

## CITY LG – March 14<sup>th</sup>- 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Bible Story:** Be Humble / Love Your Enemies • *Matthew 5:38-48*

**Bottom Line:** Love like Jesus even when it's hard.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* • *Philippians 2:3 NIV*

### WORSHIP

Live Differently

He Has Won

*SLIDE: Theme*

Hey, everybody! Welcome back to another week of our series called 'Upside Down!' I'm so glad you're here today. This month, we're learning something HUGE—that following Jesus doesn't always look the way the world expects. In fact, sometimes it feels backward ... opposite ... and totally upside down!

Think about it, there are times when the normal way to act is to get even, get angry, or only be kind to people who are kind to you. But Jesus doesn't teach the 'normal' way. He teaches us a BETTER way ... a way that feels different, surprising, and yes, upside down.

And today's game? It's going to get us thinking in that upside-down, opposite kind of way. Because nothing in this game works the normal way! If you do what you *think* you should do ... you'll be wrong. If you do the opposite ... you'll win! Today's game is called: 'Get Backwards!'

*SLIDE: Get Backwards! Title*

All right, here's how it works. I'm going to give you super simple instructions. Stuff like 'Sit!' or 'Clap!' or 'Walk!' But in this game ... you must NOT do what I say. You have to do the opposite.

Let me give you an example. If I say, 'Sit!' ... you should stand up or stretch tall. If I say, 'Freeze!' ... you should move around quickly. If I say, 'Walk!' ... you should stand still. Got it?

Okay, everybody up on your feet with some space around you. Let's warm up with a few practice rounds.

*AUDIO: Upbeat music*

### Round 1 (Practice)

Ready? Clap!

*Watch kids intentionally NOT clap. If needed, reiterate that they're supposed to do the opposite of what you say.*

Nice! Now, be angry!

*Watch kids intentionally NOT be angry and instead act happy, sad, etc. If needed, reiterate that they're supposed to do the opposite of what you say.*

Perfect! You guys are already getting the hang of it.

### **Round 2 (Game Begins)**

Okay, now the challenge begins!

"Sit!  
"Walk forward!  
"Freeze!  
"Shout!  
"Whisper!  
"Be scared!  
"Be tired!  
"Stand still!

Great job, everyone! Okay, now let's try a fast round ...

### **Round 3: Lightning Round**

"Clap!  
"Sit!  
"Walk!  
"Freeze!  
"Be angry!  
"Be excited!  
"Stand!  
"Be sad!  
"Whisper!  
"Shout!

Whew! You all did awesome! Give yourselves a round of ... wait, don't clap, give yourselves a round of *opposite applause*! Everyone give baby claps!

*Pause while kids give baby claps.*

You know, doing everything the opposite way feels weird, right? It feels backwards. It feels upside down. And honestly ... sometimes that's what it feels like when we follow Jesus.

Jesus teaches us to do things that aren't always easy—things that other people might not expect. And one of the hardest things Jesus tells us to do is to show love to people who aren't kind to us. To choose kindness when someone makes us mad. To respond with love even when it feels like the total opposite of what we want to do.

Now, let's take a look at our Memory Verse for this month. This verse is such an important part of our 'Upside Down' series because it reminds us how Jesus calls us to live differently—not by trying to be first or the most important, but by choosing humility and treating others with love. Let's walk through it together so we can understand what it really means.

**SLIDE: Memory Verse**

When Jesus came to Earth, He didn't just tell people to be nice; He taught a whole new way of treating others that shocked everyone who heard it.

One day, Jesus went up on a mountainside and a huge crowd of people tuned in to listen. What He said sounded completely different from the way people were used to living. He talked about humility, kindness, and loving others ... even people who were difficult to love.

Today we're going to look at one part of that teaching where Jesus explained what it means to love like Him, even when it's hard. And friends, this is a teaching that flips everything upside down. But before we get into that teaching from Jesus, let me tell you about something amazing we're doing this year!

We're going to go through God's Big Story in the Bible together so we can learn about God!

**SLIDE: God's Big Story**

This week, we're up here in the part of this picture of God's Big Story—the picture that says, 'Jesus' Life.' Jesus Himself came to teach us about who God is!

**VIDEO: Bible Story**

Jesus showed us a totally upside-down way to live, a way that doesn't wait for people to be nice first, but chooses love even when it's hard. Just like practicing something that feels awkward at first makes you stronger, choosing kindness when someone frustrates you is actually obedience to Jesus. And every time we choose that upside-down kind of love, we look a little more like Him. Let's look at our bottom line.

**VIDEO: Bottom Line**

**SLIDE: Bottom Line**

**Love like Jesus even when it's hard.**

Jesus showed us that love isn't just for the people who treat us kindly. Real, upside-down love means choosing to be kind even when someone frustrates us or hurts our feelings. And that's not something we can do on our own. We need God's help.

When someone is hard to love, we can pause and talk to God. We can ask Him to give us patience instead of anger. We don't have to show His love on our own! When we began following Jesus, His very Spirit, the Holy Spirit, came to live inside of us. He shows love to His enemies, so He can help us do that too!

When people see you choosing to love when it's hard, they'll know that you're different. They'll feel the

power of what you're doing—you're pouring out love in response to hurt—and they'll see that you're a follower of Jesus.

Loving people you don't get along with is tough. But it's one of the most powerful ways that you can live like Jesus. And He will help you as you try!

Let's talk to the God who will help us live in this upside-down way!

God, thank You for loving us with a love that never gives up. Sometimes it's really hard to show love to people who hurt our feelings or make us mad. But You understand that, and You promise to help us. Please give us the strength to choose kindness, to be patient, and to love like You even when it's hard. Help our hearts grow stronger as we follow You. We love You, God. Amen.

**SLIDE: Theme**

## **OFFERING**

For our offering this year, We are helping a ministry called E3 which helps put in freshwater wells in Malawi. Having a well with clean water right in their village means women and children don't have to travel far away to other villages to get clean water.

Children help carry water too! They have to travel so far that they have to miss school sometimes. And if they used the dirty water that is in their village, they would get very sick. Check out this video someone from our Parkview team took of kids experiencing a brand new well in their village!

**Missions Video 2**

Help us raise money to provide clean water wells in the communities in Malawi who need them. We want you to go home and ask what YOU can do to raise money for these families in Africa!