

So...You Want to Share Jesus? Leader's Guide

Scripture: "...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8b).

Purpose: The purpose of this *Leader's Guide* is to provide you with the basic resources to create a learning environment, along with the booklet, *So...You Want to Share Jesus?* that encourages children to discover how to witness and build in them the desire to be a witness to their faith in their relationships with others.

A Note About Witnessing

This booklet is designed to give elementary age children a solid introduction to the lifestyle of sharing their faith. It is the hope of the author that the communicator will use this material in a learning environment that will foster interaction and hands-on activity. As you read through this guide think of creative ways that you can communicate this material so that children will find a passion for witnessing and have a plan to do so. Mind the pitfalls of this topic and be ready to challenge your children and engage them actively so that it is less teacher talk and more facilitated discovery.

Why Should Children Learn to Share Jesus?

Since witnessing is a lifestyle it should not be left for adult education. Rather, it should be introduced in the elementary years as children are developing relationships outside their nuclear family. As

Resource List

So...You Want to Share Jesus?
Student Booklet and this
leader's guide

Bible

Globe or world map

Parent letter (*narrow column, p. 5*)

Power Tool Resources:

My Best Friend, Jesus booklet
www.wordaction.com

Kids' EE-Cube
www.E3resources.org

Magic Coloring Book
www.onewaystreet.com

The Wordless Book
www.cefonline.com

The Story of Jesus for Children DVD
www.jesusforchildren.org

How to use this guide:

Prepare by reading the suggested materials and the introductory information. Complete the booklet, *So... You Want to Share Jesus?* before you teach it to children. This will help prepare you for questions that may arise during the class session.

Create an open environment. Allow the children to ask any questions they may have.

If the pastor is not teaching this class, invite him or her to stop by and share a story about a first witnessing experience.

You may want to teach this class in a single session (such as a Saturday or Sunday morning) or divide it into two sessions (session 1 going through the material and session 2 practicing).

Have fun. Be yourself. You are part of the important spiritual formation in the lives of the children in your class so make the material your own.

these relationships grow with importance so does the opportunity for the internalization of the value of sharing Jesus with peers.

Why Should this Booklet and Other Resources Be Used?

Just like a soldier needs the right uniform and equipment in the field, so a child with the right tools can learn to clearly articulate the faith and share the love of Jesus.

Again, this booklet was designed to be one of several tools used during a lesson/small group/presentation that will engage children who may have a variety of learning styles. This can also be used at home as parents teach their children what it means to witness.

What Really is Witnessing?

To be a witness means to be able to share an account of what you have seen and heard. The early Church believers took the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 literally to mean that every believer young and old were expected to share their faith through a personal account. It is this ability to share a personal account that is the essence of being a witness.

Historically, believers have used any method of communication that they had access to. Art, theater, technology, words, they are all forms of human communication. Of course, the greatest of all is our behavior. The old saying is true: *actions speak louder than words.*

So when you are teaching the concept of witnessing you want to stress that being a witness and sharing Jesus should:

- Be personal
- Be creative
- Be friendly
- Be positive and relaxed

Biblical passages for sharing Jesus:

Read these passages as you prepare. Encourage children to read these passages.

- Matthew 28:19-20
- Acts 1:8
- 2 Corinthians 5:20
- Ephesians 2:10
- Philippians 2:4
- 1 Timothy 4:12

You will need a white board and dry erase marker or a poster board and marker for your discussion of pages 2 and 3 of the booklet.

The Lesson

Introduction

If you have not already done so, give each participant a copy of the booklet, *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Say, **Today we are going to work together to discover how to share Jesus with others. This is a special way that we can follow God's plan for our life. The cool part is that each of you will have a unique way of sharing your faith in Jesus.**

Photocopy and send home the parent letter from the narrow column, page 5 as you introduce this topic and work with the children.

Excuses...

Pages 2-3 in *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Review pages 2 and 3 of the booklet. If you have not already done so before the session, distribute a copy of *So... You Want to Share Jesus?* to each child.

Say, **Many believers find it difficult to share about Jesus to friends and even family members. One of the most common barriers to sharing Jesus is the excuses that people make.**

Ask, **Do you know what an excuse is? An excuse is something we tell ourselves as a reason why we don't want to do something. What are some excuses you have heard?**

List the excuses that children share on a white board or poster board for visual organization.

Draw four lines or blank spaces (to fill in for letters of a word) on the white board or poster paper and allow children time to guess what word would be the right answer for the question:

What is something that causes us to make excuses so we don't have to do something?

