



MAY
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GRADES
K-5

PRELUDE	SOCIAL 15 MINUTES	STORY 25 MINUTES	WORSHIP 10 MINUTES	GROUPS 25 MINUTES	HOME
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Statement of Faith

ABOUT GOD

God is the one and only true God, yet He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the Creator, so everything belongs to Him and is under His control. God is holy, so He is righteous, majestic, and loving. God is all knowing and purposeful, so He's at work to bring about His will. No person, thing, or idea compares to God.

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES

God reveals Himself to us through the Bible, and it is 100% accurate, reliable, and authoritative.

ABOUT PEOPLE

People are made in God's image and for His pleasure. But everybody falls short of God's intention, or ideal, for people. In other words, everyone has sinned. As a result, we are all separated from Him, even though He wants an intimate relationship with each of us.

ABOUT SALVATION

That's why Jesus—God's Son—came and lived on this earth, died, and rose again. God offers His free gift of salvation to all who believe in Jesus and accept Him as Savior—the only way to be forgiven and reconciled to God. Anyone who accepts this gift is adopted as a son or daughter into God's family and will live with Him forever in heaven.

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BIBLE STORY

A Bottleneck
Peter and Cornelius
Acts 10

BOTTOM LINE

Keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.

MEMORY VERSE

“Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don’t give up.”
Galatians 6:9, NIV

LIFE APP

Determination—deciding it’s worth it to finish what you started.

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.



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SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (SMALL GROUPS, 15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray that your kids would not be discouraged or give up when doing something that ends up being bigger than they thought. Ask God to give your few the grit and determination to keep going through a really big task!

1. EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, masking tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet kids as they arrive and encourage them to place their offering in the container.
- Make a masking tape line down the center of your small group area.
- Designate one side of the line "small" and the other "big."
- Direct kids to line up on the line and jump to one side or the other based on whether they think the object you name is "big" or "small". Tell them to listen carefully to your whole phrase.
- Some ideas:
 - o A book . . . shelf
 - o A baby . . . elephant
 - o An ant . . . eater
 - o A sticker . . . covering the outside of a rocket ship
 - o A ring . . . that the whole circus fits into, etc.
- Talk about how things can be bigger than they seem.

2. SMALL JAR, BIG GUESS

WHAT YOU NEED: A clear jar or container filled with small items, slips of paper, pens, answer for the SGL

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask kids to guess how many (*objects*) are in the jar. They can look but not touch.
- Let them write down their guesses.
- For younger kids, reveal the number right away and find out if it was much bigger or smaller than they'd guessed.
- For older kids, let them count the objects, dividing the objects into groups to make it go faster and let everyone have a turn counting.
- Put the objects back in the container.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"It was hard to guess how many (*objects*) fit into that jar. I thought it would only be a few because the jar is rather small, but that number was a lot bigger than I'd guessed! **[Transition] Let's go hear about someone else who had a much bigger job that he'd counted on.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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STORY: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS (LARGE GROUP, 35 MINUTES)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

Optional CG: The Amazing Maze Theme Slide

Leader enters.

OPENER

LEADER: "Great singing, everyone! Last week was an aMAZing start to our month of determination!"

CG: Determination Slide

"Determination is deciding it's worth it to finish what you started, and I've got the perfect way for us to practice determination right now! By now you've probably noticed there is tape all over the ground. If you thought this was a life-size maze, well . . . you were right! There are a few different openings where you can start, so everyone pick one and line up. If you get to a dead-end, you'll need to stop and turn around—no crossing over the lines! This may be tough. This will be bit crazy with all of us doing it. But that's what determination is all about! So, let's see it through to the end, when every single one of us has finished this maze!

On your mark, get set, go!

SFX: Upbeat music (optional)

Give everyone a chance to finish the maze. Have older kids help younger kids if they're having a hard time. Once everyone has completed the maze continue with the script.



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"You guys are aMAZing! That took some serious determination, but you didn't give up! Now, let's find our seats and get into today's story from the Bible.

