



START
the
PARTY

SMALL GROUP
ELEMENTARY
VBS 2024

**GETTING
STARTED**

Small Group time is meant to be with a group of similar-age peers that gather with a consistent leader throughout the week. The activities are designed to review each day's Bible story, help kids apply each day's Bottom Line, introduce and review the Memory Verse, and include a time of prayer. Small Group time is an important VBS rotation as it helps kids interact and talk about what they've been learning about each day. We like to say the Bible story isn't over until the kids know what to do with it. Small Group is meant to move kids to action. You can think of it as an opportunity for discipleship for your VBS week.

NOTE: Things like Bible Navigation and Salvation Conversations are written into the Small Group plans. See the Special Needs adaptations for any groups that include children with disabilities.

MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Party Guests" Activity Page, large gift bag filled with streamers, balloons, noise makers, and party hats

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask kids to sit in a circle.
- Set out the gift bag with party decorations in the middle.
- Figure out who has the closest birthday, and explain that they will be your first "guest" to the party.
- Hand your guest a card from the "Party Guests" Activity Page, and explain that they will be learning about some other people who are invited to this party. Ask them to read it out loud.
- After reading it, direct the first "guest" to stand up and choose a decoration from the gift bag. They should remain standing while holding their decoration as the rest of the scenario cards are read.
 - If they choose a balloon, they can inflate it, knot it, and hold it.
 - If they choose a party hat, they can put it on their head.
 - If they choose streamers, they can rip a section off and place the rest of the roll back in the bag.
 - If they choose a noise maker, let them blow into it once or twice before just holding it.
- Continue until everyone in the group has had a chance to read a card and hold a decoration, or until there are no more cards left.
- Let your group know they did an outstanding job preparing for a party! Have them place the decorations back in the bag, and then invite them to sit down again.
- Ask the following questions for discussion:
 - What did you find in common about all the guests at our party?
 - Have you ever been to a party where not everything is perfect?
 - Have you ever had a time where someone you invited caused problems at a party?
- Remind kids that no one is perfect. Sometimes things go wrong. Sometimes we make mistakes, or we receive things we don't deserve. No matter what, **Jesus is a good reason to have a party.** Jesus would love each of these people we read about, and He loves each of us, too! We can always celebrate the love He has for us.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Matthew's Party

Luke 5:27-32

(Sometimes called Levi)

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is a good reason to have a party.

KEY QUESTION

What is your favorite type of party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

***Please note that Matthew and Levi are the same person. He is sometimes referred to as Levi in scripture and sometimes called Matthew. Either name that is being used is referring to the tax collector that Jesus called to be one of his disciples.**

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Dinner Party Checklist" Activity Page, "Dinner Party Leader Guide" Activity Page, 11x17 paper, markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Instruct each team to form a line on one end of your group space. At the opposite end of your group space, place an 11x17 piece of paper and a marker for each team.
- Give the first kid in each line a "Dinner Party Checklist" Activity Page.
- Explain that some people plan fancy dinner parties using a guideline for a formal place setting.
- Tell kids that they will be working together with their team to create their own formal place setting. Using the checklist, they will take turns drawing the items on their team's paper, making their best guess for where each item belongs.
- When you say, "Go," the first kid in line for each team will:
 - Run to their team's paper and use the marker to draw the first item on the checklist as if the paper is a place setting at a table.
 - Label the item after drawing it.
 - Check off the first item on the checklist.
 - Run back to their team, hand the checklist to the second kid in line, and then join the back of their team's line.
- The next person in line will then run to the paper, do the same for the second item on the checklist, and so on.
- Teams will continue until they have drawn every item on their list.
- Once both teams are finished, look at each of their drawings and compare it to the answer key from the "Dinner Party Leader Guide" Activity Page.
- The team to get the most items placed correctly is the winning team. If both teams got the same number of items correct, the team that finished first is the winning team. *(More than likely, kids will get many of these items placed incorrectly, as they have probably never experienced a formal dinner party.)*
- Tell kids that even when cake forks and water glasses are put in the wrong places, the dinner party still goes on!
- Ask kids how they think Matthew may have felt while getting ready for the party he invited Jesus to.
- Explain that Matthew also wasn't getting things right, yet Jesus still chose to hang out with him, because He loves him! For Matthew, that was reason enough to celebrate!

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Matthew's Party

Luke 5:27-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is a good reason to have a party.

KEY QUESTION

What is your favorite type of party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

***One of the most impactful ways to connect with preteens is to have a conversation that gives them the safe space to process what they're learning and thinking about. If you don't have time to do all of the activities provided, we recommend that you replace either the "Bible Story Extension" or "Take a Snapshot" activity with a time of discussion, using any of the questions listed below.*

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Matthew's Party

Luke 5:27-32

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- What is your favorite type of party?
- What was the best party you ever attended, and what was the reason for celebrating?
- What makes you want to celebrate?
- Have you ever been left out of a party you wanted to go to? How did that make you feel?
- Do you feel like you deserve to be invited to a party with Jesus?
- Does being invited give you joy? If so, why?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is a good reason to have a party.

KEY QUESTION

What is your favorite type of party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Verse Banner" Activity Page, string, confetti, bins, Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into two teams. Tell each team to huddle up on one end of your group space.
- Give each team a Bible and a piece of string.
- Lead each team to look up Acts 2:28 using the Bible Navigation tips below, and read it together as a team.

Finding verses with Preteens: Our verse is from Acts. Ask kids to tell you whether that's in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (New) Direct kids toward the back of the Bible—about a third of the way through the New Testament. When they find Acts, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Tell them to find chapter 2. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell them to find verse 28 in chapter 2.

- On the opposite end of your group space, place the two prepared bins of confetti and "Verse Banner" Activity Page pieces.
- Explain that when you say, "PARTY TIME," one kid from each team will run to their team's bin. They will need to search through the confetti to find the first words of Acts 2:28. They should use their Bible to help them figure out what words they are looking for. Once they find it, they will run back to their group and thread the pennant onto their piece of string.
- Then another person from their team will run to the bin to retrieve the second set of words.
- Continue playing until every part of Acts 2:28 has been strung on the banner. Have kids from each team work together to hold up the string to their banners to display their verse. Verses must be complete and displayed in the correct order.
- The first team to have their verse strung correctly is the winning team!
- Give each team a chance to read the verse together for the whole group.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Matthew's Party

Luke 5:27-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is a good reason to have a party.

KEY QUESTION

What is your favorite type of party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (main piece and Start the Party add-on); Optional: "Start the Party Preteen" Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each of the kids the main part of the "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" along with today's Start the Party add-on. (If you're not purchasing the keychains, you can simply use the "Start the Party Preteen" Activity Page as described.)
- Explain to kids that praying is simply having a conversation with God. We can talk to God any time we want. We don't have to use special words. We don't have to wait until certain times of the day. We can tell God anything any time! God cares about what's going on in our lives.
- Assure kids that none of us are perfect when it comes to prayer. It's easy to forget to pray or to sometimes not even know what to talk to God about.
- Tell kids that each day, they are going to get a symbol as a reminder of something they can talk to God about. Whenever they see the symbol, it can be an encouragement that God is with them and listening to what they have to say.
- Explain that this first symbol will be a reminder that **Jesus is a good reason to have a party**. When they see it, they can pray as a way to say thank you for God's love. And they can ask God to fill them with joy as a result of that love.
- Say a prayer for your group.

NOTE: Place each kid's keychain and Activity Page in a sandwich bag. Write their name on the bag with a permanent marker. Collect each bag and set aside for the next day.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Matthew's Party

Luke 5:27-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is a good reason to have a party.

KEY QUESTION

What is your favorite type of party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

TRAVEL TIME

As you travel to the next track, use the following questions to keep the conversation going and to keep kids thinking about what they're learning!

- If you were planning a party for this weekend, who are three people you would invite?
- If Jesus came to your house for dinner, what would you want to talk about?

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Prepare ahead of time for Small Group Rotation for VBS:

1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Party Guests" Activity Page and cut apart; one set for each small group
- Brightly colored crepe streamers; one roll for each small group
- Balloons; two for each small group
- Party favor noise makers; two for each small group
- Party hat; two for each small group
- Large gift bag
 - Before group time, place all the decorations inside the gift bag.

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Dinner Party Checklist" Activity Page; two for each small group
- Print the "Dinner Party Leader Guide" Activity Page; one for each small group
- 11x17 paper; two pieces for each small group
- Markers; two for each small group

3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Verse Banner" Activity Page and cut out; two sets for each small group
 - Use a hole punch on the designated places on each pennant.
- Confetti; two large packages for each small group
- Shallow bins; two for each small group
 - Before group time, empty a bag of confetti in each bin.
 - Mix up the pieces to the "Verse Banner" Activity Page, and place a set in each bin.
 - Cover the pennant pieces with confetti.
- String; two five-foot pieces for each small group
- Bibles; two for each small group

5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (main piece and Start the Party add-on); one for each kid
- Sandwich bag
- Permanent marker
- Optional: Print and cut apart "Start the Party Preteen" Activity Page; one card for each kid

NOTE: Kids will be adding to the "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" each day. Be prepared to pass out, collect, and store their keychains in a sandwich bag with their name on it each day.

Please note that Matthew and Levi are the same person. He is sometimes referred to as Levi in scripture and sometimes called Matthew. Either name that is being used is referring to the tax collector that Jesus called to be one of his disciples.

Guest 1:

Nyla loves to be the center of attention. When she heard that this party was in the works, she immediately ordered a fancy outfit full of glamour and glitter so she would definitely look better than everyone else there.

Guest 2:

James isn't doing well in school. He spends his spare time playing video games, rather than completing his homework or studying for tests. His parents told him he could only go to the party if he passes his math test. When he receives another failing grade, he decides to lie to his parents so he can still go to the party.

Guest 3:

Malik hasn't been very kind or respectful to his mom lately. He knows she has a lot going on, but he tends to take out his frustrations on her by rolling his eyes or talking back. He's pretty sure she's going to say no when he asks if he can go to the party. But instead, his mom says, "I want you to go. You deserve a chance to do something fun with your friends."

Guest 4:

Avery took a job weeding the flower beds for her neighbor, Mrs. Jones. She scheduled herself for Saturday afternoon, which happens to also be when the party is. She committed to the job, but she really wants to go to the party. She decides to rush through weeding so she can still make it. As she's walking away from Mrs. Jones' yard, she can see that the job she did wasn't very good.

Guest 5:

Josiah and his brother were wrestling the other day, and they accidentally broke an antique lamp that belonged to their great grandfather. They immediately tried to hide it so their dad wouldn't find out. When Josiah receives the party invitation, he asks his dad if he can go. "Before I give an answer, I need to know what happened to the lamp," his dad says. Josiah freezes. But his brother steps in and says, "It's my fault, Dad. I broke it." Josiah mouths, "Thank you!" to his brother, and immediately texts his friends that he can come to the party.

Guest 6:

Veda can't wait to go to the party! She's new at school, and this is the first time she's been invited to anything. But the day before the party, she starts feeling sick. Her throat is burning and her head is pounding. She's so disappointed. She decides not to tell her parents that she doesn't feel well, because she knows they'll make her stay home. Veda knows she'll risk getting others sick, but she really doesn't want to miss out.

