

VBS - Backyard Kids Club

Sharing the Gospel

Sharing the Gospel with Kids:

The word ***gospel*** means “good news”. It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God Rules - The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me. He is in charge of everything. (Gen 1:1, Rev 4:11, Col 1:16-17)

We Sinned - Since the time of Adam & Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Rom 3:23)
The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God & deserves God's punishment of death. (Rom 6:23)

God Provided - God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. (John 3:16, Eph 2:8-9)

Jesus Gives - Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity! This is the best gift ever! Good news!! (Rom 5:8, 2 Cor 5:21, 1 Peter 3:18)

We Respond - We can respond to Jesus. The ABCs of becoming a Christian is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to receive the gift Jesus offers.

Admit to God that you're a sinner. The first people that God created chose to sin and disobey God. Ever since then, all people have chosen to sin & disobey. (Rom 3:23)
Tell God you messed up and you are sorry for doing your own thing and turning away from Him through your thoughts, words and actions. Repent, turn away from your sin. Repent doesn't just

mean turning from doing bad things into doing good things. It means turning from sin and even from your own good works and turning to Jesus. Trust only in Him to save you.

Believe that Jesus is God's Son and receive God's gift of forgiveness from sin. You must believe that only Jesus can save you and that you cannot save yourself from your sin problem. Not even by praying to God, going to church or reading your Bible. Your faith or your trust is only in Jesus and what He did for you through His life, death & resurrection.

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior & Lord. Tell God and tell others what you believe. If Jesus is your Savior, you are trusting only in Him to save you. Jesus is also Lord, which means He is in charge. You can start following Him and doing what He says in the Bible. You are born again into a new life and look forward to being with God forever.

If you sense that children are under conviction from the Holy Spirit and would like to respond to the good news, spend some time counseling and praying with them individually. If you sense that the child is not ready to pray and respond in faith and repentance, continue to prayerfully teach him about Christ throughout VBS.

Preparation:

Prepare your heart. Read the Scripture passages in your Bible. Pray that God will speak to you through His word.

Pray for the kids you will teach.

Read through the daily sessions in advance.

Gather any additional supplies that you need.

Relax and enjoy the chance to build relationships with your kids.

Be flexible. Adjust your plans to make this the best possible experience for you and your kids.

Bible Study Overview

Day 1 – Foundation of Love – Jesus Chose Matthew

Jesus called Matthew, a tax collector, to follow Him. Matthew left everything behind and followed Jesus. Matthew hosted a banquet. Jesus and His disciples came to the banquet. The Pharisees complained and questioned why Jesus ate with tax collectors & sinners. Jesus told the Pharisees that He came not for the righteous but for sinners. (Matthew 9:9-13)

Day 2 – Foundation of Forgiveness – Paul’s Redemption

Paul was chosen by God to bring the good news about Jesus to the Gentiles. He was arrested and later taken to King Agrippa to tell his story. Paul told how he used to persecute believers. But one day, on the road to Damascus, he saw a bright light and heard a voice speaking to him. The voice was Jesus. Paul obeyed Jesus’ command and told people everywhere that Jesus is the Messiah. (Acts 26:1-29)

Day 3 – Foundation of Worth – Jesus Prayed in the Garden

On the last night Jesus spent with His disciples, He went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He asked His disciples to remain awake and pray while He went further into the garden. Jesus was distressed because He knew He was going to die on the cross to save people from their sins. Jesus returned to the disciples three times and found them asleep each time. The last time He told the disciples to get up and follow Him. Jesus knew the time had come to follow through with God's plan. (Matthew 26:36-46)

Bible Study

Day 1 - Foundation of Love - Matthew 9:9-13

(Use your own words, but have your own Bible open)

Matthew was a tax collector and often sat at a booth where people came to pay their taxes. Many people did not like tax collectors because they often took more money than they were supposed to. They kept the extra for themselves! One day Jesus walked by and saw Matthew sitting at the tollbooth. Jesus said to Matthew, "Follow Me." Matthew got up immediately, leaving everything behind and followed Jesus.

Matthew hosted a grand banquet (or a big fancy party) at his house. Jesus and His disciples came to the banquet. Many tax collectors and other sinners were also at the banquet eating with Jesus and the disciples. When the Pharisees (teachers of the law) saw this, they began to complain to the disciples. They asked why Jesus would eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners.

