

The
FLOOD
A “Dress to Get Wet”
VBS Curriculum

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The FLOOD: A “Dress to Get Wet” VBS Curriculum

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Unless otherwise indicated Scripture quotations are from the World English Bible (WEB).

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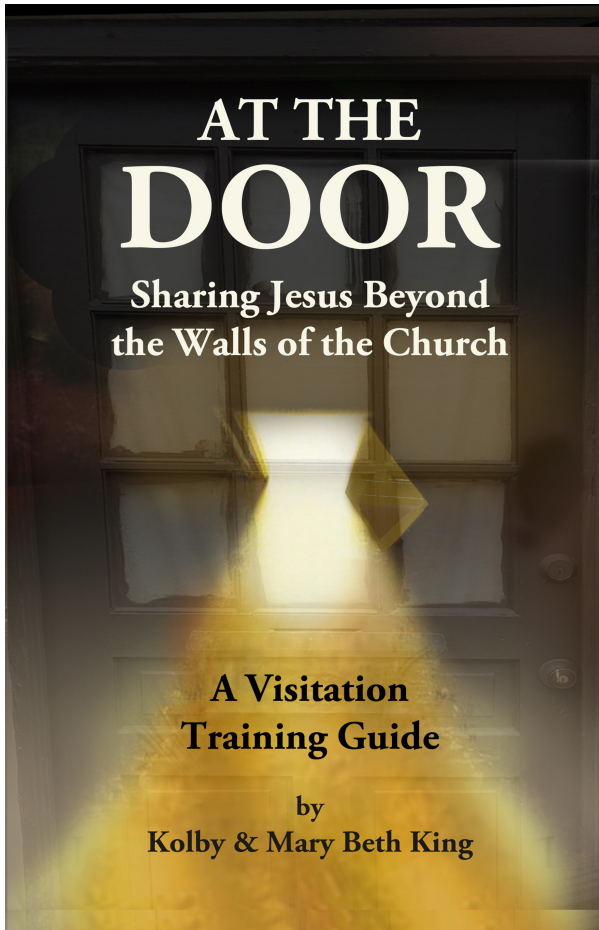


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Part 1

LEADER INFORMATION

CHAPTER 1

THE BASICS

The FLOOD is a 3-day, dress-to-get-wet event that can be used as a Vacation Bible School or another fun, summer outreach activity.

Goal

For kids to learn Bible truth

For kids to learn about salvation

To reach kids who might not come to a normal VBS

For kids to have a great time in a Christian atmosphere

For kids to get wet from head to toe

Equipment

The equipment you need depends on the activities you choose for each day. However, none of the games and activities require expensive equipment or equipment that is hard to find or make.

Songs

We do not have certain songs that we recommend specifically for this curriculum. However, online you can watch videos of a variety of songs that will work well for this kind of setting. Visit us online at: www.threethirtyministries.org/kid-songs and use the login password “Sing4Jesus”.

Warnings

- Water recreation typically damages the grass. We have seen areas of the lawn that take a long time to recover once they have been wet and trampled by children.
- You will get wet. Be sure that your leaders understand that they will probably get wet too. Especially warn them about cell phones that are not waterproof.

Discipline Procedure

When you reach kids who don't normally go to church, you can expect some discipline issues that you might not have with your normal Sunday morning children. These are not discipline "problems" but opportunities for ministry. See the back of this curriculum for sample discipline procedures.

Wetting the ground

Before the water games, we suggest that you thoroughly wet the ground. This makes play more fun as students splash while running across the area where your activities will be happening. It is also fun if you have a sprinkler that is spraying across the area through which they will be running. If you want, you can also equip your leaders with water guns. However, you need to help them know how and when to use these so that they do not become a distraction to the games and create chaos at times when you want structure.

Checking the ground

Before you plan your event, make sure that your game area is free from stickers, glass, and anything else that might be dangerous to bare feet.

Using Trained Youth

We love using students. Youth are an incredible asset when they are trained, know what you expect and stay on task. Recruit and train youth in advance. We also suggest that you not let youth attend the activities who are not in a leadership position. Our experience has been that youth who show up just to watch or "hang around" have a

tendency to distract the students who are leading the activities. This is something that you definitely want to announce in advance while you are signing up volunteers. When youth sign up, also tell them when the required training sessions will be.

Set high standards for your students. Youth will live up to or down to the expectations that you give them. Train them to share their salvation stories. Train them to know how to lead a child to Christ. Don't just use them as side helpers but be willing to use them to their full potential. At the back of this curriculum you can find training materials for teaching all of your leaders how to share their salvation testimonies and how to lead a child to Christ.

Keeping Control

For years we have led water recreation with hundreds of kids at a time. The key to keeping control is:

- Go over rules, instructions and expectations before you go outside and begin the activities.
- Lead and guide children to and from activities. Do not just send them.
- Enforce your rules and instructions. If you have told the children not to touch the kiddie pools, water balloons, or the other equipment needed for the activities, expect and enforce their obedience. If a child cannot control himself after a warning, follow your church's discipline procedure, which we suggest should include temporarily removing him from the activities.
- Guide the kids where to be and what to do. When you first arrive outside, for example, tell them to line up along the fence or a wall. Then give them instructions before approaching the activity area. We also suggest that you go over instructions inside at the end of the rally and then dismiss kids by age groups with leaders to the appropriate activity areas. For

example, "All third and fourth graders follow [leaders name] to your activity. You will see four orange cones there. We need you to get into equal lines behind those cones." Of course, the leaders need to assist with this.

- Do not let even one child run wild. If you make an exception for one, you need to make the exception for all. As you can see, this will quickly disintegrate your activity time into chaos.
- Use control tools outside. To learn more about control tools, see the information at the back of this book. A control tool is a simple refocusing tool where the leader makes a statement or asks a question and the kids respond.
- When you were outside, have a way of signaling when it is time for groups to move stations. It is good to give a two or five minute warning for this. You could use a whistle, a boat horn, or a megaphone.
- For the water balloon review, before you go outside the first day, tell your kids to listen for a certain signal. It is the only time during the day that this signal will be used. The signal will always mean that all the children are to come immediately to you and gather around in front of you as a group. The signal could be something as simple as three long whistle blows or a very recognizable sound that is *only* used for this.

Taking Pictures

During these activities, you will get opportunities for some great pictures and video. The best option is to find someone who has a waterproof camera or phone so that you are not taking a chance that their device might get ruined by a splash or squirt of water.

Modesty

Never assume that just because kids attend church that they will be modest at water events. Discuss your modesty policy before the event and be sure to state it on your promotional materials. For example,

“One piece swim suits only or please wear a T-shirt over two pieces suits.”

Making Partners

As a student, were you ever the last one chosen to be a part of a team? Were you ever afraid that you would be chosen last—that no one would want you and that you would be automatically given to a team because there were no other options?

In sports and activities one of the cruelest things that leaders can do is to let students choose who they want on their team. Someone will always be chosen last. Someone will always feel unwanted.

These are not the experiences that we want our students to have at church, so below is an easy way to create pairs or partners:

Have your students spread out in the room. Tell them that when you call a number, you want them to get into groups of that number. So if you call out a three, you want them to get into groups of three. If you call out a five, you want them to get into groups of five. .Call out 4, 3, 8, 3, 7, 12, 5, 2. The only reason you’re doing this is to get them in pairs in a manner where no one feels left out, so you’ll want to end by getting them into groups of 2. If there is an extra student, then a leader may need to participate as well.

Extra features

In addition to the water activities, here are two more ideas that can be a bunch of fun along side the FLOOD.

- *The Great American Mud War* – Create an area of mud. We’ve used a tiller to turn up the ground and run water on it for several days before the activities. Then you can have a variety of activities in the mud.
- *Hidden Coins* – Take 10 pennies and hide them in a muddy area or an area that is wet and will get trampled. Then, at the end of the activities, have your kids hunt for the coins. Use the

parable of the lost coin (Luke 15) to share with your kids how much the Lord desires for lost people to be “found.” You can also use the parable of the hidden treasure (Matthew 12) to teach that Jesus is more important than anything else in life.

- *Bubbles* – Add bubble games and bubble blowing to your water activities.
- *Body Painting* – Let your kids do “body painting.” This takes a lot of paint. Be sure also to use appropriate and washable paints.
- *T-Shirt Freeze* – Create T-shirts to give to your kids during the event. Put the shirts in a Ziploc bag and then fill the bags with water and freeze them solid. The next day, give the frozen bags to the kids. The first student to get their frozen T-shirt out and put it on is the winner. This is a great way (a very “cool” way) to give your kids their event shirts.
- *Prizes* – If you plan to give out prizes, put them in some water and freeze them.
- *Extra Time* – If you have extra time, play a game of *Wet Red Rover*. This is regular Red Rover but with sprinklers and water so that kids get soaked as they run and play!

Basic Equipment

The following is a list of some basic items that you may need depending on the outside water activities that you choose:

- *Kiddie Pools* – These can be the cheap ones. You will need one that is approximately 5-6 feet wide and 12”-18” deep for every 12-15 students. The rule for water games is: ALWAYS HAVE PLENTY OF WATER. Better to have too much than not enough and always be prepared for accidents that might spill

some of your water.

- *Large trash cans* – These can be used in games, as an extra or back-up water source and for storing your equipment.
- *Plastic Cups and Bowls* – Do not use disposable cups and bowls since they are not usually durable enough for the water games, depending on the activities you've chosen.
- *Balloons* – You can have fun with a variety of kinds and sizes, even 260 and 360 pencil balloons, but balloons made specifically as water balloons are thinner and usually pop best.
- *Megaphone* – This is not necessary but can help greatly to give instructions or get your students attention during the event.
- *Buckets* – We usually take the handles off of the plastic buckets we use for water recreation because they usually break and we don't want to take the chance of someone swinging a bucket with the handle when it breaks and the bucket hurting someone.
- *Orange cones* (or something else that can designate areas, starting points, etc.)
- *Sponges* – Both large and small work great for different kinds of games.
- *Sprinklers* – The better the range of the sprinkler, the more kids can enjoy it.
- *20oz bottles* – Used in a game called "Bottlehead," listed below.
- *Spray Whip Cream* – Used in a game called "The Whip Cream Shooting Gallery," listed below.
-

- *Water Balloon Slingshot* – These are great fun but always make sure that the shooting only happens under adult supervision. Water Balloon Slingshots should also never be shot directly at anyone since many of these can shoot a balloon at up to 70 mph. Always make sure to shoot upwards and loft balloons down to those who are catching or playing in the game.

CHAPTER 2

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

AT A GLANCE

- Opening Rally – 45 minutes
- Transition to outside – 10 minutes
- Rotation through three activity stations – 15 minutes each / 45 minutes total
- Water balloon review – 10 minutes
- Popsicles and free play – until parents arrive

SCHEDULE DETAILS

Opening Rally – 45 minutes

The main rally contains the meat of your Bible teaching and spiritual emphasis. Begin with fun, fast paced songs and then move into your Bible story and reinforcement illustrations as outlined later in this book.

Transition to Outside – 10 minutes

The transition begins at the end of the Opening Rally. During this time give instructions for everything the kids need to know before they go outside.

Also, make sure children use the restroom before going outside. Once

they are outside, we highly discourage traffic from coming in and out of the church since you take the risk of tracking mud on floors, creating slippery and dangerous spots, etc.

First Day Instructions

Here is an example of the kind of instructions you might want to give on the first day:

SAY: In a moment, we are going to give you a chance to use the restroom. If you need to use the restroom, now is the time because once we are outside we don't want you to come back into the church, tracking in mud and water.

SAY: We are going to dismiss you by grade to your activity stations. When you go, you will need to take everything with you that you brought. Your parents will pick you up from outside. If you brought a Bible or something that water could damage...(Tell the kids specifically where they can put these where they will be safe. Then be sure to remind them to get their items before they leave with their parents.)

Go over all the activity areas and give any instructions the kids need to know. Children will follow the instructions better when they first hear them inside and then are reminded of them outside.

If you expect that a lot of children will need to use the restroom during the transition time, then create a transition activity while kids are going in and out of the room. A transition activity could be a game of Simon Says, Gorilla Beats the Man, a snack that kids eat while they watch a short five minute video, etc.

Outside Activities – 45 minutes (three 15-minute rotations)

The purpose of the activities is not only to have fun but also to reinforce the main points taught throughout the week. The teaching that happens outside is "quick hits." In other words, your leaders will do an activity and followed by a 2 to 3 minute spiritual application that will summarize the main point that you want the kids to

remember from the activity. Quick hits are brief and biblical to help kids understand how to apply spiritual truth to their lives. During the water games, you should be doing more playing than talking but the talking should be direct and to the point.

Water Balloon Review – 10 minutes

As you wind down to the end of the day, call your kids together and have them sit down as a group. Before you call them, you want to set out two chairs. Have a boy and girl volunteer sit in the chairs. You can choose these volunteers randomly or by choosing them as a reward for being the best listeners of the day or, etc. Every day the review will be a boys versus girls competition. Have several large water balloons already prepared. You will need a water balloon for each question that you ask.

Take turns between the boys and girls asking the group questions. If one group gets a question wrong, it goes to the other group. If the girls get a question right, pop a water balloon over the boy volunteer. If the boys get a question right, pop a water balloon over the girl volunteer's head.

Have a leader keep track of which team gets the most correct answers. At the end of the game, announce the winner for the day, give announcements about tomorrow and instructions about how parents are picking the kids up. Remind kids to get all of their belongings and give them any instructions concerning the free play period. Then pray and direct kids to where they can get their Popsicles to eat while they play in the water and sprinklers until their parents arrive.

Popsicles and Free Play – until parents arrive.

Have trash cans ready for the Popsicle trash. It is also easier if you already have the ends cut off of the Popsicles so that your leaders don't have to do this as they distribute them.

The reason we suggest using Popsicles is because after water games on a hot day, kids are usually thirsty. Giving them Popsicles is an easy way for them to be refreshed without needing to go inside the

building. Anytime you do outside activities on a hot day but don't want to have a line of kids waiting at the water fountain or to provide drinks for everyone, Popsicles are a great and affordable alternative.

Make sure your leaders continue to monitor the kids during the free play time. Let kids have fun but also make sure that their fun doesn't get out of hand.

During this time, it is great to have sprinklers that the kids can jump through. Also, allow kids to get inside the kiddie pools and even to help emptied them. Let the kids use up any leftover water balloons as well.

Make sure you have a water hose or an area of clean water where kids can wash their hands and feet before leaving with their parents.

If you have information you want to send home about the next day's activities or flyers the kids can use to invite friends, make sure to give these to the parents as they pick up kids instead of giving them to the children. If you release older children, then you will need to give them to the children but be sure to tell them to be careful not to get this information went. You can also have Ziploc bags ready with the information inside as well.