F E A R

Ask, **Which excuse would be easy for you to use to avoid doing something? What excuses have you used to get out of doing something in the past? Was that an easy excuse to use? Why or why not?**

Notes:



Faith Words are words that help you in your Christian life. They are important faith concepts for children. These words are emphasized using the Faith Words' logo. Look for the definition for "disciple" on page 3 of the student booklet. Look for "Holy Spirit" and "witness" on page 4.

Display the globe or world map as you read together Matthew 28:19. Name a country and have children find it on the globe or map. Pray for people in that country who are sharing Jesus' love and message of hope with others.

Important terms and definitions:

Coach: a person who points out things to do for growth and improvement.

Helper: a person who encourages and supports another.

Believer: a person who chooses to believe in something or someone else. The person is convinced of the belief confirmed by personal experience.


We Were Told to Go!



Distribute Bibles and encourage the entire group to turn to Matthew 28:19. Invite the children to read the passage together. This prevents any child feeling uncomfortable about reading ability.


Ask, **What does the word *go* mean? What images come to mind when you hear the word *go*?** Record a list of the responses on the white board or poster board of what the word *go* means.

Coach, Helper, and Guide

Page 4 in *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Print the words: *coach, helper, guide, believer, Holy Spirit,* 

disciple,  and *witness*  on seven separate paper strips. Write the matching definition for each word on a different sheet of paper. You will have seven word strips and seven definition sheets. Divide the group in teams of 2-3 children. Give each team a definition sheet and challenge the teams to find the matching word for each definition. If you have more than 21 children, increase the team size. If you have less than 14 children, give each team more than one word to define. Provide a realistic time limit in which to complete the task. After all the matches have been found have each team announce the match made and explain


why the match is correct. Identify the words that are *Faith Words*  (Holy Spirit, witness and disciple). Explain the importance of *Faith*

Words  as words that help us learn about God and His teachings.

Say, **Now that we have a good understanding of what these words mean be ready to spot them in your booklet when we come to them.**

When you see one of these words in your booklet, circle that word.

Have each child locate Acts 1:8 in a Bible. Give help as needed. Read Acts 1:8 out loud as the children follow along in their Bibles. Ask, **Who is it that gives us power?** Have the children fill in the blanks to

answer the question (*Holy Spirit* ).

Dear Parent:

Thank you for allowing us to join with you in nurturing your child spiritually. An important step in spiritual life is the ability to share our faith with others. This *Young Believer's Discipleship Series* study is designed to help your child with information, tools, and the practice needed to comfortably begin sharing Jesus with others.


I have included with this letter a copy of the leader's guide and booklet for your information. You may want to continue the learning at home with your child by walking through the pages of the booklet together. You may also want to try these following activities:


- Share your faith story. Tell your child how you came to know and love Jesus. Be sure to include as a part of your story how He continues to work in and through you today.
- Have you ever shared your faith with another person? How did it feel? What was the person's response? Share this information with your child.
- Practice! Review *The ABC's of Salvation* with your child (*narrow column, page 8*). Talk about some of the language used. Read the Bible verses together.
- Celebrate! Have a time of praise when you and your family celebrate together how good God is.
- Pray with your child for friends and family that need to know Jesus. Keep a prayer journal. Write these names in the journal. Pray for these people by name each day.

Thank you again! Remember that you and your family remain in our prayers.

What Is a Witness ?

Divide the group into three teams. Ask, **What do you think it means to be bold?** (Allow responses) **What does it mean to be a**


witness  ? (Allow responses) **Let's read about three men who were**

bold witnesses.  Assign each team a Bible passage to read together. Include strong readers within each team. Have a spokesperson from each team share the answer for the passage to fill in on page 4 of the booklet and give a brief summary of what the person in the passage witnessed about.

Team 1: Read Acts 3:11-16.

Answer: Peter. Peter witnessed to Jesus' healing power. Ask, **How could Peter know about Jesus' healing?** (He had seen it for himself. He knew Jesus and knew that He could heal. Peter healed others with Jesus' power working through Him.)

Team 2: Read Acts 13:26-32.

Answer: Paul. Hint: Have children go back to verse 16 to solve the mystery of who is speaking in verses 26-32. Paul witnessed to Jesus' death and resurrection. Ask, **How could Paul be a witness  to Jesus' death and resurrection? How did Paul know that Jesus is alive?** (Paul met Jesus on the Damascus road and learned for himself that Jesus is alive.)

Team 3: Read Acts 8:30-35.

Answer: Philip. Philip witnessed to the Ethiopian about the good news of salvation through Jesus. Ask, **How was Philip able to share about salvation with another person?** (Philip had experienced salvation for himself. He knew it was possible to believe in Jesus and be forgiven of sins because it had happened to him.)

