

MAKING DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES



EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

Leadership Handbook
Student Version



L.I.T. MINISTRIES
Empowering The Next Generation

Mission: Our mission is “Empowering The Next Generation.”

Purpose: Our goal is to recognize the uniqueness of every child. We are committed to reach them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and disciple, equip, and release them for ministry in the church and as missionaries in the world.

Definition of Child: Birth through 18 years of age

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW KING JAMES VERSION. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Empowering The Next Generation
Leadership Handbook, Student Version 2025

Revised 2019, 2020, 2022, 2025

Copyright © 2016 by L.I.T. Ministries

L.I.T. Ministries
5876 Garner Adell Rd.
Weatherford, TX 76088

www.leadersintraining.com

Written by Dr. Clint May
Edited by Amy McMullin
The Cross illustrated by Katherine Holmes Booth

“But as you ponder how to serve the Lord by making disciples, recognize that the greatest return on the investment of your ministry resources, with the longest-lasting effect, is achieved by spiritually discipling children.” —George Barna



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRETRAINING EVALUATION	1
TWELVE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW FOR CHILD DISCIPLESHP.....	2
The Way of The Cross	4
Reaching Children with the Gospel	8
THE CROSS (LUKE 9:23).....	9
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES	11
Jesus Is Lord: Boss.....	12
God's Word	14
Prayer	15
Gifts and Ministry	18
Tell Others	23
Obedience.....	26
CREATING A SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT FOR DISCIPLESHP	27
Involving Family	28
Mentoring Apprentices of Jesus.....	32
Creating Ministry Roles	38
Taking Kids on Mission	41
CHILDREN & STUDENTS DISCIPLING OTHERS	45
GOD AND CHURCH	47
TWELVE LANDMINES TO AVOID.....	52
APPENDIX	53



PRETRAINING EVALUATION

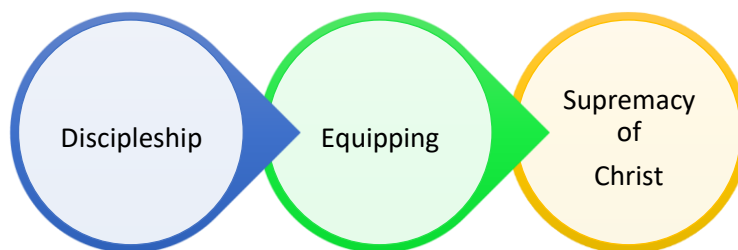
1. Where do children currently serve in your church?
2. How are parents involved in their child's discipleship?
3. What is your ministry model for children today? (Check the answers that apply to your ministry.)
 - ☐ Children are taught according to their learning styles.
 - ☐ Children observe while the teacher teaches them how to walk with Jesus.
 - ☐ We minister to children.
 - ☐ Children minister with us.
4. When a child receives Christ as their personal Savior, how do you help them begin their walk with Christ?
5. How do you define *discipleship*?
6. Do children in your ministry know how to lead a person to Christ?
7. What is the most important spiritual harvest field in the world?
 - ☐ Adults
 - ☐ Children
 - ☐ Students
 - ☐ Preschoolers



TWELVE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW FOR CHILD DISCIPLESHIP

1. **THE BOSS PRINCIPLE:** Christ is the _____ of the Church, and you are called to carry out His vision.¹ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Matthew 18:2-4; Matthew 19:14; Luke 9:23-24)

The Boss Principle is the recognition of the _____ of Christ over all creation and His call to all believers to lay down their lives as a living sacrifice to Him. It is the denial of self and the taking up the ministry and mission of Christ. This is the aim of all discipleship.



2. **THE POWER PRINCIPLE:** _____ is the ultimate source of _____, and _____ for your ministry setting.¹⁰ (Hebrews 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; Acts 1:8; Acts 4:31; Ezekiel 22:30; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

Through _____, we gain wisdom, vision, and a clear plan for ministry. Through prayer, we are given power to fulfill His desires.