Guest 7:

It's Ashlynn's party. Her parents said she could invite anyone she wants, but they specifically encouraged her to invite Lucy, the girl next door. The problem is, Ashlynn hasn't really been friends with Lucy since kindergarten. They've mostly gone separate ways and started hanging out with two different groups of friends. Ashlynn doesn't want to hurt Lucy's feelings, but she also knows her friends will think it's weird if Lucy is at the party. She decides not to invite her.

Guest 8:

Caden got into an argument with James at baseball practice this week. They did not resolve their issues, and they haven't spoken to each other since. But Caden knows James is going to be at Ashlynn's party. He comes up with a plan to confront James at the party.

Guest 9:

Amara's little sister has a dance recital coming up this weekend, and she promised a long time ago that she would be there to cheer her on. But now she has Ashlynn's party at the same time. Ashlynn is her very best friend, and she expects Amara to be there. Amara decides to go the recital with her sister, but she sneaks out of the auditorium once her sister goes back stage to get ready. She figures her sister will never even know.

Guest 10:

Silas will do anything for a good prank. Sometimes he takes it too far. When he received the invitation for the party, he decided this would be a perfect opportunity for mischief. He offers to bring cupcakes to the party, and Ashlynn seems pleased to have help with food. Little does she know, he's planning to fill each cupcake with a filling that will stain everyone's mouth green. Ashlynn will be so mad!

What to Do:

Print and cut apart. Provide one set for each small group.

"Party Guests" Activity Page

VBS, DAY 1, PT

©2023 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

Dinner Party Checklist

- Service plate
- Salad plate
- Bread plate
- Soup bowl
- Water glass
- Cup and saucer
- Dinner fork
- Fish fork
- Salad fork
- Cake fork
- Dinner knife
- Butter knife
- Teaspoon
- Soup spoon
- Dessert spoon
- Napkin
- Place card

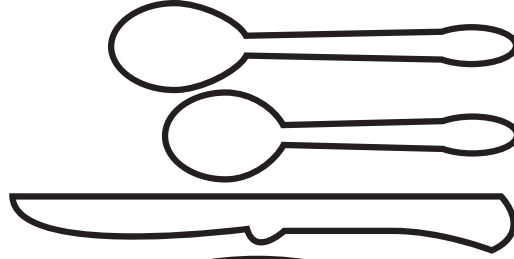
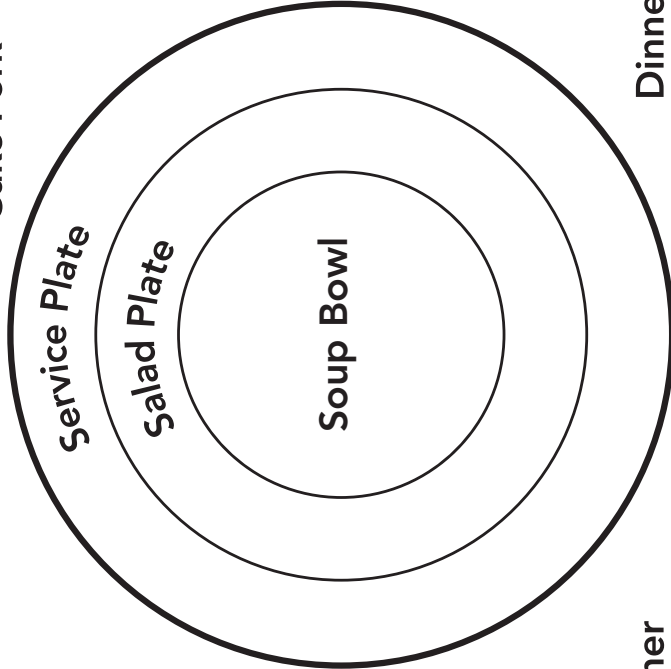
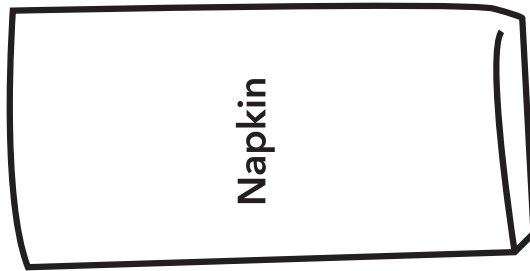
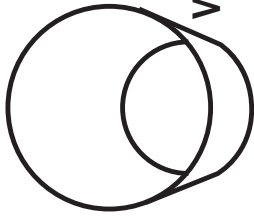
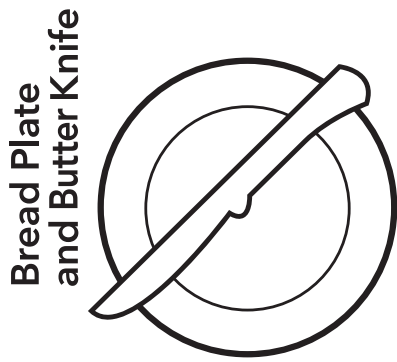
What to Do:

Print two copies for each small group.

"Dinner Party Checklist" Activity Page

VBS, DAY 1, PT

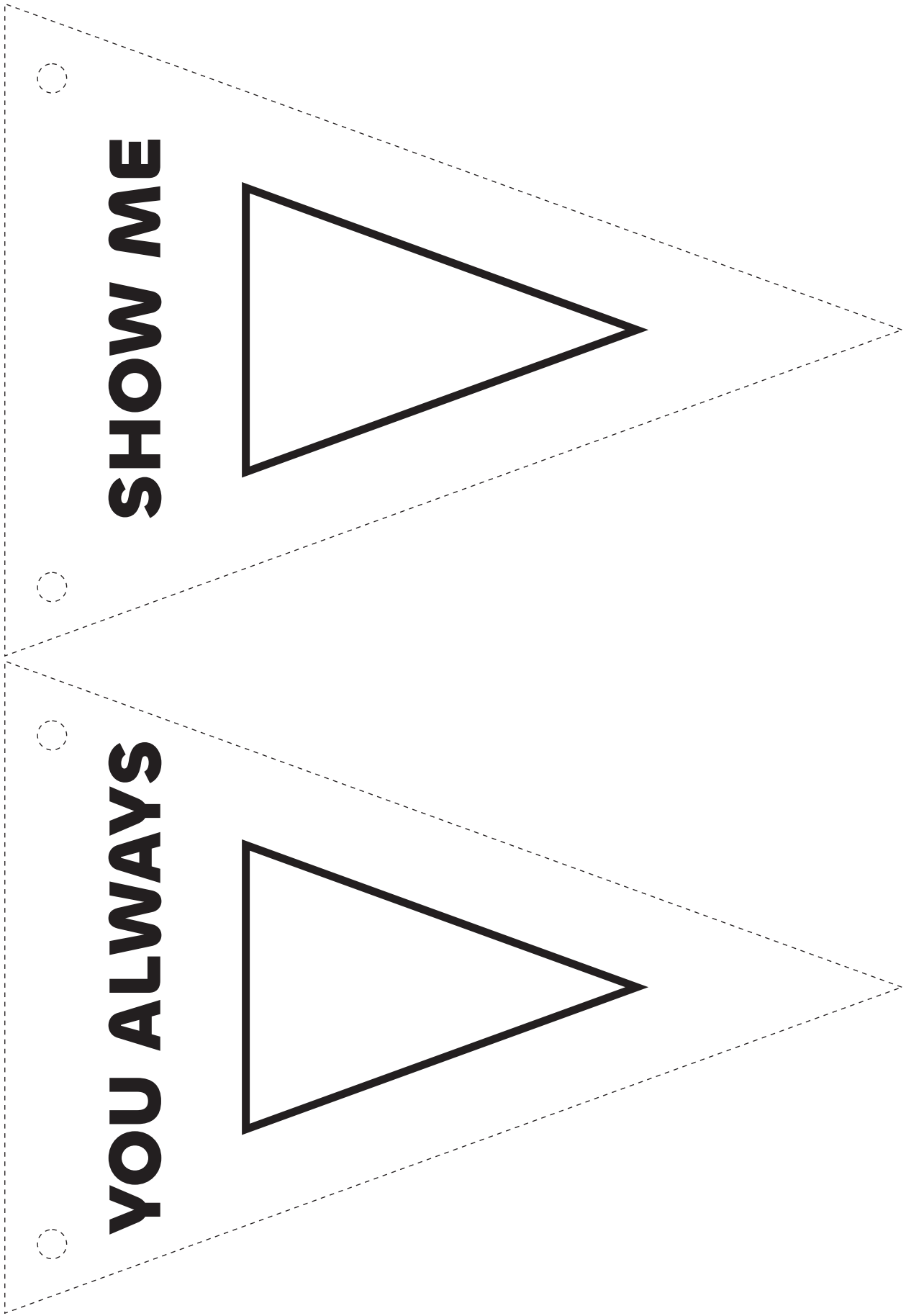
©2023 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.



