

## MAKE YOUR MOVE: LEADING A CHILD TO CHRIST (45 MINUTES)

### Purpose Statement

This 45-minute plan is designed to equip children's ministry leaders and volunteers to explain the gospel to kids with guidelines and a step-by-step process of how to present the gospel.

### Needed Resources

- *VBS 2023 Gospel Guide* (1 guide per conferee)
- *Levels of Biblical Learning Poster* — Display on the focal wall. Use construction paper arrows to highlight the section on Salvation concepts.
- Construction paper — Cut into several arrows. Attach these to the Levels of Biblical Learning poster pointing to the “Salvation” concept area.
- *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me*
- *VBS 2023 Devotional Bible for Kids*
- *VBS 2023 Worship Rally DVD Set* — Cut DVD to the Gospel Presentation video.
- *VBS 2023 Tablecloths*
- TV/DVD Player
- Twister® game mat — Hang the mat on the wall.
- Item 1: “Words & Definitions” — Print 1 per conferee plus 1 extra. Cut the extra along the lines. Tape each word to a circle on the Twister mat. Hand out the definitions to conferees. Give a complete copy to each attendee after playing the game.

### Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle. In each chair place a handout, a *VBS 2023 Gospel Guide*, and a *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* witnessing tool. Place a table at the front of the room and for teaching tools, and any recommended resources to which you will refer, such as the *I'm A Christian Now* resources from Lifeway.

### Teaching Steps

#### 1. Introduction (2 minutes)

- Comment: “Leading a child to Christ is an awesome privilege that we have as children's leaders. Everything we do—every lesson, message, activity, and event—should point children to Christ so that they can come to know the Lord as their personal Savior.”
- Explain that in this conference, conferees will learn how to explain the gospel to kids, learn guidelines to follow when counseling kids, and learn a step-by-step process of how to lead a child through a gospel presentation.
- Pray, asking God to bring kids to our churches so that we can lead them to Him.

#### 2. Twister: Watch Your Words (10 minutes)

- Say: “If you've been a Christian for a while, you may be accustomed to saying biblical, religious, and churchy words that may not make sense to a child who is new to church. We must choose our words carefully (use concrete language) and explain what some words mean when presenting the gospel to children.”
- Hand out the definition cards (Item 1) to conferees. Explain that these are definitions to some “churchy” words that can be confusing to kids. State: “Find the word that matches your definition on the Twister mat and tape the definition next to it.”

- After volunteers have matched up their words and definitions, review each one with the entire group.
- Say: “Knowing ahead of time how to explain these words to children will help leaders not get ‘twisted up’ when they share the gospel.”
- Refer to the Levels of Biblical Learning poster and encourage conferees to consult that resource for additional understanding of the concept of salvation. Read some of the characteristics that children at different grade-levels can understand.

### 3. **Clue: Guidelines When Counseling Children** (10 minutes)

- Share the following tips for counseling children. These are considered “best practices” when sharing the gospel with kids.
  - **Deal with each child individually.** Avoid mass appeals when presenting the gospel. If a mass appeal is made in a worship service, make sure that at some point children are spoken to individually about the decision they are making. If you are sharing the gospel in a small group setting, make sure to talk to children individually who want to know more about becoming a Christian.
  - **Be conversational.** Sit next to the child. Do not stand over them. Tell them who you are and ask them about themselves. Get to know the child.
  - **Ask open-ended questions.** There are three types of questions:
    - **Closed Questions:** Questions that can simply be answered with only a “Yes” or “No.”
      - Ask conferees for examples of closed questions. (Examples: Do you want to be saved? Do you love Jesus?)
    - **Limited Questions:** Questions that can be answered with a correct answer.
    - **Open-Ended Questions:** Questions that spark conversation that help reveal a child thoughts and feelings.
      - Examples of open-ended questions: Who is Jesus? What is sin? What is a Christian? Why do you want to become a Christian? How do you feel? (Sometimes the feelings we have are God’s way of speaking to us.) What has led you to start thinking about becoming a Christian? How long have you wanted to be a Christian?
  - **Use the Bible along with an age-appropriate witnessing tool.** Let the child read verses from a Bible so they know where truth comes from. Use an age-appropriate witnessing tool to highlight and explain the gospel to the child.
  - **Present the gospel clearly on a child’s level.** Explain words to them that they might not fully understand.
  - **Determine the spiritual condition of the child.**
    - Does a child understand the meaning of sin?
    - Does the child know that they have sinned?
    - Does a child know they sinned against God?
    - Does a child know that their sin separates them from God?
    - Does the child understand what Jesus did on the cross for us?
    - Does the child understand how one enters a relationship with God?
  - **Lead a child to make an appropriate decision.** It is OK for a child to decide he is not yet ready to become a Christian.