SETTING UP THE STORY

LEADER: "Last week we talked about a guy named Peter. He showed some incredible determination and didn't give up telling other people about Jesus. Well today, we get to continue his story!

Now, you may remember how we talked about the mission that Jesus gave Peter and the other disciples. Jesus wanted them to tell everyone about Him and why He came to earth: to live a perfect life, die for the sins of the world, and make it possible for people to have a forever relationship with God. Well, Peter and the other disciples had been hard at work doing just that, and the new church was growing quickly. But the Jesus followers faced many difficulties. The Jewish religious leaders felt threatened by this new teaching, so they arrested and even put to death those who followed Jesus. Many believers scattered, fleeing Jerusalem to live in other towns and cities. But even in their new homes, they shared the Story of Jesus.

"Peter traveled to visit some of these believers, encouraging them and performing amazing miracles in the name of Jesus. One of these times, he stayed in the seaside town of Joppa at the home of a man named Simon.

CORNELIUS SENDS FOR PETER

LEADER: "About thirty miles away in the town of Caesarea lived a Roman Commander named Cornelius. He was in charge of about 100 soldiers in the Italian Regiment.

"Though Cornelius had not been born a Jew, he and all his family believed in God. They gave praise to God and were always willing to help those in need. One afternoon, Cornelius took time to talk with God.

"As Cornelius prayed, an angel of God appeared before him in a vision. Let's read what the angel said to Cornelius.

(Open your Bible and read Acts 10:4b-6) "Your prayers and gifts to poor people are like an offering to God. So he has remembered you. Now send men to Joppa. Have them bring back a man named Simon. He is also called Peter. He is staying with another Simon, a man who works with leather. His house is by the sea' (NIRV).

"As soon as the angel left, Cornelius called for two servants and one of his soldiers who also believed in God. He told them the whole story and told them to go to Joppa right away.

"And that's just what Cornelius did. The three men left immediately and neared Joppa around noon the following day.

PETER'S DREAM

LEADER: "At the same time, Peter was hungrily waiting on his lunch while he talked with God up on the rooftop. Immediately, Peter, also saw a vision. But in order to tell you about it, I'm going to need two volunteers to help me.

Bring up two volunteers—either adults or your tallest kids. Have them each take a side of the sheet, still gathered up, and hold it up in the air until you tell them to lower it to the ground.



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"It seemed as though heaven opened up, and a large sheet was let down from heaven. (*Prompt volunteers to lower the sheet.*) It was filled with all kinds of animals, birds and reptiles.

"A voice from heaven said, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'

"Peter nearly choked in shock. These particular animals were all called "unclean" by God's law. No Jew would eat one of them.

"'No, Lord! I will not!' Peter said. 'I have never eaten anything that is not pure and "clean.'"

"The voice from heaven responded. 'Do not say anything is not pure that God has made "clean.'"

Prompt the volunteers to raise the sheet up again.

"Twice more, the sheet filled with unclean animals was lowered—and then taken back up to heaven.

Have the volunteers lower the sheet, lift it up again, then lower it and lift it back up one final time. Then dismiss the volunteers back to their seats.

"Okay, so that was a little bit strange, right? But God sure got Peter's attention with that vision!

"While Peter was experiencing the vision, the three men from Cornelius arrived at the gate of the home. Up on the roof, God's Holy Spirit spoke to Peter. Listen to what the Spirit told Peter. (*Open your Bible and read Acts 10:19b-20*) 'Three men are looking for you. Get up and go downstairs. Don't let anything keep you from going with them. I have sent them' (NIRV).

"Peter obeyed and went down to greet the men. The men helped him understand who Cornelius was and why he had sent them. Peter welcomed them inside, and the next morning, all four men set out together for Caesarea. Even some of the other believers from Joppa joined them.

PETER & CORNELIUS MEET

LEADER: "The following day, the whole group arrived in Caesarea at the home of Cornelius.

Move to a piece of the masking tape maze. Move your foot back and forth over the line, as though it's the doorstep, as you speak.