3. **THE NEHEMIAH PRINCIPLE:** The vision God gives you must _____ and an _____ for your ministry. A _____ should be laid out in order to develop a strategic plan to engage children in ministry.² (Nehemiah 1:4; Genesis 41:25; 1 Chronicles 28:19; Proverbs 16:3; Proverbs 16:9; Luke 14:28)

As we seek God for clear vision, He will give us _____ and the steps we need to implement what He reveals to us.

4. **THE BARNABAS PRINCIPLE:** Every minister needs a _____ in their life.³ (Acts 4:36; Acts 11:25-26; 1 Corinthians 11:1)

*"A mentor is someone who has been down the path that you want to go."*⁴

¹ Dynamic Church Planting International (DCPI) 01CPESH © DCPI 2014, 11. Our Twelve Biblical Principles of Ministry to Children were adapted from the training of DCPI.

² Ibid., 4.

³ Ibid., 5.

⁴ Ibid., 4.

5. **THE PAUL PRINCIPLE:** Every young believer needs a person in their life to _____ them for ministry. (1 Samuel 3:1a; 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:3)
6. **THE TIMOTHY PRINCIPLE:** Every believing child is _____ and has a calling and purpose in the body of Christ, both _____ and in the _____. (1 Samuel 3:1; 1 Samuel 3:10-11; Samuel 16:7; 2 Chronicles 34:1-2; Esther 4:14b; Jeremiah 1:6-8; Luke 2:42; 1 Timothy 4:12)
7. **THE FAMILY PRINCIPLE:** _____ are divinely called by their Creator to disciple their children and intentionally pass on their faith to the next generation. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Deuteronomy 11:19; Ephesians 6:4; Isaiah 38:19; Psalm 78:4; 19:18, Ephesians 6:1-3)
8. **THE LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE:** The minister has a calling to _____, including _____, for building up the body of Christ.⁵ (Ephesians 4:11-12; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Corinthians 14:40; Luke 22:26; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:7)
9. **THE MISSION PRINCIPLE:** The calling of the body of Christ is _____. We are called to reach _____ and _____ so they might do the same.⁶ (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:14-15)
10. **PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER:** _____ of the church is called to minister.⁷ (1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 5:16)
11. **THE DISCIPLINE PRINCIPLE:** Spiritual disciplines _____, build spiritual maturity, and equip children to live out their calling in obedience to Christ. (1 Timothy 4:7-8; 1 Corinthians 9:27)
12. **THE EZEKIEL PRINCIPLE:** Children _____ by being guided into deeper spiritual encounters with Him. As they learn to trust Him, they discover His presence and grow in their faith throughout their journey. (Ezekiel 47:1-6; John 7:37-38; Revelation 22:1-2)

Assignment: Your assignment for tonight is to get alone and seek the Lord for vision and clear direction for your ministry. Take your prayer journal, take a knee, cry out to God, and ask Him to show you what the next step is for you. Go to **page 49** and read through “Planning for Success.”

⁵ DCPI, 6.

⁶ DCPI, 6.

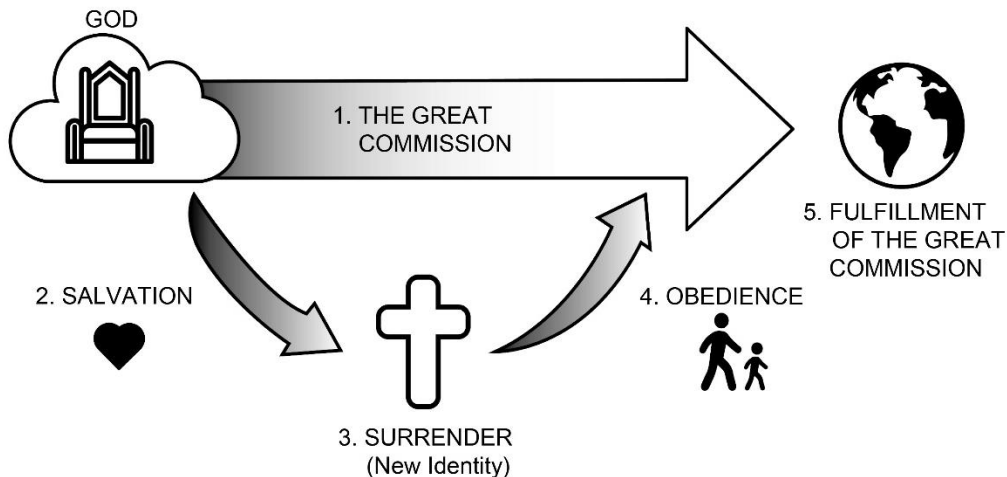
⁷ Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2003), 24.



