

Preteen | W3

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 included as optional)

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Like It or Not (K-1st grade), Unbox the Story (2nd-3rd grade), Bible Story Extension (4th-5th Grade)

Application Activity: Change for the Better Hanger (K-1st grade),

Respond with Love (2nd-3rd grade),

Take a Snapshot (4th-5th Grade)

Memory Verse Activity: Voice the Verse (K-1st grade), Draw the Verse

(2nd-3rd grade), Verses to Take with You (4th-5th Grade)

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



Bible Story

Zacchaeus • Luke 19:1-10

Bottom Line

The love of Jesus changes people.

Monthly Memory Verse

"I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you." • John 13:34 NIV

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 👤 Offering Container | 1 |
| 👤 Chopsticks | Several |
| 👤 Bowls | Several |
| 👤 Candy hearts (or small foam hearts) | Several |

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Give each team two bowls—one filled with hearts and one empty—and one pair of chopsticks. Place the bowls two feet apart.
- Explain that this is a race.
- The first kid on each team is to use the chopsticks to pick up one heart, and move it to the empty bowl. They are not allowed to use their hands, only the chopsticks.
- If they drop the heart, instruct them to pick it back up with the chopsticks and try again.
- After they drop their heart in the bowl, direct the first kid to pass the chopsticks to the next kid.
- The first team to move all of their hearts to the new bowl wins.

What You Say:

"Nice work! That required some serious skill and concentration.

[Transition] In our true story from the Bible today, a man named Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector who was focused on gaining more and more money. He was very good at taking money from people. But when he met Jesus, his focus completely changed, and he wanted to make things right."

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Play

What You Need

- Prepared bottle of water with "Zacchaeus" label 1

What You Do:

- Ask: "What was the biggest change you saw in Zacchaeus after he met Jesus?" (*He went from selfish and greedy to generous and fair.*)
- Show the group the water bottle. Tell them this is the "Zacchaeus Bottle Flip Challenge."
- Let kids take turns trying to flip the water bottle and have it land standing up.
- Explain that just like flipping the water bottle can completely change its position, Jesus' love completely flipped Zacchaeus's life around.
- Discuss the following questions:
 - Why do you think Jesus chose to spend time with Zacchaeus when everyone else disliked him?
 - How do you think Zacchaeus felt when Jesus called him by name and wanted to come to his house?
 - What does this story show you about how Jesus sees people—especially those who have made wrong choices?

What You Say:

"It's amazing to think about how much Zacchaeus changed in one day. Jesus didn't condemn him or order him to pay everyone back. Jesus simply made it clear how much He loved him. Jesus looked up into the sycamore-fig tree and said, '*Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay at your house today*' (Luke 19:5 NIV). That love transformed him from the inside out. Zacchaeus went from being someone nobody trusted to someone who was making things right and being generous, promising to pay back four times the amount he took. It's proof that **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**"

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Imagine

What You Need

-  Whiteboard and dry-erase marker (or large paper and marker) 1

What You Do:

- Tell the group that you're going to create a "Top Ten" list together.
- The title of the list is: "Top Ten Ways to Share the Love of Jesus." Write that across the top of the board.
- Challenge the group to brainstorm a list of ten practical, everyday ways they can show Jesus' love to the people around them.
- Write their ideas on the board. Encourage them to be specific.
 - Instead of "be nice," maybe "invite someone new to sit with my group at lunch."
 - Instead of "help people," maybe "ask my parents if I can help with a chore before they ask me."
- Keep brainstorming until you have a solid list of ten great ideas.

What You Say:

"This is an incredible list that we can put into action. Zacchaeus didn't just feel bad about his choices; he made a plan to change. He took action. The people in the crowd who saw Jesus go to a 'sinner's' house didn't understand. But Jesus said He, the Son of Man, came to look for the lost and save them. Every item on this list is a way to show that **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**"

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move

What You Need

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
|  Bible | 1 |
|  Paper | 4 |
|  Marker | 1 |
|  Tape | 1 |

What You Do:

- Write the numbers 1 through 4 on the paper.
- Tape one paper in each corner of the room or in your small group space.
- Open the Bible and read John 13:34 to the group.
- Instruct the kids to start in the middle of the room/space.
- Tell them to move to a corner while you count to ten.
- Call out "Corner 1!" and instruct the kids in Corner 1 to say the Memory Verse together.
- Direct the kids to return to the middle of the room/space.
- Tell them to move to a corner while you count to ten.
- Call out "Corner 3!" and instruct the kids in Corner 3 to say the Memory Verse together.
- Continue to play as time allows.

EveryChild Pro-Tips:

- Pair students up so they can travel to the corners together, providing support and encouragement.
- Make sure you place the numbers in accessible locations for all kids.

What You Say:

"Great job! You were all over the room for that one. Jesus' command to love is something that should follow us everywhere we go. Jesus showed Zacchaeus unconditional love and gave him an opportunity to make things right. When we obey that command to love others, we see that **[Bottom Line] the love of Jesus can change things for the better.**"

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

Ask:

- Zacchaeus climbed a tree just to see Jesus. What do you think made him so eager to see Jesus—and what might that say about what was missing in his life?
- Jesus called Zacchaeus by name and wanted to spend time with him, even though others called Zacchaeus a “sinner.” What does this teach you about how Jesus sees people who have messed up or feel left out?
- Zacchaeus didn't just feel loved—he changed. Why do you think experiencing Jesus' love made Zacchaeus want to make things right instead of being told to?
- The crowd judged Zacchaeus and whispered about him, but Jesus chose kindness. When have you seen someone judged by others, and how could you respond more like Jesus in that kind of moment?
- The story says that the love of Jesus changes people. How has knowing that Jesus loves you—no matter what—changed the way you see yourself or treat others?

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect

What You Need

-  Kids' "Prayer Journal" Activity Page from 1 previous weeks with their names on them
-  Extra "Prayer Journal" Activity Pages for kids who didn't attend previous weeks Several
-  Coloring supplies Several
-  Optional: Paper in place of the "Prayer Journal" Activity 1

What You Do:

- Set out the coloring supplies.
- Give each kid their "Prayer Journal" Activity Page from the previous week.
 - If a new kid attends this week who didn't attend previously, give them a blank "Prayer Journal" Activity Page and instruct them to write their name on the front.
- Encourage the kids to turn to page 5 in their "Prayer Journal."
 - *Optional: If you are opting not to use the Prayer Journal," give each kid a piece of paper, and instruct them to write "The Love of Jesus Can Change Things for the Better." along the top. Then follow the prayer prompts below.*
- Invite the kids to think about one area in their own life, or in the world, that they wish could be changed for the better, and write or draw about that situation in their journal.
- After they've had a moment to write or draw, encourage the kids to take a moment to pray, inviting Jesus to bring His love into that situation. (e.g., "Jesus, please help my friend who is sad," or "Jesus, please help me to be more patient with my brother.")
- Let the kids know they'll add to their journal each week.
- Collect the prayer journals and keep them in a safe place for the following weeks.

What You Say:

"Zacchaeus's story shows us that no situation is too broken for Jesus' love to fix. He can change hearts, and He can change situations. We can ask the Holy Spirit to fill us with God's love and show us ways to love others. Let's trust Him with the things we wrote down or drew today.

"God, thank You for the incredible story of Zacchaeus. It's a powerful reminder that Your love can change absolutely anything for the better. Please help in the situations we wrote about in our journals. We believe that You can bring Your love and peace into each one. Help us to be part of that change by showing Your love to others this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."