Part 2

TEACHING CURRICULUM

CHAPTER 3

TEACHING OVERVIEW

Day 1

Control Tool: What do you know? Jesus Saves!

Bible Story: Jonah

Key Point: Jesus is the Best Choice of All

Key Verse: Acts 4:12

Day 2

Control Tool: What do you know? Jesus Saves!

Bible Story: Jesus Call Disciples

Key Point: God Still Calls People

Key Verse: Romans 10:13

Day 3

Control Tool: What do you know? Jesus Saves!

Bible Story: Jesus Calms the Storm

Key Point: Jesus has Power Over Fear

Key Verse: Psalm 56:3

NOTE: These lessons have been written where one leader can teach the entire lesson or multiple leaders can oversee each section.

CHAPTER 4
LARGE GROUP LESSON – DAY 1
Jonah

SONGS

Begin with songs. During the songs, have someone share their salvation story about how they were saved.

BIBLE LESSON

SAY: Anytime I say, “What do you know?” I want you to say, “Jesus Saves!”

Leader: “What do you know?” *Students:* “Jesus Saves!”

Practice this several times.

SAY: Today’s Bible story is about making choices, so before we hear it, I want to find out what kind of choices you make.

Have your group stand up and tell them the following. Keep this fast-paced:

Which had you rather...

- If you had rather go to the movie theater, go to the wall on my left.

If you had rather go to a ball game of your favorite team, go to the wall on the right.

- If you had rather buy a video game, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather buy a movie, go to the wall on the right.
- If you had rather buy clothes, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather buy food, go to the wall on the right.
- If you had rather buy a stuffed animal, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather buy a football, go to the wall on the right.
- If you had rather eat a hotdog, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather eat a hamburger, go to the wall on my right.
- If you had rather have a picture with your friends, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather have a poster of a sport's hero, go to the wall on the right.
- If you had rather eat at McDonald's, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather eat at Chick-Fil-A, go to the all on the right.
- If you had rather be at VBS this week, go to the wall on my left.
If you had rather be knee-deep in mud in the smelliest hole in the state, go to the wall on the right.

SAY: Everybody freeze. Now on the count of three, as fast as you can, come sit down. 1-2-3! Compliment who was first as well as who was the most considerate, etc.

SAY: In a few minutes we're going to hear a story of someone who made a choice but first I'm going to need some help with sound effects.

Divide the class into two parts.

- To one side give the following sound effects: Wind (*Practice this with them, starting quietly and then getting louder and louder*) and a splashing sound.
- To the other side give the following effects: Waves (*Practice this with them, starting quietly and then getting louder and louder*) and a swallowing sound.
- To all:
 - Rain (begin by thumping the fingers on their legs and then move to heavier rain by slapping the hands on the lap)
 - Thunder—Practice sounds like thunder.
 - Lightning (no sound, but have them blink their eyes)
 - The sound of something sinking—i.e., gulp, gulp, gulp...
- Tell the kids: Every time I say “Jonah” I want you to say, “Go Jonah!” *Practice this.*

Bible Story—Jonah

(Do NOT read the story—Tell it and show it)

Once there was a man named **Jonah** (Go Jonah!). **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) lived a long time before Jesus was born and **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) was a godly man who wanted to follow God, but one day God told **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) to do something really hard. He said, **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) Go to Nineveh. Now the people of Nineveh were his worst enemies. But God said, **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) Tell the people that if they don't stop doing the wrong things they are doing that I will destroy them all. Now **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) kind of liked the idea of his worst enemies getting wiped off the face of the earth, so **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) decided to disobey God. Instead of going to Nineveh, **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) went the opposite direction and went down to Joppa to “hoppa” on a boat. And **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) went down into the bottom of the boat and they set sail for a place called Tarshish.

The sailors looked up and saw some clouds. Then there was some gentle wind (kids begin making effects) and gentle waves and gentle rain. But the rain got louder and wind and waves got louder too. Suddenly there was thunder and lightning and the boat was going back and forth, back and forth. But **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) (This cuts off the effects)—Does anyone know what he was doing? He was asleep.

Now do you see what he was doing—He was trying to run away from God. Can you run away from God? No. If you go to the top of the highest mountain in the world, God is there. If you go to the deepest part of the sea, God is there. And that’s why God had sent the storm—to stop **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) from going the wrong way.

And the wind was blowing (kids begin making effects again) and the waves were coming and there was rain and thunder and lightning and the boat was going back and forth, back and forth. And the captain came down and said **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) “Wake up. We’re going to die.” And **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) went up and looked at the storm.

And the wind was blowing (kids begin making effects again) and the waves were coming and there was rain and thunder and lightning and the boat was going back and forth, back and forth. And then **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) said “If you throw me overboard it will stop.” And even though they didn’t want to, the sailors finally took **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) and threw him over.

And there was a splash (splash sound) and he sank down (gulp, gulp, gulp) and then God appointed a big fish to swallow (sound effect) **Jonah** (Go Jonah!). And for three days and three nights **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) was in the belly of a fish.

Now what would you do if you were in the belly of a fish? (Let kids answer) **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) prayed and told God that he didn’t want to go the wrong way anymore and that he was willing to do what God wanted him to do.

So the big fish got a stomach ache, pulled up to the shore, and what kind of sound do you think it made. And out came **Jonah** (Go Jonah!). And **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) did what God wanted him to do and the people of Nineveh repented (stopped doing the wrong things) and God didn't destroy them. They were saved because **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) took them God's message.

SAY: **Jonah** (Go Jonah!) decided to do what God wanted him to do. He made a bad choice and then he made a good choice, and today we want you to know that giving your life to Jesus and following Him is the best choice you'll ever make.

Leader: "What do you know?" *Students:* "Jesus Saves!"

THINK ABOUT IT

ASK: **Does God love bad people?** (Yes. In the story God wanted to save the people in Nineveh even though they had done terrible things.)

ASK: **Is there anything you can do to make God stop loving you?** (No, God will always love you.)

SAY: God has great plans for your life but you'll miss out on those plans if you walk away from Him.

ASK: **What is it called when you walk away from God and do things that are wrong?** (Sin.)

ASK: **What do you think our greatest problem is?**

SAY: Our greatest problem is sin.

ASK: **What are some examples of sin?** (Take a few answers.)

SAY: Sin is anything you do that's wrong, like Jonah disobeying God and going the wrong way. Sin will always point you in the wrong direction. But God's Word is true and will always point you in the right direction.

RAISE your hand if you've ever done something wrong.

SAY: We've *all* done wrong things. God is perfect but we're not perfect and our sin separates us from God. Did you know that because we've all done wrong things that *none* of us deserve to go to Heaven? Because we're not perfect like God is perfect, we need all need a Savior who can take our sins away.

Leader: "What do you know?" *Students:* "Jesus Saves!"

KEY VERSE

Choose a volunteer—Let this volunteer pop a balloon that holds today's key verse.

Read Acts 4:12 from the Bible.

SAY: I'm going to read that verse again. While I read it, see how many times you can count the word "no."

ASK: **How many times did I say "no"?** (2 times)

SAY: There is only one way to be "saved" and that's Jesus?

ASK: **What does it mean to be "saved"?** (To give your life to Jesus, to receive God's gift of salvation and know for sure that you're going to Heaven, to receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior.)

ASK: **What name is this verse talking about?** (Jesus. Because Jesus died for our sins and rose again, He is the only one who can take them away.)

ASK: How many ways does this verse say there is to be saved?

(There is only one name in which we find salvation—Jesus is the only way to be saved.)

KEY: There is no greater choice in life than choosing to give your life to Jesus.

SAY: God wants you to be saved and today if you're not sure you're saved or maybe you know you're not, then as soon as we finish, go up to one of our leaders and simply ask, "How can I go to Heaven?" If you do this, they'll drop what they are doing to tell you or to take you to someone who will tell you what the Bible says about how a person can be saved.

Leader: "What do you know?" *Students:* "Jesus Saves!"

TRANSITION ACTIVITY (Optional)

Word Removal Bible Memory Game

Lay out words and phrases for the today's verse on the floor or hang them where everyone can see them:

"There is / salvation / in / NO one else, / for there / is / NO other name / under heaven / given to people, / by which / we must / be saved" / Acts 4:12.

Lead the kids in saying the verse together. Then let a volunteer throw a beanbag or shoot a dart (or water gun) at the verse. Remove whatever phrase they hit and say the verse again. Let another child take a turn and remove another word or phrase. Say the verse again. Keep going until all the words are gone. This is a great way to help your kids memorize today verse.

CHAPTER 5
LARGE GROUP LESSON – DAY 2
Jesus Calls Disciples

SONGS

Begin with songs. During the songs, have someone share their salvation story of how they were saved.

BIBLE LESSON

SAY: Anytime I say, “What do you know?” I want you to say, “Jesus Saves!”

Leader: “What do you know?” *Students:* “Jesus Saves!”

Practice this several times.

ASK: Yesterday we learned about a man who made a choice. **Who did we learn about? What did God want him to do? What choices did he make?**

SAY: Today we’re going to learn about some others who made a choice. And, yes, since this is the FLOOD, there’s a boat in today’s story too.

Bible Story—Jesus Calls Disciples

Read Matthew 4:18-22 out of your Bible, but tell them that when they hear you say the word “immediately”, they are to stand up, run and

touch two walls in the room and come sit back down as fast as they can without running over anyone.

Choose 2 volunteers—Give one a sign that says **Peter**. Give the other one a sign that says **Andrew**.

SAY: Peter and Andrew were fishermen who were casting their nets into the sea. But Jesus came and said, “Follow me.” And they left their nets *immediately* (have kids touch two walls and run back).

Have students REPEAT: And they followed Jesus.

Choose 2 volunteers—Give one a sign that says **James**. Give the other one a sign that says **John**.

SAY: James and John were fishermen who were mending their nets in the boat with their father. But Jesus asked them to follow Him. They left their nets and their father *immediately* (have kids touch two walls and run back).

Have students REPEAT: And they followed Jesus.

Have the volunteers sit down.

ASK: Did the men in the story make a good choice or bad choice?
(They made the best choice of all—They followed Jesus.)

SAY: Jesus called these men to follow Him. Jesus still calls people to follow him. In fact, there will be a time in each of your lives that God will call you to give your life to Christ. (*Refer back to how the person who shared the salvation testimony knew he/she needed Jesus.*)

ILLUSTRATION

ASK: Is everyone going to Heaven?

RAISE your hand if you think everyone is going to Heaven...

RAISE your hand if you think everyone is not going to Heaven...

REPEAT after me: “God wants everyone to be saved / but NOT everyone is going to Heaven.”

POINT #1—Two Kinds of People: Saved or Lost

SAY: There are two kinds of people in the world—those who are saved and those who are lost; those who are going to Heaven and those who are not. And to show you the difference, I’m going to need two volunteers.

Call up two volunteers—one boy and one girl. If you want, change their looks by giving them wigs and new names. After all, they don’t represent themselves but everybody else in the room too.

SAY: These two volunteers represent the two kinds of people in the world—the two kinds of people in this room, and no, it’s not boys and girls. Every one of you is represented by one of these two. One of them represents a “saved” person and one represents a “lost” person. And you get to try to figure out who is who.

POINT #2—Being Good Isn’t Enough

Give both volunteers a piece of gum. Explain that one day one of them had two pieces of gum so she gave the extra piece to her friend. The other volunteer also had gum, was sitting in class and decided to stick his gum in a girl’s hair. Go to each volunteer, one at a time, and ask the students if they think this person represents the saved person or the lost person.

SAY: A person who is saved *should* do what’s right, but being good can’t get a person to Heaven.

REPEAT after me—“Being good / CAN’T / get a person / to Heaven.”

Have a boys vs. girls competition to see who can be louder: “Being good / CAN’T / get a person / to Heaven.”

SAY: You can’t earn your way to God.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

SAY: So now we know that there are two kinds of people in the world.

ASK: **What are the two kinds?** (Saved and lost.)

SAY: We also know that being good can’t get a person to Heaven, but we still don’t know who represents the saved person and who represents the lost person.

POINT #3—Going to Church Isn’t Enough

Give one volunteer a Bible and the other volunteer a baseball glove (or other sport’s equipment). Explain that every Sunday the volunteer with the Bible goes to church and Sunday School. The other volunteer goes to play ball. Go to each volunteer, one at a time, and ask if they think this person represents the saved person or the lost person.

SAY: God wants us to go to church. It’s a great way to worship and learn more about Him but just because a person goes to church doesn’t mean that person is going to Heaven.

REPEAT after me—“Going to church / CAN’T / get a person / to Heaven.”

Have a boys vs. girls competition to see who can be louder: “Going to church / CAN’T / get a person / to Heaven.”

POINT #4—How a Person is Saved?

ASK: So what would we need to know to find out which one of our volunteers is “saved” or “lost”?

SAY: The one who is saved is the one who has given his life to Jesus or accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. That is the only thing that makes the difference between someone who is saved and someone who is lost.

Give your volunteers a hand and ask them to sit down.

(This is a great place for you or someone to share a salvation testimony. Keep it brief and to the point.)

Salvation Testimony: Share the story about how and when you were saved. This needs to be no longer than a few minutes, and the point needs to be focused on that fact that you needed Jesus and how you knew you needed Jesus, that you made the choice to let Jesus be your Lord and Savior. He saved you and made a way for you to go to Heaven and to have a relationship with Him. Also be very clear about how a person can come to Jesus.

SAY: Today, you are either saved or lost. Saved people are those who’ve received Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Lost people are lost because they haven’t found Jesus who is the only way to be saved and go to Heaven.

KEY VERSE

*Choose a volunteer—*Let this volunteer pop a balloon that holds today’s key verse.

Read Romans 10:13 from your Bible

SAY: The Bible says “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

CHALLENGE: Divide the students into two groups

Have Group #1 shout: *Everyone who calls...*

Leader: *On the name of the Lord...*

Have Group #2 shout: *Will be saved.*

Leader: *Romans 10:13*

Do this two or three times. Then tell them which side was loudest.

WRAP IT UP

SAY: Jesus called the men in today's story to follow Him. Jesus still calls people to follow Him. But Jesus doesn't call you with your ears. He doesn't appear and say, "Give your life to me." Instead, you know in your heart that you need to be saved. Or, perhaps you begin thinking about Heaven and realize that you can't go to Heaven unless you give you accept Christ. For some people this is even kind of scary, because they realize they need a Savior.

Have the students close their eyes.

ASK: Has there ever been a time in your life when you gave your life to Jesus?

