



Track 3

PARTICIPANT

#SayYesToJesus

**CHILDREN'S
MINISTRIES**

childmin.org



Empowering Leaders • Impacting Kids
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Children's Ministries Excellence

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is taken from the New International Version.

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01

CHILD EVANGELISM

The beauty of the gospel message is just how simple and accessible it is. Jesus was born into our world to take our place, accepting the consequences of sin, so that we may believe in Him and receive eternal life. Not only that, but we can also have a personal and ongoing relationship with God. This promise is so rich that even small children may grasp and understand it.

As children mature, their comprehension of God, grace, and faith will continue to grow with them. Evangelism should be considered more than just a program or a set of Bible studies. It is the time, love, and energy put into helping young children grow into a better understanding of their relationship with God, so that they are empowered to take ownership of their faith as they grow.

As a Children's Ministry volunteer, you will have the opportunity to present the gospel to children from many different backgrounds. Some may be hearing about God for the very first time. Others may have grown up in the church. No matter their history, every child has a need to hear and internalize this message of hope. Together we will explore the tools used behind child evangelism, as well as the heart that we as leaders must have in order to help those tools succeed.

WHY THE NEED FOR CHILD EVANGELISM?

Write down some of the challenges that were discussed with your partner. If time allows, have a few people share with the whole group what they have discussed.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

CHALLENGE 1: CONFLICTING MESSAGES

Research by the Barna Group shows that mass media appears to be the most dominant agent of influence in the lives of our children. This includes music, movies, television programming, the internet, and printed materials. Each of these influences has a different message to tell. Many do not agree with one another, let alone have the child’s best interest in mind. Children need help learning how to distinguish the good messages from the bad and how to critically think about what messages they encounter.

CHALLENGE 2: FAST PACED SOCIETY

Society is now dominated with ways of thinking that elevate the values of impulse, and instant gratification. “I want it now!” and “Do it now!” are the cries of consumerism that over-saturate our world. A relationship with Jesus is not an instant fix. Rather, it is a lifelong journey with moments of pausing, character development, growth and change. Children need guidance in Biblical values that are not taught in fast-paced living, such as patience, kindness, self-control, generosity, and faith.

CHALLENGE 3: DIFFICULT HOME LIFE

In 2015, 7.2 million cases of child abuse were reported in the USA. 2017 demographics report 35% of children came from families with a single parent or nonbiological living situation. And 40% of families struggled with housing issues and safe living. Many young people are not growing up with a secure family environment. They have a need for strong mentors and a place that will demonstrate grace, safety and unconditional love.

A report written for the 2006 Children’s Spirituality Conference states, “for over 60 years, informal surveys conducted by Child Evangelism Fellowship workers as well as others have confirmed that 85% of Christians receive Christ as Savior between the ages of 4-14.” This window represents the years of a child’s life where their decisions and understandings of God will most likely be made. Evangelism at this critical age will not only help children face their greatest

challenges, but it will also give them the highest chance of staying committed to Jesus in adulthood.

THE BIG THREE VENUES

Evangelism Ideas I Would Like To Use As My “Bridge”:

There are many methods of child evangelism that exist. Methods are the programs, ideas, and concepts that help children come to know and understand the gospel message. Most methods can be broken down into three big venues: Community Outreach, Church Fellowship, and Family Home Life.

Community Outreach: Programs that are held beyond the walls of the church building, usually in neutral locations such as libraries, public parks, school facilities, or personal properties. The goal of community outreach is to open a connection point for unchurched families to be introduced to your church fellowship and to facilitate conversations and personal relationships with community children and their guardians.

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Neighborhood Bible Club

- » A weekly afternoon time in which families can bring children to an interactive Bible story event similar to Sabbath School. Tell the Bible story, provide games, crafts, and activities that help children learn lessons from the story. Prepare a “take-home” package with materials for parents.

Family Events

- » Family Cooking Classes
- » Nature demonstrations
- » Healthy Kids programs

Holiday Celebrations

- » Christmas Celebrations, with gifts, caroling, and a special family worship time.
- » Mother’s Day/Father’s Day programs
- » Thanksgiving Meals

Local School Outreach

Note: Contact your local schools and ask them what their needs are. Form a relationship with the leadership at your schools and help them fill the needs. Some well-used programs include:

- » Tutoring
- » Lunch Sponsorships
- » Christian prayer groups/After-school Bible clubs
- » Temperance programs
- » Mommy and Me Play Groups

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Programs that are held on the church grounds and encourage a deeper focus on Biblical learning while building strong relationships with children and their guardians.

- » Vacation Bible Schools
- » Adventurers
- » Sabbath School
- » Children’s Church

- » Family Nights
- » Children’s Bible Study Groups
- » Kid’s Baptismal Classes
- » Family-Style Evangelistic Meetings

Note: When an evangelistic series is being held, be sure that there is a well-organized, interactive Bible program in place for the kids that runs in connection with the series. Encourage children to talk to adults about what they are learning.

FAMILY HOME LIFE

Events that are held in a home and are done on a more personal level. This venue encourages individuals to reach out to their neighbors. If your neighborhood has children, make it a point to get to know the families and invite them into your homes.

Family Nights

- » Get together in a home with families and food. Families play group games, table games, and fellowship together.

Friendship Evangelism

- » Connect with other families in your community. Invite them over, get to know them, care about them and the lives of their children, pray with them, be authentic. As your trust and connection grows, invite them to church events and share your personal testimony.

Family Worship

- » Have active family worships in your home and invite your neighbors to attend.

Community Service

Choose a community project for your family’s focus. Then invite your community friends and neighbors to help in your project. Some examples are:

- » Helping a local food bank
- » Adopting an elderly person in your community
- » Cleaning up a park

STEPS FOR CHILD EVANGELISM

As you gear up for Child Evangelism in your church, it is important to have an organized plan of action. Evangelism is an ongoing process, which means that children should be reached multiple times and in multiple ways. Keep in mind these helpful steps as you plan:

1. **Form Your Team:** Talk to those in your church who are passionate about Children's Ministries. Take them to training events and equip them for evangelistic outreach.
2. **Think Outside The Box:** Prayerfully look at the demographics for your community and find the needs of your children. Don't be afraid to try something new or different.
3. **Have An Outline:** Create a calendar and a budget for Children's Evangelism. Decide what you would like to do and brainstorm how you can accomplish this.
4. **Pray For And With Your Children:** Pray for guidance that God will help you share the gospel with your kids. Pray for each child and parent that you meet in your evangelism efforts.
5. **Demonstrate Authenticity:** Show that you truly care for the children you meet. Get to know their names, talk with them, listen, and be available.
6. **Follow Up!** Keep a list of families that you interact with and stay in touch with them. Use your planned calendar to continue inviting them to future events.
7. **Assess Your Plan:** Meet with your Child Evangelism team regularly and discuss what is going well and what can be improved.



STEPS FOR EVANGELISM

STEPS WORKSHEET:

Step 1: Form a Team

Who Can I ask to be on my Child Evangelism team?

Step 2: Think Outside the Box

What ideas do I think will work in my community?

Step 3: Make a Plan

What kind of budget am I working with? How many events do I want to put in my calendar?

Step 4: Pray For and With Your Children

What are the names of the children in my life that I would like to pray for?

Step 5: Demonstrate Authenticity

In what ways can I take a genuine interest in the lives of my children?

Step 6: Follow Up

How will I keep track of the children involved in my child evangelism calendar?

Step 7: Assess Your Plan

How often do I want to assess what our team is doing? How will we make decisions for changes and improvements?

At the very core of Child Evangelism is the desire to lead young people to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. How you take action and why you take action go hand in hand. Some people have the heart for ministry but they do not know how to take action. Others take a lot of action but forget about the heart.

As you go forward with your evangelistic outreach, never forget to have both heart and action work together. With these tools and your passion for child evangelism you will be able to touch the lives of many children.

NOTES

JESUS AND THE 28 FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS

Our focus in this group is Jesus and the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. I'm sure you've heard of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Does anyone remember when it was 27 Fundamental Beliefs? The fact that it is now 28 underscores a basic and important understanding that we are constantly growing in our understanding of Jesus and truth. We read on the Wikipedia online encyclopedia site [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/28 Fundamental Beliefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/28_Fundamental_Beliefs).

The 28 fundamental beliefs are the core beliefs of Seventh-day Adventist theology. Adventists are opposed to the formulation of creeds, so the 28 fundamental beliefs are considered descriptors, not prescriptors; that is, that they describe the official position of the church but are not criteria for membership. These beliefs were originally known as the 27 fundamental beliefs when adopted by the church's General Conference in 1980. An additional belief (number 11) was added in 2005.

Let's get more clarity on two things stated here.

First: Why are Seventh-day Adventists opposed to the formation of creeds? Again, Wikipedia will help us. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creed>

A creed (also known as a confession, symbol, or statement of faith) is a statement of the shared beliefs of a religious community in the form of a fixed formula summarizing core tenets. A creed is a "fixed formula." Set it cement. A statement of finality that does not change or grow with understanding. Seventh-day Adventists are not wishy washy in their understanding of the teachings of Jesus and the Bible, but neither do we believe that we have

arrived. We are still on the journey. The preamble to the 28 Fundamentals states that Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed, and that revision of the statements may be expected during the church General Conference Session. Here is the preamble.

Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs, as set forth here, constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference Session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's Holy Word." Does this make sense?

The second point to clarify as we get started, is that the list of Fundamental Beliefs is a growing document. This was underscored when in the 2005 General Conference Session, 25 years after officially stating 27 fundamental beliefs, another one was added. Was there a new revelation or discovery that took place? No, not at all.

This was not a new or a different understanding. Instead, the clear and strong emphasizes of Jesus' victory over all evil forces was seen as so fundamental in the Bible's teaching and to our lives as we grow in Jesus that that it was added to the list of Fundamental Beliefs as number 11. In a moment we will see why 11 instead of 28. Does that make sense?

Our understanding and experience with Jesus should always be growing! So, let's get to these fundamental beliefs we have from what Jesus and the Bible teach us.

Do you know the 28 Fundamental Beliefs?

THE 28 FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS IN BRIEF

1. The Holy Scriptures
2. The Trinity
3. The Father
4. The Son
5. The Holy Spirit
6. Creation
7. The Nature of Humanity
8. The Great Controversy
9. The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ
10. The Experience of Salvation
11. Growing in Christ
12. The Church
13. The Remnant and Its Mission
14. Unity in the Body of Christ
15. Baptism
16. The Lord's Supper
17. Spiritual Gifts and Ministries
18. The Gift of Prophecy
19. The Law of God
20. The Sabbath
21. Stewardship
22. Christian Behavior
23. Marriage and the Family
24. Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary
25. The Second Coming of Christ
26. Death and Resurrection
27. The Millennium and the End of Sin
28. The New Earth

Chart by Francini Reis Dos Santos

This list is separated into six sections because these 28 fundamental beliefs actually fall into six themes. Six broad concepts that each of these beliefs are a part of.