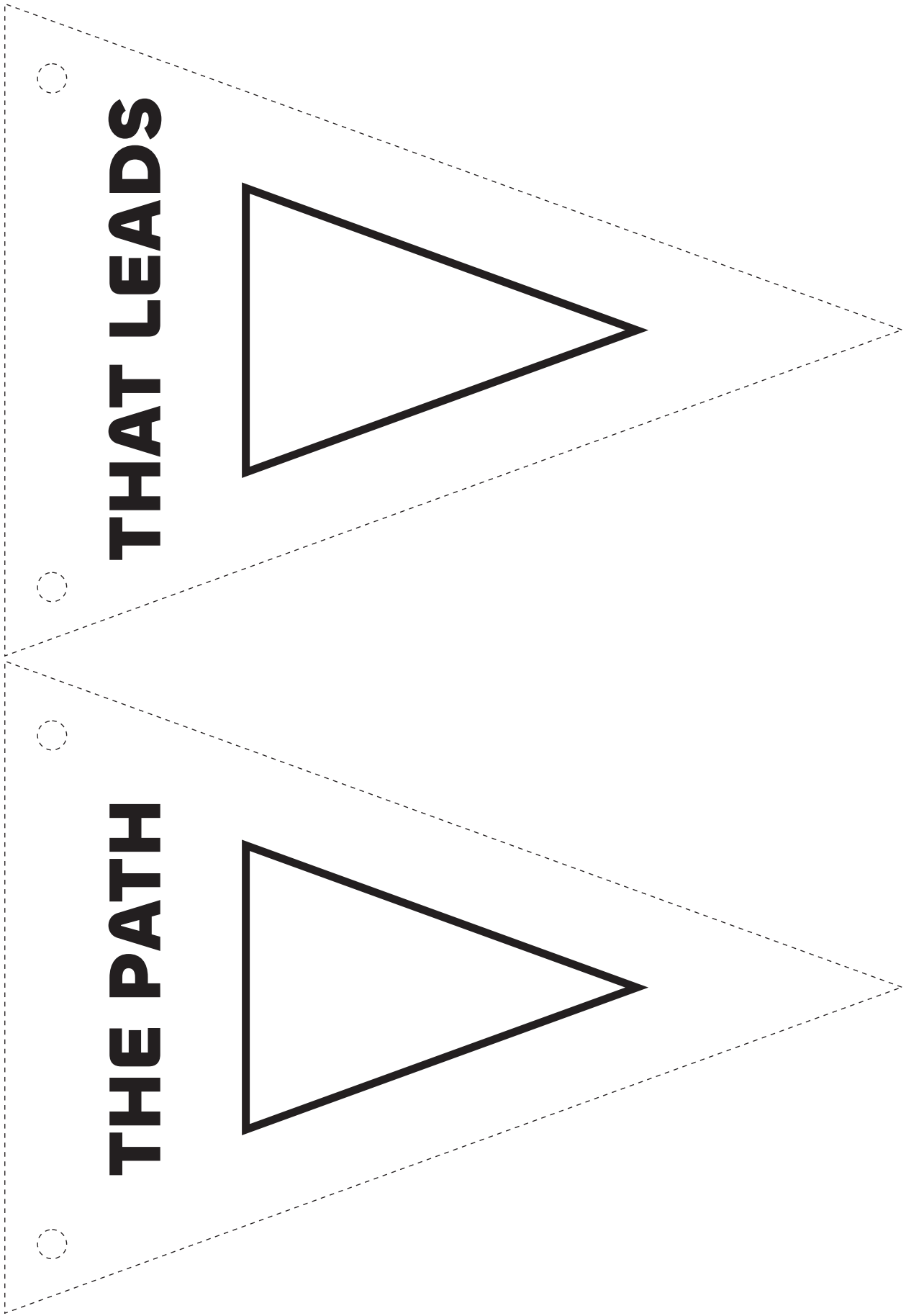
Salad Fork
Fish Fork
Dinner Fork

Dinner Knife
Teaspoon
Soup Spoon

What to Do:
Print one copy for each small group

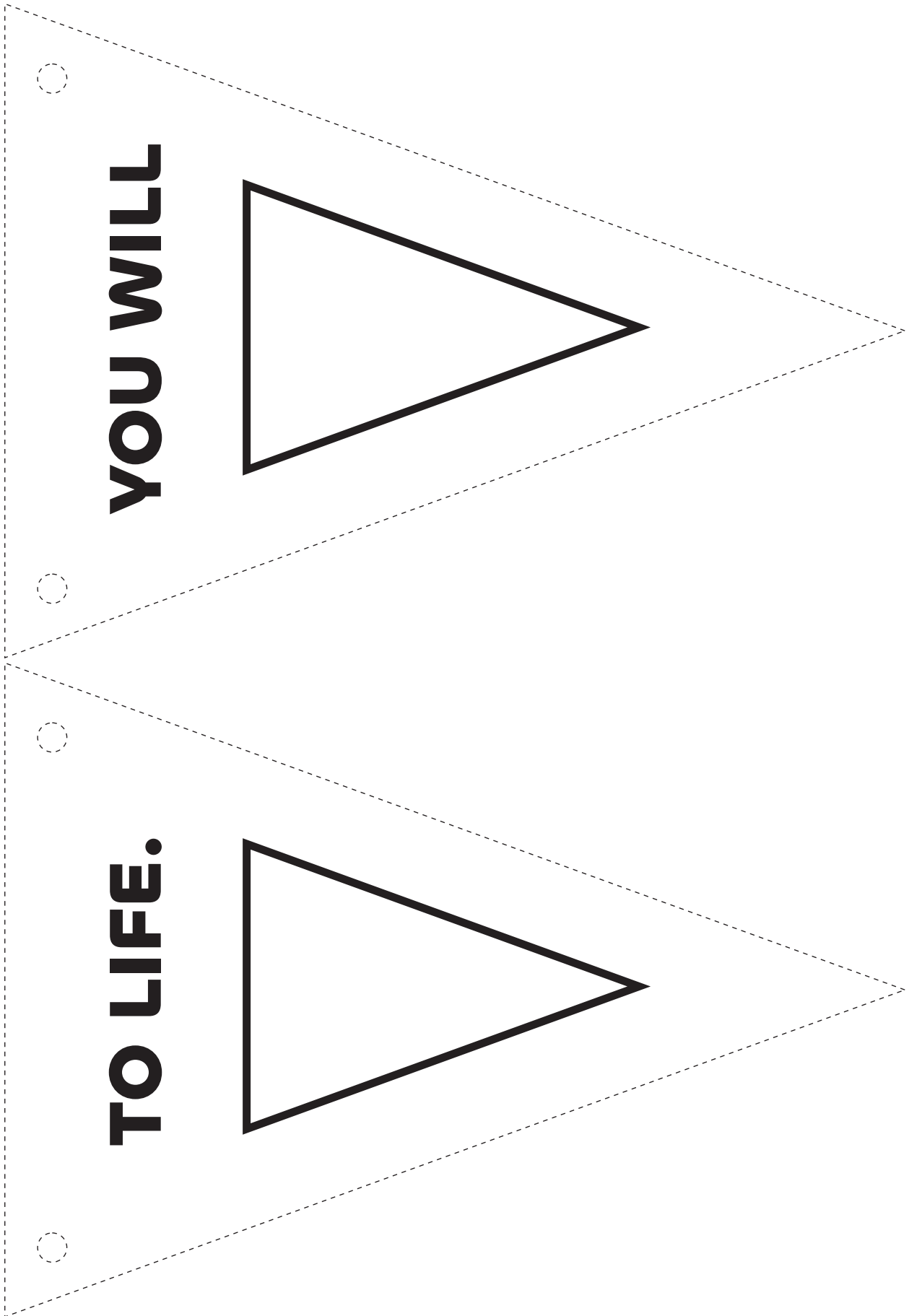


What to Do:
Print two sets for each small group. Cut out and punch holes where indicated.



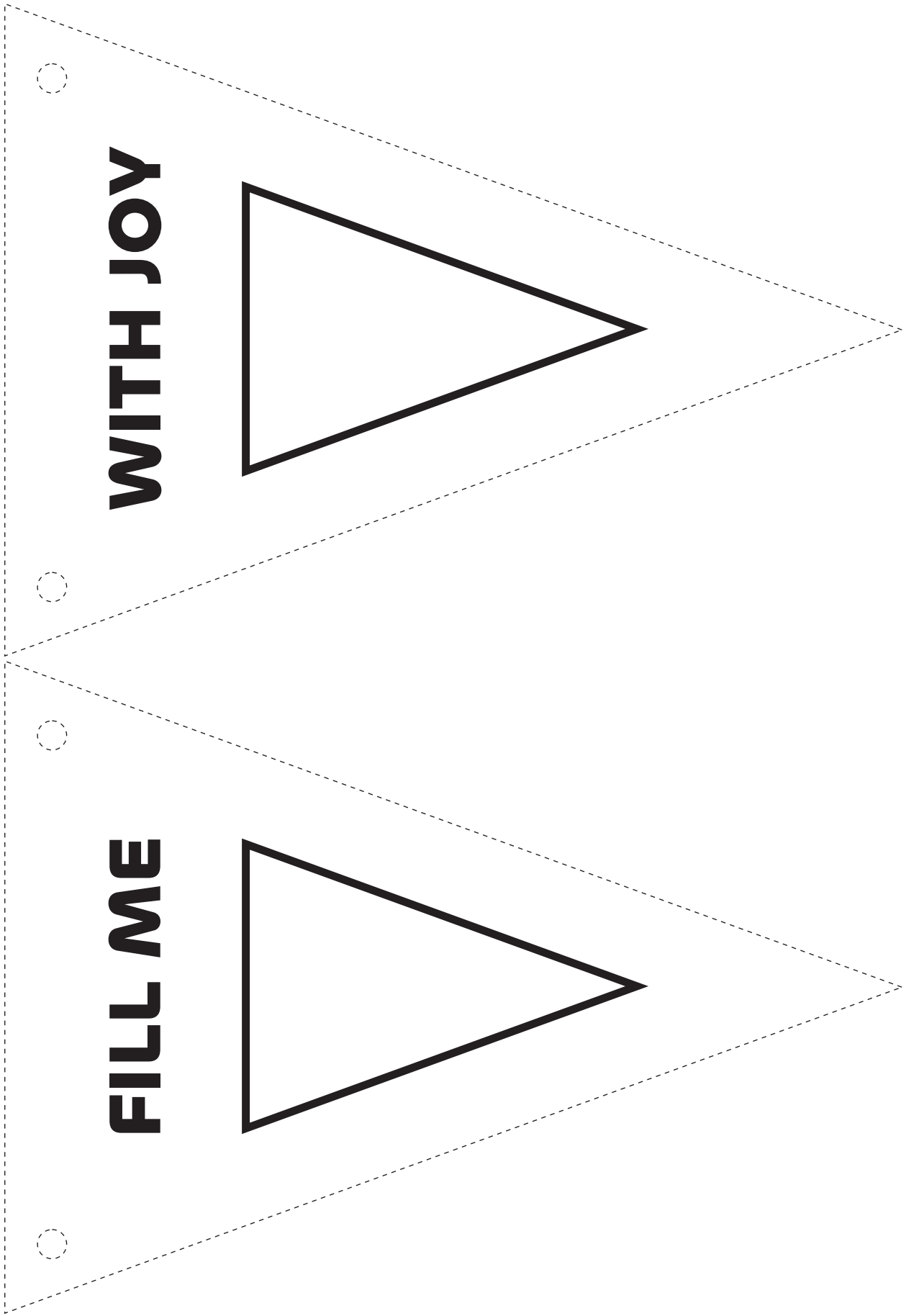
What to Do:

Print two sets for each small group. Cut out and punch holes where indicated.



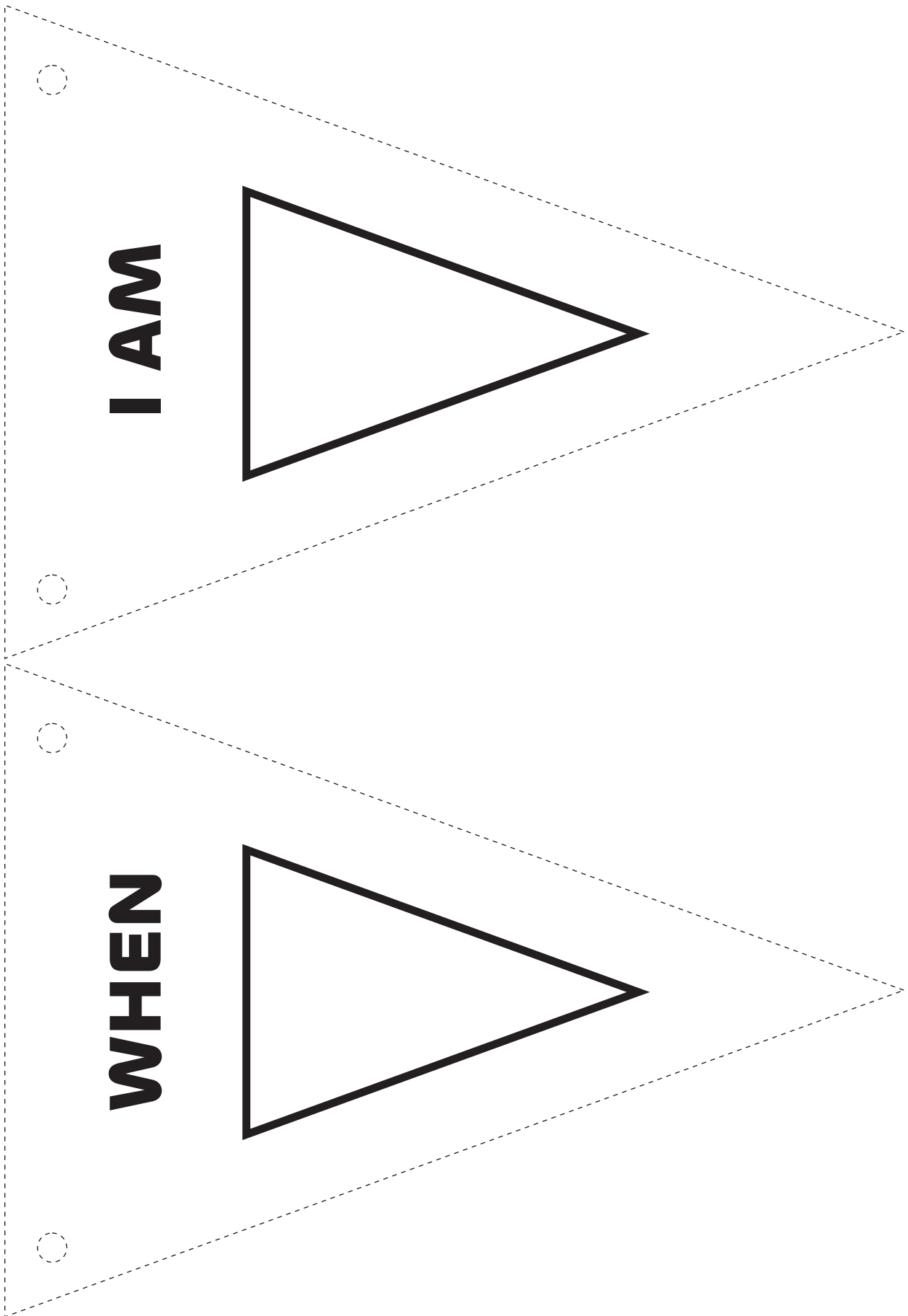
What to Do:

Print two sets for each small group. Cut out and punch holes where indicated.



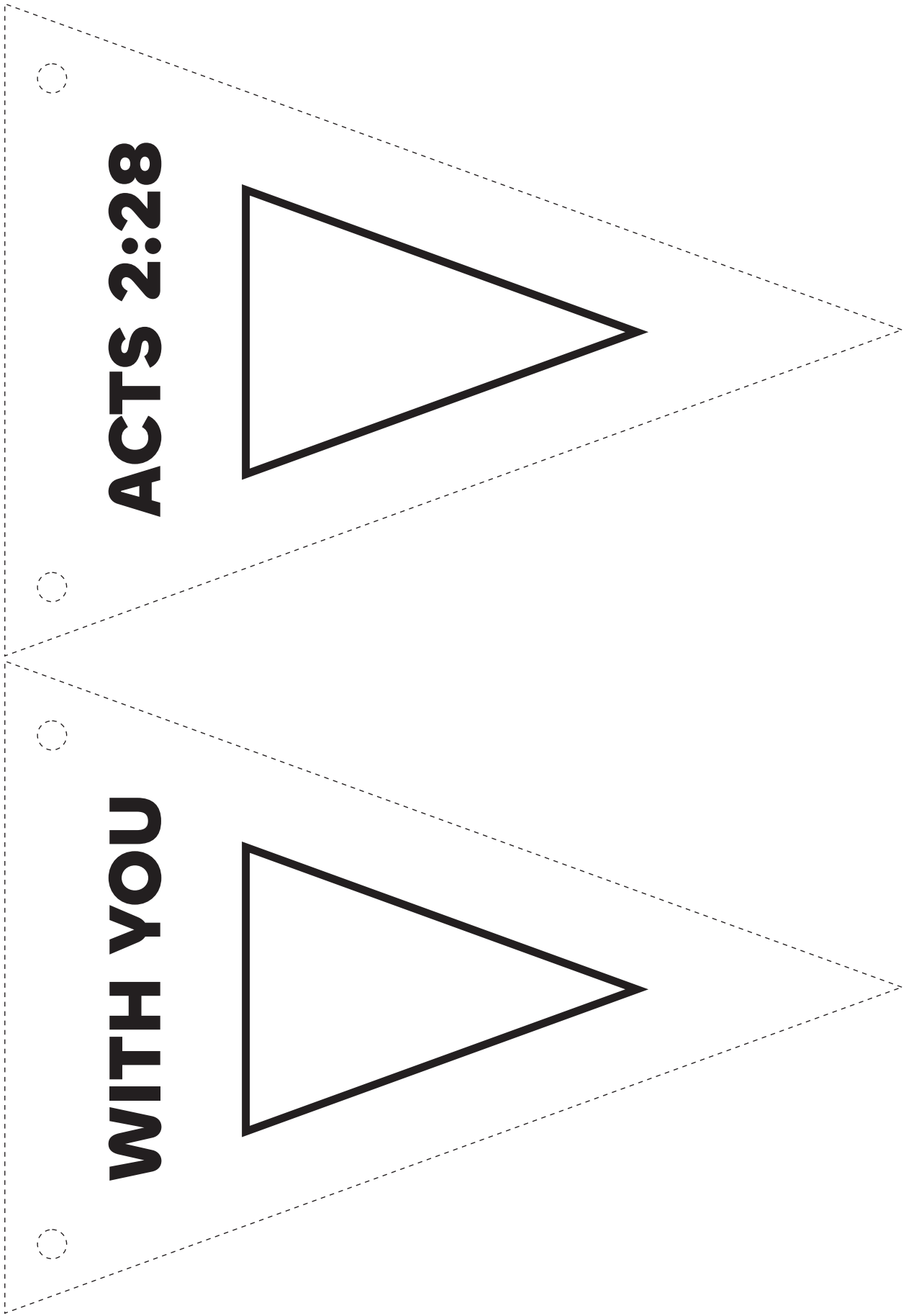
What to Do:

Print two sets for each small group. Cut out and punch holes where indicated.



What to Do:

Print two sets for each small group. Cut out and punch holes where indicated.



What to Do:
Print two sets for each small group. Cut out and punch holes where indicated.



**Jesus is a good reason
to have a party.**



**Jesus is a good reason
to have a party.**



**Jesus is a good reason
to have a party.**



**Jesus is a good reason
to have a party.**

What to Do:

Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one card for each kid.

MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Jesus' Parable of
the Wedding Feast**
Matthew 22:1-14

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Everyone is invited to the party.

KEY QUESTION

How does it feel to be invited?

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

**I should treat others the way
I want to be treated.**



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Party Invitation" Activity Page, pens or pencils

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to sit together in your group space.
- Ask the following question. Be sure to facilitate a group discussion where kids respect each other and take turns talking.
 - Who are some people who may not feel invited to the party?
- You may need to help initiate this discussion. Guide them to consider people they know who are often left out—not necessarily from a "party" but from various things in life. Help them to think about those who may not have access to certain opportunities or peers at school who seem to remain on the outside of things.
- After discussing, hand each kid a copy of the "Party Invitation" Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- Explain that they should take time to think of a specific person in their life who they could invite to church, start a friendship with, or talk to about Jesus and His love for them. Give them a few minutes of quiet time to work on their invitations.
- Explain what they are supposed to write on the indicated lines:
 - Who: The person's name
 - What: What they plan to invite them to: a certain event? a friendship?
 - When: Specific opportunities where they can reach out to this person
 - How: Will they sit with them on the bus? Will they send a text? Etc.
- Encourage kids to take these invitations home as a reminder to make an effort with the person they wrote about on their invitation. It could be a reminder for them to pray and ask God to help them be inviting.

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Cake Wars" Activity Page, gift boxes in different sizes

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into two teams, and have each team huddle up together. Give each team a set of assorted boxes.
- Explain that they're going to play a game to review the Bible story while pretending the gift boxes are layers of a wedding cake, since there was a wedding in the story.
- Explain the game directions:
 - Teams will take turns answering a review question from the story.
 - If correct, they will get to add more layers to their "cake." Cake layers should be stacked from largest to smallest.
 - The first team to get all their layers stacked wins!
- Ask kids if anyone has ever been part of a wedding (flower girl, ring bearer, etc). Choose someone who has been in a wedding, and let that team go first.
- Ask the first question from the "Cake Wars" Activity Page. Give the team an opportunity to discuss and then share their answer.
 - If correct, they can find the largest sized gift box and start their wedding cake. The other team takes their turn next.
 - If incorrect, the question goes to the other team.
 - If the other team answers the question correctly, they get to place a cake layer, and then take another turn.
 - If they answer the question incorrectly, they don't get to place a cake layer, but they still get to take another turn.
- Continue taking turns asking questions until one team has completely stacked all their cake layers. That team wins!
- **[Make It Personal] Once the game is over, share with the group about a time when you were invited to something where you didn't feel like you belonged. Explain how it made you feel to be included.**

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Jesus' Parable of
the Wedding Feast**
Matthew 22:1-14

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Everyone is invited to the party.

KEY QUESTION

How does it feel to be invited?

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

**I should treat others the way
I want to be treated.**

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

***One of the most impactful ways to connect with preteens is to have a conversation that gives them the safe space to process what they're learning and thinking about. If you don't have time to do all of the activities provided, we recommend that you replace either the "Bible Story Extension" or "Take a Snapshot" activity with a time of discussion, using any of the questions listed below.*

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Parable of
the Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- What is the best thing you've ever been invited to?
- What makes you want to be part of something else?
- How does it feel to be invited?
- Why is it important for us to feel like we belong?
- If it's true that following Jesus gives us joy, how can we invite others to experience that joy?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Everyone is invited to the party.

KEY QUESTION

How does it feel to be invited?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way
I want to be treated.

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Balloon Verses" Activity Page, prepared balloons, Bibles, pens or pencils

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Each team should assign the following roles to three people on their team:
 - Balloon Blower
 - Scripture Finder
 - Answer Writer
- Tell each team to line up with the Balloon Blower at one end of the line and the Scripture Finder on the other. The Answer Writer can be anywhere in line.
- Hand each team's Balloon Blower their set of five balloons.
- Hand each team's Scripture Finder a Bible.
- Hand each team's Answer Writer a copy of the "Balloon Verses" Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- When you say "Go," the Balloon Blower on each team will choose a balloon to blow up, tie, and hand to the next kid in line.
- Kids continue passing the balloon until it reaches the Scripture Finder on the end.
- The Scripture Finder will then look at the Bible reference written on the balloon and use the Bible to find that verse. They will read the verse out loud so the entire team can hear it.
- Then the Answer Writer will read the question on the "Balloon Verses" Activity Page that is associated with the verse that was read out loud. The team can work together to answer the question, and the Answer Writer will write it down on the activity page.
- Teams will continue this process until each balloon has been inflated and passed, all verses have been read, and all answers have been written.
- The first team to complete this is the winning team.
- Once both teams have finished, go over each question on the activity page as a group.
- See below for answers: (Answers are based on NIV but other translations are similar.)
 1. one body
 2. children
 3. outsiders or strangers
 4. love
 5. joy
- Tell kids that when it comes to God, we are all invited to the party. We can feel confident in the love God has for us, and that should fuel our desire to help others feel that love, too.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Jesus' Parable of
the Wedding Feast**
Matthew 22:1-14

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Everyone is invited to the party.

KEY QUESTION

How does it feel to be invited?