The Way of The Cross



Helping Children Align Their Plans with God's Plans

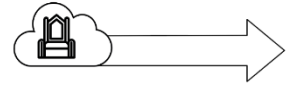


This chart represents God's redemptive plan for mankind—a plan that fully includes children.

1. **The Great Commission** is at the _____ of God's mission through Christ. It was Jesus' final _____ before ascending to the Father—to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:8).
2. **God offers salvation (eternal life)** to all who _____ that Jesus is the Son of God, who died for their sins and rose again on the third day (John 3:16; Romans 10:9–10; 2 Corinthians 5:17).
3. **Jesus teaches that true faith requires surrender** (Luke 9:23). Through surrender, we embrace our _____ in Christ and begin to walk in His purpose for our lives through obedience.
4. **As children live out the principles of The Cross in daily obedience** (see page 9), they experience the _____ Jesus promised (John 10:10).
5. **The end result of God's plan is that people from every tribe, tongue, and nation will one day stand before Him, which is the _____ of The Great Commission.**

THE BOSS PRINCIPLE: Christ is the Head of the Church, and you are called to carry out His vision. (Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Matthew 18:2-4; Matthew 19:14; Luke 9:23-24)

GOD



1. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.”

- The Great Commission is clear for all believers to go and make _____ who make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). This includes children!
- It is not an invitation; it is a _____ to obedience for _____.

2. Salvation: Children Are the Greatest Spiritual Harvest Field Worldwide



“If I could relive my life, I would devote my entire ministry to reaching children for God!” —Dwight L. Moody

- _____ percent of those who trust Christ internationally are between the ages of 4 and 14. This bracket is known as the 4/14 Window.⁸
- The moral development of a child peaks between _____ - _____ years of age.⁹
- A child’s worldview is set in place from _____ years of age.¹⁰
- What a person believes by _____ is pretty much what they will die believing.¹¹

(NOTE: See **page 23** for a full plan on sharing Christ with children.)

~ AT THIS POINT, MOST MINISTRY TO CHILDREN STOPS. ~

⁸ www.4to14window.com

⁹ Alan Nelson, *KidLead*, (Monterey, Self Published, 2009), 41.

¹⁰ George Barna, *Raising Spiritual Champions: Nurturing Your Child’s Heart, Mind and Soul* (Glendale: Arizona Christian University Press, 2023), 77.

¹¹ <https://www.barna.com/research/research-shows-that-spiritual-maturity-process-should-start-at-a-young-age/>

Misconceptions of Salvation and Discipleship for Children

- Conversion is the _____ and _____ of discipleship.¹²
- Children are just _____ in the church while someone else ministers to them.¹³
- They are to be _____ and not _____.
- They are restricted because of their _____.



3. Surrender: The Cross (Luke 9:23; Romans 12:1) (page 9)

- Surrender for some will cause a _____ of belief. Salvation comes with a cost to take up His cross and give one's life fully to Christ in obedience to Him (Luke 14:26-30).
- This is a _____! We must help children through this crisis of belief when they move from living a self-fulfilling (or self-exalting) life to their new life in submission to Christ.
- The call of The Cross is to _____ self, _____ your cross, and _____ Jesus. (Luke 9:23).
- Children are offering their lives as a _____ fully submitted to His plans for their lives (Romans 12:1).

Embracing Their New Identity (Ephesians 1:13)

"Identity is not what we achieve, but what we receive from God." —Jana Magruder

- They receive _____, not a baby Holy Spirit.
- Every believing child receives a _____ at the new birth.
- They now have a new identity as _____ (John 1:12).
- This new identity is not based on anything they _____, but it is only through _____ in Jesus Christ (John 3:3).