The Doctrines of God

1. The Holy Scriptures
2. The Trinity
3. The Father
4. The Son
5. The Holy Spirit

The Doctrines of Humanity

6. Creation
7. The Nature of Humanity

The Doctrines of Salvation

8. The Great Controversy
9. The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ
10. The Experience of Salvation
11. Growing in Christ

The Doctrines of the Church

12. The Church
13. The Remnant and Its Mission

14. Unity in the Body of Christ
15. Baptism
16. The Lord's Supper
17. Spiritual Gifts and Ministries
18. The Gift of Prophecy

The Doctrines of Christian Living

19. The Law of God
20. The Sabbath
21. Stewardship
22. Christian Behavior
23. Marriage and the Family

The Doctrines of Restoration

24. Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary
25. The Second Coming of Christ
26. Death and Resurrection
27. The Millennium and the End of Sin
28. The New Earth

This helps explain why the 28th fundamental belief became number 11 instead of number 28. "Growing in Jesus" is one of the doctrines of salvation therefore is included in that section. With that understanding, let's explore some ways of teaching these fundamental beliefs to our children.

PART TWO

The Doctrines of God

1. The Holy Scriptures
2. The Trinity
3. The Father
4. The Son
5. The Holy Spirit

In this section, the first belief is The Holy Scriptures. That's where it all begins. The Bible. God's holy and infallible word.

2 Timothy 3:16 says:

"All scripture is inspired by God"

The Bible is the Word of God, but so is Jesus.

In John 1:1 and 14 we read:

1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

14: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us

We only know about God from what God has told us and is recorded in the Bible. What are some things we learn about God from the Bible?

Group share and discuss. A few suggestions

- » God is our creator.
- » God is love.
- » God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

- » God is one
- » God has always existed. No beginning and no ending.
- » God is all powerful.
- » God became a human.
- » God forgives us for the wrong things we have done.

With the understanding that God is the creator we can also learn about Him from the things He has made.

What are some things we can learn about God from the things He has made?

Group share and discuss. A few suggestions:

- » He likes order
- » He is an amazing designer
- » He's really smart
- » He likes smells
- » He likes sounds
- » He likes the way different things feel
- » He has emotions

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

We should continually speak to children of God as an ever present reality. Talk about who He is and what He has done. Speak of God as the creator of all that exists, but also acknowledge that not everything in nature works the way God intended. Sin and Satan's evil are also fundamental beliefs.

PART THREE

Have you ever needed help to get you out of a problem? The obvious answer for all of us is yes. Who do you go to when you need help?

- » Who do you go to if you don't know how to do a math problem?
- » Who do you go to if you have a splinter in your finger?
- » Who do you go to if need something you can't afford?
- » What would you do if you were lost?
- » What would you do if you were in a tree and couldn't get down?

The Bible tells us that we are like sheep that have wandered away and are lost. We may not even know it, but like a shepherd that knows if some of his sheep are missing, God knows that we have wandered off and he wants to save us. And the Bible tells us that we need to trust Him if we are to be rescued. How do you trust in someone you can't see? Or would you trust in someone you can't see?

The third section of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs is the doctrines of salvation which include the reality of our situation, Jesus being our only hope, how He saved us and what that salvation means in our lives today and our hope of eternity.

The Doctrines of Salvation

6. The Great Controversy
7. The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ
8. The Experience of Salvation
9. Growing in Christ

Always emphasize with children that our part is trusting God and listening to His voice.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

"We are saved by grace through faith, not works."

PART FOUR

There is no need to have anyone attempt breaking the sticks with names on them because the point has been made. They will want to group with others in groups larger than the volunteer was able to break.

The fundamental beliefs that are a part of the fourth section are all about the importance of the church and what makes it stronger.

The Doctrines of the Church

10. The Church
11. The Remnant and Its Mission
12. Unity in the Body of Christ
13. Baptism
14. The Lord's Supper
15. Spiritual Gifts and Ministries
16. The Gift of Prophecy

In 1 Peter 2, Peter says that Jesus is the corner stone of the church and in verse 5, speaking to all of us He says, ***"You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood"***

We need each other. I need you, you need me, and we all need Jesus.

Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV2011)

13: "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

14: But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Galatians 3:24 (NIV2011)

24: So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith.

The fifth section of the 28 Fundamental beliefs addresses the guidance God gives for living life now and for eternity. God's guidance is not given to keep us from anything good, but to protect us from things that are not good. Doing as God directs is the safest and best way to the best life today and forever.

The Doctrines of Christian Living

17. The Law of God
18. The Sabbath
19. Stewardship
20. Christian Behavior
21. Marriage and the Family

The sixth section is a treasure of the good things to come for those who want what God has to offer.

The Doctrines Of The Restoration

22. Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary
23. The Second Coming of Christ
24. Death and Resurrection
25. The Millennium and the End of Sin
26. The New Earth

Do you want these amazing gifts? I know the answer is yes. There are aspects of each that are simple enough for a child to understand yet each one contains depths that will provide greater understanding and growth as long as we live.

CONCLUSION

Our challenge is to take our churches Fundamental Beliefs and share them in such a way that the children will see more clearly who Jesus is and how much he loves them. Jesus' love needs to shine bright and clear through each one. Our short time together is just an introduction to the richness of God's word and all that he speaks to us in love.

On the table for your examination, are some of the resources that are listed in your booklet. Take a look.

Some of the excellent resources available for teaching children the love of Jesus through the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the church.

- » What We Believe, by Jerry Thomas.
- » Creation Case DVD, by Richard Aguilera.
- » God Loves Me 28 Ways, by Charles Mills & Linda Koh
- » Learn About God's Love Activities, by Adriana Femopase
- » Sing About God's Love, by GC Children's Ministries
- » Creation Case DVD, by Richard Aguilera.
- » Little Songs for Little People, by Saustin Mfunne (songs to build faith, love, trust, etc)

"OPERATION SEARCH AND RESCUE – God Never Gives Up" is a tool you can use to customize an evangelistic series for children for your church. By matching the adult series with the children's series and sending home a Bible Study for the children to do with the parents, it not only reinforces what the children have learnt, but also gives the parents the opportunity to mentor their children and learn from them at the same time.

Check out these sites:

- » <http://www.adventsource.org/as30/store-productDetails.aspx?ID=37326> "God Loves Me 28 Ways" book supplied by Advent Source
- » http://kidsministryideas.org/content/bible_studies "God Loves me 28 Way" Bible Study Guides
- » "FUN-DA-MENTALS" fun doctrinal posters by Kids Ministry Ideas Website;
- » <http://www.adventsource.org/as30/store-productDetails.aspx?ID=37742> "God Loves Me 28 Ways"
- » <http://kidsministryideas.org/content/fundamentals> (Child Evangelism Kit by Advent Source)

NOTES

03

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO WITNESS

Note to presenter: Have someone prepared to put an apple on the presenters table. They are to do this quietly once attendees begin coming in the room. They are to do it without making a scene, then return to their chair, however they should make sure at least two or three coming in for the workshop see them do it. They are not to tell anyone why they did it or volunteer that they know anything about it until you ask them directly... Make sure they understand. When the volunteer goes forward to place the apple, the presenter is to position themselves so they do not see it happening. (Apple can be substituted with a box of candy, etc.) When it's time to begin, look at the apple with a puzzled look and ask. Does anyone know how this apple got here?

Wait for someone, hopefully more than one, to acknowledge that they know and get them to tell you what they know. Confirm that they saw and who they saw do it? Address the person who did it and say, "I have witnesses telling me that you put this apple here. Why did you do it? They will then tell everyone that you asked them to do it.

Now you can confess that in fact you did put them up to it as a way of introducing today's topic: Teaching Children to Witness.

(There is a chance the witnesses will not volunteer that they know until they realize that it was all planned so be prepared to flow with what happens but do your best to

get the witnesses to speak up first)

SECTION 1:

What makes someone a witness?

Take answers. Confirm that a witness is someone who knows something from seeing, hearing, or experiencing it in some way. Also, that a witness has a choice. To share what they know or keep quiet. (Suggestion to presenter – Ask volunteers to read the Bible verses.)

Bible Verse 1: Isaiah 43:10-12 (NKJV)

10 "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.

11 I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior:

12 I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, And there was no foreign god among you; Therefore you are My witnesses," Says the LORD, "that I am God.

We are witnesses of whatever we know about God. God wants us as vocal witnesses. Witnesses who see and hear and feel, experience and invite others to do the same.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7 (NKJV)

4 *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!*

5 *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*

6 *“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.*

7 *You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.*

God’s plan, God’s gift of salvation, is simple enough a child can understand it and they can also understand how to share this Good News with others. It is very important to God that we do this.

We are to live our faith 24/7. It should be a public matter. Our children are sponges that absorb everything we say and do. Also, they are like wet cement, taking shape influenced by what happens around them. As leaders, we have a duty to inspire and give opportunity for children to express their love to Jesus.

In an informal survey, several children were asked, “What does it mean to witness?” Interviews with the children were one on one. The most common description of what it means to witness was... Acting like Jesus or Loving like Jesus.

This is a good answer and a good place to begin. Jesus himself said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35 When we love someone it shows, doesn’t it? Without even trying, it happens. It is simply stated in 1 John 4:8 “God is love”, and a few verses later, “We love Him because He first loved us” 1 John 4:19. Yes, loving God and loving others is a witness of God and His love for all of us.

After listening to these children explain what they understood witnessing to be, they were prodded, “Tell

me about a time that you witnessed.” The most common response was initial silence and an obvious struggle for what to say.

After a bit all were able to give an example, such as “I talked with my friend about Jesus”, or “I have told my friend about church and she told me about hers.” Also there were stories of inviting a friend to a special event at church such as a Christmas or Easter play. Again. All good answers. What is of interest is that almost without exception children paused and had to think, almost as if wondering, when have I been a witness for Jesus?

Most of our children already have a basic concept of what it means to be a witness for God and a God given desire to do so. It is the role of the generations before them to educate and empower.

(At this point toss ball to someone in the audience. Be sure you have made eye contact before tossing the ball. The ball should be soft and easy to catch. A small beach ball will work well. Ask the person who caught it to choose someone and pass it to them. Repeat three or four times then ask for the ball to be tossed back to you)

Witnessing is caught more than taught. Our children will do less of what we say and more of what we do. Are you modeling a witnessing lifestyle? Are you actively sharing your faith in ways that children see? Do they see you in action and in word living and sharing your faith in parks and playgrounds, grocery stores and malls, going door to door, and so on? Teach children that in witnessing, success is in sharing.

A witness is someone who knows something from seeing, hearing, or experiencing it in some way. Also, a witness has a choice. To share what they know or keep quiet.

WHAT IS A WITNESS?

SECTION 2

(Choose a volunteer to read 2 Peter 1:16-19). In 2 Peter 1:16-19 Peter makes the point that he was a witness. He wrote that he was telling what he himself had seen and heard.

2 Peter 1:16-19

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

Was Peter a witness? Yes! An eyewitness! He wanted people to trust that he was telling them the truth. He wanted them to believe that Jesus was all that He said He was. What had he seen and heard? Did you hear Peter point to something else that also helps convince us that Jesus was the Son of God?

Verse 19.

"We have the prophetic word of God confirmed."

What is the prophetic word of God? The Bible. Do you believe the Bible? Why? (Take answers)

Though Peter was an eyewitness he said there was a witness even stronger than him. The Bible. The Bible had foretold Jesus, and given clear details about Him and what He would do. The Bible is the most powerful witness that Jesus is all that He claimed to be.

SECTION 3

Gwen Smith, speaker, author, songwriter, and worship leader wrote: <https://gwensmith.net/can-i-get-a-witness/>

Growing up we played silly games. Fun games that connected strands of strangers and tethered them to a specific time and place with a memory. One of those was the cookie jar game. It's probably more of a chanty thing. You remember.

