

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

WEEK 4

ACTIVITY | Final Countdown

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Divide the kids into their weekly teams, and choose one person from each team to come to the center of the room for a sports version of, "Rock, Paper, Scissors." They must do an exercise pose at the count of three: A squat for rock, a forward lunge for scissors, and a jumping jack for paper. Play until only one person remains. That group will earn 100 challenge points. Play the song, "[The Final Countdown](#)," during the game.*
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *When someone loses, have that person join the winner -- now they are a team! When they go up against someone new, they need to decide on their move as a group, and everyone does the action at the same time. Whoever wins gets everyone on the opposing team on their team! Continue until one large team wins.*

BIG IDEA

Jesus understands my challenges.

BIBLE

Jesus Predicts His Death: Mark 8:31-38;
(Psalm 22:23-31)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT?

MUSIC | "Born to Run"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play "[Born to Run](#)" by SEU Worship. This week, after playing the song once, ask if anyone knows the words to the song by heart. Invite them up to the front to sing what they know. Or play and pause the song intermittently, asking kids to sing the word or phrase that follows each pause.

ACTIVITY | See Like a Referee

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Wrap a whistle in layers and layers of plastic wrap. Form a ball of plastic wrap around the whistle until you can no longer see what is in the middle. Create one of these for each group. The group must pass the ball around, each kid taking one layer of plastic wrap off and then passing it to the next. The team who gets to the whistle and blows it first will win the final 100 challenge points!
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** Tell each preteen group how many layers of wrap each item needs, and have them do the wrapping for you. Then they can pass off their finished product to another team, then begin play as instructed.
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** If you have kids who have mobility concerns, designate them to be the ones to blow the whistle. Another way to modify this activity might be to use aluminum foil, which might be easier to peel off than plastic wrap.
- Referees are often in great shape, observant, have strong character, and can make decisions quickly because they can see the game from a different point of view.
- When Jesus sees your challenges, Jesus sees them from a big picture point of view.

SO WHAT?

- I can't believe we've reached our last week of "Challenge Accepted!" We have learned that no matter what kinds of challenges we face, Jesus takes care of us, shows us the truth, and helps us when we are tempted.
- In today's Bible story, we find that Jesus faced a very serious challenge, and it involved having to make a prediction. **Do you know what a prediction is? Have you ever made a bet or tried to guess who would win a game?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have two adult volunteers square off in a head-to-head competition (e.g., arm wrestling, free throws, jumprope, etc.). Have kids try to predict who will win by standing on the same side of the room as that person. Have kids cheer for their pick!*
- Good job to everyone who made the correct prediction! You see, Jesus also had to make a prediction, but it involved himself. Jesus predicted when he was going to die.
- *[Read Mark 8: 31-33.]* **How do you think you would have reacted if you were Peter or any of the other disciples?** Jesus just told his closest friends that he was going to die soon. Jesus knew it needed to happen to save the world from sin, but his friends did not know this. They didn't understand why Jesus would choose this.
- *[Read Mark 8:34-38.]* Jesus reminds his friends that anyone who loves God has to do what Jesus was doing – which is to let go of our own way and follow God's way. It must have been so difficult for Jesus to accept that he was going to die, especially because he really didn't deserve to. But he was going to obey God because that was the way God was going to save everyone from sin. Jesus accepted the challenge.
- We have to accept the challenge, too. It's not always easy to choose to do the things God wants us to do. And trust me, Jesus gets it. Jesus knows how hard it is. But we know, like Jesus did, that God's ways are always better – even if we can't see it just yet.

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus understands my challenges.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Like last week, have two volunteers hold up a giant banner with the words "Big Idea" written across it. Choose as many kids as there are words in the Big Idea and give each of them a piece of paper with their word written on it! Send them running through the banner one*

at a time to reveal this week's Big Idea! (Be sure to use paper that's easy to tear and/or perforate the paper a bit in the middle to make sure kids can tear through.)

- Everyone, let's look at this Big Idea banner while clapping and cheering as loudly as we can.
- Chant the Big Idea with me: **Jesus understands my challenges! Jesus understands my challenges! Jesus understands my challenges!**

VIDEO | Challenge Accepted, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's [teaching video](#).