4. Obedience (Acts 1:8; Matthew 10:19)

- They show their love for Christ by _____ His commandments (John 14:15).

¹² Bill Hull, *Conversion and Discipleship: You Cannot Do One Without the Other* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2016), 20.

¹³ Pete Homan.

- By embracing God's plan in obedience to His calling, they experience the power of the _____ as they minister (Acts 1:8).
- They find true _____ in living for Him (John 15:11).



5. Fulfillment of The Great Commission (Revelation 7:9)

- There are multiple people groups worldwide that have _____ the Gospel one time.
- All believers are called to work towards the fulfillment of The Great Commission. The Great Commission is _____; it is a command/direction from Jesus to us.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb!” (Revelations 7:9a)



Reaching Children with the Gospel

Share the Gospel of Christ with Children



1. Take every _____ to share the Gospel with children.
 - After every Bible study
 - During evangelistic events
 - While talking with children one-on-one
 - Whenever the opportunity arises
 - Sit down with children individually to counsel with them. Give them a clear invitation to receive Christ.
2. Things to _____ when sharing the Gospel with children.
 - Having children receive Christ in _____ by leading them through a prayer of salvation (Children should be counseled individually.)
 - _____ with children after they have trusted Christ
 - Counseling _____ child at a time (It is best to sit with them one-on-one and listen to their individual stories.)

Effective Tools for Presenting the Gospel with Children

- Wordless Book (**page 53**)
- Power Bands (**page 57**)
- Counseling Card (See Counseling Card Training on **page 23**)

Salvation Is the Starting Point of Discipleship

1. Go over “How do you know that you are forgiven?” near the bottom of the Counseling Card.
2. Never ask a child how they _____ after they receive Christ as Savior. Our salvation is not based on our feelings.
3. Remind children that God’s promise is through _____. God _____ breaks His Word.



THE CROSS (LUKE 9:23)

The Cross is a foundational tool that teaches children the spiritual disciplines necessary for a life of obedience to Christ. Following salvation, a child is called to surrender fully, take up their cross, and walk in step with Jesus. The Cross model outlines six key spiritual disciplines that, when practiced daily, lead to lasting transformation and a life of wholehearted obedience to Christ.



(**The Cross** is made up of two illustrations or examples: The Disciple's Cross¹⁴ and The Wheel.¹⁵)

¹⁴ Avery T. Willis, Jr. *The Disciple's Cross: MasterLife* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1986), 11.

¹⁵ www.navigators.org/Tools/Discipleship%20Resources/Tools/The%20Wheel

	BOSS: SURRENDER
	GOD'S WORD
	PRAYER
	EVANGELISM: TELL OTHERS
	GIFTS AND MINISTRY
	OBEDIENCE



SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES



THE DISCIPLINE PRINCIPLE: Spiritual disciplines deepen faith, build spiritual maturity, and equip children to live out their calling in obedience to Christ.

“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” (1 Timothy 4:7b)

“Exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.” (1 Timothy 4:7b-8)

- The Christian faith is not a _____ - _____ decision; it also comes with a call to join God in His _____ purpose to make disciples who make disciples.
- “Spiritual habits are disciplines we put into our lives that place us into a _____ to hear from God and allow Him to take us _____ into life with Christ.”
Jim Thomas
- Through spiritual disciplines, we develop _____ that lead us to live a life of obedience to Christ.
- *“Making disciples is more than _____...Disciples are followers. Disciples are apprentices. Disciples are imitators.”¹⁶*

The Importance of Daily Time with Christ and Living a Faith in Action

1. Forming spiritual habits requires a _____ at first.
2. As they grow in their faith, it is essential that children _____ to the same routine.
3. Doing their devotional _____ in the morning enables them to become consistent in this daily routine.
4. Children will grow deeper in their faith when they spend _____ time in prayer.
5. A spiritual habit can be formed sometime within _____ days. The average is between _____ - _____ days.
6. Following the example of _____ gives a consistent reminder of living a life of obedience to Christ daily.