Crowd: "Amy stole the cookie from the cookie jar!"

Amy: "Who me?"

Crowd: "Yeah, you!"

Amy: "Couldn't be!"

Crowd: "Then who?"

Amy: "Elise!"

Crowd {redirected}: "Elise stole the cookie from the cookie jar!" ... and the game went on to never really gather the cookies that were stolen. Who thinks these things up? Why can't we just pass around the cookies and eat them with milk instead? I hear your "Amen."

Sometimes I think that those of us who are Jesus lovers play the cookie game with the Great Commission.

Jesus Lovers: "Susan, tell the world that the Lord is good!"

Susan: "Who me?"

Jesus Lovers: "Yeah, you!" Susan: "Couldn't be!"

Jesus Lovers: "Then who?"

Susan points to another Christian who she thinks has less kinks in her armor. "Tara!"

And the game goes on, but the directive to be a witness for Jesus Christ does not. It is sharply cut off and redirected at the “Who me?”

I play games and pass up opportunities to influence others toward Christ all the time. I bow out from repping Him to the world... or to that friend, volleyball mom, neighbor, family member, or co-worker who is in desperate need of His grace. Why? Because I like my comfort. It's fluffy and I'm shallow like that far too often. It's not such a silly game when eternal matters are on the line, is it? It's a sad game. One that I need to stop playing. One that we all need to stop playing. We're not going to practice this in an activity! But can we acknowledge that it's true?

Did we already say, “Our children are sponges that absorb everything we say and do,” and that “they are like wet cement, taking shape influenced by what happens around them?” Yes, and also that, “As leaders, we have a duty to inspire and give opportunity for children to express their love to Jesus.” We know this, yet without intentionality we will fall short. For God and for our children we need be on purpose. And we should make witnessing fun!

Opportunities for sharing faith in God are many and varied. Handing out water bottles in the park with a sticker message on them, Set up a table with free popcorn and printed stories or coloring pages, distribute socks and gloves for the homeless, prepare and conduct a sing-a-long in the park, and anything else you can think of.

What are some good witnessing experiences you have had with children or know of and would like to do?

SECTION 4: RESOURCES

(Have a number of witnessing tools on the table)

- » The Wordless Book, Wordless Bracelet, or Wordless Pin
- » Kid's EE Cube – Note that all are not the same and some include the teaching of eternal torment.

STEP 1: SHOW “HEAVEN AND MAN”

HEAVEN. Heaven is a free gift. It is not something you work for or deserve. The Bible says, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift to God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23 KJV). The Bible also says, “... it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:9). **THIS IS A VERY MUCH NEEDED GIFT BECAUSE WE HAVE A BIG PROBLEM.**

MAN. We are all sinners and we cannot save ourselves from sin. What is sin? Sin is anything that we think, say, do, or don't do, that separates us from God. The Bible says, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”, (Romans 3:23) and sin leads to death. A big problem with sin is that without God's help we can't get back to Him.

STEP 2: SHOW “GOD”

The Bible says, “God is love” (1 John 4:8b); but the Bible also says, “(He) will by no means clear the guilty” (Exodus 34:7b KJV). God loves us and does not want us to die, but on the other hand He must end sin which means that all sinners will die. This is a problem that god solved by sending his son Jesus.

STEP 3: SHOW “JESUS”

JESUS, the Son of God, is God. He came from Heaven to earth. He lived a perfect sinless life. Then He died on the cross taking the death of sin so we won't have too...

STEP 4: SHOW “RISEN JESUS”

...but because He never sinned, He rose from the dead. He paid the penalty for our sins and to purchase a place in Heaven for us. The Bible says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16 KJV). How do we get this gift of eternal life? By faith.

STEP 5: SHOW “SAVING FAITH”

Saving FAITH is not just knowing about God in your head. Saving faith is trusting God and growing close to God. The Bible says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved”. (Acts 16:31).

Does this make sense to you?

STEP 6: SHOW “TRUST JESUS”

The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) Have you asked Jesus to save you and to forgive you for your sins? Would you like to pray now and let Him know that you want to accept His gift of eternal life? This means that you want to trust in Jesus, turn from your sins, and follow Him. Jesus says, “... he who believes in Me has everlasting life.” (John 6:47b) If this is what you want, we can pray together. I can pray, and you can repeat after me: Dear Jesus, Forgive my sins, and come into my life as my Lord and Savior. I believe in you and trust in you. Thank you. Amen.

COMMITMENT: Welcome to the family of God!

STEP 7: SHOW THE “STEPS FOR GROWTH IN JESUS”

God does what He says He will do so now you can know for sure that you are going to be with God in Heaven some day? You can trust Him. And if God asked you, “Why should I let you into My Heaven?” what would you say?

(I believe in Jesus, that He came from heaven to save me, that He died on the cross so He can forgive me, and I do want to be with Him forever.)

Love God and Others, Pray
Constantly, Read the Bible Daily,
Go to Church, Tell Everyone
about Jesus.

**TO GROW
IN JESUS**

Talk about these aspects of the Gospel with each other and with children. It will then follow that as children interact with classmates, friends, or as casual acquaintance they will know how to share. Always emphasize that for safety, children are always to be under responsible adult supervision. Whatever method of sharing is used it is important that it be easy to understand, memorable, clear, and Biblical.

Know and share all five essential parts
of the Gospel.

1. Sin (we are sinners)
2. Blood—Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead
3. Forgiveness (Christ forgives our sins and is our Savior)
4. Growth (we grow our relationship with Jesus)
5. Heaven (Jesus is preparing a nice place to take us to live with Him forever after His second coming).

**5 PARTS
OF THE
GOSPEL**

With a clear message and simple approach a child is equipped to talk about Jesus to anyone anywhere. The Wordless Book is another simple method of sharing the Gospel in a way that is quite memorable.

The Wordless Book has been around for many years, and likely most of you are familiar with it.

According to Wikipedia “the Wordless Book” was invented by the famous preacher Charles Spurgeon. On January 11, 1866, he preached a sermon to several hundred orphans with the title “The Wordless Book”. His text was Psalm 51:7 “Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” In the sermon Spurgeon used three colors, black, red, and white to represent three foundational concepts of salvation.

Within a few years Dwight Moody was using “The Wordless Book” as he taught the gospel to children, and he had added gold as a fourth color. As use of this simple and effective teaching tool spread, green was added, and there are some wordless books that also include blue to represent baptism.

Using colors to illustrate the foundational concepts of salvation is called a book, and color pages can be bound together to form a book, but this learning tool works just as well if presented in order on a single poster or banner.

Let’s take a look at “The Wordless Book”

THE WORDLESS BOOK

Another simple method of sharing the Gospel in a way that is quite memorable.

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CONCLUSION

As we use a variety of learning tools with our children to teach God’s love and how He saves us, we empower them to also use these tools and lead others to Jesus.

Children can have a strong impact on people that might

never heard about the gospel, and they will as they see us also being intentional. Richard Baxter, the great Puritan pastor who witnessed a mighty movement of God in his day (mid 1600’s), said we will never see God move in a general way unless He first moves in our homes. We don’t want kids to simply survive in today’s culture, we want them to be anchored in their relationship with God and make an impact as they spread the word of God. Our little and young witnesses of today will be our church leaders of tomorrow. Let’s intentionally prepare and empower them to start now. God want’s witnesses who will speak up for Him. Are you willing to be sworn in as a witness?

Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God. Praise be to God. Your children will say yes too. Just ask.

Other Ideas:

- » “Teach Your Children To Witness” Linda Mei Lin Koh, GC Children’s Ministries (Presenter’s Notes)
- » <https://children.adventist.org/teach-your-children-to-witness.pdf>

NOTES

04

INVOLVING CHILDREN IN MISSIONS

Children today are faced with many distractions that attract them. They have all the information at their fingertips. Anything they want to know is at their reach with a touch of a button. Yet with all this information and entertainment they need guidance and safe meaningful ways to show compassion for others. How do we help them? Sharing is part of growing and we will look at some creative ways to engage them in helping others.

We all know that the words we use can make a difference. You'll enjoy this video with an example of words and responses to those words. "The Power of Words" on YouTube.

Show video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hzgzim5m7oU>

"There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land." Deuteronomy 15:11 NIV

Why do you think we need to involve children in missions? What is the purpose?

There are multiple answers. Here are a few.

- » Help kids identify needs of others and see how they can make a difference in the world.
- » Children easily understand the concept of compassion.
- » Responding to needs of their world help children develop into caring adults.
- » By helping others, they can spread the love of Jesus.

Children need to understand what mission means and to know that they too have a mission. Children love to play spy or watch spy movies. Spy agents have a mission, they are ready and they are prepared. Agents have assignments all over the world. It is the same with the Church. We have an assignment, a mission that involves every country, in every language. We have

a Global Mission, to go, to reach and to love. When children realize that they have a mission, they will carry that to adulthood. They will live a life of reaching others. Yes, even as children they have a role in mission and can serve in ways adults can't, and when we all work together great things happen.

Even though it was difficult you all worked together to move forward. Spreading God's Good News is our task. The Good News is that God loves us, and He wants us to pass on that love. When we help others, we move them forward towards God. We all have struggles but when you have someone helping it makes it easier.

Let's explore some of the many mission activities we can do with our children either at home or at church. We have some ideas to share and as we do we want you to think of a mission project you have done with children or perhaps would like to do but have not yet.

POLICE PRAYER BADGES

Children can make police badges thanking the police for their service and letting them know that they are praying for their safety. Once done children with parents can place on police cars throughout the city or go into a police station and pray for an officer and hand out badges.



NOW YOU FOUND ME!

Children will place small toys like dinosaurs or cars and leave them at playgrounds in parks. Attach a little message saying: "Now You Found Me- I'm yours" "Take me home!"



Kindness ←←←
Dinosaurs

RAKE N GO

As a family go and rake leaves for someone in the neighborhood, then just leave. Make it a nice surprise for someone and leave a little note.



BIRTHDAY MIX BAG

Put together a gift bag including all the ingredients for a party: cake mix, frosting, candles, birthday plates and napkins, aluminum cake pan, table cloth, bag of balloons, party hats, maybe even a gift card. Deliver it to someone you know would not be able to enjoy these items or you can drop at any Food Pantry in the city.

Check out these Birthday Box Project sites.

<https://www.family-to-family.org/hands-on-giving/birthday-giving-project/>

<http://www.thebirthdaybox.org/>



SOCKTOBER

Have the children in your church promote this project, asking members to bring socks during the whole month of October and put them in a basket at entrance of church. In November, just in time for the cold weather, deliver them to a shelter for the homeless.



IS THERE A MISSION PROJECT IDEA YOU COULD SHARE IN 30 SECONDS?

Also remember that the internet is filled with many more ideas. Here are resource ideas from our church that can be used to teach children about World Missions:

Remember that any mission's activity you do is purposely to involve children so they can see that they can make a difference. Giving at a young age will impress their little minds and their tiny hearts. The goal is to make

the activities as child friendly as possible. It will be a fun and loving memory of sharing God's love.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13:34 NIV

ADRA-stories of children in other countries • Children's Missions has videos of Global Missions on YouTube
 Read amazing stories in Children's Mission Quarterly • Have a missionary come and tell stories
 • Have a World Fair where you present other countries: Their culture, food, language •
 Read Children's Mission books. Check out this site
<https://www.adventistbookcenter.com/books/stories/missions.html>

NOTES

05

TEACHING CHILDREN STEWARDSHIP

AWARE

Have you ever heard of a suffix? A suffix is a letter or group of letters added to the end of a word that will change or add to its meaning. Like adding “i-n-g” to the end of a word. Can you think of a word that you can add “i-n-g” to? Take answers.