"Peter might have hesitated for a moment at the doorstep. According to Jewish law, entering the home of a non-Jew would make him unclean. But because of the vision that God had given him about clean and unclean things, he knew that things were changing. So he took a deep breath . . . and stepped inside. (*Step over the line with both feet.*) There, he found a large group gathered and waiting for him.

"As a sign of respect, Cornelius fell down at Peter's feet, but Peter made him stand up, Cornelius was so happy to see Peter, and he invited Peter in to meet all of his family and friends.



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"Let's read what Peter said to the group. (Open your Bible and read Acts 10:28-29) 'You know that it is against our law for a Jew to enter a Gentile home. A Jew shouldn't have any close contact with a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not say anyone is not pure and 'clean.' So when you sent for me, I came without asking any questions. May I ask why you sent for me?' (NIRV).

"Cornelius explained his vision to Peter and thanked him for coming. He told Peter that God was there with them and they were ready to listen to everything the Lord had commanded Peter to tell them.

"Peter was starting to understand the vision God had given him. He spoke to the whole group, sharing what God had revealed. His speech to them was incredible and life-changing for everyone who heard. Let's read it directly from the Bible. (Read Acts 10:34-40a, 42-43)

"I now realize how true it is that God treats everyone the same," he said. "He accepts people from every nation. He accepts anyone who has respect for him and does what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel. It is the good news of peace through Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all. You know what has happened all through the area of Judea. It started in Galilee after John preached about baptism. You know how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Jesus went around doing good. He healed all who were under the devil's power. God was with him. "We are witnesses of everything he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by nailing him to a cross. But on the third day God raised him from the dead. . . . He commanded us to preach to the people. He told us to tell people that he is the one appointed by God to judge the living and the dead. All the prophets tell about him. They say that all who believe in him have their sins forgiven through his name" (NIRV).

"While Peter was still speaking, God sent His Holy Spirit to everyone listening. The Jewish believers who had come with Peter were amazed that the Holy Spirit had come to people who weren't Jews. This was a game-changer for sure!

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

LEADER: "Within a short time, Cornelius and all his friends and family were baptized in the name of Jesus. Cornelius begged Peter to stay with them longer and teach them more about Jesus. So Peter and his friends stayed several days with Cornelius. When Jesus had first instructed them to tell the world about Him, they thought He meant only the Jewish people. But now it was clear the job was much bigger—they were called to share the Story of Jesus with EVERYONE. And that mission was just beginning, but they kept going.

"And you know what? You can keep going too! Just as God sent the Holy Spirit to help Jesus' followers share His story, God has given us His Spirit too. When we put our trust in Jesus as our Savior, we receive the Holy Spirit, who will guide us and help us keep going. We can be a part of the work God is doing in the world, but it's going to take some determination because it's a really big job!

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] Keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.

"Let's ask God to help us keep going."



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PRAY

LEADER: “Dear God, thank You that we can trust You no matter what. You have a plan, for us and for the world, and we get to be a part of that plan! But it’s a big job, so we need Your help to keep going. Help us to stay focused on the job You have for us to do. In Jesus’ name, we pray, amen.”

CLOSER

LEADER: “Jesus gave His disciples a pretty big job. He told them to spread the gospel from one end of the earth to the other. But as Peter found out later, the job was even bigger than he thought. The story of Jesus wasn’t just for Jewish people. It was for everybody in the entire world. It was for people who were raised differently, people who acted differently, and people who believed differently. The story of Jesus was so important, it wasn’t to be kept secret from anyone.

“And guess what! The story of Jesus is STILL that important. God sent Jesus to die for all the sins in the world, and three days later God raised Jesus from the dead! That’s something we shouldn’t keep to ourselves. We should want everyone to know that God loves us that much.