ASK: Do you know for sure that you are going to Heaven?

ASK: Is God calling you to do something?

SAY: God wants you to be saved and today if you're not sure you're saved or maybe you know you're not, then as soon as we finish, go up to one of our leaders and simply ask, "How can I go to Heaven?" If you do this, they'll drop what they are doing to tell you or to take you

to someone who will tell you what the Bible says about how a person can be saved.

Leader: “What do you know?” *Students:* “Jesus Saves!”

TRANSITION ACTIVITY (Optional)

Word Removal Bible Memory Game

Lay out words and phrases for the today’s verse on the floor or hang them where everyone can see them. Like yesterday, lead the kids in saying the verse together. Then let a volunteer throw a beanbag or shoot a dart (or water gun) at the verse. Remove whatever phrase they hit and say the verse again. Let another child take a turn and remove another word or phrase. Say the verse again. Keep going until all the words are gone.

In between turns, reinforce what it means to “Call on the Lord...”

CHAPTER 6
LARGE GROUP LESSON – DAY 3
Jesus Calms the Storm

SONGS

Begin with songs. During the songs, have someone share their salvation story about how they were saved.

BIBLE LESSON

SAY: Anytime I say, “What do you know?” I want you to say, “Jesus Saves!”

Leader: “What do you know?” *Students:* “Jesus Saves!”

Practice this several times.

SAY: Today you’re going to see how Jesus has power over fear.

REPEAT after me: Jesus has power / over Fear

Bible Story—Jesus Calms the Storm

Tell your students that you are going to need every one of them to help you with the Bible story. Two days ago, you taught them some sound effects for a storm in the story of Jonah. Today’s story has a storm in it as well. Tell your kids that you’re going to practice the sound effects. Then divide your class into two parts. (You can divide

them either by using two sides or by using boys and girls.) Lead them in making the following sound effects:

- Side 1--Make a sound like **wind**. Have them start out gentle and get louder and louder.
- Side 2--Make a sound like **waves**. Again, start out gentle and get louder.
- Everyone--Show them how to put their hands on their knees. Begin tapping your fingers louder and then patting your knees louder and louder to make a sound like **rain**.
- Everyone--When you say, "**Thunder**," they say, "Boom!"
- Everyone--When you say, "**Lightning**," they say, "Bright Light!"
- Everyone--When you say, "**Boat**," they say, "Row, row, row your boat!"
- Everyone--When you say, "**Jesus**," they say, "Have no fear, Jesus is near!"
- Everyone--When you say, "**Stop**," they stop all the sounds and movement. Everybody freezes.

Now you're ready to tell the story, but first practice with them a few times. For example, say, "Thunder / Boat / Jesus / Wind / Stop." etc.

Make stopping almost like a game to see how quickly they can get quiet. Practice again: Wind / Waves / Boat / Jesus / Stop!

TELL THE STORY: One day Jesus and His disciples were in a **boat** (Row, row, row your boat!) and **Jesus** (Have no fear, Jesus is near!) had fallen asleep when a storm came. It probably began with a **gentle wind** and some **gentle waves**, but they grew **louder** and **louder**. Then

there was probably some **gentle rain**, but it got **heavier**. (*At this point you should have the wind, waves, and rain all happening at the same time.*) Then there was probably some **thunder** (Boom!) and **lightning** (Bright Light!) And some more **thunder** (Boom!) and the **boat** (Row, row, row your boat!) was going back and forth and the disciples were scared. **STOP!**

ASK: Have you ever been scared during a storm? (Take a couple of answers.)

ASK: What did you do?

SAY: Watch what the disciples did...

BACK TO THE STORY: The **wind** was blowing. The **waves** were crashing. The **rain** was pouring. **Louder** and **louder**. There was **thunder** (Boom!) and **lightning** (Bright Light!) and more **thunder** (Boom!) and even more **thunder** (Boom!) and the **boat** (Row, row, row your boat!) was going back and forth and the disciples were scared. But **Jesus** (Have no fear, Jesus is near!) was asleep in the back of the boat. So they woke up **Jesus** (Have no fear, Jesus is near!) and said, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown!" **STOP!** (If they don't stop quickly, tell them they can do better than that. Tell them to see how quickly they can stop. Then start the noise again and loudly say, "Stop!")

SAY: The disciples asked Jesus if He cared they were going to die. That's how scared they were.

ASK: Do you think Jesus cared about how scared they were? (Yes, and He cares about any time you're scared too. God doesn't want you to live in fear.)

ASK: After the disciples woke Jesus up and He looked around at the storm, do you think He was afraid? (No, He wasn't afraid. Why? Because even in the storm, He was in control. And if you've given

your life to Jesus and are living for Him, you don't have to be afraid either because Jesus is always in control.)

ASK: Since Jesus is in control, does this mean bad things won't ever happen to you? (No, bad things sometimes happen to good people, but if you're walking with Jesus, you can always trust that He can take any bad thing that comes your way and turn it to your good.)

FINISH THE STORY: The **wind** was blowing. The **waves** were crashing. The **rain** was pouring. **Louder and louder.** The **boat** (Row, row, row your boat!) was going back and forth and was starting to fill with water. There was **thunder** (Boom!) and **lightning** (Bright Light!) and more **thunder** (Boom!) and **lightning** (Bright Light!). So they woke up **Jesus** (Have no fear, Jesus is near!) and said, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" Then **Jesus** (Have no fear, Jesus is near!) said, (Say this loudly over all the storm noise) "Quiet. Be still." In other words, **STOP!** (The students should become quiet.) And just as quickly as that, the storm stopped. The waves stopped. The wind and the rain—everything stopped.

SAY: The disciples should have known that everything would be okay because Jesus was right there with them.

REPEAT after me: Have no fear, Jesus is near!

- Tell those who did the wind to say, "Have no fear."
- Tell those who did the waves to say, "Jesus is near."

Go back and forth several times to see which side can be the loudest.

SAY: We are going to have a competition. In the story Jesus calmed the storm and when he hushed it, it became quiet and still. We're going to see who can be the quietest and most still person while I read this story to you out of the Bible. So, try to be as quiet and still as you can and then I'm going to choose someone to reveal our Key Verse today.

Read Mark 4:35-41 from your Bible.

Praise different ones for how quiet and still they were—i.e., “Great job, Mark. You were so quiet. And Johnny didn’t even move!”

SAY: Sometimes when someone realizes that they’re not saved because they’ve never given their life to Jesus, they feel scared. But if you have given your life to Jesus, there’s nothing to fear...And if you haven’t and want to know more, talk to one of our leaders as soon as we’re done.

Leader or Student’s Salvation Testimony: Have a pre-determined volunteer (either a leader or a student) share the story about how and when they were saved. This needs to be no longer than a minute or two, and the point needs to be focused on that fact that they needed Jesus, how they knew you needed Jesus, and the choice they made to let Jesus be their Lord and Savior. He saved them and made a way for them to go to heaven and to have a relationship with Him. Help them to be very clear about how people can give their lives to Jesus too.

Leader: “What do you know?” *Students:* “Jesus Saves!”

KEY VERSE

Choose a volunteer—Let this volunteer pop a balloon that holds today’s key verse.

Read Psalm 56:3 from your Bible—“When I am afraid, I will trust in You.”

Repeat after Me —

Leader: **The Bible says** (*Kids: The Bible says*)

Leader: **When I am afraid** (*Kids: When I am afraid...*)

Leader: **I will trust in You** (*I will trust in You...*)

Leader: **Psalm 56:3** (*Kids: Psalm 56:3*).

ASK: What are some other things that scare you?

This is a great time to share something that scared you when you were a child...but share it quickly and be brief.

SHOUT OUT COMPETITION

SAY: When I point to this side, I want the all the boys to say, “**When I am afraid ...**”

Then I'll point to the other side, and I want all the girls to say, “**I will trust in You.**”

Then I'll say, “**Psalm 56:3**”

Go back and forth between the two sides three times to see who can be louder.

SAY: The next time you're scared, trust in Jesus. And, if you're scared that you're not going to Heaven or not sure if you're going to Heaven, then, in a moment, as we dismiss to our activities, I want you to go up to one of our leaders and simply ask, “How can I go to Heaven?” And, if you ask this, that leader will either tell you about how you can give your life to Christ or take you to someone who will tell you. God doesn't want you to go through life not knowing. God doesn't want you to live in fear. He sent Jesus to make a way to save us from our sins and you can know for sure that you're saved and going to Heaven.

TRANSITION ACTIVITY (Optional)

Word Removal Bible Memory Game

Since today's verse is short, choose a volunteer to pop a balloon that has Romans 6:23 in it. Explain that we don't have to be afraid because even though sin has a punishment, Jesus died and rose again so that we can have the free gift of eternal life. Use Romans 6:23 in the same Bible Memory Game as the past two days. And if you have extra time, see if your kids and tell you the previous days' verses.

EXTRA ILLUSTRATION

Since these lessons have such a strong emphasis on salvation, here is a great illustration that would work well with any day:

Gift Illustration

Choose 1 volunteer.

SAY: Let's say this pen (or any other object) is worth a million dollars and I come to you one day and say, "I'd like to give this to you." Is it yours yet? What would you have to do to get it? *(If they don't immediately say, "I have to reach out and take it," guide them toward that answer.)*

SAY: Like a gift, you can accept it, or you can say no. A gift can't be earned, just like eternal life—you can't be good enough to get to it. There is only one way to be saved from your sin and that's Jesus.

SAY: Now with the pen, it would be easy for you to take it. All you have to do is reach out and it's yours. With God's gift, it's a little different—You can't physically reach out and take it, but in the Bible God told us how we can accept this gift. You see, Jesus paid the price. What we have to do is:

- **Admit** you have sinned and be willing to turn from your sin.
- **Believe** that Jesus is God's perfect Son who died for us and was raised from the dead.
- **Call** on the Lord, confess your sins, and commit your life to Him.

Order your VBS T-shirts

Leader: “What do you know?” *Students:* “Jesus Saves!”



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Part 3

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

CHAPTER 7

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY OPTION NOTES

Plan your “Flood” by choosing from the daily water activities below. However, every day be sure to have at least one station that is specifically targeted toward salvation. Have both children and leaders assigned at certain activity stations to share their salvation testimonies. Then during your VBS identify trained leaders whom your kids can talk to if they have questions about salvation.

Important Things to Know

(1) Even though you only have three activity stations, each station can have several games. For example, you could have an activity station with several relay games, another station with several tossing games or water balloon games and then the Whip Cream Shooting Gallery, which you would want to stand alone since it is a longer activity.

(2) Even though many of the spiritual applications say to read certain Bible verses to the kids, we highly discourage any of your leaders taking their Bibles into the water games. Encourage them to put these verses on a card or piece of paper or cardstock and even though they are not reading them from the Bible, to make sure the kids understand that they are hearing God’s Word.

CHAPTER 8

VARIOUS WATER GAMES

- *Whip Cream Shooting Gallery* – Divide your class into partners. Squirt a whip cream beard and mustache on one partner and give the other a water gun (or some other inexpensive water squirter). Then let them shoot the whip cream off their partner’s face. Then have them switch roles. Shower caps and goggles are optional but be careful not to get whip cream in their eyes. You will need a can of whip cream for every four students and it’s always great to have some extra to shoot in their mouths too—just be sanitary if you do this.

Spiritual application: In this game you were shooting for a target. In life we have a target too, to be perfect just like Jesus is perfect. But we’ve missed the mark. None of us are perfect. We have all sinned and the Bible says that our sin, the wrong things we do, separates us from God. Read and reinforce Romans 3:23.

- *Piñata* – Hang up one or more large water balloons. Blindfold volunteers and see who can pop the balloon. Be sure to use a “bat” that will pop the balloons and not just knock them down.

Spiritual application: Talk about how hard it was to swing without being able to see. Then read 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 and briefly help your kids understand many “lost” people are blind to their need for Christ. But each one of them, who knows Jesus, can be a light that shines in the darkness to show people the way to be saved.

- *Battleship* – Hang a sheet between two teams who are sitting on the ground, so that the teams can’t see each other. Let the teams take turns tossing a water balloon over the sheet. If one hits a student on the other team, he is out and leaves the game area. Let your students (even those who are out) continue taking turns tossing the water balloons until all the “ships” on one side have been sunk.

Spiritual application: It would have been easier to play the game if you could have seen where the “ships” were but you were “shooting blind.” Aren’t you glad that God didn’t leave us blindly trying to figure out how to follow Him. God is very clear in the Bible about how to be saved. Read and briefly explain Romans 10:9 and 10:13. If you want, you can also explain that God has also been very clear about how to follow Him. Ask your kids to describe ways that they can follow, live for, know and share Jesus in their everyday lives.

- *Bomb Brigade* – Assign three students to lie down on the ground about 20 to 30 feet away from the rest of your group. Either one at a time or as small groups, let your students throw water balloons, trying to bomb the students lying down. When a student makes a hit, he takes the place of the student whom he “bombed.”

Spiritual application: Part of the fun of this game is taking the place of someone you hit. Aren’t you glad that Jesus took our place too—When Jesus died, He took our death. He became the

substitute that took the punishment for our sins, so that, if we receive Him as our Lord and Savior, we don't have to. Read and briefly explain 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Other variations: Tell the students who are lying down that they can roll to avoid being hit. A good spiritual application for this is to talk to your students about how to avoid doing things that are wrong.

- *Plug the Hole!* – Drill about 150 pencil-sized holes in a large trash can. You will need a source of water such as a kiddie pool. Scoop buckets of water from the water source into the trash can. As it fills, your kids try to plug the holes to keep all the water in. For more fun, have two teams race to see who can fill their trash can first. In a race, it is always best to let a leader use the bucket to fill the trash can and to splash the kids in the process.

Spiritual application: Would it be possible to perfectly plug every hole so that you team didn't spill a drop of water? That would be hard—it might be impossible but here's something that we absolutely know is impossible—It is impossible to save yourself from your sins and to get yourself into Heaven without Jesus. It's impossible because we've all done wrong things and we're all separated from God by our sins. Even if you were so good that you only did ONE BAD THING, you still couldn't go to Heaven because you're not perfect like God is perfect. That's why we all need a Savior and only Jesus can save us from our sins. Read and re-explain Romans 3:23.

- *Pipeline*—Drill holes in a PVC pipe. Have a team of students hold the pipe over their heads, trying to plug the holes while one person buckets water into one end of the pipe. Have a bucket on the other end and counters who keep track of how many buckets each team fills.

Spiritual application: All of the water entered the tube but not all of it made it to the end. Everybody on the earth enters the world the same way but not everybody will make it into Heaven. Read and briefly explain what the Bible says in Matthew 7:13-14.