¹⁶ Chuck Peters, Jana Magruder, Stephanie Salvatore, *Flip the Script: Disrupting Training for the Sake of the Next Generation*, (Nashville, LifeWay Publishing, 2022), 66.



Jesus Is Lord: Boss



THE BOSS PRINCIPLE: Christ is the Head of the church, and it is His vision you are called to fulfill.

Surrendering to Christ

1. Encourage children to _____ their lives to Christ daily (Romans 12:1).
2. Consistently remind them that Jesus is the Boss _____, not just a one-time event.
3. Encourage them to allow Christ's lordship in their daily _____ (Proverbs 3:5-6).
4. Encourage children to surrender to Christ when _____ with their friends (Acts 1:8).
5. Encourage children to take up their cross and _____ each part of The Cross daily (Luke 9:23).
6. Remind children that _____ for ministry comes through surrendering to Christ first.
7. Encourage children to surrender to Christ daily as an act of _____ (Romans 12:1).
8. Teach children that through daily _____ in Christ, they will bear spiritual _____ (John 15:5).

Embracing Their New Identity

- They are _____ of God. (John 1:12)
- They are born again. (John 3:3)
- Children receive _____...not a “baby” Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13)
- They are _____ by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12)
- They are _____ by the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8)
- They are a part of God’s divine plan. (Matthew 28:19-20)
- They have God’s divine nature. (Colossians 1:27)

- They have _____ to God. (Hebrews 4:16)
- They are _____ of Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:20)
- Christ lives in them. (Colossians 2:6-10)
- Their bodies are _____ of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)



God's Word



THE BOSS PRINCIPLE: Christ is the Head of the church, and it is His vision you are called to fulfill.

"If you love Me, keep My commandments." (John 14:15)

"To effectively disciple a child entails _____ their _____ to be consistent with the Lord's teaching." —George Barna¹⁷

- Demonstrate for children how to _____ on the Word of God.
- Teach them that God's Word is _____ and it is His guide for them for life.
- Encourage young believers to _____ God's Word daily (Psalm 1).
- Teach them to _____ and _____ to be _____ of the Word of God (James 1:22).
- Encourage children to _____ and meditate on God's Word (Psalm 1, Romans 12:2).
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you _____ to bring His Word alive.
- Help them see that God's Word is a _____ to a blessed and joy-filled life (John 15:11).
- Teach children to claim the _____ of God's Word when they pray.

"All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

¹⁷ Barna, 9.



Prayer



THE BOSS PRINCIPLE: Christ is the Head of the church, and it is His vision you are called to fulfill.

THE POWER PRINCIPLE: Prayer is the ultimate source of power, wisdom, and vision for your ministry setting.

“The aim is not to get God in on what I think he should be doing. Rather, the _____ is to get us in on what God is doing, become aware of it, join it, and enjoy the fruit of participation.” —Eugene Peters

- When we pray, we are asking God to _____ our hearts with His perfect will (1 John 5:13).
- Teach kids that they have _____ to God through Christ (Hebrews 4:16).
- Teach children to ask for the Holy Spirit to guide their prayers (Ephesians 6:18).
- Teach children to regularly _____ their sins to God (1 John 1:9).
- Teach kids to put on the _____ daily (Ephesians 6:10-18).
- Teach children to offer their lives to God daily as an act of prayer and worship (Romans 12:1; Isaiah 6:1-8).
- Teach kids to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to _____ them when they minister or share the Gospel (Acts 1:8).
- Teach kids to practice Christ’s _____ in their lives helping them walk with Him all day long (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- Teach children to pray the scripture they have memorized to God and claim it’s promises (Psalm 1).
- Teach kids to take their thoughts _____ (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).
- Begin a _____ with children. Write out the date and prayer requests and then write down God’s answers to their requests.
 - Pray for family.
 - Pray for lost friends.
 - Pray for the people of the 10/40 Window.
 - Pray for people in authority.
 - Pray for missionaries.
 - Pray for revival.

- Teach children to ask their Heavenly Father to show them where He is working so that they might join Him in what He is doing (John 15:19-20).
- Teach children to ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom on who to pray for (Ephesians 4:18).

