the pens and coloring supplies.
- Instruct the kids to draw a simple self-portrait on their paper.
 - It can be a stick figure or just their face.
- Around their portrait, ask them to write the names of a few people they could talk to about God this week (friends, family members, teammates, etc.).
- Next to each name, have them write or draw one thing they want to talk to that person about God. (e.g., next to "Grandma," they could write "When you talk to Jesus, what do you say?"; next to "My friend, Sam," they could write, "What do you like about God?")
- Give the kids a few minutes to work.
- When the kids are done, ask if anyone wants to share one person they listed and what they plan to say or do.

EveryChild Tips:

- Allow kids to work in pairs if they feel more comfortable brainstorming ideas together.
- For kids who struggle with writing or drawing, they can say their ideas aloud, and you can jot them down for them.

What You Say:

"This is a great game plan for how you can **[Bottom Line]** practice talking about God this week. Let's pray and ask God to give us the courage to follow through with our plans."

"God, thank You for all the people in our lives who are getting to know You. Thank You that Jesus showed us it's important to talk about You and learn about You. Please give us the confidence to talk about You to the people we wrote about today. Help us to see the right time and find the right words to say. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."