- *Knock it* – Give each student a small cup full of water. Tell your students to spread out. When you say go, they will try to spill the water from other people's cups. Their goal is to be the last person with water in their cup.

Spiritual application: In the game you wanted to hold onto your water and be the only one who had it. But in life our goal is the opposite. Jesus is the living water and God doesn't want us to keep this truth to ourselves but to share it. God wants everyone to be saved. Read and briefly explain the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman, focusing on John 4:14, that Jesus is the living water. Jesus is what everyone wants and needs. Also, focus on how the women shared what she knew with others and how many came to believe.

Play the game again...Spiritual application: Some of you chased after other people's cups, to spill the water. Some of you, however, simply trying to protect your own cup. The point is, all of you were after something. In life, what are you chasing after? What are you living for? What is the most important thing in your life? This is a great springboard for you to briefly share about the parables of the fine pearl and the hidden treasure from Matthew chapter 12 and how nothing in life is more important than Jesus.

- *Water Balloon Volleyball* – Using either towels or sheets, have one team toss a water balloon over a volleyball net. The opposing team will try to catch it in their towel and toss it back. Keep score in the same way as a regular volleyball game.

Spiritual application: In the game water balloons were tossed back and forth. Read and briefly explain Ephesians 4:14 and how God wants us to be firm in our faith.

- *“Squirt Them Out” Simon Says* – Play “Simon Says” but instead of getting students “out,” they get squirted or if you had rather, they get a cup or bucket of water dumped on them. (If you have a student that is intentionally getting “out” to get squirted, institute a “three strikes and you’re out” policy, which means, if they get squirted three times, they’re out of the game.)

Spiritual application: In this activity, they were imitating you. When you said, “Simon Says,” they did what you did and said what you said. Read and briefly explain Ephesians 5:1 and how we should be imitators of God. God wants us to be just like Jesus.

- *Duck, Duck, Splat* – Like regular Duck, Duck, Goose but instead of saying “Goose,” you quickly dump a bowl of water on the person head.

Spiritual application: In this activity you were chasing another student. Did you know everyone in life is chasing after something? In other words, what are you living for? Listen to God desires for us in Matthew 6:33. Read and briefly explain this verse and what it means. Also explain that seeking the kingdom of God first begins by giving your life to Christ.

- *Water Obstacle Course* – Use sprinklers, water balloons, hanging sponges, kiddie pools, etc. and any playground equipment to create a fun and wet obstacles course through which your kids can run.

Spiritual application: In life there are a lot of obstacles that can hinder you from following Christ. What are some things that distract people from fully living for Jesus? Read and briefly explain Luke 10:38-42 and how Jesus is the most important part of life. Remind the kids that knowing Jesus and knowing about Jesus are two different things—Knowing Jesus begins by giving your life to Him.

- *Spray It Out* – Give each child a cheap water gun or sprayer and have them spray it out. This is simply a fun water fight. As a prelude to this, you could also have water duals. Put two students back-to-back, count off 5 paces and have them turn and shoot. Give them 5 seconds of shooting before calling a halt.

Spiritual application: In the activity, you were shooting for a target. In life, what are you shooting for? Read and briefly explain what the apostle Paul’s goal was as described in Philippians 3:14. Paul had done some really bad things in the past—even killing Christians, but when He came to Christ, Jesus changed His life. He put all those wrong things in the past and lived for a new purpose.

- *Treasure Hunt* – In a muddy area, have kids hunt for hidden coins.

Spiritual application: In the activity, they were looking for something that was lost. Use the parable of the lost coin (Luke 15) to share with your kids how much the Lord desires for lost people to be “found.” You can also use the parable of the hidden treasure (Matthew 12) to teach that Jesus is more important than anything else in life.

- *The Blob* – In a wet and muddy area have kids play “Elbow tag”... Divide your group in to partners. Choose one pair to be your

volunteers. Have everyone else lock elbows with their partners and stand in a large circle. These groups cannot run. They can't move. Designate one of your volunteers to be "It" and the other to be the Runner. Explain that It will chase the Runner who will run away but can lock elbows with one of the groups who is standing still. If the Runner does locks elbows, the partner on the other side (the one who is now *not* linked with the Runner) releases his elbow and becomes the new Runner and must run from It. If It tags the Runner, they switch roles. To add extra water fun, set up a kiddie pool and when a new person becomes It, before they can chase the Runner, they have to jump in the kiddie pool and roll over one time. For an extra version to make it harder, have all your teams run around instead of standing still. For this style, be sure to set game boundaries.

Spiritual application: When were you safe in the game? To be "safe" from It, you had to lock elbows with someone. Has there ever been a time in your life when you didn't feel safe? In life, Jesus is your safe-place. God is your shield. Read and briefly discuss Psalm 27:1 or Psalm 18:1-2.

- *The Great River Run* – Have teams use tin foil to make a river to flow water from one area to another.

Spiritual application: Listen to story of some other people working together to build something. Read and briefly discuss the Tower of Babel from Genesis 11:1-9. Even though the Bible doesn't specifically state why they were making the tower, God's response shows that their motive was wrong. They apparently thought that they could make a way to God. Can we make our own way to God? Can we get ourselves into Heaven?

- *Batting Practice* – Practice batting with water balloons.

Spiritual application: No professional baseball player has a perfect record. We all sometimes miss. In life, missing the mark is called sin and sin is anything we do that's wrong. We have all done wrong things and that's why we all need Jesus to save us from our sins.

- *Water Twister* – Use dish washing liquid on a twister mat. Swirl it with a broom to foam it up and then play twister.

Spiritual application: Something that is twisted isn't straight. Did you know that furniture of twisted wood is called "wicker." The twisted part of the candle that you light on fire is called a wick. Twisted wood is wicker. The twisted part of a candle is a wick and a twisted person is called wicked. Briefly help your kids know the difference between a person who is "wicked" (has twisted ways) and "righteous" (stays on God's path). Emphasize that the key is to stay on God's path. Read and explain Proverbs 3:5-6 and Proverbs 4:27. (NOTE: Since this has the potential of a longer discussion, especially if you ask questions, play a game, then have a discussion. Then play again and finish the talk.)

- *Slip and Slide* – Set up a "Slip and Slide" and let your kids enjoy. For more fun, make a water pool or mud pit at the end. (Warning: Because of the risk of injury, many slip and slide kits advise that adults don't need to participate in this activity.) This also makes for a special feature during the free play time at the end as well.

Spiritual application: There are a lot of things in life that can make you "fall" or "fall away" from following Christ. What are things that help you stand for Christ everyday? What should you do if you go the wrong way? How can you return to Christ? Read and briefly explain 1 John 1:9. For a longer discussion, you can share about the Prodigal Son in Luke 15.

- *Pool Scrabble*—Put floating letters in a kiddie pool and let your students race to spell or unscramble a key word.
 - *Spiritual application:* Choose a key word from a Bible verse. For example, you could choose the word “CROSS” and then explain why Jesus died and rose again to make a way to save us. Or, you could have your kids search to spell “LOVE” and “SINNER” and then read and explain Romans 5:8, etc.
- *Splash Cap*—Add a cup or container to the top of a hat, such as a baseball batting-helmet. The “mad hatter” then has to catch as many water balloon on his head as he can.

Spiritual application: You gained a point for every one you caught. You know, some people think that they “earn points” with God for doing good but no matter how good you are, nobody is good enough to get to Heaven on their own. Briefly share the story of the good, young man (the rich ruler) from Mark 10. Even though he was good, he was unwilling to come to Christ because he loved his stuff too much.

- *Water Limbo* – Use a water hose to create a stream of water. Then play water limbo.

Spiritual application: How low will you go? How far are you willing to go to be accepted by your friends? What if they wanted you to do something wrong? Read and briefly discuss Galatians 1:10. We should live to please God, not people.

- *Jump the Flow* – A leader holds a hose of water very low to the ground. Everyone lines up and takes turns jumping over it. The leader then raises the stream an inch or so higher. Again, everyone jumps over it. If anyone hits the stream of water, they are out. The last person is the winner.

Spiritual application: In life we all face obstacles. When you're facing a challenge, you can keep trusting God and know that God can help you overcome anything that you might face. Read and explain Philippians 4:13.

- *Ball Blast* – Use cones or ropes to create a circle on the ground. Place balls of different sizes and weights inside. Give the student a hose and challenge him to shoot the balls out with the water in less than a minute.

Spiritual application: In the game you were trying to move balls outside of the circle. However, in life, God wants you to stay perfectly inside His will. God's will (or plan) for your life is for you to give yourself to Christ and be saved and then to follow Jesus every day in every way. Read and briefly explain Romans 12:1-2.

- *Water Gun Tag* – Designate one player to be "It." Give him a water gun and tell them to try to squirt and "freeze" as many other players as possible. For an added version, have another player with a water gun that unfreezes the frozen players.

Spiritual application: In the game you changed when you were squirted. In life people change when they meet Jesus. Read and briefly explain the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19.

- *Musical Water Balloon* – Have your kids sit in a circle with one water balloon. When the music begins, they start passing the balloon around the circle. When the music stops whoever is holding the water balloon gets the water balloon popped over their heads and is out. If the water balloon breaks with a student, he is out as well. Continue playing until only one person remains. For another variation, have students toss the balloon instead of passing it.

Spiritual application: In the game you didn't want to be caught with the balloon. In life, because people don't like getting caught doing wrong things, they will try to hide their sin. But can you hide anything from God? Read Hebrews 4:13.

- *Water Balloon Basketball Shoot* – Set up an empty bucket as the goal. Have each student step back a few feet and toss the balloon into the container. If they make the shot, have them step back another step and try again. Continue playing to find out who can make the longest shot.

Spiritual application: In basketball players will practice shooting the ball over and over again because they want to be the best they can be in the game. But in life, no matter how hard you try and no matter how good you are, you can't get yourself into Heaven. There is only one way to be forgiven and to go to Heaven and it's only through Jesus Christ. Read and explain John 14:6.

- *Jump, Jump, Jump* – Everyone stands in a circle holding a cup of water. A leader in the middle spins around in a circle, swiping a rope under their feet. As the rope passes beneath them, your students have to jump. A person is out if they spill all their water or the rope hits them. Another option is to have two students jump rope between two leaders who swing the rope.

Spiritual application: You jumped when you saw the rope coming. In other words, you made a good choice. In life you're going to make choices to and the best choice you can make is to give your life to Jesus and then to follow Him every day in every way. Read and discuss John 10:10.

- *Flip Flop Kick* – One at a time have kids put on a pair of flip flops (that you will need to provide) and see how far they can kick

them off.

Spiritual application: There are some things that God wants you to kick as far away from you as possible. What are some things that you think God wants you to get rid of? Briefly read and discuss 2 Timothy 2:22.

- *Duck Race*—Each team has a plastic ducky in a gutter and a water hose. When you say go, they squirt their ducky to see who can make him swim to the end first.

Spiritual application: The ducks were in a race and so are we. Listen to what the Bible says about this race in 1 Corinthians 9:24 and help your students understand what it means to “win” in life.

- *Puzzled*—Time your students to see how long it takes each one to complete a waterproof kids puzzle while everyone else squirts them with water. Set boundaries from where the other student can shoot.

Spiritual application: It’s easier to put a puzzle together if you can see the “big picture,” but sometimes in life things happen that we don’t understand. Sometimes bad things happen to good people and we ask God why. But even when we don’t have the answers, we can still trust God. We can know that only God sees the big picture and that He can turn any bad thing to our good. Read and explain Romans 8:28.

CHAPTER 9

WATER TOSSING GAMES

- *Greased Water Balloon Toss* – Divide your class into partners. Cover water balloons with baby oil and let partners see how many times they can toss them. You can also have them take a step backward after each toss as well.

Spiritual application: Sometimes no matter how much you want to hold onto something, you just can do it. Like these balloons, it just slips through your fingers. Did you know that no matter how much you want to hold onto the things of this world, that nothing from this world will leave with you—not money, toys, things, stuff, houses, cars. None of this can go to Heaven with you but if you know Jesus, you can tell your friends and family about Him and if they're willing to give their lives to Christ, they can go to Heaven too. Read and briefly explain 2 Peter 3:9—God wants everyone to be saved.

- *Water Balloon Distance Toss* – Divide your class into partners. Give each pair a regular water balloon. Tell them to toss the balloon from one partner to the other. After each toss, have the partners take one step back and see how far they can go and continue to throw and catch the water balloon.

Spiritual application: Read Romans 3:23. There is a distance or a separation between you and God. What causes this? (Our sin.) Why did Jesus need to die to bring us back to God? (Because, to bring us back to God, someone had to take the punishment for our sin and only Jesus is perfect, who deserved no death but took out death on Himself so that we can share His life.) How does a person give their life to Christ? (This is a great time for someone to share their salvation story and to explain to your children how a person is saved.)

- *Distance Throw* – See who can throw a water balloon the farthest.

Spiritual application: If you have given your life to Jesus, God has taken your sin away. Listen to what the Bible says about how far God has removed your sins. Read and briefly explain Psalm 103:11-12.

- *Target Throw* – See who can toss a water balloon into a hula hoop on the ground 20-feet or more away. (If you have a water balloon slingshot, have kids shoot balloons high in the air and try to get them to land in a hula hoop, bucket or another target—even a human one, that is much further away.)

Spiritual application: What are you aiming for in life? Read and briefly explain how Paul came to Christ in Acts 10. He had been living for one purpose, even killing and persecuting Christians, but when he met Christ, Jesus changed His life. Afterwards, he lived for a different reason—to follow and serve Christ and God used him in incredible ways.

- *One Person Water Balloon Toss* – Give each student one water balloon. Tell them to throw it in the air and to try to catch it. Each time they throw it, challenge them to toss it higher until they are throwing it as high as they can. If their balloon breaks,

they are out. Have leaders watch to determine who threw their balloon the highest and caught it.

Spiritual application: You tried to go as high as possible with your balloon. Did you know some people try to get to Heaven by reaching up to God? But here's the great thing about God's love—God reached down to us before we were even born. Jesus died and rose again to save us before we ever knew anything about Him. Read and briefly explain Romans 5:8.

- *To The Stocks* – Put someone in the “stocks” and throw wet sponges, water balloon or water balls at them. Be sure to make sure that the distance your students stand and the object they throw won't hurt your volunteers.

Spiritual application: In Europe a few centuries ago, when someone was caught breaking the law, they were put in “stocks” and people would throw tomatoes and other food at them. This was part of their punishment. In life, though, there's a bigger punishment for sin. What is the punishment for sin? Read and discuss Romans 6:23.