The Isaiah Prayer (Isaiah 6:1-8) P.R.A.Y.

Isaiah had an encounter with God that resulted in God calling him to obedience.

- **Praise and Thanksgiving** (vs. 1-4): Isaiah saw the _____ of the angels.
- **Repent and Confess** (v. 5): Isaiah felt _____ of sin in the presence of God, and he confessed his sin.
- **Asking** (vs. 5b-7): Isaiah felt a burden for the people of Israel. He said, “I live among a people of unclean lips.” _____ the Holy Spirit to guide your prayers (Ephesians 6:18).
- **Yield and Surrender** (v. 8): Isaiah _____ to God’s will for his life. “Here am I. Send me!”

The Battle for the Mind of a Child

“Feelings come and feelings go, and feelings are deceiving. My warrant is the Word of God and nothing else is worth believing.” —Martin Luther.

The number one target of the enemy is a person’s (a child’s) mind.

Children must understand that thoughts that come to their minds are not always their own thoughts.

- Questioning their identity in Christ
- Thoughts of fear or anxiety
- Thoughts of condemnation
- Thoughts of worthlessness
- Out of control thoughts
- Thoughts to harm themselves

Children have authority to fight because they are God’s children (John 1:12).

God has given them authority because of their new identity as children of God, to take those thoughts _____ to Him (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

- They are a child of God, and they have the _____ to claim the promises of God’s Word against the enemy’s attacks.

- They can use the Word of God (_____) to fight off thoughts that are contrary to the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17).
- Jesus modeled how to fight the enemy using _____ (Matthew 4).
- They defeat these thoughts through the _____ and the word of their testimony. (Revelations 12:11)
- Have them capture thoughts when they start and reject those thoughts in _____.



Gifts and Ministry



PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER: Every member of the church is called to minister.

THE TIMOTHY PRINCIPLE: Every believing child is valuable and has a calling and purpose in the body of Christ, both now and in the future.

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:10-11)

1. Engage children in ministry _____!
2. Pray for _____ from the Holy Spirit.
3. _____ children to use their spiritual gifts for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13).
4. Encourage children to _____ weekly in your ministry.
5. Spiritual gifts will _____ while children are serving and doing ministry.
6. As you observe and see their spiritual gifts, allow them to _____ them on a regular basis in your ministry.
7. Encourage them to use their gifts _____ the church to love and care for their neighbors.

Sacrificial Giving

Children can _____ both spiritually as well as financially to individuals and the body of Christ.

1. Children should be given regular _____ to give in your church (such as food, clothing, money for missions, etc.).
2. Children _____ God’s spiritual blessings.
3. _____ giving helps eliminate a covetous spirit.
4. They learn that, just like the boy with the loaves and fish, God can work miracles through the _____ of gifts.
5. They learn to put the _____ of others ahead of their own.
6. They learn the _____ of giving.

Ministry Opportunities for Children and Their Spiritual Gifts

The outline below includes some of the spiritual gifts listed in the Bible found in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28; 1 Corinthians 14:1-40; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 4:9-11.

1. **Evangelism (Ephesians 4:11):** The gift of evangelism is the ability to explain clearly to lost people how to become Christians and to persuade them to desire to be saved.
 - All believing children are called to share the Good News of Christ, but some have the specific gift of evangelism.
 - Train children in your group how to share their faith.
 - Encourage your group to share and have them report back to your group each week.
 - Speak with your church leadership about possible opportunities or outreach events your groups can be a part of where they can share.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them who to share the Gospel with outside your group.
2. **Giving (Romans 12:8):** The gift of giving expresses itself in a desire to give above and beyond our ten percent tithe. The person with this gift finds it easy to give freely and is very cheerful in doing so.
 - Talk with your church leadership about specific needs in your church and invite children in your group to give to support the ministry need.
 - Have your group sponsor an Operation Christmas Child box.
 - Find out if there are families in your church that have special needs and ask children to bring food or clothing to help them.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group to help others.
3. **Service (Romans 12:7):** The gift of service expresses itself in a desire to serve others. The person with this gift finds it easy to be a servant in the church and finds great joy and fulfillment in doing so. (Remember, all believers are called to serve, but some have the specific gift.)
 - Ask children with the gift of service to arrive early and set up your classroom.
 - Ask them to help when a need arises in your group.
 - Have them serve snacks or refreshments to your group.

