### LEADER GUIDE ELEMENTARY · QUARTER 4





### **QUARTER 4**

### LEADER GUIDE









### Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:

#### Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

**Experiential** What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

#### Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.



Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.



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### Visit our website: group.com/SimplyLoved



#### Real. Bold. Love.

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## Welcome to Simply Loved!

Welcome to Simply Loved Sunday school—where you and your team simply experience God's love and share it with kids.

"Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us."

(1 John 4:11-12)

With Simply Loved, you, your helpers (we call them Crew Guides), and your kids explore a foundational, Jesus-centered journey through God's story of Love. We believe that faith isn't a subject to be mastered; it's a relationship to grow! So every single component of Simply Loved sets the stage for you to more intentionally grow friendship with Jesus and each other. Keep reading to find out what that'll look like in *your* classroom.

Join our Simply Loved Facebook community to learn from children's ministry leaders just like you!

facebook.com/groups/simplylovedteacherslounge

### How It Works

### **Simple Volunteer Roles**

You'll need the following volunteers:

**Leader:** (That's you!) The one person in each teaching space who has looked over the lesson and will direct all activities. The glance-able, structured lessons in this guide allow leaders to spend more time interacting with kids and less time glued to scripts.

**Crew Guide:** A helper who simply shows up and participates with kids. Crew Guides don't need to be Bible experts—simply people who love Jesus and kids!

### A Simple, Flexible Lesson!

### **Simple Prep for Leaders**

Prepare your heart and pray for the kids before each lesson. Plus, check off supplies as you gather them!

### **Opening Options**

Choose from two opening activities—both introduce the day's Bible Point. Each unit creatively uses the same supplies all four weeks. That means you'll need to gather Opening Options supplies only once a month! If you'd like, set up these Opening Options as activity stations in your room. Simply cut apart the cards you'll find in each lesson and place one at each station to guide activity and conversation. Or, do one or both activities with all kids together. You choose!



### Sing & Play

Gather kids to sing and discover the Bible Point. Plus, a Bible Memory Buddy connects the Bible verse to kids' everyday lives.



### **Bible Discovery**

We've given you lots of options, but don't skip this part! It's the "meat" of the lesson where kids experience God's greatest gift in an interactive, hands-on way. There's no time to be bored as kids and Connect Crews follow the Leader through a memorable Bible experience. You'll read directly from the Bible throughout the Bible Discovery, so be sure to mark your place ahead of time and choose a kid-friendly translation to read from.









### **Apply-It Options**

Consider your time frame, and take your pick: a game or an activity that lets kids practice Bible skills! Each option applies the Bible Point to everyday kid life.

### **Friendship Finale**

Wrap up your lesson with a gospel-centered Jesus connection, and equip kids to continue faith conversations at home! Plus, affirm kids by name as you give each child a Bible Memory Buddy sticker at the end of each lesson.

### A Simple, Flexible Format!

### **Age-Graded Classrooms**

It's simple! You'll need one prepared leader and at least one helper (we call helpers Crew Guides) for each teaching space. We recommend having a media player handy in each space for music and each week's Bible Memory Buddy video.

### Age-Graded Classrooms With a Multi-Age Opening

It's simple! Lead the Sing & Play section with all ages together. Set up a media player in your gathering area so that when you're all together, you can sing along with music videos, introduce the Bible Point, and meet the Bible Memory Buddy! Then, disperse to age-graded classrooms for Bible Discovery, Apply-It Options, and the Friendship Finale. You'll need one prepared leader and at least one helper (we call helpers Crew Guides) for each teaching space.

### One (big or small) Room With Multi-Age Kids

It's simple! You'll need one prepared leader plus at least one helper (we call helpers Crew Guides). Ideally, you'll have one Crew Guide for every five to eight kids, but it can work with your church's volunteer-to-children ratios. We recommend having a media player handy for music and each week's Bible Memory Buddy video.



## Our Strategic Approach

There are "whys" behind every lesson component, and we want to share them with you! Here are the guiding principles behind the creation of Simply Loved Sunday school curriculum.

You may have heard	But we've found	That's why
"lt's hard to recruit volunteers."	When volunteers need less prep time, have fun, and feel like they're making a difference, they'll make serving a priority.	Simply Loved volunteer roles are important, but easy!
"Kids need to be entertained."	Kids need to be noticed and loved.	Simply Loved lessons are designed to help you listen to kids and get to know them.
"You need a lot of supplies."	You need only a few supplies used in creative ways.	Simply Loved incorporates minimal supplies each unit but uses them in innovative ways to introduce and apply the day's lesson.
"We need helpers— any warm body will do."	Helpers don't just assist. Even though they don't need to prep, they serve an important relational purpose and make a big difference in kids' lives.	Simply Loved helpers have a name and an elevated role: they're "Crew Guides"! They participate along with the kids, play a meaningful role in lessons, and make a difference by building friendships with kids.
"Kids are rarely able to remember Scripture."	Creating a visual and emotional connection to Scripture dramatically helps kids remember and understand why the Bible matters in their everyday lives.	Simply Loved incorporates kid-friendly videos featuring Bible Memory Buddies (animals God created) to help them understand Bible truths and trigger Scripture memory. And Bible Memory Buddies help discoveries stick! (wink, wink)
"Teachers are Bible experts."	Teachers are channels of friendship who help children understand and experience Jesus' love.	Simply Loved uses human relationships to communicate God's love in a tangible way. Built-in conversation starters help teachers share their personal stories and their own friendship with Jesus.
"Covering a lot of information is intimidating."	Reaching children is simple when you focus on one Bible Point.	Simply Loved repeats key Bible Points in different ways so truths sink deep. And it combines the repetition of a Bible Point with an auditory and physical response that will stick with kids long after your lesson ends.
"Success requires getting through the whole lesson."	You'll clearly communicate the key Bible Point no matter how far you get.	With Simply Loved, a palette of Bible-Point-supporting options gives you the freedom to choose what works for your kids and your time frame. So no matter how much of the lesson you complete, the Truth from God's Word shines through.
"Kids'll get bored if you repeat something they've heard before."	Kids appreciate routine and repetition when it's done in a fun way.	Simply Loved's scope and sequence intentionally repeats the Bible verse and Point for four weeks. This strategically cements Bible learning no matter how often kids attend.

### Helping Elementary Kids Become Rooted in Faith

As their Leader, you get to show elementary-age children what loving Jesus looks like! And Simply Loved will help. Simply Loved incorporates the following Age-Level Teaching Tips to create a rich environment where elementary kids grow a lasting friendship with Jesus.

### Go Deeper

As kids get older, we may be tempted to throw more Bible stories and Bible information at them. But elementary kids don't need more things to learn; they need to dig deeper into the truths they've been introduced to. That's why Simply Loved explores one Bible Point for four weeks and why open-ended questions meet kids right where they are—no matter their grade or prior knowledge of the Bible.

### Make It Fun

You know, we often differentiate between "fun" and the "meat" of our lessons. We think that if we incorporate a game or free play, then we're making time for fun. But with Simply Loved, Bible discoveries are as fun as game time, and prayers are as fun as videos!

### Keep It Simple

Kids benefit from messages that are short, sweet, and relevant to their everyday lives. That's why Simply Loved Bible lessons center around one short, simple, memorable Bible Point. Repetition cements learning, so repeating Bible truths helps kids remember them when they need it the most.

### **Build Friendships**

Friendship matters to elementary kids. So Simply Loved builds friendships by allowing time for kids to talk and get to know each other. Plus, Simply Loved encourages you to break up into smaller groups called Connect Crews. That way each child is seen and known, and when a question is asked, everyone has a chance to talk and share.

### Be Authentic

In order to build real friendships with kids, you need to let them see leaders as real people. That's why, when asking a question, Simply Loved encourages Leaders and Crew Guides to share from their own lives first and model the answer. When *you* go first, you're honestly telling kids about your own struggles and experiences—and even hard-to-reach kids will follow your lead.

### Connect to Emotion

God has wired us with emotions, and the Bible is filled with stories of real people who experienced fear, sadness, joy, doubt, fatigue, and confusion. That's why Simply Loved identifies and evokes key emotions each week. Connecting to emotion cements learning and helps elementary kids know that Jesus understands their feelings and is with them, no matter what.

### Point Out Kids' Purpose

Kids don't need to wait until they're grown up to fulfill God's purpose for their lives; they can do it right now! That's why Simply Loved intentionally incorporates time each week for Leaders to affirm and encourage kids as they grow closer to Jesus.

## Supply Closet Inventory

### **Elementary**—Quarter 4

Bible Memory Buddy posters\*

Bible Memory Buddy stickers\*

Have these items handy for some hands-on fun this quarter!

### **Program Essentials**

□ Music Video DVD\*

Buddy Video DVD\*Bible Story posters\*

□ Take-It-Home Flyers\*

media player

□ child-safe scissors

□ construction paper

pencils and pens

small paper cups

plastic cups

pompoms

colorful tape

glue sticks

□ Bibles

**Art Supplies** 

□ paper

### Odds & Ends

- □ 3 drinking glasses
- D bowl
- □ coffee filters
- □ hand cleanser
- hand towel
- metal spoon
- paper bowls
- paper towels
- pitcher
- □ robe
- □ shallow tray
- □ shaving cream
- □ sticky notes
- □ straws
- 🛛 timer
- □ tissues
- upbeat music
- □ water
- wet wipes
- whiteboard, dry-erase markers, eraser or flipchart

washable markersyarn

□ tape

### **Toys & Goodies**

- balls or small toys
- blocks
- individually wrapped snacks (optional)
- □ ping-pong balls
- □ play dough
- puzzles or another simply activity kids will enjoy
- Skittles candies (optional)



\* in your **Simply Loved Kit** 

### Take-It-Home Flyer Tips

Follow these steps to get Take-It Home Flyers off the ground effectively so they'll cruise on a direct flight home.

- 1. Follow your Simply Loved Leader Guide. The end of each elementary lesson is strategically written to incorporate these flyers.
- 2. Read the first page to your whole group of kids first. This is meant to be a quiet prayer time that intentionally connects kids to their friend Jesus.
- 3. Next, ask the "Talk Starter" question aloud, and give time for kids to discuss and pray in Connect Crews.
- 4. THEN, *and only then*, distribute Take-It-Home Flyers to kids. If you choose to forgo this strategic order, prepare to have papers whizzing by your head before you're ready for them.
- 5. Be sure to point out the challenge on the top of the folding instructions page. That'll *really* motivate kids to make sure this page gets home.
- 6. Be sure to give each helper a copy, too—not to fold for themselves, but so kids can reference the instructions once folding begins.

### Prepare for takeoff!

Help your ministry to families really take off with these specially crafted Take-It-Home Flyers. After reading each Jesus-centered flyer and talking with their Connect Crews, kids will follow the directions and fold these flyers into 3-D masterpieces!

Once home, they'll transport meaningful opportunities for Jesus-centered family fun.

Cool questions help family members tell stories about their own friendship with Jesus!

Kids and families will love these practical ways to live out faith at home.



After kids make Bible discoveries at church, families can explore more about each lesson's Bible content at home.

### Unit 1 | Week 1

### Wanted: Leader of Israel

Judges 2:6-23

## Israel Needs a Leader

**Bible Point** 

#### God is patient...even when we forget about him.

### **Purpose**

"What was I thinking?" you wonder to yourself sadly. You'd messed up, talked to God about it, and promised it wouldn't happen again. But then it does happen again. The gossip slips out of your mouth. Or the road rage kicks in. You feel horrible.

Sin has a way of coming around again and again in our lives. While it's true that God forgives us and remembers our sins no more (Hebrews 8:12), sin is and will continue to be a struggle on this side of heaven. It's as sad and frustrating as the book of Judges.

But there's good news: God is patient. He won't give up on you, even when you forget about him. Perfection isn't a requirement for teaching children God's Word. As you lead this lesson, help kids remember God's presence in their lives. Rather than leading from a place of shame or guilt, authentically show kids what living in God's forgiveness and freedom looks like.



### Prayer

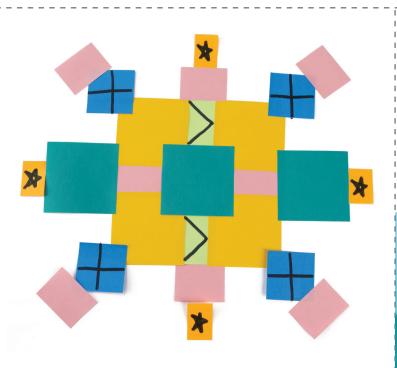
Dear God, time and again, I forget about you and your work in our world and in my life. I'm sorry. Thanks for your unfailing love and forgiveness. In Jesus' name, amen.

Opening Options	Sing & Play	Bible Discovery & Friendship Finale	Apply-It Options
<ul> <li>Option Cards*</li> <li><i>Stick to It:</i> sticky notes, markers</li> <li><i>Ping-Pong Bounce:</i> pingpong balls, cups</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>countdown video*</li> <li><i>Music Video</i> DVD*</li> <li><i>Buddy Video</i> DVD*</li> <li>Moe Bible Memory Buddy poster*</li> <li>media player</li> <li>Bible (bookmark Psalm 145:8)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>"Israel Needs a Leader" Bible Story poster*</li> <li>Moe Bible Memory Buddy stickers* (1 per child)</li> <li>Take-It-Home Flyers* (Unit 1, Week 1) (1 per child)</li> <li>Bible (bookmark Judges 2:10-12, 13-15, 18, 19)</li> <li>puzzles or another simple activity kids will enjoy (1 per Crew)</li> <li>paper</li> <li>marker</li> <li>tape</li> </ul>	<ul> <li><i>Explore More:</i> Bibles, paper towels (1 per person), washable markers, shallow tray of water</li> <li><i>Game:</i> upbeat music, media player, chairs</li> </ul>

### Prep

# **Opening Options**

Set up one—or both—of these intro activities to start your time together. Each activity connects kids to the Bible Point and to each other. Cut apart these Option Cards, and place one by each activity you choose. Crew Guides will follow the directions and build friendships with kids as they make discoveries together!



### Stick to It

Supplies: sticky notes, markers

Work together to make a pattern with sticky notes and decorate it with markers.



What's a routine, or pattern, that you repeat every day?

A pattern is something that repeats again and again. In our Bible story, God's people followed a not-so-good pattern of forgetting about God again and again. But **God is patient.** God helped his people over and over again.

### Ping-Pong Bounce

Supplies: ping-pong balls, cups

Put a cup on one side of a table. Stand across from the cup and try to toss a ping-pong ball so it bounces and lands in the cup.



Tell about a time you were way off and missed the mark.

The ping-pong ball didn't always bounce into the cup right away. But with patience and a gentle touch, you'd eventually succeed. Today we'll discover that **God is patient.** Over and over, the Israelites missed the mark, but God never left them.

# Opening

Now's a great time for Opening Options. Choose one—or both—to introduce today's Bible discoveries.



# Sing & Play

Hello and welcome! Let's begin with a song.



I'm so glad we all have a friend in God's Son, Jesus. I know he'll be with us today as we learn more about God and his Word.

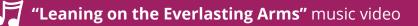
### **Bible Point**

Today we'll discover that God is patient. Every time you hear the words "God is patient," touch your chin, then move your arm forward like this (demonstrate) and say, "Thanks, God!" This motion is how you say "thank you" in sign language. Pretty cool, huh? Let's try that together.

- Touch your chin, then bring your arm forward and say, "Thanks, God!"
- Repeat several times

Repetition cements learning, so be sure to say today's Bible Point A LOT. Have fun with it! Kids will love listening for it and responding with *"Thanks, God!"* 

When we're patient, we're willing to wait. And we aren't annoyed as we wait. Instead, we're forgiving. Need an example? Hold up a Bible. Time and again in the Bible, we see examples of God being patient and gracious with his people. We'll find out more about that today. God's patience is with us, too! We can always lean on him. Let's sing about that!



Help kids transition, clean up the activities, and sit with Connect Crews. A Connect Crew is a small group of kids with one Crew Guide.

### **Supplies**

- Bible
- media player
- Music Video DVD

"No, Not One" music video

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" music video

"All That Is Good" music video

- Buddy Video DVD
   Moe Bible Memory
   Buddy video
   (Week 1)
- Moe Bible Memory Buddy poster



### **Bible Memory Buddy & Verse**

Moe the sloth is our Bible Memory Buddy! Show the Bible Memory Buddy poster. How much do you know about Moe and his sloth friends? Let's find out with a This-or-That Challenge! You'll hear two fun facts about sloths. It's up to you to decide which is true—this fact or that!

Pow far can most sloths move in a minute: 4 feet or 6 feet?

- Have everyone slowly hold up four fingers to vote for *this* (4 feet) or six fingers to vote for *that* (6 feet).
- Make a drumroll sound by patting your thighs or the floor.
- Dramatically give the answer as you slowly walk about 6 feet forward. Most sloths can move up to 6 feet in one minute. That's moving pretttty slowly. Let's find out more about Moe.
- Watch the Bible Memory Buddy video to meet Moe.

### Moe Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 1)

Show the Bible. The Bible is God's true story of love! It's a big book that's filled with lots of little books. Let's say the verse together. I'll say a line, and then you repeat it after me.

"The Lord is merciful (extend one arm) and compassionate, (extend other arm) slow to get angry (slowly move palms down) and filled with unfailing love." (move arms up) (Psalm 145:8)

**God is patient.** (*Thanks, God!*) **All good things come from God. Let's celebrate** with another song.



 Moe
 The Lord is compassionate compassionate compassionate so and filled with unclaining low.

 (Pacher Method)
 (Pacher Method)

# Bible Discovery

### **Circle Up & Connect**

Let's circle up and spend a little time simply getting to know each other in smaller groups called Connect Crews.

- Arrange kids into Connect Crews with one helper—or Crew Guide—per group.
- Invite kids to sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Connect Crews.
- Have kids give their Crew Guides an elbow bump.
- Have kids take turns saying their names and answering this question. Crew Guides go first.
- When have you forgotten something?

### The Heart of the Matter

It's so easy to forget stuff, and it can be easy to forget about God, too. I'm going to tell you a story about how patient God is—even with the forgetful people he loves.

Today's Bible story begins with God's people, the Israelites, finally settling into the land God had promised to give them. God had made the promise a long time before, and it had finally happened. All the people moved into their new homes and got comfy. I think we should do that here in our space, too!

Have Connect Crews each choose a place in the room to be their "land" and sit in a circle.

Welcome to your new land! Now that you're settled, why not have some fun? Here's something for your Crew to do.

Give each Crew a puzzle or another simple activity to have fun with together. Interrupt everyone after three to five minutes. **Wow! I got distracted and forgot to keep telling you the Bible story. We still have a lot to discover about God today. Let's clean up and get going.** Have everyone clean up the activities and put them to the side.

What do you think would have happened if there was no leader here to steer us back toward our Bible story? Invite responses from the whole group.

We needed a leader to guide us toward God or we may have forgotten all about him and done our own thing today. That can happen in our everyday lives, too. Let's talk in our Connect Crews.

- Why is it sometimes easy to forget about God?
- **?** Tell about a good leader in your life who helps you follow God. Invite Crew Guides to share first.
- Crew Guides give thumbs-up when everyone has shared.

### **Supplies**

- Bible
- "Israel Needs a Leader" Bible Story poster
- puzzles or another simple activity kids will enjoy (1 per Crew)
- paper
- marker
- tape

We call helpers Crew Guides. If you lead a small class, you can be the Crew Guide. Simply circle up with the kids. If you have helpers, form smaller groups so each child can be known—and so kids can befriend your helpers, too!



As you invite responses from the whole group, be sure to repeat back what's said to confirm you understand and so everyone in the room can hear.

# Keep your Sundays simple-and your kids delighted-with Simply Loved.

This Elementary Leader Guide provides a step-by-step, simple-to-follow plan for Simply Loved Quarter 4 lessons. Featuring memorable, hands-on, friendship-focused activities, each lesson easily adapts to your unique Sunday school format while guiding kids on a foundational, Jesus-centered journey through God's story of love.

### This quarter's Bible discoveries:

Unit/Week	Unit Theme	Lesson Theme
Unit 1/Week 1		Israel Needs a Leader (Judges 2:6-23)
		Focus: God is patienteven when we forget about him.
Unit 1/Week 2		Deborah Becomes Israel's Judge (Judges 4:1-16)
	Wanted: Leader	Focus: God is patientand helps us know what to do.
Unit 1/Week 3	Unit 1/Week 3 of Israel	God Talks to Gideon (Judges 6)
		Focus: God is patientand sees our potential.
Unit 1/Week 4		Gideon Leads God's People (Judges 7)
office in Week 4		Focus: God is patientand we can trust him.
Unit/Week	Unit Theme	Lesson Theme
Lipit 2/Maak 1	Unit 2/Week 1 Unit 2/Week 2 Unit 2/Week 3 Unit 2/Week 4	God Provides for Ruth (Ruth 1–4)
Unit 2/Week 1		Focus: God knows what we needwhen we feel alone.
Unit 2/Week 2		God Answers Hannah's Prayer (1 Samuel 1:1–2:11)
Offit 2/ Week 2		Focus: God knows what we needwhen we're hurting.
Unit 2/Week 3		God Speaks to Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1–4:1)
Offic 2/ Week 5		Focus: God knows what we needand speaks to us.
		God Gives His People a King (1 Samuel 8–10:25)
Unit 2/Week 4		Focus: God knows what we needeven when we try to solve our own problems.
Unit/Week	Unit Theme	Lesson Theme
		Jesus Is Tempted (Matthew 4:1-11)
Unit 3/Week 1		Focus: Jesus shows us how to liveand believe God's Word.
Unit 3/Week 2	Follow Jesus	Jesus Washes His Friends' Feet (John 13:1-20)
Offit 5/Week 2		Focus: Jesus shows us how to liveand lead others.
Unit 3/Week 3		Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray (Matthew 6:5-18)
OTHE STWEER S		Focus: Jesus shows us how to liveand talk with God.
		The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
Unit 3/Week 4		Focus: Jesus shows us how to liveand love others.

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