



# Practice Talking About God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 1 • January 3/4/5

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

**Transitioning to Large Group can be difficult for some kids. Use the Small Group time to support this transition by creating excitement and anticipation for worship. Plan a special dance move for worship or review your group's favorite lyric to shout when you hear it. This keeps kids engaged in worship.**



WELCOME

**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Ask:**

- *What is your favorite thing to do on an obstacle course?*
- *Last week was Christmas and New Years! How did it go?*



PRAY

**Say:** God put me in your life to help you learn more about him! He's also placed other people around you who love talking about God and getting to know him better—maybe it's friends in this room, your grandma, or even your neighbor. There are so many people who have a relationship with God and want to keep growing in it. One of the best ways to do that is by having conversations about him. And that's exactly what we're going to focus on today! Let's take a moment to pray about that together.

**Pray:** Dear God, we know that you want us to know you. Help us get better at talking about you with the people in our lives who also know you. We want to grow together as we get to know you more. Amen.



BIBLE

**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- *Jesus had only one story written about him between when he was born, and when he was a man.*
- *We are going to read the ONLY story written about Jesus when he was a boy!*

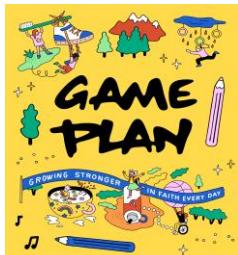
**Read:**

- *Luke 2:41-52*

**Review:**

- *How old was Jesus when this story took place?*
- *How do you think your grownups would react if you were missing?*
- *How did Jesus act towards his family when they went home?*
- *What does this story show us about how important God was to Jesus?*
- *What do you think it means when it says Jesus "grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man"?*

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



# Practice Talking About God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 1 • January 3/4/5

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



Take out the Red Solo Cups and spread them out in the center of your Group upside down.

- Hide Bendable Jesus under one cup and mix them up so it would be difficult to guess where he is.
- Choose someone to go first. Ask them a question from your Question Card. If they answer correctly, they can select one cup to look under and see if they found Jesus.
- Keep playing until someone finds Jesus. Keep playing as long as time allows.



**Say:** Talking to others about God doesn't have to be complicated! A simple way to talk to others about God is by just offering encouraging words that are centered around God. You could tell a friend "God made you really good at \_\_\_\_\_" (drawing, sports, music) or "I am so sorry that happened to you, I will pray for you!"

Your challenge this week is to have three conversations with others about God. You've got this! I can't wait to hear who you talked to and what you talked about next week!



**Ask:** Who in your life can you talk to about God?

- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



Let's partner with parents by sending them home with a resource that has a fast and major impact. It's a great time of year to start some new habits, and this is a simple one!

- January Parent Resource (1 per family, at the door)

**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**



# Practice Praying To God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 2 • January 10/11/12

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



**Prayer is a concept that can be uncomfortable for some kids and adults! When challenging your group, share with them the different forms prayer can have: praying aloud, praying with your eyes shut, prayer by writing in a journal, and more. Remind kids that God hears them no matter how they are praying!**



**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Ask:**

- *Would you rather always have clean teeth that you never have to brush, or always have clean hair that you never have to shampoo?*
- *Last week you were challenged to talk to others about God. Who did you talk to and about what?*



**Say:** When we pray, we are talking to God. And praying isn't just us talking to him; we also have an opportunity to hear him talking to us. I want everyone to close their eyes and imagine putting on a heavy backpack. The backpack is full of rocks. Pretend God is slowly taking one rock at a time out of your backpack. Now your backpack is light and easy to wear. That is what prayer is! You can give all your heavy difficult thoughts and circumstances to God, and he will help you. Let's talk to him now.

**Pray:** Dear God, thank you for giving us a way to talk to you. Please help us get better at bringing our difficult things to you. We know you are bigger and stronger than any of our problems. Amen.