- Think of specific ways they can serve in your group or during other activities.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group to help others.
4. **Organization/Administration (1 Corinthians 12:28):** Titus was to organize the ministry in Crete. In 1 Corinthians 12:28, there is a list of spiritual gifts that includes administration. The person with this gift helps the church organize itself so it can effectively minister to its own members and to others out in the world.
- Have them take records.
 - Have them organize your classroom or your supply tote.
 - Allow them to plan an event for your group.
 - Allow them to plan out the month, including who will assist with clean up, teaching, memory verse, etc.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group to help others.
5. **Prophecy (Romans 12:6):** The gift of prophecy enables a person to speak God's Word boldly so that it brings conviction of sin. Prophets speak to people and confront them concerning sin.
- Children with the gift of prophecy see things in black-and-white; there are no gray areas for them. Help them to show grace while sharing.
 - Ask the children with the gift of prophecy to pray and ask the Lord if there is something specific He would like for the child to share with your group.
 - Be open to allow this child to share their heart. You may be surprised by what you hear.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group to minister to others.
6. **Teaching (Ephesians 4:11):** The gift of teaching is the ability to teach Bible truths in a way that others might understand and be built up in their faith.
- Invite children with the gift of teaching to assist you as you teach.
 - Give them an assigned part in the following week's group Bible study. Have them come up with ways to creatively teach the lesson.
 - Encourage them to look for ways they might teach the Word of God to their friends outside the church.

7. **Encouragement/Exhortation (Romans 12:8):** Romans 12:6-8 lists several gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of encouragement, or exhortation. It is given to build up the body of Christ. The person with the gift of encouragement easily edifies other people, helps build confidence, and reminds Christians of the hope they have in Christ.
- Have those in your group with this gift write notes to those who were absent from your group.
 - Have them call those who are struggling with their lessons to encourage them and pray for them.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group.
8. **Shepherd (Ephesians 4:11):** The gift of a shepherd is to lead, guide, and feed the flock of God, which is the church. The shepherd, or pastor, is gifted by the Holy Spirit to be a leader. He has the ability and desire to teach, protect, and build up the church.
- Encourage children with this gift to pray for the needs of individuals in your group.
 - Allow them to lead a portion of your time during small group where they take charge and give instructions.
 - Ask them to teach the lesson. Encourage them to ask the Holy Spirit to guide them as they prepare and teach.
 - Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group.
9. **Mercy (Romans 12:8):** Those who have the gift of mercy see the needs of others and find it easy to help them. They are aware of people's needs around them.
- Encourage this child to pray for your group and to show Christ's love to those in your group who have needs.
 - Encourage the child's family to volunteer at a homeless shelter to meet the needs of the poor.
 - Get with your church leaders and find out ways that the children in your group can minister to individuals in need in your church.

10. **Faith (1 Corinthians 12:9):** The gift of faith is an unwavering trust in what God promises. The person with the gift of faith believes that God will be faithful to His Word.

- As they mature, allow the child with the gift of faith to lead your prayer times.
- Write down specific prayer requests in a journal and celebrate with your group when God answers.
- Have this child pray for specific needs in your group.
- Have them pray for the sick and the hurting.
- Have them pray specifically for God to show them how to use their gift outside your group.

11. **Helps (1 Corinthians 12:28):** Christians with the gift of helps are those who like to work to assist or help another person's ministry. They usually work behind the scenes.

- Ask children with the gift of helps to arrive early and set up your classroom.
- Find creative ways to give them jobs and responsibilities that allow them to serve behind the scenes.

There are many spiritual gifts. Some not listed above. Always pray for wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit to see what these gifts might be.

Learning Activity: As a group, create a list of potential areas within your church where children can utilize their spiritual gifts to serve.