Examples: Fly, Walk, Smile

What does adding “ing” do to the word? ... It makes it about doing what the word is. If you are smiling you are doing a smile. Right? If you are falling you are doing a fall.

“S-H-I-P” is another suffix ending, and it really has nothing to do with a big boat. Can you think of a word that ends with the suffix ship? (Take a few responses – If “stewardship” is mentioned confirm that that is the “ship” word we are here to talk about, but let’s consider some ship words first) (if the word “Worship” comes up, know this:

- » The root of the word “worship” is “worthy”.
- » The noun “worship” is being worthy.
- » The verb “worship” is about actively acknowledging someone’s worth by showing respect and honor.)

Just for starters if needed, here are a few words that end in “ship” that most will be familiar with.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| » Friendship | » Partnership |
| » Relationship | » Dealership |
| » Championship | » Leadership |
| » Citizenship | » Marksmanship |
| » Sportsmanship | » Scholarship |

What does ship on the end of a word mean?

1. ship added to a word makes it about being,
2. ship added to a word makes it about character or office or skill.

So –

- » Friendship is about being friends.
- » Citizenship is about being a citizen.
- » Sportsmanship is about being a sportsman.

1. What would leadership be about?
2. What would horsemanship be about?

(Ask about any “ship” word you want to use but don’t make the list long) Here’s some words ending in “ship”

that are not so common. What do you think they mean? They are all real words. (Have everyone say the answer together)

- » Sonship
- » Daughtership
- » Teachership
- » Studentship

Here's one that is common. "Ownership"? What would it mean? (Again, all answer together) This brings us to our word for today.

STEWARDSHIP

What would stewardship mean? Being a steward... But what is a steward? A steward is the one who has the responsibility of caring for what belongs to someone else. A steward is not the owner. Being a steward is a position of trust and responsibility. So...Is a forest ranger be a steward? Absolutely! They take care of the forest but they don't own the forest. Is a nurse a steward? For Sure! They take care of patients but they don't own the patients. Is the president of the United States be a steward? President Theodore Roosevelt said "Yes." The president's job is to take care of the whole country, but they don't own it.

Stewardship is being responsible in lots of different ways. We are talking about stewardship because we need to be aware of something very important. One of the places that very important that very important fact is found is Psalm 24:1

It's nice to hear the same thing said in two different ways to get a good understanding, so let's hear Psalm 24:1 from the New King James Version and the International Children's Bible.

Psalm 24:1 (NKJV)

The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

Psalm 24:1 (ICB)

The earth and everything in it belong to the Lord. The world and all its people belong to him.

This being true, what does this have to do with stewardship? For the Christian, stewardship is about realizing that everything belongs to God. What we think is ours is simply for our use but it still belongs to God. God wants us to be good stewards. Here's a Bible verse that talks about an important quality a steward needs.

1 Corinthians 4:2

Again, let's hear how two different versions say the same thing.

1 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV)

Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2 (ICB)

A person who is trusted with something must show that he is worthy of that trust.

God gave us all the same amount of time each day. Do you think it is important to Him how we use it?

Here's something Jesus said about how to prioritize or time. That means knowing what is most important.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. And in different words from the International Children's Bible.

Matthew 6:33 (ICB)

33 The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what God wants. Then all these other things you need will be given to you.

Let's be good stewards of time making sure we use our time with God in mind. Here's another Bible verse that talks about stewardship.

1 Peter 4:10 (NKJV)

10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1 Peter 4:10 (ICB)

10 Each of you received a spiritual gift. God has shown you his grace in giving you different gifts. And you are like servants who are responsible for using God's gifts. So be good servants and use your gifts to serve each other.

What insights into stewardship for God did these verses and this activity impress upon you?

(Call on someone to answer) Stewards are to be caring, think of others, and bringing blessing to them.

CONCLUSION

There are so many other aspects of stewardship that we could have covered. Would keeping our room clean and taking care of our clothes be about stewardship? Sure!

Would using our talents and abilities for good be about stewardship? Absolutely. Would using our money wisely and faithfully returning God's part to Him be about stewardship? Without a doubt. And the list could go on for God has blessed us with so much.

When it comes to teaching children about stewardship we need to keep in mind that:

- » Children learn by imitation and much if not most of a child's learning about stewardship is done without words. They learn responsible management from watching their parents and how they take care of things.
- » They learn from us how much importance to place on our ecological impact.
- » They learn about money management, paying bills on time, saving for larger purchases, limiting impulse buying, etc.
- » They learn about time and how to use it.
- » They learn by watching, what is important to their parents.
- » Children also learn from their parents as the offering plate is passed in church.

Parents should be encouraged to talk with children about all these things and explain why it makes a difference to them. They should find opportunities to talk about their stewardship decisions from recycling to what their giving at church, either online or putting it in the offering plate, and the reasons for choosing how to give. Also, parents should be encouraged to think through at what age and how to provide children with their own money and guiding them to make wise stewardship choices.

RESOURCES:

- » Resource and information used by permission from Catrina LeSure from Teaching Stewardship (Catrina LeSure, Darnisha Thomas - NAD Children's Ministries Trainers)
- » Advent Source:
 - » Stewardship Jack Books
 - » Stewardville Daily Times Children's Church
 - » Stewardship: Taking Care of God's Stuff God's Way

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

The gifts given by the Spirit as mentioned in Scripture are alive and well within the church! Often development of spiritual gifts might be overlooked in the very young. But the Bible does not give an age discrimination for who can receive spiritual gifts. God is capable of working within adults and children alike, blessing everyone with natural talents that grow and mature each day. It is a great privilege as children's ministry leaders to be advocates for our children in this area by being actively involved in helping them recognize and develop the God-given gifts they have.

DEFINING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The spiritual gifts of scripture are defined in Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and 1 Corinthians 12-13. These are God-given abilities distributed to Christians by the Holy Spirit that allows them to work through their lives to help the church execute its mission on earth. There are a large number of spiritual gift inventories and resources available which help outline and define the specific details of each gift. Below is a short summary of the many gifts that are described. Keep in mind that these gifts which are listed may go by other names depending on the inventory that you use:

1. ADMINISTRATION This is the spiritual gift where the spirit where the Spirit enables certain Christians to

organize, administrate, and promote the various affairs of the local church's ministry to direct them effectively. A local church cannot grow beyond a certain point without the ministry of these individuals (1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:8, Titus 1:4-5)

2. DISCERNMENT This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit enables Christians to know without a doubt whether a statement or behavior is of God, Satan, or man. (1 Corinthians 12:10, Acts 5:3-6, Acts 16:16-18, 1 John 4:1)

3. EVANGELISM This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit enables particular Christians to share the Gospel to unbelievers and burdens Christians about soul-winning. All Christians are called to witness for Christ whether they have this gift or not. (Ephesians 4:11, Acts 8:5-12, Acts 21:8, Matthew 28:18-20)

4. EXHORTATION This is the spiritual gift where the spirit enables certain Christians to deliver challenging and encouraging words (Romans 12:8, Acts 11:23-24, Acts 15:32)

5. FAITH This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit provides Christians with great confidence to believe and expect great things from God (1 Cor 12:9, Romans 5:1, Romans 12:3, Hebrews 11)

6. GIVING This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit enables certain Christians to accumulate and give large

amounts of their finances to the glory of God. (Romans 12:8, Acts 4:32-37, Galatians 4:15, Philippians 4:10-18, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)

7. HELPS/SERVING/MINISTERING This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit empowers certain Christians to render practical help in both physical and spiritual matters. Serving one another, like evangelism, is a calling of all Christians, but there are some who have a special desire to serve, and receive great blessing from it. (Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Galatians 6:1-2)

8. MERCY This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit enables certain Christians to minister and to have compassion for those who are suffering or afflicted (Romans 12:8, Luke 10:30-37)

9. PASTOR/SHEPHERD This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit enables certain Christians to preach and teach the word of God and to take responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a body of believers (Ephesians 4:11, 1 Peter 5:1-11)

10. TEACHING This is the spiritual gift where the Spirit enables particular Christians to communicate and clarify the details and truths of God's word for others to learn. (Romans 12:7, Ephesians 4:11)

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION:

What are your own spiritual gifts? How can you serve children with those gifts?

EMPOWERING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

When exploring spiritual gifts with your children, you want to direct their interests in a way that sticks. That is why being observant, providing opportunities, and giving feedback are so important in the supportive process of exploration.

An excellent tool for helping children explore their spiritual gifts is the **“GO Fish” Curriculum by the North American Division**, which allows kids to take a simple spiritual gift inventory, then focus on the spiritual gift they score highest on through the “fishhooks” These fishhooks are a reference from the **Ministry tools Resource Center** and provide guidelines for leaders to use:

1. CONSIDER THE AGE LEVEL. There are many types of inventories available, some even for children as young as 5 or 6 which parents can help children fill out. Choose an inventory that will work best for your group.

Provide teaching about spiritual gifts and God's design for the church. By helping young people to understand God's purpose for the church and for their lives through service, you can help them realize they are an active part of their church family right now, not just when they are older.

2. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO SERVE. Children need to develop a base of experience in ministry so that they can begin to identify how they are gifted. Encourage kids by getting them involved in a variety of ways. Share many different ministry opportunities, involving them in the various aspects of total church life where they can work side-by-side with adults. Suggest that families serve together as teams. God will use these opportunities to grow passions within their hearts and to surface and develop their spiritual gifts.

3. PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH AFFIRMATION AND FEEDBACK. When Jesus sent out his disciples to minister, he took the time to discuss how it went with them. Why would we do any less with the children whom we encourage in ministry of any kind? First, include them in training opportunities. Second, affirm them in what they are doing. If there seems to be an

area in which they do particularly well, tell them. Third, provide feedback afterward. Evaluate with them what happened, both on the positive and negative. Offer suggestions on how they might improve. Or, if they don't feel they are interested or suited for a particular type of ministry, help them find something that might be a better fit.

4. PROVIDE ROLE MODELS. Adults can be a good examples for children to look up to. Encourage your church congregation to evaluate themselves as they connect with your kids. Pair children up with leaders who are strong in spiritual gifts that match your children's, then ask that these leaders spend time with your children as mentors.

5. PROVIDE PRAYER SUPPORT. Develop a prayer base for the children of your church that goes beyond praying for only the troubled ones. Pray also for those who seem to be doing well and who want to be a part. You can set up prayer teams to surround each child in prayer daily.

CONCLUSION

When exploring spiritual gifts with your children, you want to direct their interests in a way that sticks. That is why being observant, providing opportunities, and giving feedback are so important in the supportive process of exploration.

Praying for your children as you guide them is above all else. They need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit in whatever they do for Him, just as much as an adult does. Both their motivations and means of serving need to be and outgrowth of abiding in Christ. As you come to the close of this training, take a moment to pray for the children who are close to you.

Pray that the church will be willing to involve these children in the ministry of the church in relevant and powerful ways. Pray that God will use opportunities to serve even in small ways to grow a passion within their hearts to follow God's purposes for their lives. Pray your children will learn early in life how God has equipped them to serve and that they will follow his design for their lives. And pray they will learn to sit at the feet of Jesus and draw near to God as they serve.