CHAPTER 10

WATER RELAYS

For relays, divide your kids into teams of 6-8 students and instruct them to line up behind cones that designate the beginning of the line. For most of these games, you will need to be next to a large water source, so putting each team on the side of a kiddie pools works well.

- *Typhoon* – One student sits down across from their team (about 20 feet way). The next student in line fills a cup of water, runs to him, yells “Typhoon” and splashes him in the face. (Be sure to tell your kids to close their eyes. They can also cover their faces, if they want to, and make sure your kids also know not to let go of the cup when they do the splashing.) He then sits down and the “splashed” student returns the cup to the next person in line.

Spiritual application: Explain that they knew what was coming. They even yelled “Typhoon!” as a warning. God has given us warnings too. God has warned us to stay away from sin. What is sin? What are some actions that are sinful? What are some other warnings that God has given us in the Bible? God is perfect and we are not. And because we have all done wrong things, none of us can get into heaven without Jesus. Because

only Jesus died for our sins so that he could take them away. God has warned us that there is only one way to be saved from our sins and only one way into heaven and that is by giving your life to Jesus Christ.

- *Bottlehead*— One student lies down across from their team and holds an empty 20oz bottle on their forehead. The next student in line fills a cup of water, runs to him, and pours it from nose-level, trying to get as much into the bottle as he can. He then takes the bottle and lies down and the other student gets up and runs the cup to the next person in line.

Spiritual application: In this game you were aiming for a target. Sometimes you hit the target and sometimes you miss. In life, the Bible tells us that we have all missed the target of God's perfection. God is perfect but we are not because we have all sinned. Read and explain Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23.

- *Sponge Walk*— Have your teams line up in single file. The first person in line will put a wet sponge between their knees and a wet sponge under each armpit. The first student in each line will be in walk, or waddle, around a cone or marker and back to their line to give the sponges to the next person.

Spiritual application: Did having sponges between your knees and under your arms help you to go faster or slower you down? In the same way that the sponges held you back from doing your best, are there things in your life that are holding you back from following God? What are some things that hold people back from following Jesus?

- *Footloose*—Pass a wet sponge using only your feet. This is a great game to play in the mud since the best way to pass the sponge is on your back, gripping the sponge with both feet.

Spiritual application: To win, everyone on your team had to do their part. If one person stopped, everyone lost. The Gospel means, “The Good News.” We have the Good News that Jesus died and rose again to save us from our sins. But if you don’t do your part in passing this truth along, it affects more than just you. Read and explain Hebrews 9:27 and the great privilege we have in sharing Christ.

- *That’s Using Your Head* - Fill up a cup with water. Hold it over your head and hop to a large container or bucket. Pour out the water that remains to see which team can fill their bucket the first. Make sure that every child gets at least two turns.

Spiritual application: Was it hard to hop and keep the water in the cup? It was hard doing both things at once. There are some things that just don’t go well together. In the same way, there are some things that can’t go together at all—For example, you can’t serve both God and this world. You have to make a choice. Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 10:21.

- *The Human Coffee Table* – Each team chooses a volunteer who gets on his hands and knees. One at a time, the rest of the team fill up cups of water and balance them on the volunteer’s back. See which team can get the most cups balanced, even on top of each other, in the time allowed.

Spiritual application: To keep the cups balance, the volunteer had to be very still. Sometimes in life we get distracted by all the cares and worries of the world and we neglect just being with God. Read and discuss Psalm 46:10 and how your students can “be still and know God” every day.

- *Fire Brigade* – Have each team stand in a line with a water source at the front and an empty bucket at the back. The first person in

line fills a bowls with water and passes it back over his head to the next person in line. The bowl continues to pass over their heads until it finally reaches the last person who pours what is left of it into the bucket.

Spiritual application: This game is called Fire Brigade. When something is on fire, people rush to put it out. It is urgent. Who can tell me what the word urgent means? Urgent means this is something that cannot wait. It needs your attention now. Today there are a couple of urgent things that I want you to think about. First, (have kids hold up one finger) if you have never given your life to Jesus, it is urgent that you think about this now. Giving your life to Jesus is the greatest decision that anyone can ever make. Second, (have kids hold up two fingers) if you have given your life to Jesus, do you think it is urgent that we tell others about him to? Absolutely. One of the most important things you can do is to tell other people about how Jesus can save them from their sins.

- *Dizzy Dean* – When you say go, the first person in line will run to a baseball bat that is about twenty feet away, bend over to put their forehead on it while keeping it touching the ground, and spin around eight times as fast as he can. Then have him dip a cup in the water and carry it over his head back to the line where he will splash the next person and hand them the cup.

Spiritual application: They chose to spin around. Nobody made them, and they took the chance that they might fall down. We make choices everyday in life too, and some of those choices can make a mess out of our lives. That's why God has given us parents and other people, to help guide us, teach us, and sometimes stop us from making bad choices.

Notes: Have adult sponsors count how many times they spin and to help encourage them to keep the bat touching the ground.

Remove anything dangerous into which they might stumble.
This is also a great event to video!

- *Sponge Relay* – Have each team sit in a line (preferably on very wet ground) between a water source and an empty bucket. The first person in line fills a sponge with water and passes it over his lap to the next person in line. The sponge continues to pass until it finally reaches the last person who squeezes what is left of it into the bucket and passes the sponge back to the front. This game is best when multiple sponges of different sizes are used at the same time.

Spiritual application: Most things pass with time but some things remain forever. Read and discuss Mark 13:31. Help your students understand the God's truth will always remain. God has given us His Word and has told us how to live and how to be saved.

- *Elbow Pass*—Pass a wet sponge using only your elbows.

Spiritual application: You passed the sponge by using your elbows. How can we pass God's truth to others? With our mouths, we can speak the truth and with our lives, we can pass the truth in action. Read and briefly discuss Philippians 2:15.

- *Ice Cube Relay* – Open an ice chest full of ice cubes. Each student will try to remove an ice cube using only his feet and move it to another container. The first team to get a set number of cubes in their container wins.

Spiritual application: To win, your team had to remove ice from one place and put it in another. Similarly, to remove our sins, God took them from you and put them on Jesus. Jesus was

punished for our sins, so that we could be forgiven if we are willing to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

- *Water balloon Relay* – Have each person in line run to retrieve a water balloon, throw at another team and then run back to tag the next person in line.

Spiritual application: To win the game how many things did you have to do? Run to get the balloon, throw the balloon, and run back—three things. To go to Heaven, how many things do you need to do? Only one. Read and briefly discuss John 14:6 and what it means for a person to be saved.

- *Wet Clothes Relay* – Dip one or more very large pieces of clothing in the water. Have the first child in line put them on, run around a cone, take them off and give them to the next person in line.

Spiritual application: Read and discuss Ephesians 4:22-24. Help your student understand what God wants them to “put on” and “take off.”

- *Water pass* – Have your students pass water from one plastic cup to another down the line, and then pour the water into an empty container or bucket at the end.

Spiritual application: Each of you freely gave water to the next person in line. It was free. They didn’t have to earn it or pay for it. You simply gave it to them. Likewise, the Bible says that salvation is a gift. Read and briefly explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

- *Drip* – Poke a small hole in the bottom of a Styrofoam cup. Students run to fill a container but they cannot plug the hole with their finger. For added fun, have them carry it over their head.

Spiritual application: You had to move quickly because you were loosing water. You knew it wouldn't last forever. In the same way, time is ticking down on our lives too. We won't live forever. At some point everyone dies. Listen to what the Bible says in Hebrews 9:27—Briefly read and explain this verse.

- *Chariot Races* – In a wet or muddy area have each team form a line behind a cone or marker. Two or three students from each team will serve as “horses” by grabbing the corners of the team’s blanket or sheet while one student rides by sitting on the sheet. The student riding on the blanket should hold onto the sides for safety. When you say go, the “horses” pull the “rider” around cone about 10 to 15 feet away and back to the beginning point. The first team to have every member complete the race wins. Also, tell your students to be careful not to swing the riders off. Tell the riders to hang on tight but if they fall off, to let go.

Spiritual application: Read and discuss Psalm 20:7. You can easily relate this to the Exodus (Exodus 14) as the Israelites are at the Red Sea. Pharaoh’s army is coming and there seems to be no way to escape. They think they are going to die. But at the same time, you can see Moses’ trust in God. In life, no matter how bad a situation might appear, you can always trust God.

Other variations: Play the game again but this time, you won't use two “horses” and one “rider,” but as many horses and riders as possible. The first team to have everyone ride wins.

- *Over-Under* – Put a sponge in the water. The team then passes it over one person, under the next, and so forth until it reaches the back of the line. The last person squeezes what is left of it into a bucket and passes it back to the front. For an added challenge, have the back person run to the front, re-soak the sponge and begin it all over again.

Spiritual application: In the game, the sponge dripped water everywhere because it was full of water. Did you know that God wants you to be full of something too? Read and explain the last part of Ephesians 5:18. Being filled with the Holy Spirit begins by giving your life to Jesus.

- *Water Balloon Squat* – Let students take turns running to a cone or marker, sitting on a water balloon to pop it and then returning to their team.

Spiritual application: What's left of the water balloons? Just trash. The game ruined them. Did you know that sin ruins lives? Read and explain Galatians 6:7.

- *Sponge Spree* – Have your students soak a sponge in water, balance it on their heads and walk around a cone or marker and back to their team.

Spiritual application: You had to be careful to make sure the sponge didn't fall off your head. In life God wants us to be careful too. Read and briefly explain 1 Peter 5:8.

- *Balloon Catapult* – Give each team a water balloon. The team members sit down in straight lines. When you say go, the first person on each team places the balloon between his feet and, using only his feet, passes the balloon over his head to the next person in line, who receives the balloon, using only his feet. The relay continues until the balloon has reached the last team member (if the balloon falls, it is returned to the first person in line so that the relay can begin again). If the balloon breaks, the team gets a new one!

Spiritual application: In the game, you shared the balloon. In life, once you've given your life to Christ, you get to share His love

and truth with others. Read and briefly discuss Colossians 4:5.

CHAPTER 11

WATER BALLOON SLINGSHOT GAMES

(NOTE: Always follow guidelines and warnings for any water balloon slingshot that you are using. Be careful never to shoot a water balloon slingshot directly at your students.)

- *Shoot into the Crowd* – Have your students spread out and randomly shoot or throw water balloons into the crowd. Always shoot high and let the balloon come down on them instead of a direct throw.
- *Catch Me If You Can* – Choose several students to spread out in a large area. Shoot water balloons high and see if you kids can catch them.
- *Sheet Catch* – Give several students a sheet and have them work together to catch water balloons.
- *Distance Shoot* – Let your student take turns shooting the slingshot to see how far they can shoot a water balloon.
- *Target Practice* – Let your student take turns shooting the slingshot

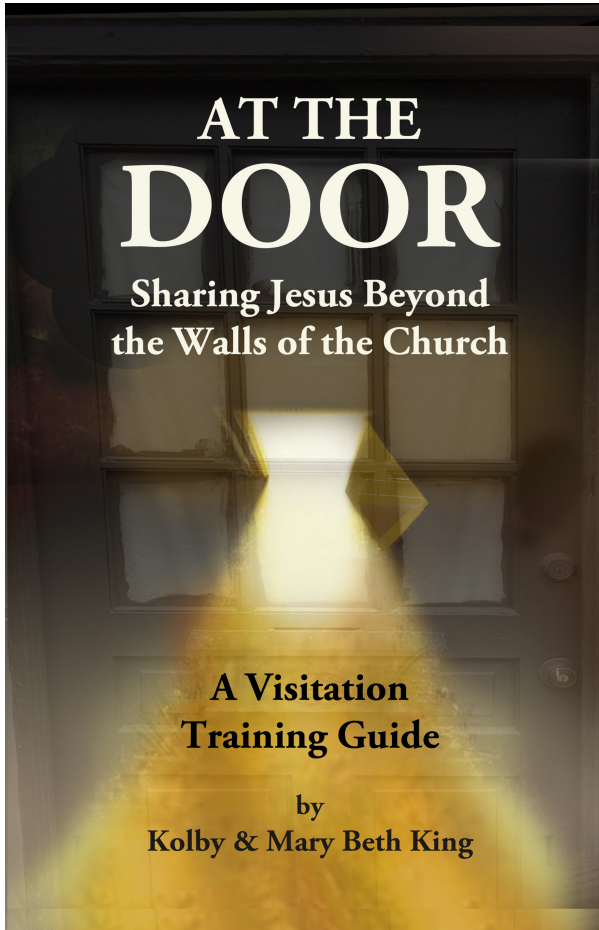
to see how close they can come to a target.

Spiritual application: In between water sling shot games, tell the story of David and Goliath (especially since David used a different kind of slingshot) and emphasize multiple truths that apply to your student's lives such as: God has a plan for everyone. You can trust God and stand up for God. You can do what's right even when others tease you. You can overcome huge obstacles in life when you're following Christ because God is with you. When David won, all of Israel won—He was their representative. Jesus was our representative when He died for us. When He won, He made a way for us to “win” too.

For Additional Ideas: Simply search online for more water games and children's water activities.

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Part 4

LEADING KIDS TO CHRIST

CHAPTER 12

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before we jump into the tools of the next few pages, there are a few things I want you to know:

Sharing Jesus is not about methods—It’s a lifestyle

Imagine that you are on an airplane. Suddenly the pilot gives an urgent message: “I have good news and bad news,” he announces. “The bad news is that we are going to lose a wing.”

He pauses.

“The good news is we get to choose which one.”

It doesn’t matter which wing you lose, you’re going to crash either way. Likewise, there are two key parts to your witness—the words you say and the things you do. If you say all the right words but your lifestyle doesn’t match, then people won’t want your Savior.

“Why would I want his Jesus? I’m better than he is!”

On the other hand, if you live the right life but never tell anyone why, they’ll just think you’re a really good person without ever knowing why.

“I wish I could be more like him.”

To be a good witness, you need both words and actions. This is life-style, not a method or program for sharing.

Not everyone will come to Christ

As you share, some people will say no to the Lord. Others won't even want to listen. A child might not yet be ready. Many times you will plant a seed, someone else will water, but God will cause the growth (1 Cor. 3:6). Speak boldly, speak often, and trust the Lord with results.

Don't worry about using the "wrong words"

But, "What if I mess up?" You don't have to be a Bible scholar with a degree on your wall to tell someone about Christ. Your only prerequisite is a living, daily relationship with Jesus. If you're saved and you're walking with the Lord, then you're ready to tell the world about the wonders of God. Entrust yourself to Christ and He will give you the words to say.