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**

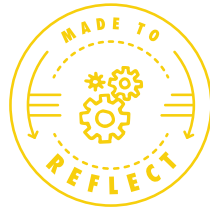
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

**I should treat others the way
I want to be treated.**

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (main piece and smiley face add-on); *Optional:* "Smiley Face Preteen" Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid their sandwich bag from the previous day containing their "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains." Give each kid today's smiley face add-on. (If you're not purchasing the keychains, you can simply use the "Smiley Face Preteen" Activity Page as described.)
- Remind kids what you discussed previously about prayer.
 - *Praying is having a conversation with God any time we want. We don't have to use special words. We don't have to wait until certain times of the day. We can tell God anything any time! God cares about what's going on in our lives.*
- Explain that today's symbol can be a reminder that **everyone is invited to the party**. Invite kids to share a time when being invited to something made them smile.
- Encourage kids to pray about the people in their lives who they can invite whenever they see the smiley face. They can ask God to give them courage to include people they wouldn't normally invite. They can pray for opportunities to have conversations with people they can invite.
- Say a prayer for your group.

NOTE: Place each kid's keychain and Activity Page in a sandwich bag. Write their name on the bag with a permanent marker. Collect each bag and set aside for the next day.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Parable of the Wedding Feast
Matthew 22:1-14

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Everyone is invited to the party.

KEY QUESTION

How does it feel to be invited?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

TRAVEL TIME

As you travel to the next track, use the following questions to keep the conversation going and to keep kids thinking about what they're learning!

- What's your favorite way to celebrate?
- If you could pick one dessert to eat every day, what would you choose?

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Prepare ahead of time for Small Group Rotation for VBS:

1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Party Invitation" Activity Page and cut apart; one invitation for each kid
- Pens or pencils; one for each kid

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Cake Wars" Activity Page; one for each small group
- Assorted sizes of plain white, rectangle gift boxes; two sets for each small group
 - Each set should have six boxes and include different sizes that can be stacked.

3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Balloon Verses" Activity Page; two for each small group

- Bibles; two for each small group
- Pens or pencils; two for each small group
- Balloons; 10 for each small group
 - Before group time, use a permanent marker to write the following verse references on the deflated balloons (write each reference on two balloons): Romans 12:5, Luke 18:16, Ephesians 2:19, 1 John 3:1, and Acts 2:28
 - Separate the balloons, making two sets of five balloons (each set containing one of each verse reference).

5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

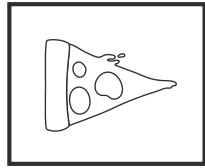
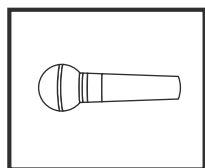
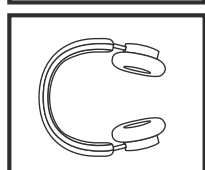
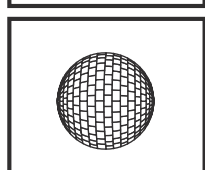
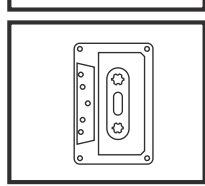
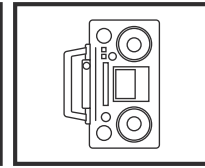
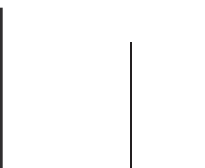
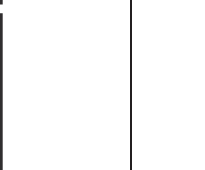

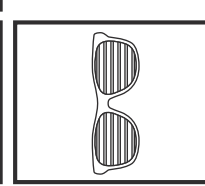
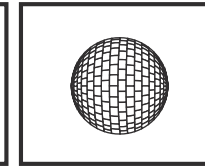
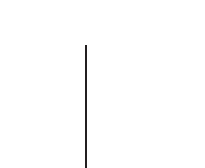
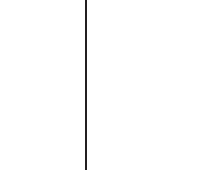

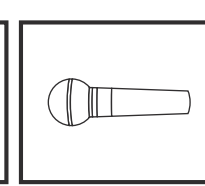
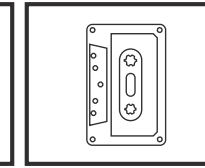

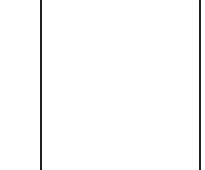

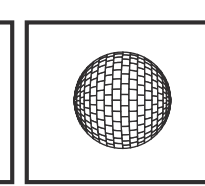
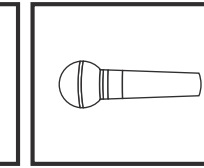
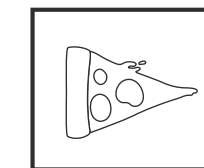
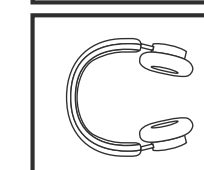

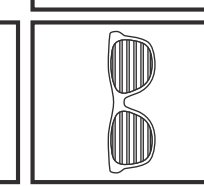
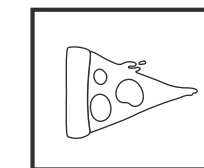
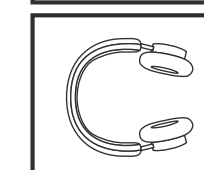

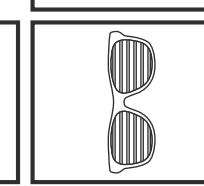
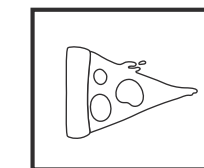
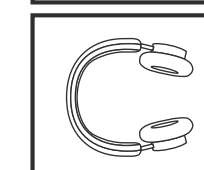

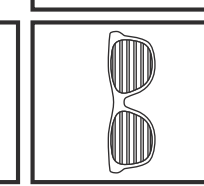
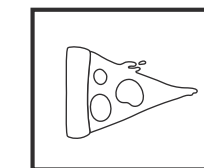
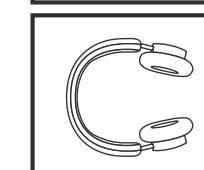

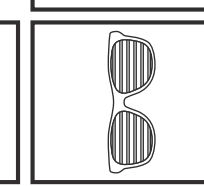
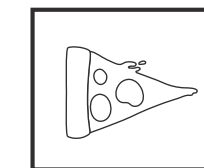
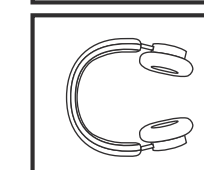

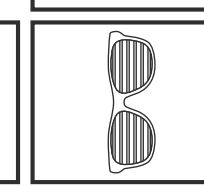
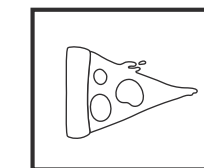
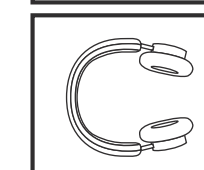

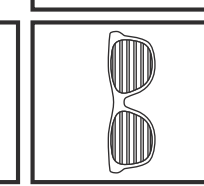
Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

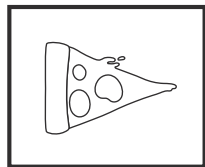
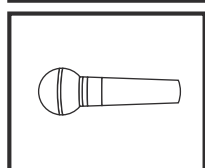
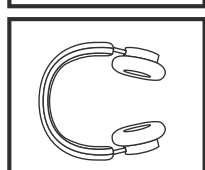
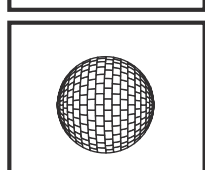
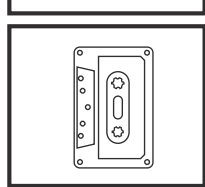
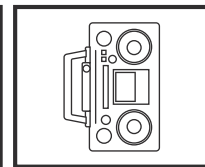
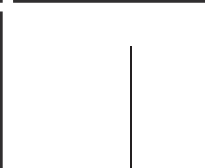
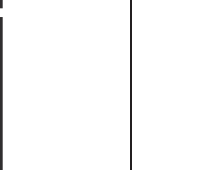

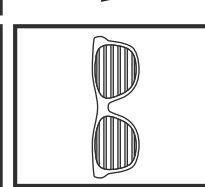
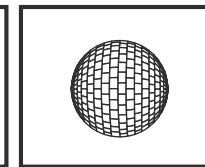
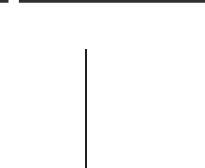
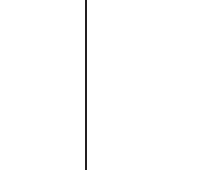

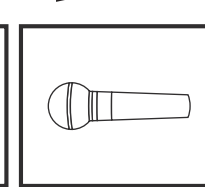
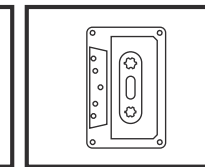

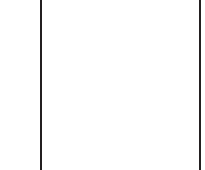

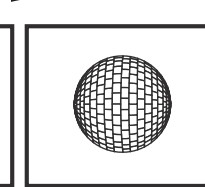
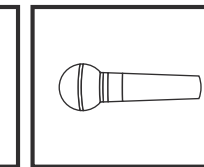
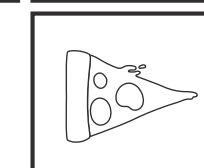
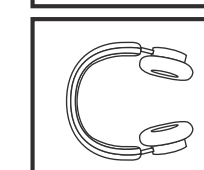
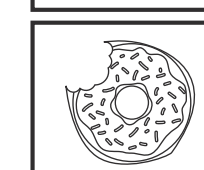
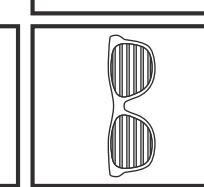
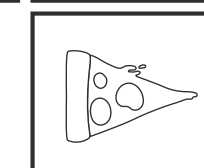
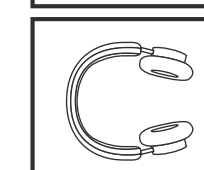
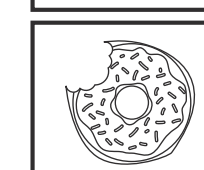
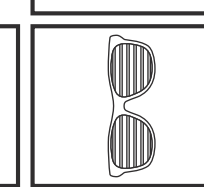
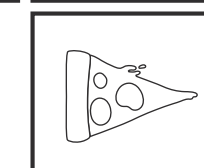
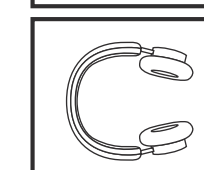
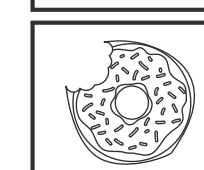
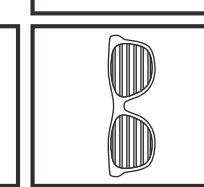
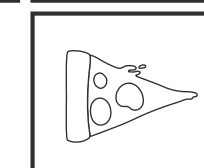
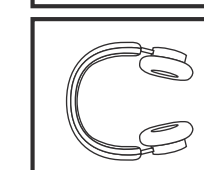
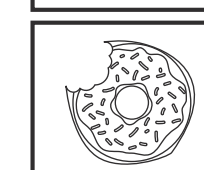
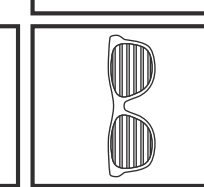
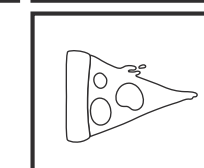
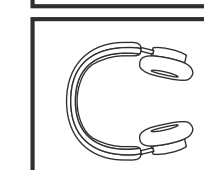
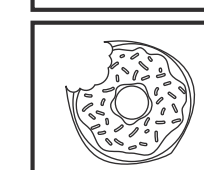
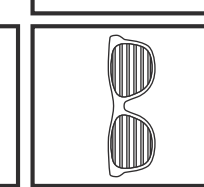
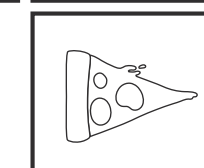
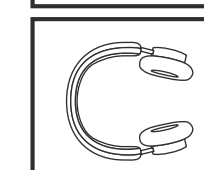
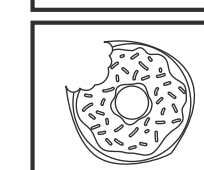
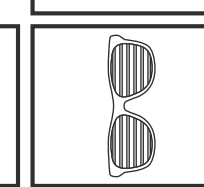
- "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (from previous day and smiley face add-on); one for each kid
- Optional: Print and cut apart "Smiley Face Preteen" Activity Page; one card for each kid

NOTE: Kids will be adding to the "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" each day. Be prepared to pass out, collect, and store their keychains in a sandwich bag with their name on it each day.

