



BIG IDEA

Jesus shows us what God's kingdom is like.

MATTHEW | **JESUS** | **WEEK 2 OF 5**

Kingdom

GOD STORY

Jesus' Kingdom Parables
Matthew 13:1–33

KEY VERSE

[Jesus] said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must say no to themselves. They must pick up their cross and follow me."

Matthew 16:24b (NIRV)

LEADER TIP

This series follows Jesus in his life on earth through the eyes of Peter. We see how God partners with who we are for his purposes. Each week explores what it looks like for us to follow Jesus.

My Story

1 | CONVERSATION STARTER (2 minutes)

Lead into the lesson by chatting about unexpected story endings and the upside-down kingdom of God. Introduce today's Big Idea.

2 | INTRO ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Fill in the blanks for a variety of fun sentence starters, then ask the kids to describe what they think God's kingdom is like.

God Story | Life Story

3 | WEEKLY VIDEO (12 minutes)

Watch the video, which includes host, God Story, Key Verse, and Life Story segments. Recap and discuss the teaching together.

My Story

4 | SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (12 minutes*)

Read and discuss Matthew 13:24–29. Brainstorm ideas and draw pictures of what the kingdom of God is like.

5 | WRAP-UP ACTIVITY (8 minutes)

Pray together using the Lord's Prayer as a guide.

Our Story

6 | DISMISSAL

Connect with parents and give them take-home materials.

*Extend as needed and adjust the timing for other activities.



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My Story

1 | Conversation Starter

SUPPLIES

- None

LEADER TIP

- Use this quick activity to welcome everyone, build community, and set the tone for your group.

INSTRUCTIONS

- As the kids arrive, greet them and gather everyone together.
- Ask: Have you ever been partway through a story and thought you knew exactly how it was going to end—only to be totally surprised?
- Depending on the size of your group, have the kids share their answers with the people sitting closest to them or with everyone.
- Explain that Jesus' disciples thought they knew how the story of their nation, Israel, was going to end. They believed the Messiah would come and lead a great army to defeat Rome, then set up an earthly kingdom. Instead, Jesus told them about the kingdom of heaven. It's sometimes called the upside-down kingdom because it looks totally opposite to those of the world!
- Introduce today's Big Idea: **Jesus shows us what God's kingdom is like.**

2 | Intro Activity

SUPPLIES

- None

INSTRUCTIONS

- Guide everyone to spread out around your group's space.
- Read aloud the following sentence starters, pausing after each one for the kids to think of their answers:
 - My feet smell like...
 - My breakfast tasted like...
 - My shirt feels like...
 - My friend can yell like...
 - I sometimes eat like...
 - The weather kind of feels like...
- Invite the kids to take turns sharing how they filled in the blank. If they give the same answer as someone else, guide them to stand together.
- Before moving on to the next description, direct everyone to spread out again
- Add your own sentence starters if time permits.
- End the game with "God's kingdom is like..."
- Encourage the kids to share what they think God's kingdom is like as you move into the video teaching.



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God Story | Life Story

3 | Weekly Video

SUPPLIES

- Video file

LEADER TIP

- Make sure the kids understand the links between today's Big Idea, the God Story, and the Life Story.

INSTRUCTIONS

- a. Play the video. It includes:
 - Host segment
 - God Story (Jesus' Kingdom Parables, Matthew 13:1–33)
 - Key Verse segment
 - Life Story (Kyla struggled with her relationship with God and she stopped going to church. Then she connected with a youth leader who had a similar experience. Kyla returned to church and found a community where she could share about her relationship with God and know she's not alone. She decided to be baptized and become part of God's kingdom!)
- b. Recap the video teaching. Discuss:
 - What stood out to you in today's Life Story? How about the God Story?
 - What do these stories have to do with today's Big Idea: **Jesus shows us what God's kingdom is like?**



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My Story

4 | Small Group Activity

SUPPLIES

- Bibles
- God's Kingdom Is Like activity pages
- Markers

LEADER TIPS

- The Lord's Prayer printed on the back of the activity pages is for the Wrap-Up Activity.
- Make sure everyone's names are on their pages.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Gather your small group to sit together.
- Make sure everyone has a Bible. Share them if needed.
- Show the kids how to find Matthew 13.
- Review: What is a parable?
- If needed, clarify that parables are short stories about everyday things that Jesus used to help his followers understand big ideas about God and his kingdom.
- Read aloud Matthew 13:24–29.
- Discuss:
 - What did Jesus explain about God's kingdom in this parable?
 - Do you find any parts of this story confusing?
 - When you don't understand something do you just quit, or do you try to learn more about it?
- Give each person an activity page.
- Place the markers where everyone can share them.

- Direct the kids to brainstorm what they think God's kingdom is like or ideas they have about it (e.g., descriptions such as "God's kingdom is like a rainbow" or words like "loving" or "peaceful"). They may work in pairs but should write on their own activity pages.
- Encourage everyone to draw an image under each of their ideas or to write more in-depth explanations.
- If time permits, invite the kids to share one or two of their ideas with everyone.
- Explain that as followers of Jesus, we're "kingdom people" who live in God's kingdom now and still not yet. (Yes, it's a tough concept, but the kids can handle it!)
- Emphasize the Big Idea: **Jesus shows us what God's kingdom is like.**



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My Story

5 | Wrap-Up Activity

SUPPLIES

- God's Kingdom Is Like activity pages

LEADER TIP

- The Lord's Prayer is printed on the flipside of the activity pages used in the Small Group Activity.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Remain in your small group and sit together in a circle.
- Make sure everyone has their God's Kingdom Is Like activity page.
- Direct the kids to look at the prayer on the back.
- Let them know that Jesus taught this prayer to his disciples 2,000 years ago. People still use it today! The Lord's Prayer gives us a model that we can follow when we pray.
- Invite some keen readers to take turns reading a couple lines of the text to review it.
- Read aloud the whole prayer and ask everyone to join you in praying. The kids may read it aloud with you or close their eyes and pray silently.

Our Story

6 | Dismissal

SUPPLIES

- Crafts
- Take-home cards
- Key Verse cards
- Key Verse colouring pages

LEADER TIP

- Organize the take-home materials so they're easy to access. It may be helpful to sort them before the lesson, then set out any crafts later. Consider having one leader focus on handing out everything.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Greet parents as they arrive to pick up their kids. Take a moment to share a highlight or two from your time together today.
- Give everyone a weekly take-home card.
- Offer a Key Verse card and a colouring page to anyone who has not gotten them this month.
- Remind the kids to take their crafts.
- Make sure their security numbers match before they leave your group's space.