Never second-guess what you said or did

After speaking with someone about accepting the Lord, never second-guess the situation. Don't give room to thoughts such as, "What if I would have been more clear..." or "What if I would have said this instead..." or "What if it's my fault he didn't want Jesus." Do you hear all those "What ifs" again. Simply trust that God did in that moment what He wanted to do. Trust that God is able to speak far beyond your physical words and do more than you could ever realize in a simple conversation or encounter. In other words, enjoy your relationship with God and enjoy sharing that relationship with others without the burden and self-condemnation that you might have done better.

CHAPTER 13
**SHARING THE GREATEST STORY
OF YOUR LIFE**

Your salvation testimony is simply your story about how you came to know Jesus.

Here are a few things to remember:

Your testimony doesn't have to be "dynamic." Every story of salvation is a story of life-change and the greatest miracle of all. There is no such thing as a "boring" testimony.

It also doesn't have to be long. In fact, it shouldn't be long. Try to keep your salvation testimony to a minute or less. Practice this.

This guide will help you to think through your story of how you came to know Jesus. Write it down but don't memorize it—just learn it. This isn't a presentation. It's a story. Share it from your heart. Let God guide you, and listen to Him as you share it.

When I was younger I knew a man who had heart surgery. After being given certain drugs and as they wheeled him down the hall, he said, "I knew I shouldn't have eaten that taco!" My thought, however, wasn't about tacos. What would naturally come out of my mouth if I were in the same situation? It wasn't a judgmental thought; just something that made me examine myself. And I decided that if I was ever in the same situation, I didn't want to be talking about what I just ate. I wanted to be ready to share Christ in any situation, with any

distraction, in any amount of pain, even under anesthesia. I wanted my salvation story to be the first thing to come out of my mouth. So I shared it every day for the purpose of getting ready to share it easily no matter what.

Share your salvation story as often as you can. Try to share it every day. Practice on your family. Practice on your Christian friends. Practice in the mirror. Practice on your dog...he won't get saved. Practice on your non-Christian friends...some of them might get saved. The more you share your story the more comfortable you will be in sharing your story and the more natural it will become.

Finally, understand that there is power in your testimony. People can try to argue anything...but it's hard to argue someone's experience.

So let's begin where you began...

Part 1

What Started You Thinking About Giving Your Life To Jesus?

Were you in church and heard a preacher? Did something happen that made you think about death or heaven? Did a friend do or say something that put these thoughts in your mind?

It is amazing to hear the things that God uses to draw people to Him. As a child I stopped watching *Star Trek* after seeing a movie where Captain Kirk denied the existence of God. However, in college I met a young man training for ministry who came to Christ because of that same scene. As he watched it, he began to wonder, "Could there be a God?" The Lord used that *Star Trek* movie in the process of drawing him to Christ.

What stirred your heart? What started you thinking about giving your life to Jesus?

Write down your thoughts on a piece of paper.

Part 2

What Did You Do?

As you were thinking about Jesus and heaven, did you talk to someone? Did you talk to your parents? A minister? What did you learn? What did you do? Obviously, in some way, you learned about how Jesus died and rose again to make a way to forgive you, to save you, and to give you eternal life. Then you decided that you wanted Jesus to be the Lord of your life and you called on Him to save you.

Stop and think about it. Take some time to write down your experience.

Part 3

What Difference Did It Make?

So what's different now that you are a believer? What difference did it make in your life? What difference did it make in eternity? The best way to end your salvation story is by saying:

"Because of this I know for sure I'm going to heaven. How about you?"

This simple statement helps you to discover whether or not the person you are talking with knows Jesus also.

If they say, "Sure. I'm going to heaven," ask them how they know for sure. Are they right? Did they share a salvation experience or an answer that you know, according to the Bible, isn't right? Are they trusting something other than Christ for salvation (i.e., "I'm a good person." "I go to church." "I got baptized.")?

If they don't share a genuine salvation experience, then ask for the opportunity to share with them what the Bible says about how a person can know Jesus and spend eternity in heaven. **"Can I show you what the Bible says about how you can know for certain that you would spend eternity in heaven?"**

If they say "yes," then share with them how God can save them just like He saved you. If they say "no" ask if there would be a better time

and if not, try leave them with a tract or at least try to leave an open door for sharing with them in the future.

Take some time to write down your thoughts.

Pitfalls To Avoid When Sharing Your Salvation Story

(1) Stick To The Point

Don't share your life story: "I was born at a really young age and I was close to my mother when it happened..." Get to the point. This is the story of how you came to Christ. Cut out everything else. For example, you don't need to say, "So I talked to my pastor. His name was Bob and I had known Bob for twelve years. We used to play softball together. We had this cool nickname for him..." What does that have to do with your salvation experience? If nothing, then don't share it.

(2) Keep It Brief

You should be able to share your salvation testimony in a minute or less. Time yourself. Try to share as clearly and briefly as possible.

(3) Avoid Churchy Language

If someone hasn't grown up in church, they may not understand churchy language. If you say, "I walked down the aisle" referring to go forward during a church invitation, someone who hasn't been in church may associate it with their only experience of "walking down an aisle" which is probably the day they were married. With children I stopped using the phrase, "I asked Jesus into my heart," because there was a child who said, "I don't want Jesus in my heart!" Why not? "Because He's a big man and I'm just a little girl." She was being literal. Big man plus little heart equals big mess! She didn't understand the terminology.

When I have used the term "saved," a biblical term, I have had children ask, "What do you mean that you were 'saved'? Did you fall

in a swimming pool and someone pull you out?"

Even, when I am speaking with a child, if I ask, "Have you ever sinned?" I always follow by saying, "Have you ever done anything wrong?" I started doing this after having several children tell me, "No. I've never sinned." Then I would ask, "Have you ever done anything wrong?" and they would immediately say, "Oh yeah." It wasn't that they hadn't done wrong things. They just didn't understand my wording. As you are working on your salvation testimony, listen to it with the ears of someone who hasn't been in church. Listen also with the ears of a child. Do you hear anything confusing?

Creating Opportunities To Share Jesus With Others

If you have a friend that is lost, how do you bring it up without feeling awkward or off-the-wall. Here are some suggestions:

- Ask, "Can I tell you about the greatest thing that ever happened to me?" If they say, "yes," then share your salvation testimony, the story of how you were saved. If they say "no," then it's probably a bad time and there will be a better time later.
- Look for situational opportunities: Is something going on in this person's life that might be making them think about spiritual matters? Did heaven, death, God or Jesus just come up in a conversation? Did someone just use God's name in vain and you can kindly explain to them how important that name is to you?
- Pray and ask God to open up doors for you to share His love with others. The single greatest thing that stops people for sharing Jesus is an unwilling heart.

Let's Review

The best way to create an opportunity to share your salvation story is by saying, "Can I tell you about the greatest thing that ever happened to me?"

There are three basic parts to your salvation story:

- (1) What started you thinking about giving your life to Jesus?
- (2) What did you do?
- (3) What difference did it make?

The best way to end your story is by saying, “Because of this I know for sure I’m going to heaven. What about you?”

This question puts the “ball” in their court to help you find out whether or not they have had a genuine salvation experience and to help you know how to proceed in your conversation with them.

The First Week Sharing My Story

Share your salvation testimony every day this week and in the back of this book write down the names of the people with whom you share it. Also write down their responses and any thoughts or experiences you have.

I Need Help!

We’ve met people in churches where we are training who just need an extra helping hand getting started. That’s okay and we want you to know that we’re here to help. We want you to be the best you can be...and God has called us to help you in this way. So, if you write down your salvation testimony and want to share it with us, feel free to send it our way. If you have questions, then please email us. If you get the chance to lead someone to Christ, we’d love to hear about it. There are no boring testimonies and no boring stories of people being saved...these are forever-changing moments. If you need help or simply want to connect with us, please email us at *resources@threethirtyministries.org*.

CHAPTER 14

SHARING THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Key Questions

- If you were to die right now, do you know for sure that you would go to heaven?
- In your opinion, what does it take for a person to go to heaven?
- *(Or, if you've just finished sharing your salvation story...)* “Because of this I know for sure I’m going to heaven. How about you?”

Never Assume

If people express that yes, they know they are going to heaven, never assume that they have given their lives to Jesus. Find out more.

ASK: How do you know?

Then if their answer leads you to believe that they have not truly had a salvation experience (i.e., I’ve been good, I go to church, I’ve been baptized, I just think I will, etc.), then treat them just as if they had said “no” in the beginning. Follow-up by saying:

ASK: Can I show you what the Bible says about how you can know for sure that you’re going to heaven?

If they say, “No”... be kind and polite but don’t just drop the subject.

ASK: When would be a good time for us to talk about this?

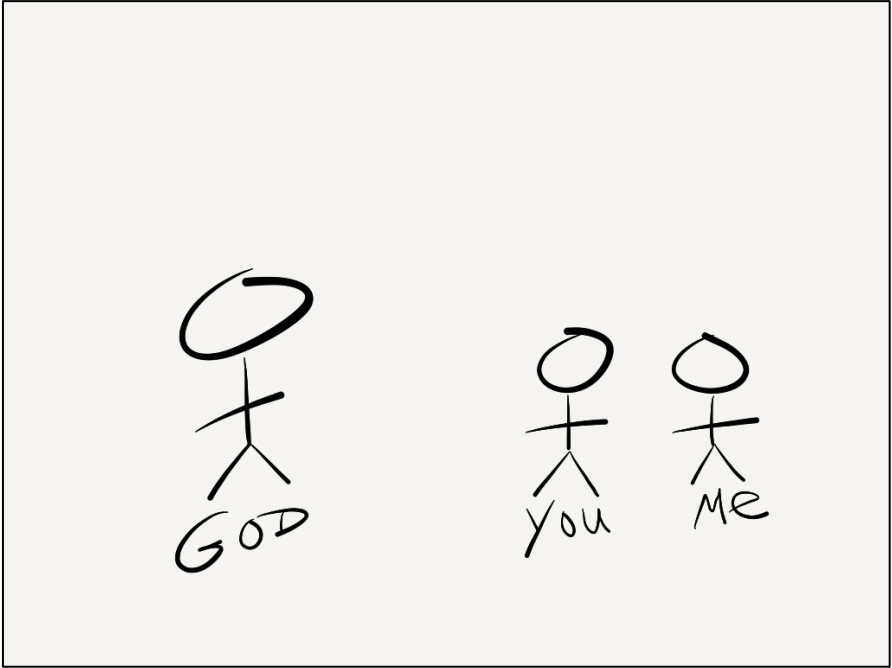
If they are a friend or a relative, let them know that it's important to you that you can share with them.

If they say, "I don't know" ... assure them that it won't take long. Say something like, "It will just take a couple of minutes. And we can just sit and talk right here." By suggesting a nearby place and moving to it, many people will naturally follow.

If they say, "Yes" ... begin showing them the plan of salvation as described in the next chapter. This method of sharing the Gospel takes the each part of God's plan of salvation and adds to it in a simple drawing.

The Salvation Drawing - Part 1

GOD'S LOVE



Draw three stick figures: "God" on the left-hand side and "You" and "Me" on the right-hand side.

EXPLAIN that God loves the person you are talking to and that He wants a personal relationship with them. Instead of writing "You" and "Me" under the figures, write your name and the name of the person to whom you are talking. This will not only help you to remember their name but remind you to keep using their name often as you talk with them.

Example of what to say:

God loves you and He created you to have a relationship with Him. Even before you were born He loved you and had great plans for your life.

The Bible says,

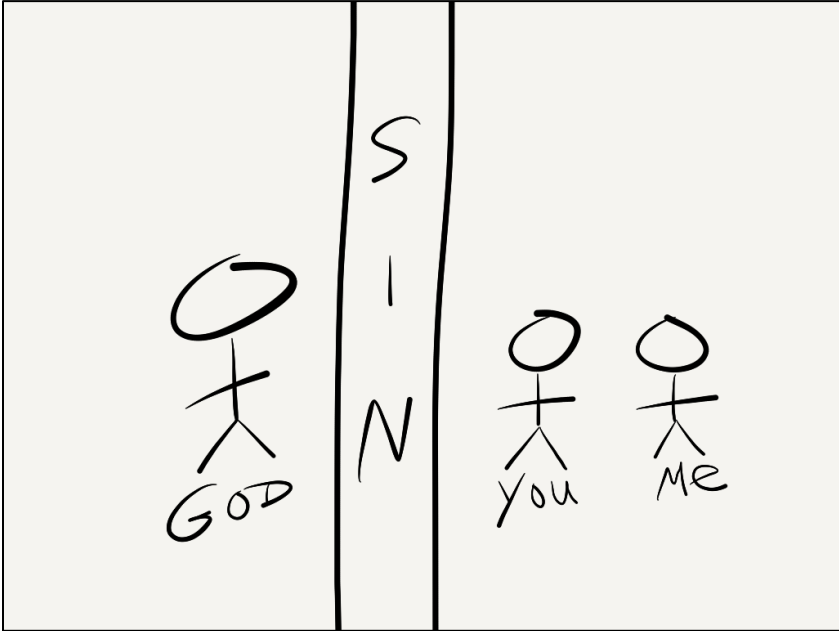
“For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Talking With Children

You can use this method to share the Gospel on a child's level. Remember, be brief and to the point. A seven year old under the conviction of the Holy Spirit is still a seven year old and will still have the attention span of a seven year old. Be careful not to mistake immaturity for lack of interest or conviction.

The Salvation Drawing - Part 2

OUR PROBLEM



Add a rectangular wall in the drawing between us and God. Label this block "Sin" to show how sin separates us from God.

EXPLAIN that we have a problem. Our problem is sin and sin is anything we do that is wrong and our sins separate us from God.

Example of what to say:

But we have a problem called sin and sin is anything we do that is wrong..

Have you ever done something wrong?

Yes, we all have.

The Bible says,

“For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

We’ve all done wrong things and you can picture our sin like a great canyon or huge wall that separates us from God.

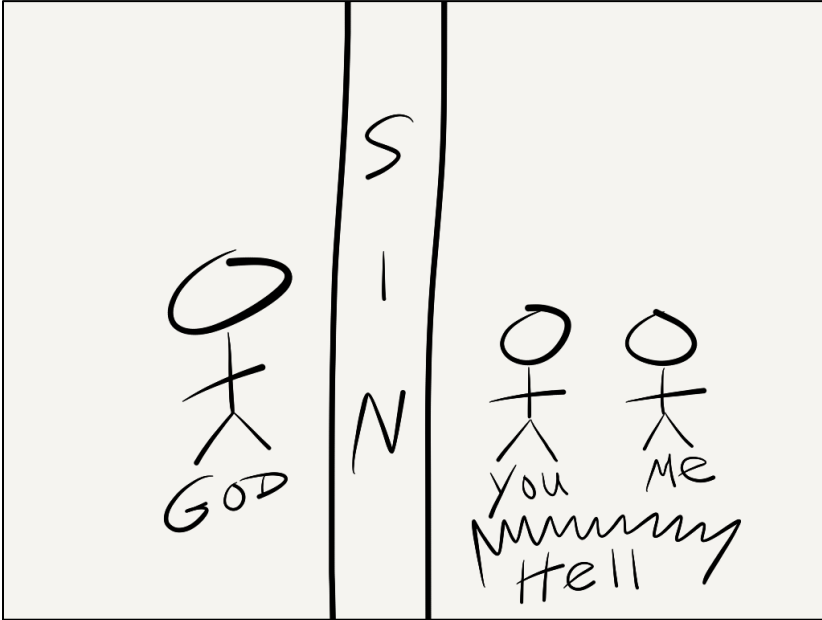
God is perfect. He’s on this side. Are we perfect? No, because we’ve all done wrong things. And our sins, the wrong things we do, separate us from God.

Talking With Children

Be careful not to ask, “Have you ever sinned?” Many unchurched children aren’t familiar with the term “sin.” Ask, “Have you ever done anything wrong?” This is an easier question to understand.

If a child says that he has never done anything wrong, it’s possible that he hasn’t reached the “Stage of Accountability.” See chapter 12 for information on this subject.

The Salvation Drawing - Part 3
THE PUNISHMENT FOR SIN



Add an image of flames to the drawing beneath "You" and "Me". Label this image "Hell."

EXPLAIN that there is a punishment for the wrong things we do. This punishment is eternal separation from God in a place called "hell." God didn't create hell for us, but for the devil and the other angels that rebelled against Him (Matt. 25:41). But when we sinned and rebelled against God, this became our just punishment too.

Example of what to say:

Sin has a punishment. It's a place called hell, but God doesn't want you to go there. The Bible says that God created hell as the punishment for the devil and the other angels that rebelled against

Him, but when we did wrong things, hell became our punishment too.

And hell isn't just the punishment for really bad things—One sin, no matter how small, even the littlest of lies, is enough to keep a person out of heaven.

The Bible says,

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Talking With Children

When speaking with a child, do not omit mentioning hell because this is a part of the Gospel. However, do not focus on it either. Your aim is not to scare the child but to inform them that there is a punishment for sin and a gift that is eternal life. Also, you may need to distinguish with some children that “hell” is a “bad” word if you use it in a bad way, but it's also a place but not a place that God wants you to go.

The Salvation Drawing - Part 4
THE GIFT OF GOD



Add to the drawing an image of a cloud above "God." Label this image "Heaven."

EXPLAIN that just because God wants us to go to Heaven, doesn't mean that we automatically will.

Example of what to say:

But there's more...

ASK: Where does God want us to go? (To Heaven.)

God has a gift for you: Being able to know Him and to go to Heaven when you die. God wants you to go to Heaven. It doesn't matter what

you've said or done—it doesn't matter how bad you've been, God still loves you. But just because He wants us to go to Heaven, doesn't mean that we automatically will.

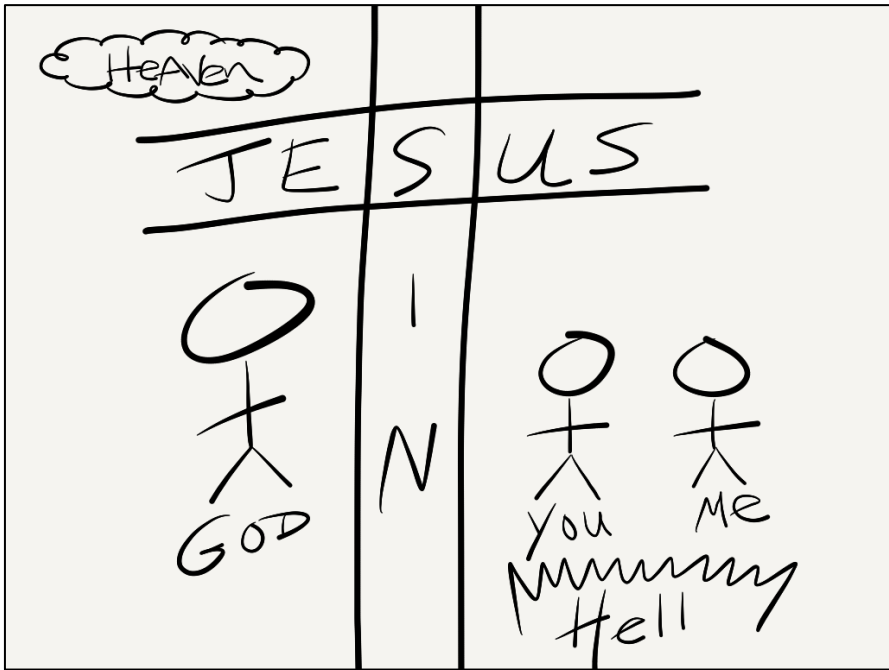
We have to make a choice, but this is what God did...

Did You Know...

God's gift of "eternal life" is not just going to Heaven. In John 17:3 Jesus said, *"This is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and him whom you sent, Jesus Christ."*

Eternal life is being in relationship with God and it doesn't begin when a person dies. Eternal life begins the moment a person is saved.

The Salvation Drawing - Part 5
ONE WAY



Add a bridge to the drawing across "Sin." This will also reveal the image of a cross. Using the "S" in "Sin," label this bridge "Jesus."

EXPLAIN that Jesus was God and came to earth as a man. He lived a perfect life, and when He died, God punished Him for all the wrong things you and I would ever do. This is how much God loves you and this is the reason Jesus came, to make a way for you to go to heaven. (Refer to the sin block.) If this is the Grand Canyon of sin, Jesus built a bridge across it by dying and paying the price for your sins, but Jesus didn't stay dead. Three days later, God raised Him from the dead and He's alive today. That's why He's the only way to go to heaven.

Example of what to say:

God sent Jesus. Jesus is God's only Son who and came to earth as a man. He lived a perfect life, and when He died on the cross, God punished Him for all the wrong things you and I would ever do.

This is how much God loves you and this is the reason Jesus came—to make a way for you to go to heaven. If sin separates us from God, Jesus built a bridge across it by dying and paying the price for your sins.

But Jesus didn't stay dead. Three days later God raised Him from the dead and He's alive today. That's why He's the only way to go to heaven.

The Bible says,

"But God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

The Bible says,

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but by me'" (John 14:6).

At this point the drawing part is finished. The drawing shows a person what God did to make a way for us to go to Heaven. Now it's time to explain how people can accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

The Salvation Drawing - Part 6
HOW A PERSON IS SAVED



Add nothing to the drawing.

Jesus has already paid the price for your sins, but for you to give your life to Him, you have to:

A - Admit that you have sinned and be willing to turn from your sin.

B - Believe that Jesus is God's Son who died and was raised from the dead. This isn't just believing with your head, but trusting with your heart.

C - Call on the Lord, confess your sins, and commit your life to Him. This is the willingness to turn from your sins and to turn to Christ as you Savior.

The Bible says, “That if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

The Bible also says, “For, “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

EXPLAIN that for a person to receive Christ, they must come to God on His terms and His terms are everything or nothing. To give your life to Jesus means that you are willing to surrender everything you are and everything that you have to Him. It’s not enough to just turn from your sins. Many people turn over a “new leaf,” but this is a step more because you are turning from your sins and turning to Christ as Lord and Boss of your life.

Talking Tip

The A-B-C outline to the left is just a guide. You don’t actually have to say, “A...Admit that you have sinned...” This is just a guide for you to follow in your mind.

CHAPTER 15

ASKING FOR A RESPONSE

ASK: Does all this make sense to you?

When you ask, “Does all this make sense to you?” don’t be afraid of being asked questions to which you don’t know the answers. It’s okay not to have all the answers. If the person you are speaking with asks you something that you don’t know, just say, “I don’t know about that but what I do know is…” and then come right back to what you know about what it means to give your life to Christ.

The purpose of this question is to give them clarification on how to know Jesus, not to “chase rabbits.” For example, if you are talking to a child who at this point says, “Do animals go to Heaven?” just bring the conversation back to what matters. “Why don’t we talk about that later, but right now let’s talk about how you can know that you’re going to Heaven.” Also, never interpret random questions from children to mean that they aren’t interested about what you’re saying. Remember that kids think differently, so be very careful not to mistake immaturity for the lack of God drawing them to Himself.

ASK: Would you like to give your life to Christ?

Some people, when learning how to share Jesus, choke when it comes to the question, “Would you like to give your life to Christ?” If you feel anxious about asking this, just take a deep breath, swallow, trust God and boldly spit it out.

If the person says, “Yes”, then explain how they can pray and ask Jesus into their lives.

(If they say, “No,” see chapter 10.)

Example of what to say:

You can give your life to Jesus right now by praying and asking Him to take control of your life, but realize that repeating a prayer can't save you. Words can't “save” you. You have to mean what you say. You have to be willing to make Jesus the Lord and Boss of your life. God knows what's in your heart, so if you're willing to give your life to Christ right now, I can either lead you in a prayer or just let you share your heart with God.

But I would like for you do this aloud. This way I can be a witness to what you are doing.

Sample Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus,

Thank you for dying for me and offering me heaven. I'm sorry for the wrong things I've done. Please come into my life and be my Lord and Savior. I give you my life. Thank you for saving me.

In Jesus Name, Amen.

Praying For Salvation

There are no magic words that saves a person. God knows what is in the heart. But to lead someone in a prayer, you don't have to have one memorized. Just remember the A...B...C's again. Let them be a guide to you:

A - Admit that you have sinned and be willing to turn from your sin.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I'm sorry for the wrong things I have done...

B - Believe that Jesus is God's Son who died and was raised from the dead. This isn't just believing with your head, but trusting with your heart.

I believe that you are the Son of God and that you died and rose again...

C - Call on the Lord, confess your sins, and commit your life to Him. This is the willingness to turn from your sins and to turn to Christ as you Savior.

I give you my life.

Then we always encourage you to have the person end the prayer by saying, "Thank you for saving me...In Jesus' name—Amen." By doing so, even before they finish praying, you are already building in them the assurance that God has been true to His promises.

Talking Tip

If a person says he wants to pray on his own but his prayer doesn't mention anything about accepting Christ and it just sounds like a "Thank you for this day" kind of prayer, when he finishes, simply say, "Now did you want to give your life to Jesus? I'm asking because that's not what you talked to Him about. So, if you want to accept Christ, why don't we pray again and this time just tell Him what you want Him to do. I can help you too." Then help guide him to help him know how to express what he has told you is in his heart. Situations like this don't mean that the person isn't sincere. A lot of times this person has a history of praying but now that he is trying to express his heart he falls back into what is familiar and comfortable for him.

Leading A Person In A Prayer

Some people are afraid to ask if the person wants to pray their own prayer. After all, what if they don't say the right words...but are there rights words? God is looking at the heart. When I was saved all I remember saying was "Dear Jesus, please forgive me for my sins." Giving your life to Christ isn't about the words you say but what is in

your heart and many times we had rather put words in a person's mouth than just to let them share out of the fullness of a heart that desires Christ.

One of the most beautiful prayers I have ever heard was prayed by an ex-convict who simply said, "God, I got nothing to offer you but if you'll take me, I'll come."

One student I once talked to, who wanted to talk to God on his own, simply said, "God," then teared up and stopped talking. What should you do? Well, help them out. I simply said, "Just ask God to forgive you... Tell Him that you want Him to save you... and be the Lord of your life..."

Many people, though, especially children prefer to be led in a prayer. A child once told me when I asked him, "But I'm scared to talk to God on my own." Talking to God was a new idea to him and it was scary. Wouldn't you be scared too if you were getting ready to talk to the God of all power, who created the universe, about whom you knew very little and you were getting ready to talk to Him for the first time, knowing that you had done wrong things?

When you lead someone in a prayer, say one short phrase at a time and give them time to say it back to you. But beforehand remind them that they are saying this to God and not to you.

Dear Lord Jesus... Thank you for dying for me... and offering me heaven... I'm sorry for the wrong things I've done... Please come into my life... and be my Lord and Savior... I give you my life... Thank you for saving me... In Jesus Name, Amen.

Talking With Children

Most children who want to accept Christ will want you to lead them in a prayer. A preteen once said to me, "Can you help me pray? I'm scared to talk to God." After thinking about this, it made perfect sense. Picture a child who is getting ready to talk to God—the God of all power, who made everything, and a God he doesn't know—for the first time. I understand why he felt scared.

Congratulate The New Believer

Example of what to say:

You've just made the greatest decision of your life! The Bible promises that if you are willing to commit your life to Christ, He will save you and give you a brand new life. All the wrong things you've ever done have been wiped away. You're forgiven and the Lord has given you a new beginning with Jesus as your Savior and God as your Heavenly Father.

Encourage this new brother or sister in Christ to let others know what they did. Ask them to call two or three people they think would be excited about their decision.

If you are at church when a person accepts Christ, immediately take them to a church leader. This gives that leader an opportunity to reinforce to them the significance and assurance of what they have done.

If you're talking to a child, immediately congratulate him and give him a big high-five. Let him know how proud and happy you are. Then encourage him to continue growing with Jesus and to tell his parents about what he has done. Let him know that if his parents have any questions about this, that they can call you or the church.

Then encourage him to begin growing in his new relationship with Christ:

- Beginning to pray and talk to Jesus as your friend—tell Him about anything in your life.
- Starting to read the Bible in the Gospel of John to get to know Jesus better.
- Following Jesus in baptism, which is a public statement and symbol that you've given your life to Christ.
- Becoming actively involved in a church where people can support you, teach you, and encourage you as you begin the most wonderful relationship you'll ever have—a friendship with God Himself.

Talking Tip

The list above is about growing. This is not a checklist. Don't lay this out as a "now that you're saved I'm going to burden you with 5,000 things that you have to do. Welcome to the Christian life!"

These "outward" actions are NOT the Christian life. They are an overflow *of* the Christian life. Praying, reading the Bible, going to church, etc. are the externals that are produced by an internal walk with the Lord. This new believer has not been saved to a "religion" but to a relationship. Help him to understand simply that the more you spend time with someone, the better you know him. The same is true with God. Scripture, prayer, learning about the Lord at church and fellowshiping with other believers helps a person to grow closer to Christ. Remember, the Christian life is not about squeezing your life into a set of rules. It's about the Rule Himself coming to live His life through your uniquenesses.

CHAPTER 16

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

Not About Emotions

When I first began leading people to Christ, when someone would get saved, I used to immediately say, “How do you feel?” I was excited and wanted to know what they were thinking and feeling. Then one day I led a man to Christ and said, “How do you feel?” A strange look came across his face and he said, “Am I supposed to feel something?” Suddenly I realized that he had only been a believer for 10 seconds before I gave him his first bit of doubt to chew on. People are wired differently. Some cry. Some shiver. Some feel nothing and don’t even look excited. But salvation is not about feelings. It’s about the fact that Jesus will save anyone who genuinely calls on Him to be their Lord and Savior.

I remember a child accepting Christ and his response was so unmoved that I wondered if he had really meant it. He prayed and then ran off to play as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened. But the next day his mother told me about how he was telling everyone at school about what he had done. As he grew I saw how real his decision really was...even though his emotional response was disappointing to me. I learned that I have no right to judge the sincerity of someone’s heart based on the loudness of their emotions.

Important Note About Safety

In today's society it is extremely important that all of our actions remain above reproach and that in all matters we avoid any hint or appearance of evil or compromise. For this reason, never deal one-on-one with a child, student or person of the opposite sex alone behind closed doors. You must never place yourself in a situation where your actions could be questioned or accusations could be made without public proof of visibility.

If They Say No...

After asking, "Would you like to give your life to Christ?" what if the person says "No"?

Simply ask, "Why Not"

From this point the conversation can go a hundred different directions, but regardless of their reason, try to help them understand the importance of not waiting to receive Christ.

At the same time, though, don't be pushy. Try to leave an open door to talk with them again in the future. Also, let them know that they don't have to be with you or at church to pray and ask Jesus to save them. There is no magic prayer; it's a matter of the heart. They just have to be willing to pray and ask Jesus to come into their lives, to turn from their sins and to turn to Christ as their Savior and Lord.

If They Aren't Sure...

Saying, "I don't know" is the same as saying "No, for now."

Encourage the person to consider why he wouldn't want to make this decision. "What do you think is holding you back from wanting Jesus in your life?"

Sometimes a person may really want to be saved but the idea of surrendering complete control of his life makes him uncertain. On the other hand, sometimes the person is considering if he really is willing

to turn from certain, favorite sins. Either way, let him know what he needs to do to be saved and that he can make this decision any time and any place, “even right now,” but explain the importance of not waiting.

Walking Away

After speaking with someone about accepting the Lord, never second-guess what you said or did. Don't give room to thoughts such as, “What if I would have been clear...” or “What if I would have said this instead...” or “What if it's my fault he didn't want Jesus.” Simply trust that God did in that moment what He wanted to do. In other words, enjoy your relationship with God and enjoy sharing that relationship with others without the burden and self-condemnation of a world of “what ifs.”

CHAPTER 17
SCRIPTURES TO MEMORIZE

JOHN 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

ROMANS 3:23

For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.

ROMANS 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 5:8

But God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

JOHN 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but by me."

ROMANS 10:9

That if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

ROMANS 10:13

For, "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

EPHESIANS 2:8–9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no one would boast.

HEBREWS 9:27

Inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this, judgment...

CHAPTER 18
THE STAGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

"Have you ever done anything wrong?" I asked my four-year old son.
"No," he said.

"Never? Never lied or disobeyed?"

"No."

"Then during nap time," I said, recalling an earlier situation, "do you remember when you snuck out of your bed and hid under the desk in the living room?"

"Yes," he said, lowering his eyes.

"Was that wrong?"

"Yes," he mumbled.

"So, have you ever done anything wrong?"

"No," he said, and he believed it.

He was serious. Although he had come to an understanding that some actions are right and some are wrong, he hadn't reached the understanding that HE had done wrong things. This is the stage of accountability, the stage at which an individual comes to the personal understanding that he is a sinner. This is not a term found in the Bible but is a term used to describe the point in life at which a person can

distinguish right and wrong and willfully chooses to do wrong. It is at this point that a person becomes accountable for his sins.

Some call this the "Age of Accountability" but "age" seems to imply that it happens at a specific age and it does not. Some children come to this understanding at the age of four or five but others might not reach this stage until they are eight or even older. It's different for each person.

Nevertheless, if a child cannot yet discern right from wrong or doesn't know that he has personally sinned against God, he is not ready to give his life to Christ. Before a person can be saved, he must first understand that he has done wrong things. For this reason, when you are talking with a child, always ask, "Have you ever done anything wrong?" Notice that I didn't ask, "Have you ever sinned?" A child who has not been in church much may not understand the term "sin." I was sharing Christ with a nine-year old at a camp and asked, "Have you ever sinned?" He answered "no."

"Have you ever done anything wrong?" I said. "Oh yeah."

He had answered "no", not because he had never sinned, but because he didn't understand what I was saying. When talking with a child, be careful to avoid "churchy" language.

If you are talking to a child that has not yet reached the stage of accountability, just plant a seed for the future by saying something like:

"You know, Johnny, there will be a time in your life when you do something that's wrong. When that time comes, know that God still loves you and has made a way for you to go to Heaven. And, Johnny, if you ever start thinking about Heaven and how you can go there, come talk to me (or your pastor or Sunday School teachers, or parents if you know they are strong believers.)"

At this time DO NOT pray with him that he'll accept Christ when the time is right. Many people do this without realizing that they are dealing with a young child who may only remember that he talked with somebody about Jesus and someone prayed with him. We don't

want to do anything that might give him a false assurance in the future.

I was preaching a revival and about twenty people came forward during the invitation at the end of the service. Immediately my eyes went to two small children. As those seeking to know more about Christ were led out of the worship center, I excused myself and turned the service over to the pastor. It was my first time in this church, I didn't know how well trained their leaders were, and I wanted to make sure that nobody just talked to them for a bit and then led them in a prayer. Scooting through the crowd, I intercepted these two kids and sat down with them. They were both five years old.

"So, why did you come down," I asked.

One shrugged. The other said, "Because I love Jesus."

"That's great," I said. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Sure."

"Okay."

"Have you ever done anything wrong?"

They looked offended. Immediately one of them said, "No." The other shook his head.

"So you've never said anything wrong or told a lie or disobeyed your parents."

"No," they both said.

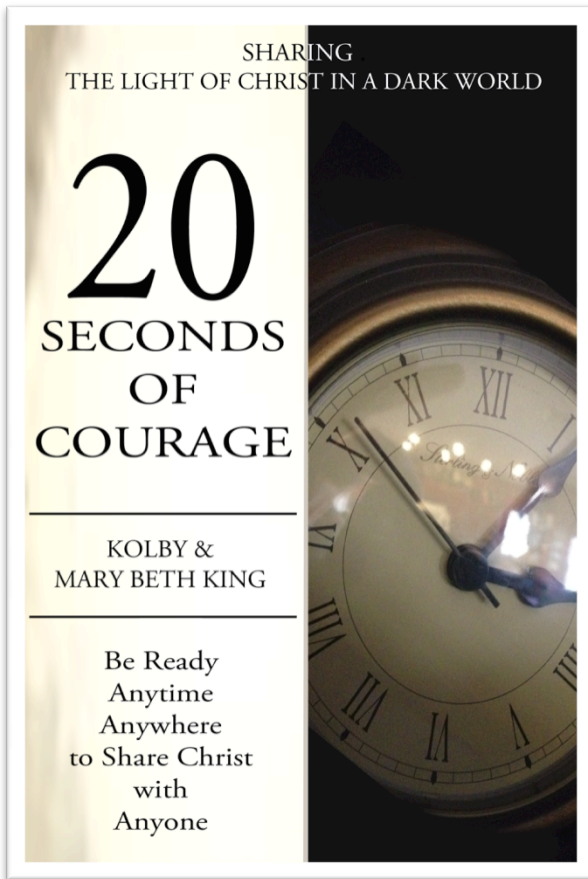
"Well," I said, as was explained above, "I want you to know that there will be a time in your life when you do something that's wrong. When that time comes, know that God still loves you and has made a way for you to go to Heaven. And, if you ever start thinking about Heaven and how you can go there, come talk to your pastor or Sunday School teachers."

Then I gave them both a high five and took them back into the church service.

Be Ready...

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Anywhere
To share Christ with Anyone.**

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Part 5

EXTRA HELPS

CHAPTER 19

SAMPLE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Discipline situations are not problems but opportunities to engage students in life lessons and to help them understand that bad decisions bring consequences. Being in a class and participating in activities is a privilege that is earned by following the rules. Use the following process as a sample way for addressing discipline situations.

Give a Warning

When a student is disruptive, disobeys or shows disrespect, give him a warning. The best practice is to pull him aside one-on-one away from the eyes of his peers. Get on his level (as eye-to-eye as possible). Express that you care about him and want him to be in class today but explain that your class has rules. Clearly explain what the student did that broke these rules. Explain that this is his warning and that if he continues to make bad choices that you will take him to the children's ministry office (or a certain leader). Being in class is a privilege he earns by following the rules. At the end of this conversation, you might even have him repeat back to you in his own words what you have discussed.

Taking A Student To The Office

If a student disobeys after the warning, take him to the office (or a certain leader). Don't give him a reminder or another warning. Let

him see that if you say it, you mean it. Follow through with your warning as soon as he disobeys. Never send a student to the office. A leader should always walk him there.

Office Conversation

One of our office leaders will have a conversation such as this with your student:

“We want you to be in class but our classes have rules and for you to be in class you have to follow those rules. Right now I’m going to give you choice: Either you can stay here in the office which means you will sit in a chair—there will be no snack, no craft, no activities for you to do. You will have no fun. You will remain with us until your parents arrive and then we will have a conversation with your parents about how you have behaved today. Or, if you are willing to obey and show your teachers how good you can be, then I’ll give you one more chance to go back into your class. But, at any time today, if you disobey or disrupt your class again, then your teachers will immediately bring you back to me and you will stay here the rest of the time until your parents arrive.”

After A Student Returns To Class

If the office staff (or leader) brings a student back to your class, it is very important that you follow through with what he has been told. If he does anything else that is wrong, immediately bring him back to the office (or leader) and he should remain there the rest of the day. When parents arrive, discuss the situation with them and begin steps to help him learn how to make responsible choices.

Tips To Know

-Discipline should always be done in love and must always be consistent.

-As a teacher, do not assign consequences (i.e., put someone in time out, threaten to take their snack away...). Following this process allows you to focus on teaching and other leaders to focus on helping the student learn important life lessons through discipline.

-Never discuss consequences with a student that you don't have the authority to give or would be unwilling to assign (i.e., if you can't obey, we'll send you home...)

-You should never raise your voice to a student. If you feel frustrated or are red in the face, you have waited too long to begin the discipline process.

-You should never by-pass this process to directly contact parents. If a conversation needs to happen with the parents, it should come through the main children's ministry leadership.

-Immediately send a student to the office for discipline offenses that are extreme or create potential harm to others (i.e., cussing out a teacher, hitting another student, threatening someone with scissors...)

-The next time a student comes to your class after a discipline situation, express to him how glad you are he is there.

CHAPTER 7

CONTROL TOOLS

A control tool is any question you ask the kids to which they give a response. They might yell some responses, whisper others, and so forth. It's a way of drawing children back into a small or large group discussion without having to say, "Listen up," "Hush," or "Eyes up here," and it is a great transition between activities. It accomplishes refocusing the kids on the leader as well as teaching them an important point and it is a thousand times better and more effective than shushing your kids.

Sample Control Tool:

SAY: When I say, "Who should be number one in your life?" I want everybody to say, "Jesus!"

Leader—"Who should be number one in your life?"

Students—"Jesus!"

Leader—"God's got a gift..."

Students—"For me and it's free!!"

Leader—"The truth is..."

Students—"Jesus Lives!"

Leader—"What are you?"

Students—"I'm Special!"

Leader—“Who does Jesus love?”

Students—“Meeeeeeeeee!”

Leader—“God’s got a call…”

Students—“For us all!”

Leader—“What life all about…”

Students—“It’s all about Jesus!”

Leader—“Big or small…”

Students—“God cares about it all!”

Leader— “God loves who?”

Students—“You!”

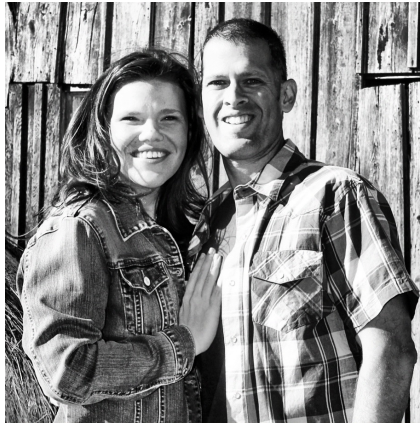
Almost any key point can be turned into a control tool. Have fun with them. Include accents in them. Have some that are slow, some that are fast, some that are whispered, some that are yelled. Have kids in competition to see which side can yell it the loudest—Remember, an effective children’s ministry isn’t always a quiet children’s ministry. Or, have a boys verses girls competition. Or, tell the kids that anytime you see them for the next month you might ask them the following question: “You might be walking down the hall and suddenly I might be right there in front of you and I might ask you this question…You might be picking your nose and suddenly I might be right there in front of you and I might ask you this really important question…Or, you might be crawling out of the bathroom and suddenly I might be right there in front of you. I might even kneel down, put my hands together and ask you this very, very important question (And no, it’s not, ‘Will you marry me?’) I’m going to say, ‘Who should be number one in your life?’ Anytime I say this, I want you, as loud as you can, to say, ‘Jesus!’ Who should be number one in your life? Jesus! Now, let’s have a boy verses girl competition to see who can say it louder. Are you ready, boys?” etc.

APPENDIX

Need More Help?

We've met people in churches where we are training who just need an extra helping hand getting started. That's okay and we want you to know that we're here to help. We want you to be the best you can be...to be an expert at VBS, at sharing Jesus with kids and leading people to Christ, and God has called us to help you in this way. So, if you have questions, please email us. If you get the chance to lead someone to Christ or have a great VBS story, we'd love to hear about it. There are no boring stories of people being saved...these are forever-changing moments. If you need help or simply want to connect with us, please email us at resources@threethirtyministries.org

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Kolby & Mary Beth King

Kolby and Mary Beth King are the founders of three-thirty ministries, a resource ministry for the purpose of providing affordable resources, training and events to churches and families around the world. God changed their lives and they are passionate about challenging the church, helping people to understand and know God and to share Him in their daily lives.

Find more resources and learn more about the events and training conferences they can bring to your church or organization at www.threethirtyministries.org.

Find more books by Kolby and Mary Beth King at
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“Jesus must become greater; I must become less.” John 3:30



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Using creative tools such as ventriloquism, stunts with six foot balloons, illusions and more to share the Gospel with all ages.

To schedule an event, contact:
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