Spiritual Gift Inventories For Kids

1. <https://www.kidsministryteam.com/blog/2013/07/kids-spiritual-gifts-survey>
2. Discipleland Spiritual Gifts Inventory For Kids
3. "Go Fish" spiritual gift inventory
4. <https://www.freeshapetest.com/>
5. Ministry Tools Resource Center Spiritual Gifts Inventory

NOTES

SPIRITUAL GIFTS FOR KIDS

God has given each Christian at least one spiritual gift. This activity will help you get started discovering which gift or gifts God has given to you. Place a number in the box before each sentence according to how true it is of you. Use this scale:

3 = Nearly always **1 = Some of the time**
2 = Most of the time **0 = Not at all**

1 I like to help people with things they cannot do by themselves.

2 I am confident that God can do great things—even when others doubt.

3 I enjoy thinking about problems and finding solutions that help others.

4 When I see injustice or unfairness, I want to say something about it.

5 I like to share with my friends what Jesus means to me.

6 It is fun to show or explain to others how they can learn something new.

7 I can sense when people are hurting and try to ease their pain.

8 I enjoy taking responsibility and directing others.

9 I like to plan ahead and to get things done.

10 It is fun to give money to help people who need it.

11 I enjoy pointing out the strengths and abilities of other people.

12 I feel good about myself when I do jobs that others won't do.

13 I encourage others to trust God, even when things look bad.

14 My friends view me as a person who is wise.

15 I like to challenge other Christians to become committed to the Lord.

16 It is easy for me to talk with people about God.

17 I want to learn as much as I can about the Bible and being a Christian.

18 I show sympathy toward people who are going through personal pain.

19 I help others work together to accomplish important things.

20 I am able to set goals and plan the best way to reach them.

21 When I receive money, I look forward to giving some to the church.

22 I can comfort and advise others so they feel helped and motivated.

23 I serve the Lord at church by moving chairs, working in the kitchen, or cleaning up.

24 I enjoy trusting God to meet my needs and the needs of others.

25 I help people use Bible truths to solve their problems.

26 I feel driven to tell others what the Bible says about their situation.

27 I like to talk with people who still don't know Jesus as their personal Savior.

28 I enjoy researching topics so I can tell others what I have learned.

29 I feel compassion for people who suffer with difficult problems.

30 I enjoy leading, inspiring, and motivating others to do God's work.

31 I enjoy organizing thoughts, ideas, and dreams into a plan of action.

32 I give money to God's work and feel like a partner with the ministry.

33 I enjoy challenging people to walk closely with the Lord.

34 I enjoy working "behind the scenes" to make projects succeed.

35 I believe God will keep His promises in spite of difficult situations.

36 I receive special insight from God for making important decisions.

37 I speak messages from God that encourage people to change.

38 I enjoy making friends with people so I can explain the Gospel to them.

39 I think I could teach a Bible study or lead a small group study.

40 Other people open up to me and see me as caring and sensitive.

41 In a group, others often look to me for direction.

42 I can give others responsibilities for a task and help them accomplish it.

43 I feel moved when I hear about the urgent needs of others.

44 I encourage and motivate other people when they are down.

45 I feel good when I help out doing routine things at church.

46 I can trust in the power of God to accomplish the impossible.

47 I sense God's presence when important decisions need to be made.

48 I am persuasive and direct when I share truths from the Bible.

49 I am comfortable telling unbelievers about my relationship with Christ.

50 I have the ability to teach so that God's Word comes alive to others.

51 I would like to visit rest homes and other places where people need visitors.

52 I can see overall needs and involve others to meet the needs.

53 I can organize ideas, people, and tasks that lead to good results.

54 God takes care of my needs because I give selflessly and cheerfully.

55 I can encourage people who are "off track" to get right with God.

SPIRITUAL GIFT SCORECARD

This scorecard will help you begin your personal journey to discover and use your spiritual gifts. Remember, as you walk with the Lord and grow in your faith, your spiritual gifts will grow with you! Over time, you will find that some gifts and areas of ministry will become more and more interesting to you.

To find out your score for each spiritual gift, write the number you chose for each statement in the boxes below. Then add up the numbers in each row.

					Total		
1	12	23	34	45	=		Serving —divine power to complete tasks that support and encourage other people. Helping —divine power to befriend people and to assist them with special needs.
2	13	24	35	46	=		Exercising Faith —divine power to show confidence in God's ability to resolve a problem, even when other people doubt.
3	14	25	36	47	=		Applying Wisdom —divine power to understand a situation and to provide God's insight or advice.
4	15	26	37	48	=		Proclaiming —divine power to reveal the truth of God's Word, explaining it clearly and with conviction.
5	16	27	38	49	=		Evangelizing —divine power to testify about Jesus Christ, leading people to personal faith in Him.
6	17	28	39	50	=		Teaching —divine power to communicate Biblical principles so that Christians understand and grow in the faith.
7	18	29	40	51	=		Showing Mercy —divine power to express compassion and support for people who suffer pain and problems.
8	19	30	41	52	=		Leading —divine power to grasp God's purposes, influencing others to accomplish God's work.
9	20	31	42	53	=		Managing —divine power to organize and plan, directing people to complete tasks well.
10	21	32	43	54	=		Giving —divine power to generously and joyously give to the Lord, meeting the needs of the Church and other people.
11	22	33	44	55	=		Encouraging —divine power to motivate people to do their best, taking righteous action.

Circle your two or three highest scores. How can you use one of those gifts you circled to serve others this week? (Be specific!)

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AND FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMS

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is a fun and educational evangelistic program for children of all ages. By doing a VBS in your church or community you will have the opportunity to show children how to interact with people who love Jesus, be introduced to Him and choose to follow Him. Children remember the fun times and Christ-centered lessons long after VBS is completed.

The VBS director plays a key role in leading the church's largest annual outreach program for children and their families. We are going to talk about some general information that will guide the VBS director -- think about how you can adapt these suggestions for your local church.

TASKS FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL LEADERS

- » Get an up-to-date picture of your church's VBS program. Research what has been happening; talk to current and former VBS leaders.
 - » Take an inventory of supplies available and assess what new materials may be needed. Find out what has worked well in the past.
 - » Select a curriculum for your church's VBS program.
 - » Recruit volunteer staff to lead main areas of VBS – story time, games, crafts, etc.
 - » Create a budget.
 - » Conduct regular VBS staff meetings where you can provide training and encouragement.
 - » Train your staff in how to invite children to accept Jesus in an age-appropriate way.
- » Mentor a promising leader for future VBS leadership.
 - » Share your plans, calendar, budget, and any other pertinent information with the children's ministries committee and local conference.
 - » Create a child safe environment by insisting that the volunteer ministry process is complete by all volunteers and caregivers.

FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE SERVING

The ages of children attending VBS vary by the practice of each church. Generally, VBS includes kindergarten through grade 4. Some churches include a program for preschoolers during VBS week. If your church chooses to go this direction, you will want to find a separate leader for this age group, so the activities will be age appropriate. Once children outgrow VBS attendance, start recruiting them as junior helpers.

6 MONTHS BEFORE VBS

- » Establish a VBS planning committee
- » Choose a director
- » Establish VBS dates and times
- » Outline goals for VBS
- » Inventory available supplies
- » Begin ordering VBS materials
- » Begin selection of staff
- » Create budget

3 MONTHS BEFORE VBS

- » Announce date and time of VBS in church bulletin and list any remaining staff vacancies
- » Contact all volunteers to confirm assignments and announce training opportunities
- » Plan a volunteer dedication service and training
- » Order any remaining supplies
- » Plan publicity
- » Add a VBS page to your church's website

2 MONTHS BEFORE VBS

- » Finalize the VBS schedule
- » Make sure any remaining volunteer spots have been filled. In the church bulletin, list donated-material needs

6 WEEKS BEFORE VBS

- » Begin publicity campaign
- » Plan preregistration
- » Make room assignments

4 WEEKS BEFORE VBS

- » Publicize preregistration
- » Organize preregistration booth and materials
- » Inventory materials
- » Update VBS information on church website
- » Prepare a flier to hand out at church
- » Contact leaders to check on their preparations
- » Make announcements in children's Sabbath school classes
- » Make announcements during church service

3 WEEKS BEFORE VBS

- » Begin preregistration
- » Check registration numbers against materials ordered and order additional materials if necessary
- » Encourage children to invite their friends and neighbors to VBS

2 WEEKS BEFORE VBS

- » Distribute curriculum to program leaders
- » Check with custodian regarding his or her function during VBS
- » Have all equipment ready to transfer to VBS locations
- » Conduct volunteer training
- » Make sure volunteers know the songs
- » Check with your church's communication director about writing an article for the conference newsletter, union paper, and local newspaper

1 WEEK BEFORE VBS

- » Remind children to invite their friends and neighbors. Conduct volunteer dedication service

DURING VBS

- » Remind staff of closing program preparation
- » Invite parents to closing program
- » Post group activity photos on church website
- » Make sure photographers and videographers cover all activities

1 DAY AFTER VBS

- » Conduct a clean-up session.
- » Registrar collects all registration cards from director and prepares VBS report online at www.childmin.com. Click on "Programs," then select "Vacation Bible School."

1 WEEK AFTER VBS

- » Conduct a staff meeting to evaluate the VBS program
- » Complete all records
- » Make written suggestions for next year's VBS
- » Mail VBS report to conference
- » Give registration cards to the pastor's secretary for filing
- » Report on your program to the church - video or slide show
- » Collect reusable supplies
- » Return borrowed supplies
- » Send thank-you notes to volunteers and donors

HOW TO PROMOTE VBS

- » Set up a VBS page on your church's website
- » Write an article for your church's newsletter
- » Send a mass announcement to everyone on your church's email list
- » Place posters on bulletin board
- » Show video announcements
- » Print brochures
- » Offer preregistration
- » Place announcements in your church's bulletin
- » Make sure your VBS is listed in the local newspaper
- » Display colorful signs outside your church
- » Mail postcards to previous attendees
- » Make announcements during Sabbath school and church

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Volunteers are the key to running a successful VBS program. When recruiting volunteers, be sure to include parents, teens, and people who enjoy working with children. There is room for people with many talents to join your team.

Depending on the size of your church and the number of children you expect, you may need a large or small team. You may not need a different person for each job. One person can do two jobs, if necessary. The important thing is to be sure that someone is responsible for each task. The following is a list of suggested workers and their job descriptions.

VBS Director: _____

The VBS director plans for the overall needs of the staff and organizes the dates, time, and room arrangements. The director is a behind-the-scenes organizer and may also be the up-front leader. The director contacts the conference Children's Ministries department to find out about supplementary materials, training, and possible financial support.

Assistant Director: _____

The assistant director is responsible for welcoming the children to VBS each day and planning the general sessions and closing program. The director could also take on this role.

Bible Story Leaders: _____

Bible story leaders coordinate the lesson activities, materials, and room decorations for Bible Learning time. They also teach songs related to the Bible lesson, tell the Bible stories, divide the children into

classes, take responsibility for the children in the assigned age-level division, keep daily attendance records to turn in to the registrar, and recruit and train class teachers.

Small Group Leader: _____

Each division needs one leader for every 5-6 students. The small group leader sits with the children during each segment of the VBS program, helps them complete their activities, leads the class in discussion or activity as indicated by the leader, and calls children who miss a day.