**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- *Sometimes I struggle to know what to say to God. Raise your hand if you have trouble knowing what to say when you pray. Same!*
- *Jesus' best friends struggled with this too. Jesus actually gave them instructions for HOW to pray! And that is great news for you and me! Let's see what he said.*

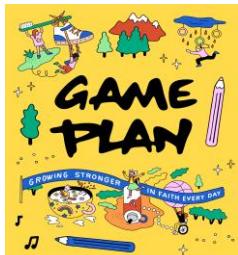
**Read:**

- Matthew 6:6-15

**Review:**

- *Why do you think his first instruction was to go into your room and shut the door and pray in private?*
- *Jesus referred to God as 'father' - and his best friends, the disciples, did too. What does it mean to talk to God as a father?*
- *Why do you think Jesus wanted to teach us how to pray?*

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



# Practice Praying To God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 2 • January 10/11/12

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY



CHALLENGE



DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS



TAKE HOME

Take out the Prayer Card Set, mix them up, and give everyone one card.

Instruct everyone to group up with the other kids who have the same card as them. Make sure every group has at least 2 people and no one is alone. After playing, mix up the cards and play again.



 NEED group: They should share one thing they need from God. Then, act out their favorite food for the group to guess.



 FORGIVENESS group: They should share one way they need God's forgiveness. Then, pray together.



 PRAISE group: Share one thing you love about God. Then, show off your favorite or silliest dance move.



 KINGDOM group: One at a time, share one way that you can make your world look more like God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom is where love, joy, peace, and goodness are the way things work. Then, give everyone a high five, because they're bringing great things into the world.

**Say:** There are so many ways to pray. You can talk to God about the things you need, you can ask him for forgiveness, you can praise him or ask him for help doing big things. Your challenge this week is to pray every day. I am giving you all Prayer Trackers. You will mark off what day it was that you prayed, and you can write down what you prayed about if that is helpful.

Share ways that you pray, or what is helpful to set yourself up to pray. Inspire kids with the simple truth that they are always praying to God, but sometimes they are *only* praying to God.

- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**

Let's partner with parents by sending them home with a resource that has a fast and major impact. It's a great time of year to start some new habits, and this is a simple one!

- January Parent Resource (1 per family who didn't previously receive, at the door)

Every kid is going home with a resource to help them with their challenge of praying every day this week!

- Prayer Tracker (1 per kid, in Small Group)

**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**



# Practice Hearing From God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 3 • January 17/18/19

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

**Elementary Schoolers have a lot fighting for their attention, making it hard for them to prioritize connecting with God. Take time to learn about the kids in your group and find unique ways they can turn to Jesus. Maybe it is praying before soccer practice or reading their Bible at breakfast. Encourage your group with these ideas and follow up the next time you see them. Building faith habits now can stick with them for years to come.**



WELCOME

**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Ask:**

- *Would you rather never have to study for a test, or be an expert in your favorite subject?*
- *Last week you were challenged to pray every day. How did it go?*



PRAY

**Say:** *Usually I pray now, but I am going to save our prayer for later after we make something special.*

**\*\*Pray this prayer after your group builds Bookmarks during the Activity**

**Pray:** *Dear Father God, thank you for the special book you gave us called the Bible. We know the world is full of books and stories, but the Bible is all about you and your love. Help us discover new things about who you are this week in the Bible. We want to hear from you when we read the Bible. Amen.*



BIBLE

**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- *Who likes building legos, blocks, or a sandcastle?*
- *There are conditions that make building a structure so that it lasts, right?*
- *What if you build with blocks on a couch cushion? It will probably fall!*
- *What if you build a sandcastle with a bunch of tiny kids around? It will probably get stepped on!*

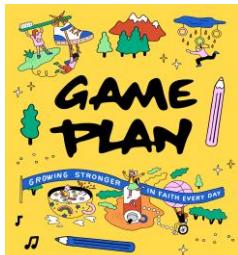
**Read:**

- Matthew 7:24-27

**Review:**

- *Jesus doesn't just want us to learn what he says, he wants us to DO what he says.*
- *What do you think the house built on a rock symbolizes?*
- *What do you think the house built on the sand symbolizes?*
- *What would it be like to live in a house built on sand vs rock?*

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



# Practice Hearing From God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 3 • January 17/18/19

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Give everyone a paper Bookmark to color.

- *The Bible is one of the best ways we can hear from God. It teaches us who God is and how to live like Jesus. When God talks to us in our heart, our mind, or body, it will always line up with what we read in the Bible. If God says to us "That girl/boy looks lonely over there, you should go play with her," you can find parts of the Bible that show that is something God would tell you to do!*
- Let everyone decorate a Bookmark. Then, give everyone a Plastic Cover to put their Bookmark in, and let them select a Tassel to attach to the top.
- Explain that they can use this Bookmark for their Bible!
- Now, pray with your Group.