Optional activity: Have each team, before sharing the answer with the rest of the group, act out a scene using the Bible passage. Consider calling it a silent movie or Bible play. Encourage the teams not to use the

Notes:

name of the witness  in the acting so the other two teams can guess the answer from the scene.

Ask, **What did Philip, Paul, and Peter all have in common?** (They all knew Jesus as Savior and Friend. They were all bold witnesses. They all shared what they knew to be true about Jesus with others.)

Say, **You have a choice to make. You can choose to be a bold witness too. If you have chosen to love, obey, and serve Jesus. If you have admitted your sins, asked for God's forgiveness, been saved and forgiven of your sins—then you have a responsibility. What is that responsibility?** (To share Jesus with others) **I really want you to decide if you are ready to be a bold witness. I want you to find a place somewhere in this room. Go to that place by yourself. Talk with God. Pray and ask God to help you be a bold witness to the truth that Jesus, God's Son, loves us and we can choose to love and follow Him. If you decide you are ready, with God's help, to be a bold witness, write your name on the line on the bottom of the booklet page 4.**



Give the children about 5 minutes for this time of personal prayer. Then bring the group back together for the review on page 5.

Get Ready! Let's Review

Page 5 in *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Refer the children to page 5. Invite the group to complete this review section by looking back at the individual pages. Encourage children to complete the following answers on their own and ask any questions they may have to this point.

Answers:

1. Excuses
2. Go/make
3. Holy Spirit 
4. coach/helper/guide
5. witness 

Optional: Allow the children to choose a friend and work together on page 5.

Notes:

You will need copy paper or construction paper and washable markers for the students to use as they create the cards. **Then,**

Use page 6 of the booklet to design a card to give to someone with whom you want to share Jesus. Then fold a blank sheet of copy (or construction) paper in half. On the front of the card draw a picture of Jesus and title, "Meet My Friend, Jesus!"

On the inside left side of the card print your story describing, "What has Jesus done for me?"

On the inside right side of the card print your story describing, "As a witness, I have seen or heard Jesus do..."


Encourage children to illustrate their cards to make their stories personal.

Plan to give this card to someone you know that needs to know Jesus as Friend and Savior. Plan to share the story of how Jesus saved you with this person.

"Share Jesus" Cards

Page 6 in *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Before this session, Make your own list answering the questions,


"What has Jesus done for me?" and "As a witness , what have I seen or heard Jesus do?" Make your own "Share Jesus" card using paper and markers and the narrow column directions of this leader's guide.

Optional, You may want to provide extra items like scrap paper, beads, glue, ribbon, buttons, glitter, etc. Allow children to creatively decorate their completed cards.

During this session, Gather with the children. This begins the hands-on practice portion of the lesson. Say, **This is now the time when we will begin to talk about how Jesus works in our lives. We each have a unique story to tell about our Best Friend, Jesus. This includes more than just the facts about Him. It includes how we know Jesus as a Friend and Savior.**

Have the children turn to page 6. Explain that this page is designed for each child to use as a planner for making a personal, unique "Share Jesus" card. Show the "Share Jesus" card that you made prior to the session. Explain the directions. Help children to understand that the two questions in the student booklet on page 6 are guide questions so that what is in the card is personal and meaningful to their lives and to the person with whom they choose to share Jesus. Emphasize that this is the time to talk about the uniqueness of their salvation stories. Remind them to include things they have witnessed in their own lives and in the lives of others that confirm their knowledge of Jesus, God's Son.

Share your story and the information you included on your card. Help children brainstorm ideas to include on their cards. Give them time to create their own cards. As children complete the cards, allow interested children to show and tell about their cards to the group. Say,

Writing our stories help us to know what to say when we witness  boldly to others about how we know and love Jesus.

Optional Activity, After children have created their "Share Jesus" cards, divide them into pairs. Have each child use the created card to talk about Jesus with that child's partner. This is good practice for talking about Jesus with others. Say, **The more you talk about your Best Friend, Jesus, the more comfortable you will be sharing Jesus with**

Notes:

There are times that as you share the good news of your best Friend, Jesus, the people you are talking with want to know how Jesus can be their best Friend. You can use these simple ABC's to remember how you can help others be saved and choose to follow Jesus too!

The ABC's of Salvation

A—Admit you have sinned. This means you know that you have done wrong and disobeyed God. You need to tell God what you've done, that you are sorry, and that you will quit. (*Read Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:9*)

B—Believe God loves you and sent His Son, Jesus, to save you from your sins. Ask for and receive the forgiveness God is offering you. (*Read John 3:16 and Acts 16:31*)

C—Claim Jesus as your Savior and Best Friend. Tell someone what God has done for you. Choose to love God and follow Jesus. (*Read John 1:12 and Romans 10:13*)

others. You can talk about Jesus with family and friends. This is a great place to begin sharing!