Craft Director: _____

Before VBS begins, the craft director lists supplies needed and works with the business manager to solicit donations from the congregation, local businesses, and community organizations. During VBS the craft director leads a team responsible for presorting and organizing materials, making at least one of each craft in advance to be sure crafts work and to show a finished sample to the children, demonstrating the crafts, answering questions, praising the children, guiding them in cleaning up, and organizing a display of crafts for closing night.

Nature Director: _____

The nature director is responsible for setting up and changing nature displays, planning and presenting daily nature talks or activities, and organizing a nature display for closing night.

Skit Producer: _____

The skit producer coaches a team that acts out skits for each general session. The skit producer also obtains and organizes materials as necessary.

Preschool Leader: _____

The preschool leader works with children ages 3 through kindergarten. When they arrive, preschoolers go straight to their room for the entire VBS program, which will be conducted by their division leader. It works best for preschoolers to do most of their activities in one room. The preschool leader will need their own team of craft and refreshment leaders.

Music Leader: _____

The music leader consults with the VBS leader when choosing the repertoire of songs for VBS. The song leader needs to be a confident singer who reacts to children in an outgoing, friendly manner.

Pianist: _____

The pianist works closely with the music leader. You may choose to have a variety of instruments rather than using only piano. Select musicians who can provide a strong, energetic rhythm.

Publicity Director: _____

The publicity director is responsible for communicating VBS plans and needs to the congregation. This is achieved by placing announcements in the church bulletin, making announcements at church, and featuring VBS in the church newsletter and on the website. The publicity director should also make sure VBS is listed in the local newspaper's community pages.

Business Manager: _____

The business manager creates a budget and presents it to the church board. If sufficient funding is not available from the church, the business manager, publicity director, and VBS director can plan a strategy for involving local businesspeople.

Registrar/Receptionist/Secretary: _____

The registrar compiles a list of students according to divisions, passes registration cards to division leaders and collects them at the close of VBS, helps division leaders record names from the registration cards onto the appropriate Class Record cards, passes the Class Record cards to the division leaders and collects them at the close of VBS, and does any additional typing the VBS director may need.

Refreshments Director: _____

The refreshments director and helpers plan and prepare healthful refreshments, deliver refreshments to the designated spot, and consult with the VBS leader and business manager about the cost of refreshments and ways to solicit donations from the congregation and local merchants. Note: try to provide snacks corresponding with each night's theme.

Safety Patrol: _____

The larger the VBS, the more important the role of safety patrols. Older children and teens may be coached to serve as safety helpers alongside adults. The safety team should patrol the parking lot and exits. Children should not leave VBS without the permission of a patrol.

As an extra security precaution at some churches, each child is given a numbered wristband when they arrive at each VBS session and their parent or guardian is given a matching wristband. Children are not allowed to leave with anyone except the adult with a matching wristband.

Photographer/Videographer: _____

Find a volunteer photographer or videographer to capture highlights from each day's VBS. Show slides or a video as part of your closing night program.

First Aid Volunteer: _____

The first aid volunteer keeps the first aid box well supplied (especially with bandages), keeps a record of children with special medical problems, and notifies refreshments director of children with food allergies.

Custodian: _____

The custodial crew helps set up for the opening night and tidies up in between meetings. (Leaders need to tidy up in the area where they work; the custodial crew watches out for anything that is overlooked.) Their largest job is putting things away after the close of VBS.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AND JUNIOR VOLUNTEERS

Kids who are too old to attend VBS can make good helpers. Juniors can help with the organization, decorations, traffic flow, skits, singing, refreshments, crafts, nature centers, and more. Serving as helpers allows them to explore their leadership skills while still having fun experiencing VBS. Also, the younger children love looking up to older role models. Another benefit of involving juniors as VBS helpers is that by the time they are teens, they will be ready to step into leadership roles.

The key to using juniors at VBS is training. If you show them what to do and why, they can easily take over and do it. It's helpful to bring all the junior helpers together for one or two training sessions in the weeks prior to VBS. Throughout the training sessions, help juniors see that what they are doing is ministry. There is no limit to their effectiveness if they open themselves to be used by God.

TRAINING AND EQUIPPING VOLUNTEERS

One important key to a successful VBS is to properly equip your helpers to do the best possible job. In order to

accomplish this goal most effectively, your staff should meet for planning and training purposes. Emphasize that the volunteers are the face and hands of Jesus.

Other topics that could be discussed include:

- » Information about this year's program
- » Volunteer expectations and job descriptions
- » How to interact with children in a way that promotes Jesus
- » The ultimate mission of VBS: bringing children to Christ

Focus on prayer, training, and VBS preparation during each training session. Offer affirmation, encouragement, and suggestions for making their ministry effective. The more responsibility you turn over to volunteers, the more time they will be willing to spend on VBS.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Be sure to share the following guidelines with all VBS volunteers. By being proactive about child safety, you will protect yourself and your church from unfortunate situations.

- » Never leave children you are responsible for unattended. Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.
- » Never be the only adult serving as a caregiver. Always have at least one other person present.
- » Always ask a child's permission before touching him or her anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any area that would normally be covered by a t-shirt and shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as you provide care.
- » Children need to be touched appropriately. However, keep hugs brief and shoulder-to-shoulder or side-to-side. Always keep your hands at (not below) the shoulder level. A caregiver kiss is to the forehead or cheek only. For small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit or stand next to you with your arm around them in an appropriate manner.
- » When taking small children to the bathroom, take another adult along or leave the door open.

- » If the door to the classroom does not have glass in or around it, the door should be left open so the teacher is in full view.

SCREENING VOLUNTEERS

Make sure that all your volunteers are screened prior to the start of your VBS program. Check with your Children's Ministries Coordinator or pastor to see what is required in your conference.

PRAYER

Talk about prayer and the power it brings. Read Matthew 7:7; look up pray and prayer in a concordance; search for texts about prayer. Encourage each volunteer to adopt a prayer text and pray it every day. Pray earnestly for God's empowerment of the children. Give them a chance to pray for each other and the children who will attend. Share personal answers to prayer. Continue praying and sharing all the way through VBS.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and enthusiasm through your church's VBS program. Through your efforts, the children in your church and community will have exciting opportunities to get to know one another and their new Friend, Jesus.

Close with prayer asking for God to bless the plans of each person and send kids to their VBS program.

NOTES

Three easy VBS Follow-up ideas!

1

Parents Night

Build relationships with children's parents by having a **Parents Night** during your VBS. Encourage children to invite their parents or older siblings who can attend either an adult Bible study or VBS activities. Also, a little tidbit of good advice, always require parents to come inside to pick up their children so you can make contact with them.

Your Notes: _____

2

Follow-up Team

Before vacation Bible school begins, form a **follow-up team** of volunteers who'll be very visible throughout the week as they get to know visitors. For example, they may do all the drama or lead the singing, or greeters each day so will children identify with them quickly. Team members stop by each visitor's home during the week and deliver a Special Guest Pack with a children's Bible, VBS themed snack (i.e. Sea of Miracles: package of gold fish) church information, phone numbers to call if children need a ride to church, and a T-shirt that says, "I'm Special to God," with your church name printed in small letters.

Your Notes: _____

3

Reunion Party!

Invite all the VBS children to a get-together every quarter. Make each reunion a **wildly fun** event that fits your VBS theme. For example, if you had a "Cowboy" theme, have a 'Round up' one time playing games and serving refreshments and a 'Yee Haw' Fall Festival the next time where children and families experience fun western games, crafts, yummy food and great stories.

Your Notes: _____

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Some churches dedicate a special Sabbath once in a while as “Children’s Church.” In many churches this Sabbath is like most other worship services except that children are participating in most of the elements. While this is a great opportunity for children to be involved at church, our focus here is a Children’s Church that is something totally different. It’s about evangelizing children and leading them to making a decision for God.

What is this Children’s Church like? Many churches have a Vacation Bible School event during the summer months. They are fun, colorful, creative and exciting. Everything is done to appeal to the children. It is one of the most successful tools for connecting with children of the community. Unfortunately, once VBS is over few churches follow up with other child focused events for

the rest of the year. If you and your church want to be intentional about reaching and evangelizing children year-round, Children’s Church could be a valuable tool.

All were important to Jesus, and children are specifically pointed out in Matthew 19:14. But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.”

Children for the most part rely on committed adults to show them who Jesus is. Matthew 19:14 clearly shows that Jesus intentionally loved children. He didn’t pause his work to love and serve children, it WAS his work.

As we explore Children’s Church and our goal of intentionally and consistently ministering to children, let’s consider several questions.

For many children, VBS or Children's Church may be their first exposure to Jesus and the Bible, so it is important to make all the effort possible to make the teaching fun, simple to understand, easy to remember and applicable in their lives. Children's Church is a year-round solution for a motivated Children's Ministry Team that can bring together the best of group worship and active learning.

There is no "one way" to do Children's Church, it's more of philosophy of using creative, kid-friendly methods to connect with children of your community. Each church will have to decide what is the most practical and applicable way to do Children's Church.

A successful Children's Church Ministry will include each of the following goals.

- » To create an environment where children can worship God at their level.
- » To create a memorable interactive environment where children can be involved in praising God.
- » To teach children about Jesus and what it means to follow Him.
- » To allow children to express themselves in a Christian setting.
- » To teach children Christian stewardship values and principals.
- » To involve positive Christian role models to encourage and empower each child.
- » To teach children leadership skills and allow them to practice them among their peers.



GOALS

The traditional VBS summer format is usually at least 3 hours each day for a week. A Children's Church event should ideally be no more than 1.5 hours. VBS is usually done for 5 consecutive days. Children's Church may be scheduled once a week or once a quarter. Whatever the frequency decided, consistency is important.

The VBS stations format has proven to be very successful. The same format can be used for Children's Church but with fewer stations than VBS typically has, or shorter time with each station.

If you have a lot of children you would divide them into three groups and cycle them around to the three

rotations simultaneously. Actually using a VBS curriculum will give options for what these stations would be. Many creative leaders enjoy developing their own curriculum.

Some station possibilities are, crafts, a special story by a master story teller in your church, puppets, interactive roll playing games, creative theme based snacks, and the list goes on.

The goal is for all stations to repeat the main theme and lesson points of the day. Using different methods and coming from different angles to teach the same lesson will increase the child's memory of what is taught.

A 90 minute Children's Church schedule could include:

- » Welcome, praise and worship – 10 minutes
- » Opening skit and theme – 10 minutes
- » Rotate to Station 1 – 15 minutes
- » Rotate to Station 2 – 15 minutes
- » Rotate to Station 3 – 15 minutes
- » Closing skit and summary – 10 minutes

If you add these times you see that this is only 75 minutes which allows for time between stations and a bit of wiggle room.



**90 MINUTE
CHURCH**

BUILD THE TEAM AND THE MINMINISTRY

It is important to have a solid team to work together doing Children's Church. The key person is a director who will inspire and lead the team to fulfilling the goals and objectives of reaching and serving the children in your community. And take note; the most successful and consistent Children's Churches also include the pastor in concept and scheduling.

There is no right or wrong way to do Children's Church in your church because each church is different. Consider your specific situation, your needs, who would help, venues and scheduling of time of day and frequency – all the aspects that are specific to your church. What is important is understanding the basic concept of what

a Children's Church Ministry would look like in your church and understanding how to guide a team to using it as a way to connect with the children, and adults too, in your community.

Let's talk about scheduling. Should Children's Church be once a month? Once a quarter? Weekly? It depends. A number of factors influence this decision. What would the church family want? Will it be during the regularly scheduled church service? Many assume that Sabbath morning is the default time, but consider other times as well. Sabbath afternoon will likely draw more community children. It is up to your church and your team to determine what is best and most effective. Also be willing to grow and adapt. It is possible that your church may start by scheduling once a quarter and later decide to make it a monthly event.

As you consider how to unfold this event in your church you will want to do the most you can to create a unique and creative looking setting for your programs. Children are drawn in when role playing is used, such as pretending to be on a safari, or going back in time to meet the men, women, and children of the Bible. Building an exciting set will be a big draw and will get the children excited about coming and inviting their friends. Depending on your space situation, you may have to consider designing portable sets that can be put up and taken down easily.

THE EVENTS

Discuss using Children’s Church as an outreach. It should be obvious to both children and parents that what you have prepared is good and that they are special. Start your events on time. Be prepared and rehearse with your team members, particularly those involved in music or drama. When a group is not prepared it shows, and you inadvertently send the wrong message.

Consider organizing your children through a registration area so that you always know who is at your events. Be sure to take into consideration security factors too. Always check to see what your requirements are for background checks for your volunteers as well.

BUDGET

Determining a budget and sticking to it is also important. Each church is different and there will always be some basic expenses that will have to be covered. Some needed items or supplies may also be donated. Many big box stores will donate materials to churches. For example, carpet stores are often willing to donate carpet tubes which can be used to create props or tree trunks. Use your imagination and explore resources for your needs.

Keep in mind that children are very willing to pretend and use their imagination and a large budget is not always necessary. Explore low cost but creative techniques to connect with the children and their imagination. The same goes for costumes. Children love “dressing up”, and they love to see adults willing to dress up to connect with them and the story. Remember the goal is for you to connect with children at their level, not at

yours. Be willing to be silly and a bit goofy as a method of teaching the children about God’s amazing love for them.

Our culture is bombarding children from all directions with toys, technology, media, and peer pressure, to conform to a secular view of our world and universe. It takes courage to stand up in determined commitment to helping children discover Biblical truths. Truths that will bring them happiness and joy as they grow in their knowledge of God. To be consistently there for children as a mentor and friend showing the unconditional love God has for them.

One last thing to keep in mind— One of the easiest ways to the heart of an adult is through the heart of their child. When you connect with children from your community, it’s also very likely that a connection will also be possible with their parents. Watch for these connections and opportunities for building these relationships as well.

NOTES

PROGRAMS ON HEALTH

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NLT)

Modern culture and consumer trends demonstrate that there is a push for healthier living like never before. Families are becoming more active, choosing better diets, and encouraging more holistic living. The Adventist Health message is in the right place to meet the needs of these families. Ellen White refers to the importance of sharing this message by stating, “When properly conducted, the health work is an entering wedge, making a way for other truths to reach the heart. When the third angel’s message is received in its fullness, health reform will be given its place in the councils of the conference, in the work of the church, in the home, at the table, and in all the household arrangements. Then the right arm will serve and protect the body.”

Essentially, the Adventist health message is part of the bigger picture of sharing the Gospel because of its ability to open hearts to hear and understand truth. Our perspective on healthy living runs parallel to current

health research, and It stands out even more today for its lead in positive lifestyle awareness and change. The principles are easy to understand, simple to apply, and important for the developing lives of children.

Because of this, there is abundant potential to use health ministries in connection with your children’s ministry calendar. Most families desire the best health for their children and will openly bring them to programs which advocate healthy living. If the health message is presented in an engaging and dynamic manner, children can be taught to apply the principles of health at an early age. They can then invite their families to do the same. This connects families together in real relationships with church members through the principles of healthy living, making a positive impact on the overall growth and wellness of each child and family.

8 PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH

As illustrated by the activity, every person is unique. No two outlines that were drawn are the same. There are different facial features, different shapes and sizes, and even different personalities shining through the colors and shades that were chosen for the drawings. Although everyone is different, many of the healthy methods written on the outlines will be the same. There are 8

major principles that are supported through scientific and Biblical evidence to improve health. It is important to be aware of these principles so that you are able to explain them to your children.

The Adventist Church has two main acronyms to illustrate the 8 principles of health.

NEWSTART

- » **N**utrition (healthy eating)
- » **E**xercise (active healthy bodies)
- » **W**ater (drinking enough water)
- » **S**unlight (Sunshine/vitamin D)
- » **T**emperance (abstaining from drugs/alcohol/overeating/self-abuse)
- » **A**ir (getting fresh air/going outside)
- » **R**est (getting enough sleep/taking time to rest)
- » **T**rust (relationship with God)

Note: To learn more about NEWSTART and explore some of the resources for children connected to this program, look at the following online resources:

Official website:

<http://www.newstart.com> official website

Healthy Kids curriculum based on NEWSTART:

<http://kidshealthandhappiness.com>

Audio skits:

<https://children.adventist.org/healthy-inside-and-out-audio-series-1-mp3-audio>

CREATION HEALTH

- » **C**hoice (making good choices in food/lifestyle/relationships)
- » **R**est (getting enough sleep/taking time to rest)
- » **E**nvironment (positive surroundings indoors and outdoors/work, school, home)
- » **A**ctivity (active healthy bodies)
- » **T**rust (relationship with God)
- » **I**nterpersonal Relationships (connection with others)
- » **O**utlook (attitude/gratitude/perspective)
- » **N**utrition (healthy eating/drinking water)

Note: To learn more about CREATION health and explore some of the resources for children connected to this program, look at their children's ministries website: www.creationhealth.com/kids

In these 8 principles, health is not only seen as what you put into your bodies or how much exercise you get. It is seen in a more holistic perspective, covering emotional, physical, social, and mental aspects of wellbeing. Children imitate what they see around them. The challenge then is to first demonstrate these health

principles by reflecting them in our own lives, so that when we teach them our kids can see the difference it has made for us. This will give them very tangible examples of what living by these healthy principles can do.

REFLECTION

In what ways can I demonstrate healthy living to my children using the 8 Health Principles?

1. **Choice** _____
 2. **Rest** _____
 3. **Environment** _____
 4. **Activity** _____
 5. **Trust** _____
 6. **Interpersonal Relationships** _____
 7. **Outlook** _____
 8. **Nutrition** _____
-
1. **Nutrition** _____
 2. **Exercise** _____
 3. **Water** _____
 4. **Sunlight** _____
 5. **Temperance** _____
 6. **Air** _____
 7. **Rest** _____
 8. **Trust** _____



GREAT KIDS

Healthy living is a series of building blocks. In order to have a healthy life, children should come to the understanding that there are many parts to health that build on top of one another. CREATION health, and NEWSTART both demonstrate the different blocks of health. Another simplified version of the health message curriculum for children is GREAT Kids , which uses building blocks for healthy living as its main guide.

BUILDING BLOCK 1 – MAKING GOOD CHOICES

“I make choices every day. My choices affect my health”

- » What healthy foods can I choose?
- » What harmful substances should I choose to avoid?
- » How can I treat my body well through choosing to rest?
- » What choices can I make to be active?
- » What attitude will I choose?

BUILDING BLOCK 2 – HAVING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

“Friendship and family are important. My relationships count!”

- » Who do I look up to?
- » Who are my friends and family?
- » How can I care for others?
- » How do others care for me?

BUILDING BLOCK 3 - GETTING OUTSIDE AND GETTING EXERCISE

“I can choose to be active with my friends and family. Going outside and exercising keeps my body and mind fit!”

- » How can I get fresh air and sunshine?
- » What active games and exercises do I enjoy?
- » How does exercise help me?
- » What fitness goals do I want to set?

BUILDING BLOCK 4 – BEING AWARE OF YOUR ATTITUDE

“My attitude is my choice. Having a positive outlook helps me have a positive life, even when I face difficulty.”

- » What am I thankful for?
- » How do I understand my feelings?
- » What perspectives do I take when I face something difficult?

GREAT KIDS



GOOD CHOICES



RELATIONSHIPS



EXERCISE



ATTITUDE



TRUST IN GOD

BUILDING BLOCK 5 – TRUSTING IN GOD

“God cares for me and has my best interest in mind. It is important to trust him in everything I do”

- » When and how can I pray?
- » What can I learn from God’s word?
- » What can I trust God with?

GREAT Kids follows a teaching formula which includes a big idea (the building block), an illustration, activity stations and a “change challenge”

STEP 1 – INTRODUCE THE BIG IDEA

Help your children understand what the healthy building block of the day is. For example, if you are talking about GOOD CHOICES, use a short story to introduce what choices are and why they are important. Healthy Choices is the first building block because healthy living depends on the choices you make every day.

STEP 2 – DEMONSTRATE THE BIG IDEA WITH A HANDS-ON ILLUSTRATION.

Use an interactive illustration to demonstrate the Big idea. For example, if you are talking about GOOD CHOICES and focusing on different kinds of choices from day-to-day, you can play a game of “A or B” (have two choice options covered under two sheets and have them choose sheet A or B) then talk about both options.

STEP 3 – ACTIVITY STATIONS.

Choose 4 Activities which focus on the different parts of the building block. For example, if you are talking about GOOD CHOICES, have a station on healthy eating, a station on temperance, and a station on rest, and a station on daily choices. Each

station should have an activity or interaction which will engage your children’s interest.

STEP 4 – CHANGE CHALLENGE

End your program with a challenge to apply the changes that children learn. This can be a card, a wristband with the challenge on it or any other challenge with a reminder they can take home.

TEACHING METHODS:

There are so many fun and creative “tickets to health” you can use to teach healthy principles! Because it is such a relevant topic, you can use pre-existing websites, youtube videos, and teaching materials to supplement your program. You can also exchange ideas with other people, coming up with your own creative healthy teaching tools. Some of the websites you can look at for resources are here:

- creationhealthkids.org
- myplate.gov
- kidshealthandhappiness.com
- superhealthykids.com
- kidshealth.org
- healthy-kids.com.au
- healthyactivekids.com.au
- healthyeating.org/Healthy-Kids/Kids-Games-Activities

When creating a children’s ministry program focusing on health, you can use several methods to connect with your community.

1. COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

A community health fair is a large, one-day event set up in a public location where families can join together learning about healthy living by visiting booths

- » Choose one of the acronyms for the principles of health (CREATION/NEWSTART/GREATkids) and designate a time and place for the community event. Advertise and communicate about it and make it open to the public.
 - o Some places you can set the fair up are at the park, library, local school district, hospital system, public fair grounds, convention hall, or mall.
- » Connect with your community leaders and see if they have resources and child-friendly presenters who can participate in your health fair.

- o a local nutritionist or dentist
- o Firemen/police officers
- o Pediatricians and nurses

- » Set up a booth with coloring sheets, activities, and presenters for each principle of health.
- » Create a followup sheet for families who would like to learn more, and contact them after the health fair.

2. COMMUNITY HEALTH CLUB

- » Partner with a fitness center or health organization to start up a community health club. This club will meet once a week for 8 weeks and focus on one part of healthy living each week.
- » Use one of the Health message acronyms to guide what you want to teach (CREATION/NEWSTART/GREAT KIDS)
- » You can target certain age groups, such as having a health club for mommy and me (0-5) kids health club (6-12) or teen health club 13-16

3. VBS FORMAT (BACK TO SCHOOL BASH)

- » Use a curriculum of your choice as a follow-up for VBS. You can package it as a “healthy kids” back to school bash, with a week long interactive program focusing on health.
- » Time and schedule would be identical to your VBS format and can be organized in a similar manner

4. SCHOOL PROGRAM

Partner with a local private or public school and put on a health program as part of their healthy kids week (red ribbon week/active kids week etc.) you can also work with your local school to set up an after-school program that uses the 8 health principles as guidelines. You will have to contact the local principal or superintended to get permission.

Reflection: How can I share the health message with my community?

DISCIPLING KIDS

There is a story that is told about a master potter, whose clay pots were revered throughout the land as the most magnificent. His young son, who had grown up watching his father at work, dreamed of throwing a pot that was every bit as beautiful. “Dad! Teach me how to create pieces as amazing as yours!” he pleaded.

The potter placed his son before the turning wheel and gave him some clay. The boy tried his best! His first pot was too thin and collapsed on the wheel. His second pot was far too thick and heavy. Other attempts resulted in holes, cracks and uneven bumps. With every creation, his father would encourage him by placing his strong hands atop his son’s tiny hands. He showed him how to move through the mistakes in the clay. As the boy grew stronger, his works became more beautiful, until his own pots were proudly displayed and admired next to his father’s. Before he knew it, he had become a master potter himself.

This story well illustrates what Christian discipleship among children looks like. Most of us have come to know God through the influence of another, and we have spent a lifetime growing in the knowledge and faith that we have in Christ. Those of us with more life experience have a sacred calling to share that wisdom with others. Day by day, we can journey beside our children, helping them learn what it means to deepen their own Christian walks. As they grow older and stronger, they will continue to share their faith with others, as we have shared with them.

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” - Proverbs 22:6

From one wooden tower, many others were built. But not without the help of a messenger. This messenger gained knowledge about the tower behind the poster board and shared their wisdom with their group members. Together each group multiplied the message.

RELATIONSHIP

Take a moment to Reflect:

Who are three people who have made an impact on my Christian walk?

How did each help me grow?

Discipleship begins with relationship. This is the foundation upon which all successful Biblical mentoring is built. When Jesus called his disciples, he made a practice of spending intimate time with them. Knowledge of Christ was gained by association before it was understood by explanation (<http://www.discipleshipdefined.com/resources/biblical-basis-discipleship>). Jesus ate with his disciples, shared with them, walked with them, talked with them, and patiently taught them for most of his active ministry.

First and foremost, there must be a relationship in our lives with Jesus before we can disciple our children. Daily, we must spend time getting to know our Savior.

As we do, the relationship we have with Jesus will spill over into the relationships we have with our children. Theodore Roosevelt is believed to have once said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This is true in the discipleship process. The impact of discipleship lies in the child knowing he or she is loved, not only by Jesus but also by their mentors. It is important to take the time and effort to know your children and to take an interest in their lives. Caring for our children's spiritual growth comes

with a commitment to demonstrate that care in real and tangible ways. If this does not happen, children may feel like a project instead of a person, and any wisdom to be shared might be missed without relationship.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Who are the children in my church whom I'd like to help disciple?

How can I demonstrate an ongoing relationship with these children?

WORD

WORD TRAINING TIP #1: MODEL GOOD HABITS

Children imitate what they see. They take notice of authenticity. Have conversations with the children you want to disciple about your own prayer life and study time. Share what has worked for you and what you have found most impactful. Be sincere with them about points where you have struggled and points where you have felt closest to God. Let them see you praying, studying, and growing. Then encourage them to develop good habits of their own. Come up with a plan together and share with them the tools they can use to go through with their plan.

WORD TRAINING TIP #2: STUDY TOGETHER

Choose an age-appropriate Bible study series that your children want to do with you and set regular time aside to go through the series with them. You can also choose a book of the Bible they are interested in and go through it chapter by chapter. Make this time you set aside a special time and communicate that the time is important to you because you care about them. Pick a special place to study (visiting the child's home, studying in a group at church, going out to a park etc) and help the child look forward to this study time.

WORD TRAINING TIP #3: FACILITATE CURIOSITY AND DISCOVERY

Teach your children how to critically think about what they are reading in the Bible. Ask them to use their five senses and put themselves in the story: what do they see? Hear? Feel? Smell? Taste? And touch?

WONDERING QUESTIONS

Ask “wondering” questions and allow them to ponder with you about what they read. Examples of questions you can ask include:

- » I wonder which person in the Bible passage you feel you are most like.
- » I wonder what you have learned from this Bible passage.
- » I wonder who this passage was written for.
- » I wonder what your favorite part of the story is...Why is it your favorite?
- » I wonder if anything in the passage was hard to understand...What questions do you have about those things?
- » I wonder how this passage can help us today.

Encourage children to ask as many questions as they can think of about the scriptures you study. Make it a question and answer game where they can ask you whatever is on their mind. Even if you do not know the answer, both you and the child can find the answer together.

Show them how to use Bible Study Tools such as concordances, web searches, and Bible commentaries. Spend time playing with the Bible stories. Suggestions for play include:

- » Sing songs that surround the stories you learn
- » Pretend and role-play themes from your Bible studies using familiar toys
- » Do a related craft together
- » Draw pictures of the story
- » Look up games using a children's ministry resource that ties in with the themes and lessons that the children have learned.

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

MINISTRY

Modeling and empowering children for ministry is an important part of discipleship because God has called his followers to witness through service and testimony (See these verses 1 Pet 4:10, Rom 12:9-13, Mt 28:19-20). Service is any work done to others with the motivation to honor Jesus. This can be as simple as helping someone carry their groceries in to demonstrating care for those who are hurting physically and spiritually. Witnessing is spreading the gospel by personal sharing or public teaching. (<http://www.discipleshipdefined.com/resources/biblical-basis-discipleship>)

MINISTRY TRAINING TIP #1: SHARING THE GOSPEL

Help your children understand the basics of the gospel message and how to share it with others. There are many easy-to-explain illustrations you can use (see listed in resource page). Encourage your kids to actively talk to one another and to you about the gospel.

Provide sharing opportunities.

- » Mentor a child and coach them on how to preach, then set a date that they can preach a sermon that they have written.
- » Help a child look through some sharing tools such as Bible studies, GLOW Tracts, Steps To Christ and let them pick out what resources they would like to share with others. Help them find places and opportunities to share those resources.
- » Go through a short Bible study series with your children. Help them understand it, then have them co-teach a class of their own using the same Bible study. Be available to help them with the class.

MINISTRY TRAINING TIP #2: SHARING THEIR TESTIMONY

Give your children the opportunity to share their testimonies.

- » Help them reflect and write a short testimony of their own about something God has done for them.
- » Help them give words to describe their relationship with God.

- » Find others who care about the child and have them practice their testimony.
- » Arrange a time in church during the service where they can give their testimony
- » Encourage the child to share their story on their own with others.

MINISTRY TRAINING TIP #3: CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Take your children to places where they can actively serve. Talk to them about some of the needs in their community and ask them how they would like to help.

- » Look for nursing homes you can visit
- » Pick a community service project together
- » Demonstrate how your children can pray for others: Help the child choose people to pray for and encourage them to daily pray for those people.
- » Have them choose a mission project they would like to financially support and come up with ideas on how they can fund raise.

Ask children if they personally know anyone who could be uplifted in God's love, then find ways of sharing acts of random kindness with them.

Help children discover a ministry that they are passionate about.

- » Share a ministry you are active in at church and show them how they can take leadership in similar positions.
- » Find what your children are interested in and ask them how they can use that interest to help demonstrate God's love. Follow up on this discussion by helping them turn their thoughts into actions.

Ideas I can use to help facilitate sharing the gospel:

Ideas I can use to help facilitate sharing testimonies:

Ideas I can use to help facilitate sharing the gospel:

Ideas I can use to help facilitate sharing testimonies:

Ideas I can use to help facilitate caring relationships:

Remember, discipleship is a life-long journey of growth in a Christ centered relationship, rooted in the Word of God and poured out to others through ministry. There is great reward and great joy in seeing children become leaders in Christ and having a part to play in their faith walk.

The apostle John states it well when he says in 3 John 4, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” This is what Joy in Jesus does- it grows, expands and draws others in. Our joy becomes

greater as we invest in depth, for an extended period of time, into the lives of our kids because we get to see God work and give their faith growth. Let us then be encouraged to prayerfully choose to reach out to the children close to us with patience, love, guidance, and care.

RESOURCE IDEAS FOR DISCIPLESHIP

WORD: BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

Bible Adventures for young readers: God Loves Me 28 Ways by Linda Koh

<https://www.adventistbookcenter.com/bible-adventures-for-young-readers-god-loves-me-28-ways.html>

My Place With Jesus Bible Guides by It Is Written

<https://itiswritten.shop/my-place-with-jesus-bible-guide-set.html>

KidZone Bible Studies by Voice of Prophecy

<https://www.voiceofprophecy.com/study/kidzone>

Footprints Series by Kids In Discipleship

<http://www.indiscipleship.org/resources.html>

Adventist Book Center Devotional Books

<https://www.adventistbookcenter.com/kids-teens/devotionals.html>

Illustrated Bible Dictionaries

» International Children’s Bible Dictionary by Lynn Walker | ISBN: 0849940133

» Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary | ISBN 10: 0529106221, SBN 13: 9780529106223

» Deep Blue Kids Bible Dictionary by Laura Allison | ISBN 10: 1501840614, ISBN 13: 9781501840616

» The Holman Bible Concordance for Kids from the Holman Reference series | ISBN 0805493735

» SDA Bible Commentary for Windows/PC/Mobile Devices <https://www.logos.com/product/38875/seventh-day-adventist-bible-commentary-standard-edition>

Bible Reading Plans

» One Year Bible Challenge for Kids by Tyndale House Publishers <https://danwerthman.com/other-bible-reading-plans/>

MINISTRY: OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM IDEAS

Tools to help kids share the gospel

» Go Fish Curriculum | <https://www.adventsource.org/as30/store-productDetails.aspx?ID=36905>

» GLOW Tracts | <http://glowcentral.com/>

» Adventist Cards Bible Heroes | <https://www.adventist.cards/>

» Backpack Evangelism | <https://ministry-to-children.com/backpack-evangelism/>

» Wordless Books | <https://www.letthelittlechildrencome.com/>

child-evangelism-resources/make-your-own-wordless-book

» **Evangel Cube** | <https://shop.e3resources.org/ecube-classic/>
Tools To help Kids Share Their Testimony

» **“What’s My Story” Testimony Booklet** | <https://jeffmcclung.com/2014/02/19/testimony-tool/>

» **“Inside Out”** by Don MacLafferty

Tools For Helping Kids pray for others

» **Prayer Sticks** | http://melissaprojects.blogspot.com/2011/10/prayer-sticks.html#.TvynK5xm_Ok.mailto

» **5 Finger Prayer** | <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/41165784067963050/>

» **Oriental Trading Prayer Prompt Cards**

NOTES



Track 3: Child Evangelism

Child Evangelism can be seen in two ways: adults reaching children for Christ or children sharing their faith with others. Child Evangelism will expand on what evangelism is and the many methods and programs that can be incorporated when evangelizing.

childmin.org

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