CHALLENGE

*Your challenge this week is to...read your Bible! If you don't have a physical Bible, that's ok! With the help of your grown up, you can use the internet to read the Bible! There is a Bible App for kids that has fun interactive stories. You can look up verses around a specific topic such as, "Bible verses that will help me to not lie." or "Bible verses that show me who God is and what he is like." You can do this, let's figure out how to read the Bible every day.*



DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS

Share with your Group some tips you have for reading the Bible. Keep it age-appropriate and inspiring.

- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



TAKE HOME

Let's partner with parents by sending them home with a resource that has a fast and major impact. It's a great time of year to start some new habits, and this is a simple one!

- January Parent Resource (1 per family who didn't previously receive, at the door)

Every kid is going home with a Bookmark to use as they read their Bible.

- Bookmark

**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**



# Practice Living For God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 4 • January 24/25/26

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

**Some kids may not be comfortable or ready to practice the Memory Verse out loud. During the activity, invite hesitant kids to sit and watch first or pass their turn to a friend. You could also provide them with the Memory Verse that is written down to read from. Once they are more comfortable, invite them to participate in new ways!**



WELCOME

**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Ask:**

- Do you like to do your schoolwork right away, or would you rather play a little before getting your work done?
- Last week your challenge was to read your Bible! How did you do?



PRAY

**Say:** God wants us to put the most important things in our life first. Like being kind, sharing, helping others, and talking to him! Let's pray to God now.

**Pray:** Dear God, help us be brave and practice living for you each and every day. We want to live like Jesus. Thank you for loving us. Amen.

**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- Jesus had lots of friends, they were called disciples. His friends were all very different from each other. They had different jobs and lived in different places.
- It seemed like it was easy for Jesus to be friends with the people he chose to be friends with!
- Let's check out a story about how he became friends with Levi.

**Read:**

- Luke 5:27-32

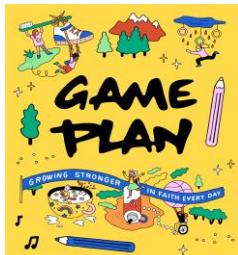
**Review:**

- Jesus only said 2 words to Levi- "Follow me"- and Levi left his job! What do you think happened there?
- It sounds like Levi made some waves at his job when he quit so suddenly, and everyone he worked with was wondering what was up! So, they went to his house and were hanging out with Jesus.
- The people who worked at the churches had a big problem with Jesus hanging out with Levi and the other tax collectors because they were bad news.
- What do you think it meant when Jesus responded to them saying "Those who are well have no need for a physician, but those who are sick."?



BIBLE

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



# Practice Living For God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide  
Week 4 • January 24/25/26  
Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



## ACTIVITY

**Say:** For our game today, we're going to need to remember today's Memory Verse. Practice saying the Memory Verse together as a group: *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

- I am going to give you a position to hold for 30 seconds. While we wait, we are going to repeat the Memory Verse.
- Plank: Stay in the 'up' part of a pushup, no knees on the ground.
- Crab: Lie on your back, lifting your body off the ground using your hands and feet.
- Chair: Push your back against the wall, or stand back-to-back with another person, and then slide down like you are sitting in a chair.
- Cobra: Lie on your belly, palms flat on the floor under your armpits, then push to lift your chest off the ground.
- You can keep coming up with positions, asking your Group to say the Bottom Line as they do them. You can even have a competition to see who can do these positions the longest. Adapt the positions to motions if needed, dependent upon your group's abilities.

Have a Group conversation reviewing the four things we focused on this month.

- Talking to others about God
- Praying to God
- Reading the Bible
- Living for God through the choices we make

Have your Group come up with a challenge focusing on one of these four. They can pick their favorite, or they can focus on the one that they struggle with the most. Either way, make it their own, and hold them accountable!



## CHALLENGE

Share with your Group how you have lived for God and used the gifts and strengths he gave you.

- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Remind every kid of your Group's weekly challenge as they leave.

- January Parent Resource (1 per family who didn't previously receive, at the door)

## TAKE HOME

**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**