My Share Plan...

Page 7 in *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Have children turn to page 7 in the booklet, *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Say, Now you are ready to come up with a plan for sharing your faith. Let's take a look at the steps for this plan.

Review the steps in the booklet.

Step 1:

Say, **Think of three people (family members or friends you know) that you want to talk with about Jesus.** Give enough time for children to think of and pray about the names they will list. **Print one name on each line in your booklet.**

Step 2:

Say, **Let's pray for each person on your list. I will open the prayer. Then you pray silently for each person you listed. I will close the prayer. Remember now that you have three names listed, you can pray for these three people each day.**


Next, sometime this week I want you to share with a parent, teacher, pastor, or other trusted adult your three names. Ask this adult to join you in praying for the three people on your list.

Step 3:

Say, **This may take some time to think about and plan. I want you within the next two weeks to think about a time and place when you will share Jesus with each person that you named on your list.** (Note: This step may not be easy for some children to identify. Encourage them to discuss this with their parent or other trusted adult.)

Step 4:

Say, **Let's review the tools that are available to help as you talk about or share Jesus with family and friends.**

The Holy Spirit:  Ask, **Who is the Holy Spirit? (Helper, Guide, etc.) The Holy Spirit will help you know who to talk with**

Notes:

about Jesus and when to talk with them. Talk with God each day about sharing Him with others. Wait and listen. God will give you a “feeling” or a “nudge” when He wants you to talk with someone about Jesus.

The Bible: Ask, Do you remember Philip and the Ethiopian? Philip shared important information about the Scripture. You can share favorite Bible verses and Bible stories with your family and friends. This is one way to start conversations about Jesus. What is a favorite Bible story or verse that you might want to share with someone? (Allow time for response. Encourage children to write a verse reference in their booklet.)

Prayer: Say, Making time each day to talk with God is very important to sharing your faith. You have to be in contact with your best Friend in order to share Him with others. When is a time that you talk with God each day? (Allow children to write the time in the booklets.)

Parent, Teacher, or Pastor: Say, The adults in our lives that we trust (like parents, teachers, or pastors) can help us as we share Jesus with others. Ask a person you know and trust to pray with you for the people you want to talk with about Jesus. Also ask this same adult to help you practice by talking about Jesus with you. You can share your faith story with this trusted adult.

“Share Jesus” Card: Have the children review the information in their “Share Jesus” cards. Say, You can keep this card in an important place as a reminder that you can talk about how Jesus is working in your life with others. Where is some place that you will keep this card? You might want to keep a notebook or journal with the card. When Jesus does something new in your life, you can write it in the notebook or journal and add it to your story that you share with others.

Say, Good news! You are ready to share Jesus! Let’s pray together that the Holy Spirit will help you be bold and have the courage you need to be a witness and share your Best Friend, Jesus, with other friends and family. Remember you can pray and ask for His help everyday. Pray with the children.

Power Tools for Sharing Jesus

Page 8 in *So... You Want to Share Jesus?*

Have the children turn to booklet page 8 as you conclude the session.

Notes:

Place on a table for easy access tools that the children can use to share Jesus with others. If these tools are not available, be creative and come up with some of your own. Be sure to provide easy-to-read, developmentally appropriate Bibles for children to use, look through, and read. There are a variety of Bibles on the market designed for children and young teens that are appropriate for use.

Power Tool Resources:

- Bible
- *My Best Friend, Jesus* booklet
- *Kids' EE-Cube*
- *Magic Coloring Book*
- *The Wordless Book*
- *The Story of Jesus for Children* DVD

Suggested Bible Versions:

- *New International Reader's Version*
- *New Century Version*
- *New International Version*

If you have access to any of the power tool resources suggested, display these resources and allow the students to look at them.

Talk about ways to use a salvation booklet (*My Best Friend, Jesus*) or an evangelism tool such as the EvangeCube™ or Kids' EE-Cube™ as a visual aid as you share your Friend, Jesus with others. As time and interest allow, have the group divide into teams and choose a power tool. Have the teams practice using the chosen tool to talk about Jesus with the other team members.

Optional Activity, Have each child create a salvation ABC bracelet. You will need: leather string, scissors, and an A, B, and C bead for each child. See the example bracelet on the booklet page 8. Say, **You can wear this bracelet. The A-B-C can help you remember how to share Jesus' plan of salvation with others. Allow children to practice the A-B-C plan. See the narrow column, page 8.**

New! FROM THE YOUNG BELIEVER'S DISCIPLESHIP SERIES



Help children grow deeper
in their relationship with God
and others with the newest books

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This series is a great tool for Children's Pastors,
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New!

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