“But telling everyone in the whole world about Jesus is a big job. It can seem never ending. So maybe instead of starting with the whole world, you could start with just one person. Tell your best friend about Jesus, or a neighbor, or your younger brother or sister. Or if you’re worried you won’t have the right words to say, try showing people God’s love by being kind and **[Basic Truth] treating them the way you want to be treated.**

“It’s a big job, bigger than you think. I mean, we’re talking the whole world here. But if we all keep going, loving each other one at a time, it doesn’t have to be impossible. The one thing to remember today is this:

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Keep going even when the job is bigger than you think. Say that with me.

LEADER and KIDS: [Bottom Line] “Keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.

“Letting people know how much God loves them is an important job, and it’s one we should never give up on. After all, check out what the Bible says will happen if we keep going!

CG: Memory Verse Slide

“Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don’t give up. Galatians 6:9’ (NIV)

“So let’s all keep going, what do you say? You can head to your Small Group now—just don’t get lost in the maze again. But if you do, at least you know with a little determination, you can find your way out! See you next week, everyone!”

Dismiss children to their small groups.

Play high-energy music as kids exit.



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GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (SMALL GROUPS, 25 MINUTES)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

*** 1. SPREAD THE WORD (application activity / review the Bible story)**

WHAT YOU NEED: "Spread the Word Maps" Activity Page, straws, watered down tempera paint

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a Spread the Word Map and a straw.
- Let them use the end of their straw to drip a dollop of paint on their map.
- Then, they can gently blow through their straw to spread the paint over more of the map.
- Let them repeat with more colors and using the straw at different angles.
- For younger kids, drip the paint for them and cut the straws in half to make blowing the paint easier.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Your paint started out as a small drip on a big world. But when you blew through your straw and spread the color, it reached over much bigger parts of your map. Peter thought he knew how big the job of spreading the Good News was going to be—that he could stick with what he knew and with the people he knew most about. But when he saw that vision and went to Cornelius' house, it became clear that the job was MUCH bigger than he'd thought. This job was not just about the Jewish people; this Good News was for the whole world! The great thing was, God was with him and helped him do this bigger job. God made a way for Cornelius and Peter to meet, and He sent His Holy Spirit to Cornelius' family to help them follow Jesus in a whole new way.

"God will be with you, too, when you decide to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.** Maybe you offer to help your dad mow the lawn, but he says first you two have to clean up the whole garage. Or you start doing an easy math problem but discover that you have to do three other really hard parts in order to finish your homework. Those are perfect times to pray that God will be with you and give you strength so you can **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think."**

2. IF YOU GIVE YOUR SISTER A COOKIE (application activity)

WHAT YOU NEED: A small pillow or bean bag, (optional) "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie"

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather the group a circle. See if they are familiar with the "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie" series of books by Laura Numeroff. In the stories, giving a cartoon animal a small treat always snowballs into a full-fledged adventure.
- *Optional: If you have a book available, read it to your group. If you have older kids, let them read to the younger kids, taking turns and changing readers every couple pages or so.*
- Start off by holding the pillow/bean bag and saying. "Your little sister wants one of your cookies, and you're determined to be kind to her. So, you give her your cookie. And if you give your sister a cookie, she's going to want-" stop short and toss the pillow/bean bag to someone else.
- Let them continue the story: "- a ride on your bike. So you help her. And if she has a ride on your bike, she's going to want to go to-" and then toss the pillow/bean bag to someone else.



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- If you have mostly younger kids, don't toss the pillow around; instead, collaborate on a story together, letting kids contribute as they'd like to and are able.
- If you have mostly older kids, ask one or a few of them to write down your story as you tell it; others could draw a storyboard, video the story with their phones, etc.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"That ended up being a crazy story! But so often, when we try to spread the Story of Jesus by being loving and kind to people, the job ends up being much bigger than we think. **[Make It Personal] (Share a situation from your own life in which loving someone was a bigger job than you'd anticipated – maybe you sat with a lonely grandparent at a holiday dinner and heard about their hip replacement for an hour; or you offered to share your lunch with a friend who forgot theirs and they revealed they didn't have dinner plans for that night, either.)** It would be tempting to give up and stop loving people because it usually leads to spending time and effort that you hadn't planned on. You might end up with less screen time because you helped your brother beat a level in his game and now he's been playing during your time with the game system; or you might end up with less free time on a weekend because you thought helping your friend study would take 30 minutes but instead it took two hours. That's when you need to remember to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.**