- Not yet ready: The child is taking steps toward God. Maybe he knows some spiritual truths but is not ready to take the next step. Avoid any pressure for the child to make a child a salvation decision.
- Ready: Let the child pray with his own words.
- Already a Christian: A child may indicate he is already a Christian but still has questions. He may need assurance of his salvation. Or he may be ready to take the next step of believer's baptism.

#### 4. **Sharing the Gospel** (10 minutes)

- Give conferees a copy of *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* and the *VBS 2023 Gospel Guide*. Ask them to follow along as you walk through the resource.
- Show the gospel presentation video from the Worship Rally DVD and encourage conferees to follow along using *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me*.
- Share the following tips:
  - After presenting the gospel, ask a child for his response:
    - Have you ever made the decision to respond to the gospel?
    - Are you ready to Admit, Repent, Believe, and Confess?
  - Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. If the child is restless and not responding in a way that indicates an authentic salvation decision, then relax and encourage the child that God is working in her life.
  - Help a child understand what the Bible says about being saved—if we believe and confess, we will be saved.
    - John 3:16: For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that **everyone who believes** in him will not perish but have eternal life.
    - 1 John 1:9: If we **confess** our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
    - Romans 10:9-10: If you **confess with your mouth**, "Jesus is Lord," and **believe in your heart** that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **One believes with the heart**, resulting in righteousness, and **one confesses with the mouth**, resulting in salvation.
    - Confess and believe. That's the simple response to God's plan for you.

#### 5. **It's Your Turn** (10 minutes)

- Guide conferees to find a partner and take turns sharing the gospel with each other using *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* resource.
- Allow time for each pair to have a turn.

#### 6. **Close in Prayer** (8 minutes)

- Close in prayer, asking God to prepare the way for us and give us opportunities to make a move to share the gospel with children.

<b>SIN</b>	Actions, attitudes, words, or thoughts that do not please God.
<b>ADMIT</b>	To own up to or to agree. A person must admit that he is a sinner before he can receive Jesus.
<b>BELIEVE</b>	To know and trust that something is true.
<b>CONFESS</b>	To tell. Each person can confess faith in Jesus as his Savior and Lord.
<b>REPENT</b>	To turn or change from disobeying God to obeying Him. When a person repents, he changes his behavior.
<b>JESUS</b>	God's One and Only Son. Jesus is the perfect Son of God.
<b>SAVIOR</b>	Jesus is our Savior. He died on a cross and took the penalty, or punishment, for our sin.
<b>HOLY SPIRIT</b>	The Spirit of God who helps people understand and trust God's plan of salvation.
<b>CHRISTIAN</b>	Name given to people who confessed Jesus as their Savior and Lord.
<b>BAPTISM</b>	When someone who is already a Christian is lowered into the water and brought back up to show others that he has confessed Jesus as Savior and Lord.
<b>LORD</b>	God, the One in charge.
<b>DISCIPLE</b>	Follower of Jesus
<b>SAVED</b>	When you have asked God to forgive your sins and asked Jesus into your life as Savior and Lord.
<b>BORN AGAIN</b>	When Jesus becomes your Savior and Lord; when you are born into God's family.
<b>GIVE YOUR HEART TO JESUS</b>	When you ask Jesus to come into your life to be your Savior and Lord.