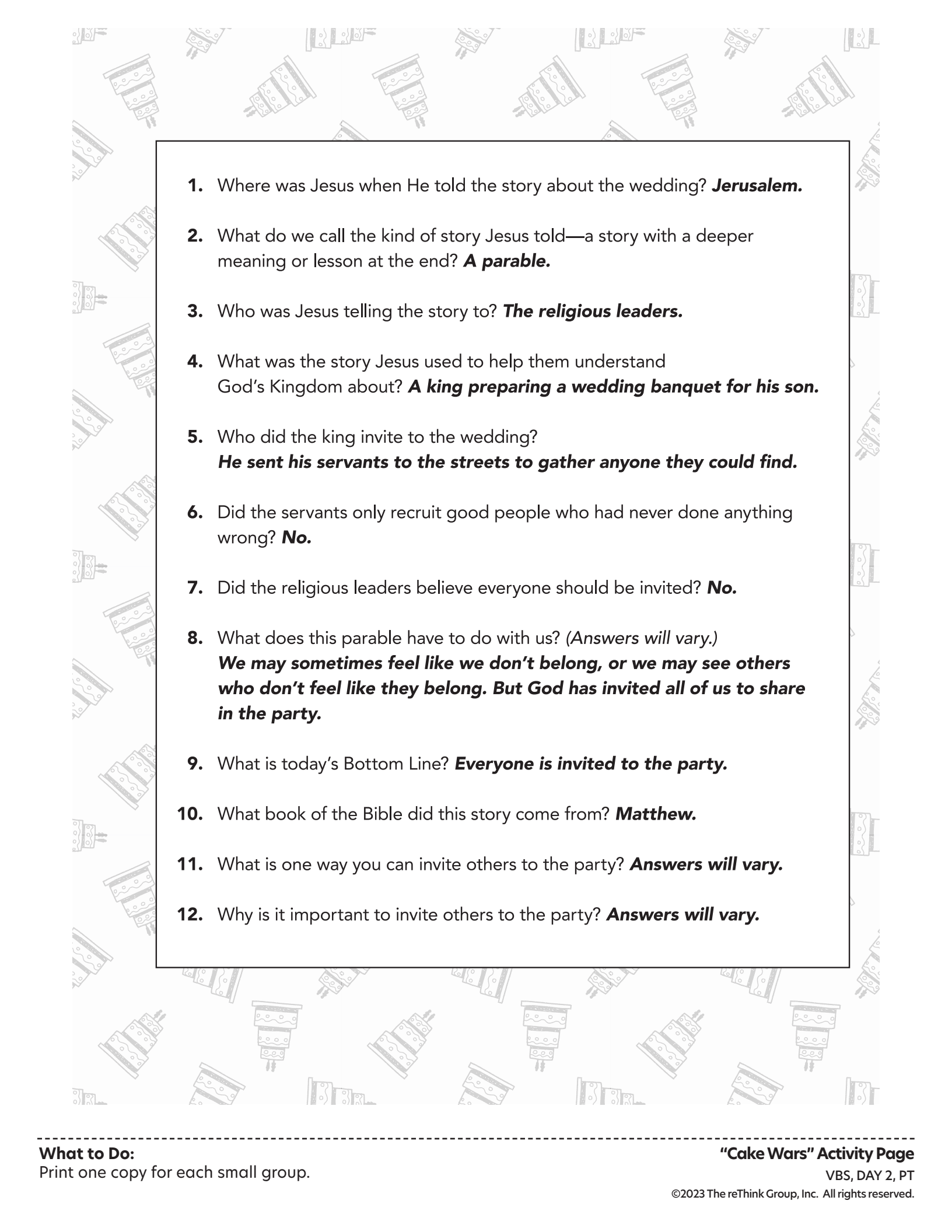
START the PARTY

				
				
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Who:	What:	When:	How:
				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				

START the PARTY

				
				
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Who:	What:	When:	How:
				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				

What to Do:
Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one invitation for each kid.

- 
- A decorative border of various cakes and pastries surrounds the central text box.
1. Where was Jesus when He told the story about the wedding? **Jerusalem.**
 2. What do we call the kind of story Jesus told—a story with a deeper meaning or lesson at the end? **A parable.**
 3. Who was Jesus telling the story to? **The religious leaders.**
 4. What was the story Jesus used to help them understand God’s Kingdom about? **A king preparing a wedding banquet for his son.**
 5. Who did the king invite to the wedding?
He sent his servants to the streets to gather anyone they could find.
 6. Did the servants only recruit good people who had never done anything wrong? **No.**
 7. Did the religious leaders believe everyone should be invited? **No.**
 8. What does this parable have to do with us? *(Answers will vary.)*
We may sometimes feel like we don’t belong, or we may see others who don’t feel like they belong. But God has invited all of us to share in the party.
 9. What is today’s Bottom Line? **Everyone is invited to the party.**
 10. What book of the Bible did this story come from? **Matthew.**
 11. What is one way you can invite others to the party? **Answers will vary.**
 12. Why is it important to invite others to the party? **Answers will vary.**

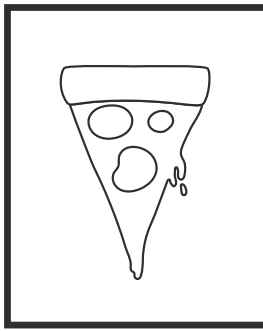
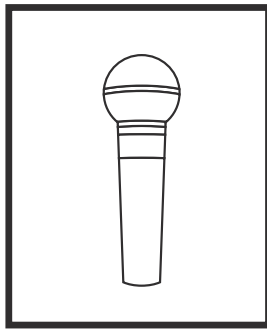
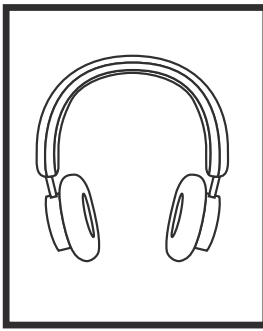
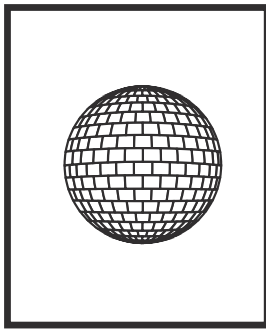
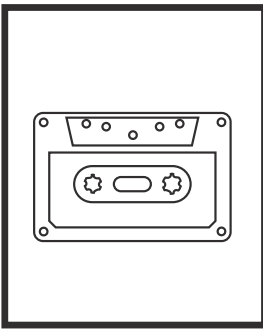
What to Do:

Print one copy for each small group.

“Cake Wars” Activity Page

VBS, DAY 2, PT

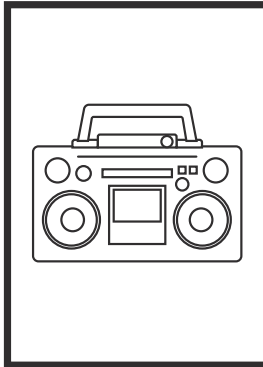
©2023 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.



Instructions: Look up and read each verse listed below, and answer the question that goes with it.

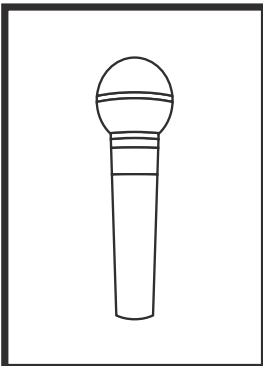
Romans 12:5

Even though we are all different people, in Christ we are _____ .



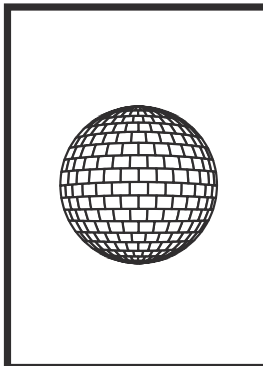
Luke 18:16

Jesus invited _____ to come to him.



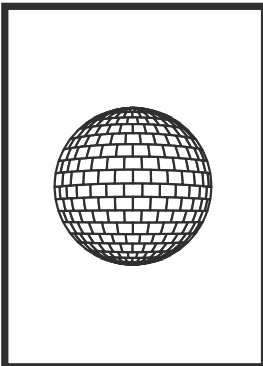
Ephesians 2:19

When we are part of God's family, we are no longer _____ .



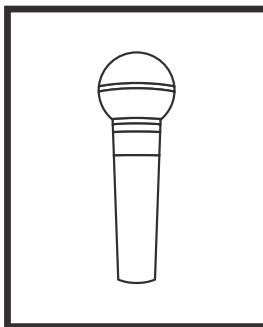
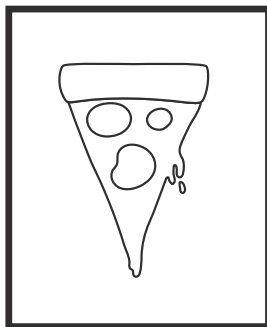
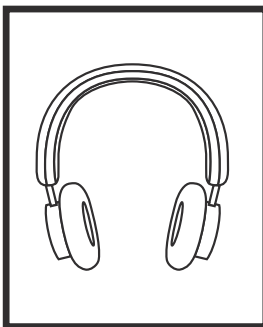
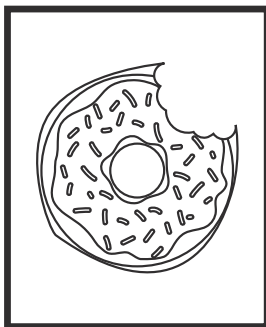
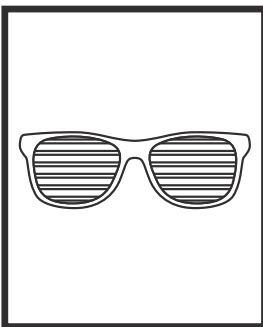
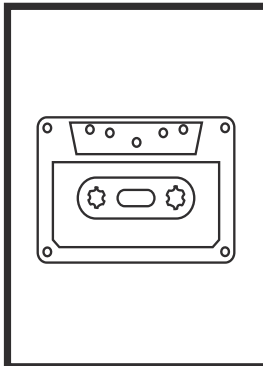
1 John 3:1

Because God has given us amazing _____ , we are His children.