Jesus overheard the Pharisees talking to His disciples. He said to them, "It is not those who are well that need a doctor, but those who are sick. I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners." Jesus was not interested in how good a person was or how bad.

Jesus wanted people to follow Him.

Ask: Do you believe that Jesus loves you?

Say: We might be tempted to think that Jesus should not spend time with such people as the tax collectors or those who love them. But Jesus chose to love them just like He chooses to love US, no matter what our sin is.

Say: Every time we meet, we'll check our backpack to see what's been packed for the day. Pull out each item and ask kids to tell how it relates to the story. If they cannot figure it out, give them some help! (coin= Matthew, the tax collector, footprint/shoe= Jesus' command to follow me, plastic/real piece of food=Matthew's banquet, scroll=Pharisees, teachers of the law)

Scripture verse - "Our VBS memory verse is Philippians 1:6. Let's read it together."

Point out words that might be confusing and define them.

Explain: We are a work in progress. We still sin even after we have given our lives to Jesus. This verse gives us hope though, because it says that Jesus never quits on us! He never gives up on us! He will keep working in us until Jesus returns!

God loves you NO MATTER WHAT. We all mess up. We're all sinners. We all do things that disobey God. Sometimes we tell a lie or don't obey our parents or are ugly to our brothers and sisters. The Bible calls those things sin. Sin is the ugly stuff we do that keeps us separated from a holy, amazing, perfect God. We all have a sin problem. The good news is that God loves us soooooo much that He sent His perfect Son to pay the price for our sin so that we can be with God forever in heaven! God's son's name is Jesus. Jesus was a real person who walked around on the earth 2000 years ago. He never ever sinned. He was perfect. God's plan was for perfect Jesus to die on the cross as the punishment for the sins that we do. Jesus died on the cross for you because He loves you and never gives up on you. You never have to be "good enough" to go to heaven. You just have to trust that Jesus loves you, He died on the cross to pay the price for your sin, and trust Him to be in charge of your life! That's great news!!

Close with Prayer. Pray for kids as they think about what it means that Jesus loves them and wants a relationship with them. Pray for VBS, that many kids will come and learn more about Jesus and His love.

Day 2 – Foundation of Forgiveness – Acts 26:1-29

Let's learn just a little bit more about each other. What's your favorite ice cream? (take answers)
Your favorite sport? Your favorite food?

No matter what you like or dislike, Jesus loves you! He loves us if we are good at something or even if we're really bad at it! He also loves us even though we sin. There's a story in the Bible about a man who called himself the biggest sinner ever! and guess what? Jesus loved him too! Jesus even used him to tell many people about His love!

I wonder what's in our backpack today that might have to do with today's Bible story... Pull out handcuffs, crown, flashlight, and envelope and hold them for the kids to see. Looks like there's a list of names. According to the list, it looks like I need some helpers to tell today's story.

Choose a kid to play King Agrippa, a couple of kids to arrest Paul & one to play Paul (give this kid the envelope with his highlighted part inside). Encourage kids to act out their parts as you tell the story. Instruct "Paul" to read his part when it's time.

Tell the Bible story in your own words. Place the crown on King Agrippa as you introduce him and help the other kids to arrest Paul. Shine the flashlight as Paul reads about his encounter with Jesus.

Paul had been chosen by God to tell the good news about Jesus to the Gentiles (people who were not Jews). Paul traveled thousands of miles telling people about Jesus and starting churches. This made some people so angry that they had Paul arrested! However, instead of being angry, Paul knew he could use his arrest to talk to many very important government officials.

While Paul was in prison, King Agrippa came to visit Festus, the local governor. Festus told the King about Paul and the King asked to see Paul and listen to his story. Paul began by reminding everyone that he had grown up in Jerusalem and strictly followed the laws and rules of the Pharisees. He spoke out against Jesus, he placed many people who were followers of Jesus in jail, and he even supported the rulers' decisions to put Jesus' followers to death!

Then, Paul told about the day he had been traveling to Damascus to arrest believers in Jesus. "King Agrippa," Paul said, "I was walking along the road in the middle of the day when I saw a light brighter than the sun! I fell to the ground and so did all the people traveling with me! I heard a voice speak to me!