"Jesus' friends didn't realize at first how big the job of spreading the Good News would be. They might have thought it could be done in ten years. But more than *two thousand years later*, we're still working at the same exact job, loving others and introducing them to the story of Jesus. Think about Peter and Cornelius, and me and (story you shared above) when you need encouragement to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.**"

3. PUT IT TOGETHER (memory verse activity)

WHAT YOU NEED: Alpha-Bits® cereal, Scrabble Jr. Cheez-it® crackers, alphabet pasta, etc, construction paper, glue, Bibles, (Optional) Food free idea: paper Scrabble® tiles, alphabet foam stickers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather together and read Galatians 6:9 out loud a few times.
- Set out the alphabet pieces and give everyone construction paper and glue.
- Let them find and attach the letters to make up the words in the verse. It will be rather time-consuming to go letter by letter.
- If you have a mostly younger group, lightly write the verse on their paper and let them match the pieces to the letters.
- If you have a large group and aren't sure there are enough of a particular letter in your supply, divide the verse into pieces and let kids find a word or phrase to put on their paper. Or let them make a mix of hand-written and manufactured alphabet pieces.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"That seemed easy at first, but you had to do a lot of digging and sorting to put the verse together a (cereal, noodle, sticker, cracker, tile) at a time! Did any of you want to give up? (Allow for answers.) Yeah, searching for each letter was tricky. It made the job much bigger than it seemed at first. You all had to decide to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when**



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the job is bigger than you think. Have you ever had a job like that, where it ended up being bigger than you thought? (Allow for answers.) I am so impressed that you kept going like that! Sharing how we've showed determination in the past can encourage other people to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.**"

Optional Additional Discussion Questions for Older Kids

- Can you think of any other times in the Bible when someone faced a job that was bigger than they'd thought?
- Read Esther 4:13-16. Only Queen Esther could save her people from a terrible plot—if she chose to finish the big job of convincing the king to stop the plot and rescue the Jewish people. This verse tells us that when she faced a job bigger than she'd ever imagined, her relative told her "it's possible you became queen for a time just like this." God placed her in just the right time at the right place that if she showed determination to follow Him, she could save all the Jewish people in the kingdom. By choosing to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think**, Esther convinced the king and saved her people."
- What big job in your life could be, like Esther's, planned by God to elevate His Good News? Is it reaching out to the new, lonely kid at school, even when he wants to spend more time with you than you'd planned? Is it babysitting for your little cousin, even when you have to help with her diapers? (Allow for discussion. Help kids see beyond the inconvenience of a task that requires more time or effort than they'd like, and to see the value of showing determination to love God and others.)

PRAY AND DISMISS

WHAT YOU NEED: Loose, knotted ball of yarn, scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather the group into a circle and hold the yarn in your hand.
- As you pray, unwind and untangle a few arms'-lengths of yarn, and then pass the ball to the kid on your left. Let the yarn pass around the circle, kids untangling and untwisting it as they go.
- If you have time, let them keep untangling the yarn until it's just one long strand.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Dear God, we are so thankful that You planned for the whole world to know the Story of Jesus and Your awesome rescue plan for us. Please help us this week as we share Your love and Your story to keep going at the big jobs You've given us to do—jobs to love our families and neighbors and classmates and enemies and friends. Amen.

"That yarn started in a small ball, but it ended up being a huge, long string (you can let kids try to measure it against their feet)! When we started, untangling it seemed like a small job, but actually it was pretty big. (Cut pieces of the yarn and give one to each kid). Tie these in a place where you can see them and remember to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when the job is bigger than you think!**"

As adults arrive to pick up send the alphabet verse pictures home with kids and let the adults guess how many letters it took to make the verse. You can also give adults a turn to guess the number of items in the jar from the Social activity. Share that both things involved a number that was bigger than they originally thought.