Acts 2:28

When we are with God, we can be filled with _____ .





**Everyone is invited
to the party.**



**Everyone is invited
to the party.**



**Everyone is invited
to the party.**



**Everyone is invited
to the party.**

What to Do:
Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one card for each kid.

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Cone-shaped party hats, plastic shower cap, shaving cream, pom-poms, paper towels

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask for a volunteer who isn't opposed to getting a little messy, and invite them to stand with you in front of the group.
- Carefully secure the plastic shower cap over their head (including hair), and strap the party hat over the shower cap on top of their head.
- Rub shaving cream on the outside of the party hat, covering as much of it as possible. Use paper towels to clean up.
- Ask the rest of the kids to think of examples of good news they've celebrated in their own lives or in the lives of others.
 - For example: winning a softball tournament, finally getting their first cell phone, a family member finding out they are cancer free, etc.
- Each time a kid shares an example, give them a pom-pom to toss at the party hat so it sticks to the shaving cream.
- Continue taking turns to give everyone plenty of opportunities to share, as time allows.
- When finished, remove the party hat and shower cap from the volunteer's head, and invite them to sit down with the rest of the group. Provide paper towels to clean up, if needed.
- Ask the following questions, and allow time for discussion:
 - What's the best news you've ever heard?
 - Have you ever felt like the younger son who was forgiven?
 - Have you ever felt like the older son who didn't think his brother deserved a celebration?
- Remind kids that in the parable Jesus told, the son who was welcomed home was able to celebrate the good news of unconditional love and forgiveness. The older son felt jealous because he hadn't done anything wrong, and yet the party was for his brother, who messed up. But the father was celebrating the good news of having both of his sons being home. We should remember that no matter what, we can always join the party and celebrate the good news of what Jesus did for all of us!
- Be open to any kids in your group that may have questions about what Jesus did on the cross and what it means to have a relationship with Him. Follow your church's protocol as it pertains to facilitating conversations with kids about faith and salvation.
- *Option: For a less messy version of this game, omit the shaving cream and shower cap. Instead, you can have the volunteer hold the party hat upside down on top of their head, and kids can toss the pom-pom balls into the hat.*

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Jesus' Parable of
the Lost Son**
Luke 15:11-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate the good news.

KEY QUESTION

**What's the best news
you've ever heard?**

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Jesus' Parable of
the Lost Son**
Luke 15:11-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate the good news.

KEY QUESTION

**What's the best news
you've ever heard?**

MEMORY VERSE

**"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."**
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Paper; pens, pencils, or markers; "Preteen Response Card" Activity Page; highlighters

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite the kids in your group to spread out and sit down.
- Hand each kid a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. If you choose to use markers, let kids share markers.
- Ask kids to share examples of reasons to throw a "Welcome Home" party.
 - For example: military deployment, buying a new house, coming home from the hospital after having a baby, kid coming home from college, etc.
- Ask kids to think of what they would want their "Welcome Home" party to look like if they ever had one, and tell them to draw a picture of it on their papers.
 - They may want to draw things like their favorite foods, guests they would invite, games they would want to play, etc. Encourage them to be creative and come up with their own, unique ideas.
- When everyone has finished their drawings, give each kid in the group a chance to share what they drew and explain their perfect "Welcome Home" party.
- After everyone has had a turn to share, ask the following questions:
 - Who does the father symbolize in the Parable of the Lost Son? (God)
 - What was the most important gift the father gave the son? (*forgiveness*)
 - In the story, forgiveness led to a "Welcome Home" party for the son. What does forgiveness lead to for us? (*a relationship with God that will last forever*)
 - Have you ever experienced God's forgiveness?
- **[Make It Personal] Share how you have experienced God's forgiveness in your own life. If you feel comfortable, explain how Jesus' sacrifice on the cross has changed your life forever.**
- Give each kid a "Response Card" Activity Page.
 - Talk about how God loves us and gave Jesus for us. Talk about how Jesus lived a perfect life and died so we could have a relationship with God that lasts forever.
 - Give each kid a card from the "Preteen Response Card" Activity Page.
 - Give kids time to read through each statement on the card.
 - Set out the highlighters.
 - As you read through each statement again, invite kids to highlight the statement if it matches how they feel. Don't pressure kids to highlight any statement. They can also simply highlight some of the artwork on the card.
 - When done, ask kids to flip their cards over to write their names on the back and to write down any questions they have about following Jesus.

NOTE: For kids who have questions or seem ready to take a step of faith, follow your church's plan and policy about introducing kids to salvation. If you know a kid's parents are believers and would want to be part of the moment when their child takes a step of faith, be sure to follow up with that family and give them the chance to have this conversation themselves.

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

***One of the most impactful ways to connect with preteens is to have a conversation that gives them the safe space to process what they're learning and thinking about. If you don't have time to do all of the activities provided, we recommend that you replace either the "Bible Story Extension" or "Take a Snapshot" activity with a time of discussion, using any of the questions listed below.*

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Parable of
the Lost Son
Luke 15:11-32

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- What's the best news you've ever heard?
- How can you be happy for someone else, even when you don't feel like they deserve a celebration?
- What are some ways we can celebrate the good news?
- Have you ever made a mistake and had to ask for forgiveness?
- How do you feel when someone forgives you?
- Do you feel like you deserve God's forgiveness?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate the good news.

KEY QUESTION

What's the best news
you've ever heard?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you."
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, prepared beach ball

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Acts 2:28 using the Bible

Navigation Tips from Day 1.

- Choose one kid to read the verse aloud.
- Invite your team to spread out and stand in a circle.
- Toss the beach ball to a kid in the circle, and tell them to find the first word of Acts 2:28 on the ball. They should say that word out loud and then toss the ball to anyone else in the circle.
- Whoever catches the ball should find the next word in Acts 2:28, and say it out loud. They should then toss the ball to someone else in the circle.
- Continue until every word of the verse has been said, including the reference.
- When it comes to the word “joy” in the verse, direct the kid who has the ball to quickly go to the center of the circle and do their favorite dance move before tossing it to the next person.
- Play several rounds as time allows.
- Give kids a chance to say the verse from memory if they are able.
- Remind kids that there is much fun to be had in celebrating the good news of Jesus! When we follow Him, we can have lives full of joy!

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Parable of the Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate the good news.

KEY QUESTION

What's the best news
you've ever heard?

MEMORY VERSE

“You always show me the path
that leads to life. You will fill me
with joy when I am with you.”

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (main piece and microphone add-on); *Optional:* "Microphone Preteen" Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid their sandwich bag from the previous day containing their "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains." Give each kid today's microphone add-on. (If you're not purchasing the keychains, you can simply use the "Microphone Preteen" Activity Page as described.)
- Remind kids what you discussed previously about prayer.
 - *Praying is having a conversation with God any time we want. We don't have to use special words. We don't have to wait until certain times of the day. We can tell God anything any time! God cares about what's going on in our lives.*
- Explain that today's symbol can be a reminder that we should [Bottom Line] celebrate the good news. Ask kids to share some ways they can celebrate the good news about Jesus and some ways they can share that good news with others.
- Let kids know when they see the microphone symbol, it can remind them to incorporate words from a worship song or verses from the Bible into their prayers.
- If your church is singing "Start the Party" this week, consider the following prayer as an example (or come up with one based on a familiar song to your group):
 - *Dear God, thank You that we can celebrate because Jesus' love is for everyone. Help us to shine Your light today so we can spread the news. Thank You for always being with us.*
- Ask kids to share what their favorite worship songs are.
- Say a prayer for your group.

NOTE: Return each kid's keychain and Activity Page to the sandwich bag with their name on it (or create one for those recently joined the group.) Collect each bag and set aside for the next day.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Parable of the Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate the good news.

KEY QUESTION

What's the best news you've ever heard?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."

Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

TRAVEL TIME

As you travel to the next track, use the following questions to keep the conversation going and to keep kids thinking about what they're learning!

- Do you prefer to be surprised or know ahead of time, so you can be prepared?
- What's your favorite song?

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Prepare ahead of time for Small Group Rotation for VBS:

1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Cone-shaped party hat; one for each small group
- Plastic shower cap; one for each small group
- Shaving cream; one can for each small group
- Colorful pom-pom balls; one package for each small group
- Paper towels; 10-15 squares for each small group

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Preteen Response Card" Activity Page and cut apart; one card for each kid
- Paper; one piece for each kid
- Pens or pencils; one for each kid
- Highlighters (in a variety of colors); enough for the small group to share
- *Optional:* Markers; enough for the small group to share

3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles; one for each kid

- Beach ball (if possible, a disco beach ball like [this](#)); one for each small group
- *Before group time, use a permanent marker to write the words to Acts 2:28, NIV scattered all over the ball in a random order.*

5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER



[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application
















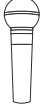
WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (from previous day and microphone add-on); one for each kid
- *Optional:* Print and cut apart "Microphone Preteen" Activity Page; one card for each kid

NOTE: Kids will be adding to the "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" each day. Be prepared to pass out, collect, and store their keychains in a sandwich bag with their name on it each day.

				
	<p>This is the first time I've heard about what it means to follow Jesus.</p> <p>I still have questions about what it means to follow Jesus and want to know more.</p> <p>I would like to talk with someone about taking a next step to put my faith in Jesus.</p> <p>I have already put my faith in Jesus, but I want to know more about following Him.</p>			
				
				
				

				
	<p>This is the first time I've heard about what it means to follow Jesus.</p> <p>I still have questions about what it means to follow Jesus and want to know more.</p> <p>I would like to talk with someone about taking a next step to put my faith in Jesus.</p> <p>I have already put my faith in Jesus, but I want to know more about following Him.</p>			
				
				
				

				
	<p>This is the first time I've heard about what it means to follow Jesus.</p> <p>I still have questions about what it means to follow Jesus and want to know more.</p> <p>I would like to talk with someone about taking a next step to put my faith in Jesus.</p> <p>I have already put my faith in Jesus, but I want to know more about following Him.</p>			
				
				
				

				
	<p>This is the first time I've heard about what it means to follow Jesus.</p> <p>I still have questions about what it means to follow Jesus and want to know more.</p> <p>I would like to talk with someone about taking a next step to put my faith in Jesus.</p> <p>I have already put my faith in Jesus, but I want to know more about following Him.</p>			
				
				
				

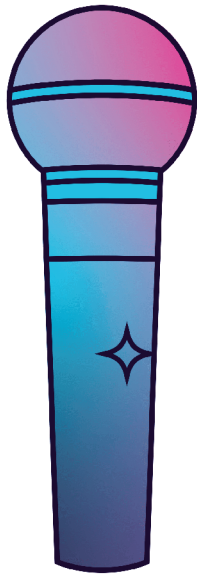
What to Do:

Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one card for each kid.