ACTIVITY | Challenge Accepted or Rejected?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give one volunteer from each group a challenge from your prepared list. Ask the kids whether they accept or reject this challenge. If they accept, they must say "Challenge accepted!" and do the task. When they complete the task, they earn a challenge point for their group!
- **List of Example Challenges:**
 - Fifteen-Second Mannequin Challenge
 - Try Not to Laugh Challenge
 - Dance Routine Challenge
 - Impersonate a Voice Challenge
 - Twenty-Second Don't Blink Challenge
 - Guess The Lyrics Challenge
 - Say the Alphabet Backward Challenge
 - Eyes Closed Selfie Challenge
 - Try Not to Sing Challenge
 - Name Five Disney Princesses Challenge
- There are many challenges we take on because we know we can handle them. But we don't accept every challenge that comes our way. Sometimes, challenges we didn't ask for happen and they can be very difficult to manage.

- However, no matter what it is, know that Jesus gets it. And Jesus will help you through it. Remember, **Jesus understands our challenges.**

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 22:23-31

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Psalm 22:23-31 . Ask the kids which verse is their favorite and why. Give each kid a [blank bookmark](#) (or make your own out of cardstock) and some drawing supplies. Instruct them to write down the verse they chose and decorate it. Provide [tassels](#) or yarn to loop through the top of the bookmark.*
- **Do you know anyone who might be going through a challenging time?** Give them this bookmark to remind them that Jesus understands and will help them in their challenges. If you don't know of anyone right now, keep this bookmark in your Bible so that you can encourage someone in the future.

NOW WHAT?

REFLECTION | Ping Pong Problems

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Provide a ping pong ball for each kid and four different buckets for the kids to choose from. Label each bucket with: "Challenges at School", "Challenges at Home", "Challenges with a Friend", and "Challenges in the World."*
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Place buckets at belt level on desks, chairs, or tables. This will support kids who may have concerns being able to lean over to the floor to participate.*
- Think about the biggest challenge you are facing at the moment. **In which of these buckets would you say your challenge goes?** Put your ping pong ball in that bucket.
- Notice how we didn't all put our ping pong balls into the same bucket. Though we might face different challenges, we can all remember that no matter what we're dealing with, Jesus understands and Jesus will

help us with any challenge that comes our way.

RESPONSE | Team Jersey

- We might not fully understand each other's challenges, like Jesus does. But as part of God's family, we should always encourage and support each other. Let's create team jerseys to show that we will be here for each other and pray for Jesus to help us!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have kids get in small groups or their teams. Give each team or group an XL t-shirt and some fabric markers. Have them write "Jesus understands our challenges" and let everyone in the group write their names underneath. You might want to take a team photo, too.*
-

PRAYER

- Jesus, we love You so much. Thank You for the way You understand our challenges. Thank You for helping us through difficult times. We know that You went through challenges here on Earth, and that's how You help us through ours. Remind us to look to You whenever we have a challenge in our own lives.

ACTIVITY | Challenge Points & Celebration!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before you end your large group time, make sure you tally up all the challenge points from each week. Give the winning team an ice cream party, a special snack or themed prizes like [sports bands](#), [balls](#), or [mini foam fingers](#) (you could prepare some of these as consolation prizes, too).*

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- How many days later did Jesus raise from the dead?
- Why did Jesus have to die?
- What did Jesus say a Jesus follower has to do?
- Re-read Mark 8:33. What do you think it means to have in mind the concerns of God instead of human concerns?
- What do you think it means to "take up your cross?"
- When Peter found out Jesus' death was inevitable, how do you think Peter felt?
- Do you think it was challenging for Jesus to tell the disciples about the upcoming death?

ACTIVITY | Game Plan

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare *sports beads*, some *letter beads*, and *string*. Ask kids to describe what they've learned this month in a catchy sports slogan of five words or less (e.g., "Challenge Accepted," "Jesus is the real MVP," "Team Jesus," "Jesus is goals," etc.). Then have kids create a bracelet, necklace, or keychain containing that phrase.
- This month, we talked a lot about the challenges Jesus faced, and how Jesus shows us what to do when we face challenges of our own. Remember that whatever you are going through, you are not alone – Jesus has been there. Jesus understands your challenges. Jesus accepts you and your challenges. Let's accept the challenge to follow Jesus the best we can!

MEMORY VERSE | 1 John 5:5 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.