The voice said, 'Why are you persecuting me?'" Paul explained that he was confused because he did not see anyone so he asked who was speaking. The voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting." Jesus told Paul that he had been chosen to go and tell the Gentiles how they could have faith in Jesus and receive forgiveness of sins!

Paul explained to King Agrippa that he obeyed the voice and told people everywhere that Jesus, the Messiah, suffered and died but rose again. Paul explained how God had helped him. Paul told the king that everything he said was true.

King Agrippa asked, "Are you trying to convince me to be a Christian too?" Paul replied, "I truly wish that not only you, but that everyone who listens to me would believe in Jesus."

Say: Jesus can use each of us just like He used Paul to speak to King Agrippa and to hundreds of other people about Jesus! Remember, Jesus loves us no matter what.

Show Romans 5:8 poster. Use this time to emphasize how much Jesus loves us no matter what we've done.

Review questions -

What was the king's name to whom Paul was speaking? (Agrippa)

Who did Paul say he spoke out against? (Jesus)

Where was Paul traveling when he saw the bright light? (Damascus)

What did the voice ask Paul on the road to Damascus? (Why are you persecuting me?)

Who was the voice speaking to Paul on the road to Damascus? (Jesus)

What had Paul been chosen to tell the Gentiles? (How they could have faith in Jesus and receive forgiveness of sin.)

Discussion questions –

Why do you think some people were angry at Paul for telling the Gentiles the good news about Jesus?

How would you have felt if you were brought before the king to tell your story? Why?

How did the experience on the road to Damascus change Paul's life?

What do you think Paul's friends thought about him after he became a Christian?

Paul was not scared to tell King Agrippa that he needed to believe in Jesus. Have you ever been scared to tell someone about Jesus? Why or why not?

Review Philippians 1:6 poster and practice the motions with the verse.

Close by praying and thanking God for His unconditional love.

Day 3 – Foundation of Worth – Matthew 26:36–46

Let's see what I have in my backpack today! I just have cards with parts of the Bible story on them. When I call the number on your card, read your part of the story really loudly so that everyone hear. Today's story comes from the book of Matthew. Does anybody remember from the first week who Matthew is? (Jesus's friend, tax collector, disciple)

1. Jesus knew He had come to earth to be the Savior of the world. He knew that meant He would have to die. On the last night Jesus was with His disciples, He took them to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to the men, "Sit here while I go pray." Then Jesus asked Peter and two other disciples, James & John to go a little farther with Him.
2. Jesus was very sad and troubled because He knew He was going to die on the cross to save people from their sins. Jesus asked Peter, James, and John to stay awake with Him because He was so distressed.

3. When Jesus had gone a little farther into the garden alone, He fell to His knees and began to pray. He asked God if there was any other way to provide forgiveness other than by dying. Jesus did not want to disobey His Father, but He also knew all things are possible for God. Jesus told God that He would do whatever God wanted Him to do.
4. Jesus returned to Peter, James & John, but found them sleeping. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you stay awake with me for just an hour? Stay awake and pray."
5. Jesus went alone a second time to pray. When He came back, the three were asleep again because they could not keep their eyes open.
6. Finally Jesus went alone a third time to pray. When He returned and found the three men sleeping, he told them to get up and go with Him. Jesus knew it was time to go with the soldiers and follow through with God's plan. He was willing to suffer and die on the cross to save us from our sin.

Say: Jesus knew that the plan for providing salvation and payment for our sins was for Him to die. He knew that it would be very painful and heartbreaking. He asked if there was another way to provide forgiveness. Yet Jesus did not desire to disobey His Father and also said that He would do whatever God wanted Him to do. Jesus knew that it was time to go with the soldiers and follow through with God's plan. He was willing to suffer and die on the cross to save us from our sins.

Jesus showed how much He loves us by choosing to die for us! There's no greater love than this.

Jesus chose to die for YOU. He loves you and wants you to spend forever in Heaven with Him. Have you made a decision to trust Jesus to forgive you of your sins and go to Heaven? Any one of these leaders would love to talk with you about this more, if you need to make the most important decision that you'll ever make.

Close by praying. Pray for those who do not have a relationship with Jesus to make a decision to follow Him.

Bible Verse. Philippians 1:6 with motions.

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Phillipians 1:6 – I am
sure of this, that the
one who began a
good work in you
will carry it on to
completion in Christ
Jesus