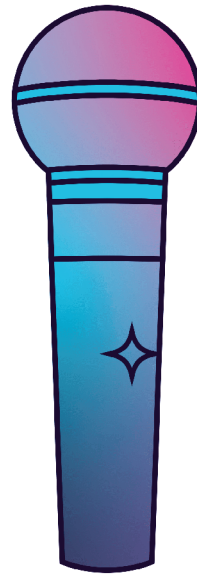
"Preteen Response Card" Activity Page

VBS, DAY 3, PT

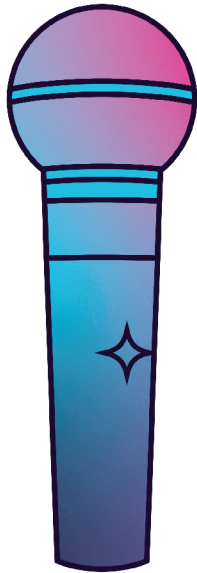
©2023 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.



**Celebrate the
good news.**



**Celebrate the
good news.**



**Celebrate the
good news.**



**Celebrate the
good news.**

What to Do:
Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one card for each kid.

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Balloon, light bulb; *Optional:* cardboard box, piece of wool

WHAT YOU DO:

- Choose a volunteer who can blow up a balloon.
 - Hand them the balloon. Ask them to blow it up and tie it before returning it to you.
- Choose another volunteer who doesn't mind getting their hair messed up.
 - Ask for permission to rub the balloon on their hair, and then do it long enough to build up some static electricity.
 - *Optional: Rubbing the balloon on clothing or a piece of wool will also generate static electricity, if preferred.*
- NOTE: The rest of the activity will work best with dim lighting.
 - If you are in a place where you can turn off the lights, switch them off or dim them.
 - If you are not in a place where the lights can be turned off, set out a large cardboard box.
- Choose another volunteer to hold the light bulb.
- Wave the balloon back and forth directly over the light bulb in a quick motion.
 - The static electricity that the balloon is carrying should cause the light bulb to flicker on as you wave it.
 - If you are not in a place where the lights can be turned off, let kids take turns looking inside the cardboard box as you wave the balloon over the lightbulb the volunteer is holding inside the box.
- Repeat the experiment, if time allows, for other kids to try it.
- Explain that if we are going to be the light of the world, as Jesus asked of us, it requires action on our part. We cannot expect to shine Jesus' light and share His love with others if we aren't willing to be party starters!
- Ask: What can you do to "shine your light"?

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

You Are the Light of the World
Matthew 5:14-16

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can be a party starter.

KEY QUESTION

How can YOU start the party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

You Are the Light of the World
Matthew 5:14-16

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can be a party starter.

KEY QUESTION

How can YOU start the party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated.



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Glow Party Game" Activity Page, cones or two-liter bottles, glow necklaces

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into two teams and direct each team to form a line on one side of your group space.
- Arrange the prepared cones or bottles on the other end of your group space.
 - Line the cones or bottles up in number order, single file, across from each team so that the "3" is furthest away from the kids and the "1" is closest, forming two identical lines of cones or bottles across from both teams.
- Hand the first kid in each line a glow necklace.
- Explain they will toss the glow necklace and try to make it land around one of the cones or bottles.
 - If they don't make it onto a cone or bottle, or if they make it onto the opposite team's cone or bottle, they will go to the end of the line.
 - If the necklace lands on a cone, you will ask them a question from the "Glow Party Game" Activity Page that coincides with the number on the cone. (Explain that the number indicates the level of difficulty for their question.)
- If they get the answer right, their team gets the number of points according to that cone.
- If they get the answer wrong, their team get no points, and the question can be used again for another turn.
- Continue playing in this way until all questions have been asked. Whichever team has the most points at the end is the winner!
- Invite kids to sit down. Ask the following questions:
 - What does it actually mean to start the party?
 - Who in your life can you start the party with?
 - How can you start the party with people who you don't know or who may be different than you? (ie: a new kid at school or someone who needs to feel included)
- Hand each kid two glow necklaces. Explain that they can keep one for themselves. But they can use the other to give to a friend when they invite them to do something. Challenge your group to think about this as they go through the rest of their summer. Remind them how important it is to love ALL people, and one way we can do that is to invite people into our world who aren't typically included.

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

You Are the Light of the World
Matthew 5:14-16

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can be a party starter.

KEY QUESTION

How can YOU start the party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."
Acts 2:28, NIRV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

***One of the most impactful ways to connect with preteens is to have a conversation that gives them the safe space to process what they're learning and thinking about. If you don't have time to do all of the activities provided, we recommend that you replace either the "Bible Story Extension" or "Take a Snapshot" activity with a time of discussion, using any of the questions listed below.*

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- Is it challenging to invite people who are different from you? Why or why not?
- How can YOU start the party?
- Who can help you start the party?
- Why did Jesus give us the responsibility of shining His light?
- How can Matthew 5:14-16 provide you with a sense of purpose?

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Party Code" NIV Activity Page, "Party Code" NIV Leader Guide Activity Page, Bibles, pens or pencils

WHAT YOU DO:

- Put kids in pairs, and allow them to spread out to sit with their partner in the group space.
- Hand each pair a Bible, a copy of the "Party Code" Activity Page, and a pen or pencil.
- Explain that they should work together to look up the verses on the "Party Code" Activity Page and fill in each blank with the correct word(s) from the verse.
 - Each of the answers will have letters designated that are supposed to be used to solve the code at the bottom of the page.
- Give the group time to complete the page.
 - See if they can solve the puzzle at the bottom on their own, but if needed, explain that the number underneath the blank indicates the letter's placement in the blanks at the bottom.
- Bring everyone back together and invite different kids to share their answers.
- Invite kids to say the secret message together: BE A PARTY STARTER!
- Ask this question:
 - What does it take to start the party?
- Encourage kids to remember that the Bible can help guide us throughout the rest of our lives. God's Word is here for us to have all the time. It can encourage us and point us in the right direction.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

You Are the Light of the World
Matthew 5:14-16

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can be a party starter.

KEY QUESTION

How can YOU start the party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (main piece and disco ball add-on); *Optional: "Disco Ball Preteen" Activity Page*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid their sandwich bag from the previous day containing their "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains." Give each kid today's disco ball add-on. (If you're not purchasing the keychains, use the "Disco Ball Preteen" Activity Page in the same way.)
- Remind kids what you discussed previously about prayer.
 - *Praying is having a conversation with God any time we want. We don't have to use special words. We don't have to wait until certain times of the day. We can tell God anything any time! God cares about what's going on in our lives.*
- Explain that today's symbol can be a reminder that [Bottom Line] you can be a party starter. When they see it, they can ask God to help them shine their light to people around them! Just like a disco ball reflects light all around a room, they can reflect the light of Jesus wherever they are.
- Ask: How can YOU start the party?
- Say a prayer for your group, making sure to pray for each individual kid. Ask God to use them to start the party after VBS is over.

NOTE: Return each kid's keychain and Activity Page to the sandwich bag with their name on it (or create one for those who recently joined the group.) Collect each bag and set aside for them to take home later.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

You Are the Light of the World
Matthew 5:14-16

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can be a party starter.

KEY QUESTION

How can YOU start the party?

MEMORY VERSE

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you."
Acts 2:28, NIV

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

TRAVEL TIME

As you travel to the next track, use the following questions to keep the conversation going and to keep kids thinking about what they're learning!

- What's your favorite dance move?
- What have you loved most about our time together?

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Prepare ahead of time for Small Group Rotation for VBS:

1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Balloon; one for each small group
- Light bulb; one for each small group
- Optional: Large cardboard box
- Optional: Piece of wool
- Before group time, check out these visual directions (and video) if needed:
 - playingwithrain.com/light-bulb-balloon-experiment/

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Glow Party Game" Activity Page; one for each small group
- Cones or two-liter bottles (or filled-up water bottles from Day 4); six for each small group
 - Before group time, number two sets of cones or bottles with "1," "2," and "3." Use a permanent marker directly on the cone or bottle or attach a strip of painter's tape first.
- Glow necklaces; two for each kid plus two more

3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print the "Party Code NIRV" Activity Page; one for every two kids
- Print the "Party Code NIRV Leader Guide" Activity Page; one for each small group
- Bibles; one for every two kids
- Pens or pencils; one for every two kids

5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" (from previous day and disco ball add-on); one for each kid
- Optional: Print and cut apart "Disco Ball Preteen" Activity Page; one card for each kid

NOTE: Kids have been adding to the "Start the Party Prayer Time Keychains" each day. Be prepared to pass out, collect, and store their keychains in a sandwich bag with their name on it and send home.

1: Jesus told his disciples that we should not put a lamp under a what?

A bowl

1: How can we shine our light? Answers will vary but may include:

Helping others and treating others the way we want to be treated.

1: Should we only shine our light to our closest friends and family? **No**

1: Show us your favorite dance move! **Accept any dance move.**

2: What did Jesus say about a town built on a hill? **It can't be hidden.**

2: Why should we let our light shine before others?

They'll see the good things you do and bring glory to God.

2: What's today's Bottom Line? **You can be a party starter.**

2: What book of the Bible did today's story come from? **Matthew**

3: When Jesus was talking about being the light of the world, where was He and what was He doing? **Sitting on a mountainside, teaching people about how God wants us to live**

3: What does joy have to do with shining our light? **When we live a life of joy, we shine the light of Jesus to those around us.**

3: How can you be a party starter? **Answers will vary but may include anything about loving others, telling people about Jesus, inviting friends to church, etc.**

3: Say Acts 2:28 from memory:

"You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you." – Acts: 2:28, NIV

What to Do:

Print one copy for each small group.

"Glow Party Game" Activity Page

VBS, DAY 5, PT

©2023 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.



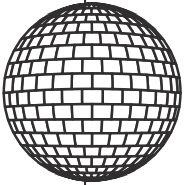
1. Look up **John 8:12**.

Jesus is the light of the _____.



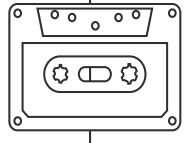
2. Look up **Ephesians 5:9**.

The light _____ good.



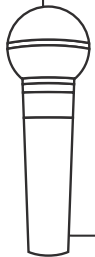
3. Look up **Acts 13:47**.

The Lord has _____ us to be light and _____ to the whole earth.



4. Look up **Psalms 97:11**.

Good comes to those who do _____.
Joy comes with an _____ heart.



5. Look up **Acts 2:28**.

Following Jesus' path leads to _____.
We can be filled with _____ when we are with Him.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 !

What to Do:

Print one copy for every two kids.



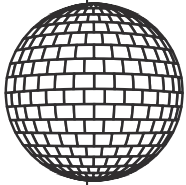
1. Look up **John 8:12**.

Jesus is the light of the WORLD.



2. Look up **Ephesians 5:9**.

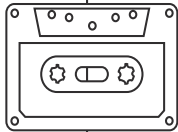
The light PRODUCES good.



3. Look up **Acts 13:47**.

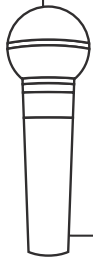
The Lord has COMMANDED us to be light and
BRING SALVATION to the whole earth.

4. Look up **Psalms 97:11**.



Good comes to those who do RIGHT.
Joy comes with an HONEST heart.

5. Look up **Acts 2:28**.



Following Jesus' path leads to LIFE.
We can be filled with JOY when we are with Him.

BE A PARTY STARTER!

What to Do:

Print one copy for each small group.



**You can be
a party starter.**



**You can be
a party starter.**



**You can be
a party starter.**



**You can be
a party starter.**

What to Do:
Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one card for each kid.

252 KIDS

252 KIDS ACTIVITY STAMP DESCRIPTIONS



MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding