**THE MOST IMPORTANT STORY**

**DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS**

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**Introduction**

The objective of the Children’s Gospel Parties is to not only reach kids and their families for Christ but to establish disciples of Christ in a cell group, leading to a new church being established. Therefore, immediately following the Gospel Party, it is very important to disciple the kids who have made commitments for Christ.

This has been foundational in Vietnam where the Church there has been doing this for 25 years. Their pattern of success is our model. What they have learned is that they must do follow-up as soon after the Gospel Party as possible. They suggest beginning one week later if possible.

They start with a series of four lessons, covering one lesson each week. This does not mark the extent of the discipleship by any means but is a great beginning. The goal would be to have a local church carry on after the initial four lessons and incorporate the kids and their families into their local programs of discipleship.

Just as in the Gospel Party, it is really important to continue to engage the children with fun times together. Songs with actions and fun object lessons really contribute to attracting the kids.

In Vietnam, they have found that an astounding percentage of kids who attend the Gospel Parties, also attend the discipleship lessons. Surely local culture contributes to this and in areas where this is little to entertain the kids, it is more attractive to them.

Very frequently new kids will want to attend the Discipleship Lessons as they have heard the kids had such a great time. It is important to welcome these kids as many may never have heard the Gospel and this presents the opportunity to share Christ with them. As well, kids who attended the Gospel Party but did not pray to receive Christ may well also want to attend.

Make sure that all are welcome, including adults, who often want to watch out of curiosity or concern. Depending on the numbers of kids, adults and then Christian volunteers, make a pointed effort to meet with all the newcomers. Often, there will be kids praying to receive Christ while the other kids are going through the lesson.

Something that can be done is to take those kids aside and go through The Most Important Story with them. They can rejoin the group after.

It is a very dynamic environment so make sure to be prayerful and ready to adapt to the situation and needs from week to week.

Kids always love treats of course but that is only possible if the resources allow and if it is appropriate for the local situation.

**LESSON ONE**

**CHILD OF GOD**

**Prior to the first meeting, remind the kids to bring their copy of The Most Important Story with them. If possible, have a few extras just in case. Be open to new kids coming who did not attend the Gospel party and make sure to welcome them and give them a copy of The Most Important Story. Plan to have someone go through it with them when appropriate.**

**Welcome and open in prayer**

**Game – “Simon Says”**

**Choose an active game and one that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

The teacher will be the leader. She/he will give commands and start with ‘Simon Says’. If you give the command without saying, ‘Simon Says’ and the kids still do it, then those kids are out of the game. The last kid still standing, wins!!

Give commands like these:

Simon Says, shake the hand of the person next to you.

Simon Says, look up at the sky.

Hop on one foot. (Simon didn’t say, so the kids who did it, are out!)

Simon Says skip around the room.

Clap your hands. (Simon didn’t say)

Simon Says put your hands up in the air and say, “Thank you, God for everything!”

**Activity – Mirror in the Box**

This object lesson will help kids understand that they are special to God.

Materials: Small box – decorated if you like and mirror. Place mirror on the bottom of the box.

What you will do:

You will tell the children you have a picture of one of God’s special creations inside the box. It is a very special picture. The reason it is so special is because it is a picture of someone who is very important to God. You can’t tell others who it is because it will be a surprise. Have the kids come up one-by-one and look inside the box. When they look inside, the children will indeed see themselves as a special creation of God.

If you have more than 10 or so kids, choose at least 5 to come forward.

Say, “I want each of you to come up when I call your name and take a look inside the box. Then without saying a word, go back and sit down. Don’t say anything until everyone has had a chance to look inside the box.”

After everyone has looked inside, ask the following questions.

1. Who did you see inside the box?

2. Did you think it was going to be you?

3. Did you know you are God’s special creation and loved by Him?

4. How many different pictures were inside the box?

**Elaborate**

Share further about how special each child is to God and that He knows everything about us.

Psalm 139 tells us. “You know when I sit and when I stand.”

Matthew 10:30 tells us the God even knows how many hairs are on our head.

Jeremiah 1:5 says, “I knew you before you were born.”

**Song – Jesus loves the little children**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

It doesn’t matter what we look like, what color we are or where we are from, Jesus loves us. Let’s sing.

**Introduction to Lesson**

When we had our first party, we shared The Most Important Story with you.

Do you remember that we shared with you that it is the most important story from the most important book, the Bible, God’s book. We were not sharing our thoughts or words, but God’s thoughts and His words written in the Bible.

That is why we also call it God’s Word. It contains the teaching of God and His son, Jesus.

**Leader begins with review.**

Do you remember when we went through the book that in one place Jesus said, “Let the children come to me?” **Show Jesus and the Children spread.**

Jesus showed that God loves children. He prayed for them, healed them, let them help him and even raised them from the dead. He said,

**“Let the little children come to me…And he took the children into his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”** Mark 10:13-15

God, our heavenly Father loves us so much that He wants each of us to become His child. In the book of John it says,

**“Yet to all who received him, (that means Jesus) to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”** John 1:12

When we were together at the party, you raised your hand that you wanted to pray to become a child of God. We prayed together and told God that we believed that Jesus came to save us from our sins and that he died for our sakes, but that God brought him back to life. By asking God to forgive us from our sins and telling Him that we believe Jesus is His son and invite Him into our lives, we become children of God.

**QUESTION** –

**WHOSE CHILD, ARE YOU?**

I John 3:1 says, “**How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”**

Romans 8:16 says, **“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children…”**

So, as we meet here today, you are now a child of God. Isn’t that exciting?

Tell the kids to yell, “I am a child of God.” LOUDER! Do it three times and tell them to yell louder each time.

**QUESTION –**

**HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD?**

Through the Bible, His Word. Repeat verses as above if needed.

**Show Jesus in the temple spread.**

In the Bible, we also learn that Jesus grew up just as each one of you. He grew and became strong and was filled with wisdom, even as a boy.

One time, he was in the temple with many adults and even teachers. He was asking good questions and they were all amazed at his understanding and answers. That shows that no matter your age, God can use you to share with others.

As Jesus began his ministry, we see in the Bible that children always had a very special place in his heart and in his life. And every one of you is so very special to Jesus.

**Show Jesus the Healer spread**

Jesus often showed his love for children. One day a man came to Jesus and he was so sad. He told Jesus that his little girl had just died. But the man knew that Jesus could heal, and he asked Jesus to go take care of her. Although the little girl was dead, Jesus just took her hand and told her to get up and Jesus healed her, and she came back to life.

It says in the Bible,

**“The sick were soon coming to be healed. And whatever their illness and pain…Jesus healed them all.”** Matthew 4:23

Isn’t that wonderful. Jesus still heals today. Just like that man asked Jesus, we can ask Him to heal us or someone we know or love.

**Show Feeding of 5,000 spread**

God shows his care for people and it showed in how Jesus cared. One day, there were many, many people who were so tired and hungry and Jesus wanted to care for them. He actually wanted to feed all those 5,000 people which is a huge number of people. The adults didn’t know what to do. Jesus turned to a little boy who offered his two fish, and 5 loaves of bread and Jesus did an amazing miracle. He made those fish and bread enough to feed all those people and they even had 12 baskets of food left after.

The need of the people that day was for food and Jesus did this to show he can meet all our needs. He chose to use the little boy and what he offered to Jesus. He will do the same with whatever we offer him today. He can use it to help others. He still performs miracles today. Nothing is too hard for God and he takes care of us.

**Summary**

When you asked God for forgiveness and invited Jesus to come into your life you became a child of God.

Now it very important that you get to know God better.

**QUESTION**

**“HOW CAN YOU KNOW GOD BETTER?”**

Interact with the children and then share:

It is so great that we can get to know God better. We can do so in many ways.

Be sure to talk to him. We call that prayer.

Read about him in his book and for now, continue to re-read The Most Important Story. God speaks to you through His word, the Bible and tells you the important things he has for you to do.

These are:

To love God, obey him, tell others about Jesus and show them God’s love and power. It is also very important for us to keep meeting together so we can learn together and share with each other.

**Song - Jesus Loves Me**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

Jesus loves me, this I know

For the Bible tells me so

Little Ones to Him belong

They are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me

Yes, Jesus loves me

Yes, Jesus loves me

The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me, He who died

Heaven’s gate to open wide

He will wash away my sin

Let His little child come in

Yes, Jesus loves me

Yes, Jesus loves me

Yes, Jesus loves me

The Bible tells me so.

**Close with prayer.**

Invite the children to next week’s lesson and share that: “We will have more fun and learn much more.”

Remind them to bring back their MIS.

Remind them about the memory verses.

**NOTE: MAKE SURE TO PRINT OUT ALL VERSES ON ENOUGH SHEETS OF PAPER FOR EACH CHILD.**

Explain: “Take these verses home and memorize them. Pick a verse you especially like to start with.”

* “Yet to all who received him, (that means Jesus) to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12
* “So, you are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.” (Galatians 3:26).
* “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” I John 3:1
* “And, ‘I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.’” II Corinthians 6:18
* “Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:39.
* “Jesus said, I am with you always.” Matthew 28:20
* “Jesus said, never will I leave you.” Hebrews 13:5b
* “The Lord is my helper…”. Hebrews 13:6

**LESSON TWO**

**PRAYER**

**Welcome and open in prayer**

**Game – Charades and or Telephone**

Charades –

Depending on number of kids, if less than 10 all the kids can participate. If more than 10 choose 5-7 to act out and have all the kids guess.

Here are some examples you can use for the kids to act out:

Swimming, baseball, brushing teeth, dancing, driving a car, sleeping, shoveling, superman

Telephone –

Just whisper to one child something fun and funny and have them whisper to the next child and on down the line to the end. Have the last person say out loud what they heard.

Use humorous things such as:

There is an elephant in my back yard.

There is a chicken in my bedroom.

The monkey played football.

A sea lion ate my pizza.

My dog went surfing.

Then, share how when we talk to God, He doesn’t have to guess what we are saying as He knows everything and understands everything going on in our lives. We just have to tell him.

**Song – I’m in the Lord’s Army**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**Introduction**

Brief review of becoming a child of God, becoming part of the family of God.

We learned about that in the Bible, God’s word.

As a family member, you know that we talk with one another.

We communicate with each other. We talk to each other and we listen as well.

That is the same with our schoolmates and friends.

**Questions:**

Let me ask you something. When you meet a new friend, how do you get to know them?

* Spend time with them
* Talk with them – you talk, and you listen

Today we are going to learn about prayer. Prayer is simply communication with God, it is not only talking to God but listening to Him.

Now that you have become a child of God, we want to get to know our heavenly Father much better. This is so important! To do that, we must spend time with Him, both talking to Him and listening to Him.

What is that called? Right, prayer!

God always hears us and it is very important for you to know that God wants you to talk to him!

Show a Bible and say, “In the Bible, God says to us…

“Call to me and I will answer you.” (Jeremiah 33:3)

When God says, “Call to me,” he means, “Pray to me” or “Talk to me”.

**Questions:**

When and where do you think, you can talk to God?

* Anytime, anywhere

What can you talk to Him about?

* Anything – when you are happy, when you are sad, when you are mad
* You should always thank God for even little things
* You should ask Him for forgiveness when you have done something wrong
* You can ask Him for help in anything
* You can ask Him to help your friends know Jesus

Is there a certain way you are to talk to God?

* No, you can talk to God when you are walking, when you are playing, when you are getting ready for bed
* You can close your eyes or keep them open
* You can sit, stand or kneel
* You can talk to God out loud or in your mind
* You can talk to God alone or with others

He is always listening for you and loves to hear you call out to Him.

How do we know this? He tells us in the Bible.

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer…

I Peter 3:12

“Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”

Jeremiah 29:12

Prayer is so important!

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Colossian 4:2

“I call on you O god, for you will answer me; give ear to me and hear my prayer.”

Psalm 17:6

It is important that you talk to God every day.

What should we talk to God about? Right! Everything!

FOR THE LEADER: There is so much that can be covered regarding prayer, so pray and think about which areas you should focus on. There is too much to cover everything but make sure you cover the areas that are most important.

Remember, prayer is not just asking, it is a way we can thank God and it is very important that every day we thank Him for His love and forgiveness.

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

We also pray for others and things we are concerned about.

**Object talk – Confessing our sins**

As we are God’s children, we want to be obedient and please our heavenly Father so we must ask God if there is anything we have done that is not pleasing to Him or if we have sinned in any way. Then, we just ask God to forgive us.

Use a blackboard if available and if not, write on a piece of paper examples of sin. Such as cheating, lying, being mean, and taking God’s name in vain. Explain how important it is to ask God to point out anything in our lives that is wrong or that is not pleasing to Him. Explain that we must ask God for forgiveness and wipe out each sin on the blackboard with eraser. God forgives and wipes out sin. Your slate is clean. If you are using paper, you can rip it up or turn it over.

Share examples of prayers:

“Lord, forgive me for my wrong thoughts, what I did and the mean thing I said today!”

“Help me to think right and do the things that please you.”

The Bible tells us:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9

Underline how important it is to keep short accounts with God and when you do something wrong, ask His forgiveness. He always forgives us and just like on the blackboard, wipes the slate clean.

**QUESTION –**

Who is the most powerful person you know about? The President, a King, a superhero? Maybe Spiderman or Superman? Name someone appropriate for your culture.

Let kids name who they think.

Then – what if when you have a problem or need that you can right away contact the most powerful person in the universe to help you? Not the president or Superman but the same person who created the dinosaurs, the whales, the lions, the elephants and giraffes. The one who created the universe and placed the sun, moon and stars in the sky?

The one who created the entire world. You can. That is who you can contact anytime, anywhere through prayer and reach your heavenly Father – God!

* Psalm 145:18. “The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.”
* Job 22:27 You will pray to him, and he will hear you…
* Philippians 4:19, “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

Remember, God cares about all your problems, big or small. He wants to help you in everything.

**Role play how to pray, with sentence prayers**

Have leaders start with a couple of sentence prayers and then invite a number of the kids to say very simple short prayers, and these can well be real needs they have.

Here are some examples:

“Thank you, Lord, for loving me and saving me.

“God, I love you. Jesus, I love you.”

“Thank you, Lord for my parents.”

“Thank you for my friends.”

“Kids are being mean to me.”

“Please help me with my homework.”

“Lord, I need a pair of shoes.”

“Help my friends at school come to know Jesus.”

“Help my mom and dad to come to know you.”

“Please help my friend get better soon and…”

You can touch the world through prayer. You can pray for children in Africa who are going hungry. You can pray for those in prison in China who are there because they love the Lord.

Pray for those serving the Lord here and around the world. Missionaries, pastors and teachers.

Ephesians 6:18. “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

**Activity – Prayer List**

The Bible says, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God.” Philippians 4:6

Provide paper and pencils and have the kids write down their prayer requests and then in the coming days God’s answers.

Give some examples and help kids fill out some items, at least 3-4.

Use a blackboard if you have one and if not, use a large sheet of paper.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MY PRAYER LIST** | | |
| **WHAT YOU PRAY FOR** | **DATE YOU START TO PRAY** | **ON THIS DATE GOD SAYS** |
| My mom to get well from sickness |  |  |
| I want to have a friend of mine believe in Jesus Christ |  |  |
| Help the people who just had the tornado. |  |  |
| Help the people in Africa |  |  |
|  |  |  |

God always answers your prayers, but the answer may be yes or no or not now.

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**Game – Red light, green light, yellow light – depending on number of kids and size of room can move or run, walk or stand in place**

Have stick with a piece of paper that is red, green and yellow. Tell kids various things such as take one step forward or walk in place etc.

Then kids call out, “Mother, may I?” Then you either show red, yellow or green. Red means stop and they can’t move. Green means they can and yellow means wait.

Play for a while then explain again. God always answers your prayers, but the answer may be yes or no or not now.

He always answers.

Sometimes God says “Yes!”

God wants you to have everything you need.

Sometimes God answers “No!”

He doesn’t give you things that are negative things for you.

Sometimes God says, “Slow or Wait!”

God’s always careful and will give you what you need at right time. You may wonder if God heard your prayer because you didn’t get an answer right away, but He always hears.

Sometimes God says, “I have something even better for you”.

God knows what will happen in the future. Trust that he will choose the best for you.

**Questions:** Add questions if time allows and appropriate.

What have you learned about prayer today?

If you don’t hear an answer from God right away, what should you do?

**Song – If You are Happy and You Know it, Clap Your Hands**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**Prayer**

**Reminder of next week’s lesson.**

**Memory Verses**

**NOTE: MAKE SURE TO PRINT OUT ALL VERSES ON ENOUGH SHEETS OF PAPER FOR EACH CHILD.**

* I John 5:14,15 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we asked of him.
* Luke 18:1 Then Just told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.
* Mark 11:24. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
* I Timothy 2:1-2. I urge, then, first of all, that request, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone…

**Optional Activity - Helium balloons**

**This can be done after the prayer list if time and resources permits.**

Have kids write out or draw if needed a prayer request or two on a piece of paper. Help them to attach it to a balloon filled with helium and take them outside and release the balloons.

Share how this is like sending our prayers to our heavenly Father.

**LESSON THREE**

**THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**Welcome and open in prayer**

**Game – Duck Duck Goose**

**Choose a game that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**HOW TO PLAY**

1. Have all the kids - “ducklings”, sit in a circle.
2. One player walks around the circle, tapping everyone on the head and saying “**duck**.”
3. Whenever the player wants, he/she can declare someone “**goose**.”
4. The player runs from the “**goose**” to take the “**goose's**” seat without being tagged.
5. The “**goose**” then repeats the game.

**Song – Shout to the Lord**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**Review previous weeks – Salvation, Child of God, Prayer.**

**Explain sentence prayers and have adults say a few sentence prayers first and then invite kids to pray, as many as time allows.**

**Introduction to Lesson**

Show Jesus and the children spread from MIS book

In our verse first lesson, we talked about God’s promise to us.

“Yet to all who received him, (that means Jesus) to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12

So, when you received him, believed that Jesus came to save you, you became a child of God.

Show Jesus on the cross spread from MIS book

Many people believed in Jesus but there were others who were so against him that they killed Him. But as you all know, that is not the end of the story.

Do you remember what happened three days later?

Show Jesus Is Alive spread from MIS.

Then show Where Is Jesus Today spread from MIS book.

God the Father brought Jesus back to life. After that, Jesus spent many days with his followers, but he told them he must return to his Father in Heaven. Jesus knew they would be sad that he had to go away but he told them He would send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and our hearts too.

When we become a child of God, the Holy Spirt comes to live in us. He helps us and teaches us. He is with us every single day and every moment. That way Jesus can be with you anywhere you go, even to the other side of the world. But if He was still here in a body, like us, he could only be in one place.

**Illustration** – Choose a leader, share their first name and send her/him out of the room

Have them say, “I have to go kids.”

Use the name of the person,” \_\_\_\_\_\_ could you help me with my coloring?” “She can’t, right? She is no longer with us.”

She left us just like Jesus had to leave His followers. But there is a big difference. Jesus said I am with you always, even to the end of the world. But if He left, how can He do that. He did that by sending us His Spirit. The Holy Spirit. We call him holy because He is holy, and He is God.

Jesus promises, “…Never will I leave you…”. But he physically left earth so the only way he can still be with us is through his Spirit. That way he is will us always, no matter we are or where we go.

Remember to have the person come back in.

Say, “She left and she was gone. But when Jesus left, he came back through His Holy Spirt.”

Have person say, “I’m back. But you see kids, I couldn’t be with you and also be someplace else. When Jesus left, He came back in the form of His Holy Spirit.”

The Holy Spirit is with you forever.

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter to be with you forever…” John 14:16

When we are sad or lonely, tell Jesus and He will comfort you. Comfort makes you feel safe.

The Bible tells us:

“…be filled with the Spirit.” Ephesians 5:18

To be filled means to let the Holy Spirit take control of your life. We need to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to take control of our lives and fill us with his presence.

**Object Lesson - “Get Stirred Up!”**

**As many places will not be able to do this particular object lesson, use an object lesson that is appropriate and helps share the concept, or just skip to the Flashlight Object Lesson.**

Slowly pour chocolate syrup into a glass of milk. Make sure to use a clear glass so the kids can see.

You can ask, what do you think I am making?

Life the glass of milk that now has a thick layer of chocolate on the bottom. Don’t stir it yet.

Say, “I can hardly wait to drink this amazing chocolate milk!” Drink some of the milk, with chocolate still at bottom of the glass.

If the kids don’t say anything, ask, am I doing something wrong because I don’t taste the chocolate?”

When the kids say stir it, do so and ask, “Does that look better?”

Then explain, “The white milk is like our lives, and the chocolate is like the Holy Spirit! When God saves us, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us; but that doesn’t mean He’s in control of every part of our lives! The Holy Spirit can help us become more like Jesus. So, we can think and act like Jesus. Instead of living for ourselves we need Him to completely fill and control us. We need the Holy Spirit to get stirred up inside us!”

How do you think we can get stirred up?

Well, through prayer you get close to God. By reading your Bible God speaks to you. We also get stirred up when you tell others about Jesus. That stirs you up!

Being a Christian is an exciting adventure and the Holy Spirit stirs us up. The Holy Spirit is our superpower and He gives us power to live in a way that is pleasing to Him.

Let’s be like this chocolate milk, mixing God into every part of our lives!

Hand out chocolate drinks

**The Holy Spirit is our super-power!**

Acts 1:8. “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…”

**Flashlight illustration – make sure you have a working flashlight and batteries**

I have brought a flashlight today to help us understand how important the Holy Spirit is.

Have flashlight with no batteries and have a child come forward to turn it on.

Without power it doesn’t work, does it?

What do you think it needs to give it power? Yes, batteries.

Put batteries back in and have them turn it on.

Just as a flashlight needs batteries to give it power, you need power of the Holy Spirit to:

**Know God.**

**Become what God wants you to become.**

We can try to be nice, loving, and patient but we just can’t do it all time with everyone. That is what the Holy Spirit helps us with.

The Holy Spirit helps us become like Jesus.

It says in the Bible “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” Galatians 5:22,23

You need power of the Holy Spirit to become like Jesus and be full of love, joy and peace.

**Activity: Balloon or balls up in air – have a number of balls or balloons**

Have the kids toss the balls or balloons into the air. Have everyone try to keep them being hit up in the air without hitting the ground. Let the kids play for a while.

Explain:

“It takes effort to keep them up in the air, because they want to fall down. Likewise, we have a sin nature that is always trying to pull us down. We can try and try but we can’t do all the right things we want on our own. We need help. We need the Holy Spirit to help us just like we can’t keep the balloons up all the time.

We also fall when don’t spend time with Jesus, praying, reading our Bible, and telling others about Jesus.”

Illustrate by hitting a ball or balloon up in the air.

“It is so easy to fall just like the ball or balloon and falling for us means saying and doing wrong things. Every day, ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of anything that is not pleasing to God. Any sinful thought or act that is unconfessed (not spoken to God yet). The Holy Spirit will guide you and help you. Then you can ask God to forgive you. The Holy Spirit will then help you know you are forgiven.

Remember “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9

Every day:

* Pray and confess (agree with God on) about wrong thoughts and things we do.
* Ask for His forgiveness and then thank Him for His forgiveness.

**The Holy Spirt helps you share with others how they can become children of God.**

* That means He will help you and give you special strength to tell others about Jesus and help you know what to say and He will also speak to their hearts.
* Jesus tells us we must tell others about Him and how others can become a child of God too.

**Songs –**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**“I’m in the Lord’s army” or “If you are happy and you know it”**

**Prayer - close**

**Reminder of next week**

**Memory verses –**

**NOTE: MAKE SURE TO PRINT OUT ALL VERSES ON ENOUGH SHEETS OF PAPER FOR EACH CHILD.**

* “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. John 16:13
* “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter to be with you forever…” John 14:16
* “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own.” John 16:13
* “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8
* “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” Galatians 5:22,23

**LESSON FOUR**

**FOLLOWING JESUS**

**Welcome and open in prayer**

**Game - Fishers of Men**

This game is like tag.  One person will be the fisherman, and everyone else will be the fish.  You can use a string or rope to make a pond in the middle of your play area.  Whenever a fish is tagged, they must go and stand in the “pond,” which will be in the the pond you made out of string or rope.  The game is over whenever everyone has been caught.  Depending on how many kids you have you may want to use more than “pond.”

**Song –Fishers of Men**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**Introduction**

Have any of you ever gone fishing, or seen people fishing?

Did you have fun? Did it look fun if you couldn’t do the fishing?

Did you catch anything or see them catch anything?

What did you use as bait? Worms? Yuck!

What did you catch?

Jesus went fishing too and he taught others to fish. But they fished for something else.

Any ideas?

Well, one day Jesus was walking along the seashore. He saw some fishermen.

What do fishermen go out to catch?

Right, well he saw them and said something to them that was very strange. He said, “Come, follow, me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” Mark 1:17

What do you think that means?

Catching people, their attention and sharing about something that attracts them.

What do you think is the bait to use to fish for people?

If possible, have a fishing pole with a heart on it

Love is the best and most powerful bait. Sharing the love of Jesus. That is the good news we have to share with everyone. It is called the Gospel.

“…it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.” Romans 1:16

Show a Bible

The Gospel message has power to change people’s lives. So being a fisher of men, of people, is reaching them to save them and by God’s power see their lives changed so they too can become children of God.

When Jesus lived on this earth, God called Him to share the Good News and He told people to ask God for the forgiveness of their sins and believe the Good News. The Good News is that God loves us and that if we believe in Jesus, He will forgive us our sins and save us and make us His child.

But before we can become fishers of men, we must follow Jesus. That is what He told His disciples.

“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

They did and they spent much time with Him. Learning from Him.

How do we follow Jesus?

We first have to believe in Him, that He is God’s son and that He came to save us.

**Review previous weeks**

Remember that in our very first lesson, we talked about God’s promise to us.

“Yet to all who received him, (that means Jesus) to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12

So, when you received him, believed that Jesus came to save you became a child of God.

That is the first step in following Jesus.

Then just like the fishermen who followed Jesus, we must spend time with Him. We do that through prayer. Talking to God and listening to Him, especially thorough His Word.

It is very important for you to know that God wants you to talk to him!

“Call to me and I will answer you.” (Jeremiah 33:3)

When God says, “Call to me,” he means, “Pray to me” or “Talk to me”.

“Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”

Jeremiah 29:12

The next step in following Jesus is to become like Him more and more.

But remember we talked about how we can try to be nice, loving, and patient but we just can’t do it all time with everyone. We need God’s help to become like Jesus and become what God wants us to become.

We need something to do that don’t we?

Do you remember what or who that is?

**The Holy Spirit**

Do you remember how God the Father brought Jesus back to life after He died for our sins?

Jesus then spent 40 days with his followers, but he told them he must return to his Father in Heaven. Jesus knew they would be sad that he had to go away but he told them He would send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and our hearts too.

“I will not leave you as orphans…”. John 14:18

“…It is for your good that I go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” John 16:7

Who do you think the Helper is?

He was teaching them about the Holy Spirit. The one he would send.

“Because you are his (children) sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts.”

Galatians 4:6.

This promise is for every one of us.

God the Father sent Jesus, to us and when Jesus left this earth, He sent the Holy Spirit to us.

He lives in us. He helps us and teaches us. He is with us every single day and every moment. That way Jesus can be with you anywhere you go, even to the other side of the world. But if He was still here in a body, like us, he could only be in one place.

**The Holy Spirit is our super-power!**

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…”. Acts 1:8

The Holy Spirit helps us become like Jesus.

It says in the Bible “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” Galatians 5:22,23

You need power of the Holy Spirit to:

**Help you share with others how they can become children of God.**

That is how we really become fishers of men. When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives.

It is important that we ask the Holy Spirit to lead us. He will as you trust in Him. You just need to step out in faith and speak to someone. It might be just saying, “Jesus loves you.”

He will help you and give you special strength to tell others about Jesus and help you know what to say. He will also speak to their hearts.

Jesus tells us we must tell others about Him and how others can become a child of God too.

We must throw out gospel nets to catch people and catch their hearts, their attention.

Fish will never be caught unless the nets are thrown out just as we can’t catch people unless we speak out and share that Jesus loves them.

**Role play – Choose child to share how they would lead someone to the Lord**

For instance, they say,

“Jesus loves you and you can learn about it in The Most Important Story book.”

We want everyone to come to know Jesus and be able to go to heaven.

Remind them that one of the easiest ways is to share the MIS with others.

**Following Jesus**

There are some very important things we must do to follow Jesus and become more like Him every day. There are things we can do to help us grow.

**We need to pray to God every day.**

When we pray, we need to ask God to help us be obedient to Him and show us by His Holy Spirit if we did anything that day that makes Him sad.

“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me.”  John 14:21

We try to be good, and the Holy Spirit helps us, but we still can mess us.

What is that called if we do wrong things?

Sin.

But you know the great thing? God is so loving, when we mess up and do things that are wrong, we just need to pray and ask God to forgive us.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9 That means all sinfulness.

It is so important that any time and every time that we sin or do something that we know is wrong that we go to God in prayer and ask Him to forgive us.

Remember your prayer list? It is great every day, maybe before you go to bed, to take out your list and pray for those on it. Before you pray for others, it is good to ask God to forgive you for anything you did wrong, and it is great to thank Him and tell Him how much you love him. Then you can pray for those on your list.

Something that should be on your list is what we call our fishing list.

What do you think that is?

The list of people we know who don’t know Jesus yet and we put them on our list so we can pray for them and that God will give us a way to share Jesus’ love with them.

Then, it is very important to read God’s Word every day. You can do this by going over your memory verses and also reading your Bible.

It is also really important to spend time with others who also love and follow Jesus. We need to get close with other Christians.

They:

* Help one another grow closer to Jesus
* Help take care of one another
* Encourage one another
* Help solve each other’s problems

**Summary –**

Today we learned about being followers of Jesus and just like Jesus followers when He first called them, it is so important to become fishers of men. Everywhere around you are people who need to learn of God’s love and that they can become children of God, just like you.

As a child of God and a follower of Jesus and as a fisher of men, you must share with them and pray for them that they too will invite Jesus into their lives.

Start with your family, your friends, your neighbors and then everyone you meet. They all need to learn of Jesus love and how they can know Him and invite Him into their lives.

**Song – Jesus loves you**

**Choose a song that is appropriate for your culture and local setting.**

**Prayer - close**

**Memory verses**

* “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…”. Acts 1:8
* “And you also must testify…”. John 15:27
* “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” Hebrews 10:24
* “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” John 14:21
* “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6
* “In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.” Psalm 5:3