Tell Others



THE MISSION PRINCIPLE: The calling of the body of Christ is The Great Commission. We are called to reach the lost and disciple and equip them so they might do the same.

Teaching Children How to Share the Gospel

Every child has the privilege of being an _____ for Christ.

1. To be His ambassador, they must be adequately trained and provided opportunities to use their training.
2. The training should result in commissioning them to go out in His name to proclaim the Good News (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20).
3. Teach children to allow the Holy Spirit to speak through them (Acts 1:8).
4. Encourage children regularly to share the Gospel with their friends, their peers and family members (Matthew 28:19-20).
5. Teach children to listen to the Holy Spirit for spiritual discernment (John 16:8).
6. Help children understand that the first sign that a person is ready to receive Christ is acknowledging that they are a sinner (John 16:8).

Counseling Card Training for Children and Adults

The Counseling Card is a tool for determining if a person is ready to profess faith in Christ. One of the most important parts of counseling with children is when the _____ is drawing them (John 16:8). If they have no _____ of sin, they should not be taken any further in the counseling process.

All counseling should be done with an open _____ in hand. Those who are counseling should take the time to look up the passages of Scripture and explain them as they go. Having a highlighted Bible makes the process go more smoothly.

The following steps make it easy to look up the _____ from the Counseling Card quickly and in order. Leaders and kids can look up the first verse in their Bibles and highlight it with a yellow highlighter (or underline it). Then, at the bottom of that page, write the page number where the next verse is found in the Bible. Go through these exact steps:

- First, find John 3:16 and highlight the verse. Then, look up Romans 3:23 to see what page it is on and write that page number at the bottom of the page where John 3:16 is found.
- Next, turn to Romans 3:23 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for Romans 6:23 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to Romans 6:23 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for Romans 10:13 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to Romans 10:13 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for 1 John 3:24 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to 1 John 3:24 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for John 1:12 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to John 1:12 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for 1 John 5:13 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to 1 John 5:13 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for Hebrews 13:5 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to Hebrews 13:5 and highlight the verse. Then, write the page number for John 10:28-29 at the bottom of this page.
- Turn to John 10:28-29 and highlight the verse.

Role Playing/Practicing Before Going Out

Have the kids practice counseling with each other in their group using their marked Bibles and Counseling Cards.

- Ask the _____ to guide you as you talk with a child about receiving Christ.
- Pay close _____ to each person as they share and give positive feedback.
- Make _____ for how to say things better or how to respond to the other person's comments or questions if they need help.
- Pray for _____ before sharing with a lost person in real life.
- Remind them to _____ to the Holy Spirit for discernment.

NOTE: If at any point the counselor does not believe the child understands the Gospel, stop counseling. Explain the Gospel to them again and tell them how they can make a choice in the future whenever they are ready because God will listen to them anytime anywhere.

COUNSELING CARD

God Loves You!

God made a way for you to be together with Him forever and have eternal life. (Read John 3:16.) In order to receive eternal life, you must follow these steps:

ADMIT (Tell on yourself to God that you have sinned.)

1. Read Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23.
2. Have you ever sinned?
3. Can you name some sins you have done?
4. How can your sins be forgiven?

BELIEVE (Believe that God's Son, Jesus, died for your sins and then rose from the dead.)

1. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.
2. Who is God's Son?
3. What did Jesus do for our sins?
4. What happened to Jesus after He died?

CHOOSE (Choose to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord.)

1. Read Romans 10:13.
2. How can you be together with God forever?
3. What does it mean to choose Jesus as Savior? As Lord?
4. After hearing this, what would you like to do today?

(Lead the child in a prayer ONLY if they are understanding the Gospel.)

"Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I am sorry for my sins. I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died for my sins and rose on the third day. Please forgive me of my sins and come into my life right now to be my Savior and Lord forever. Amen."

How do you know that you are forgiven?

1. Where is Jesus right now? (He is in your heart.)
2. Read John 1:12. (You are a child of God now.)
3. Read 1 John 5:13. (A person can know that they have eternal life because of the promise of God's Word.)
4. Read Hebrews 13:5. (Use 5 fingers to show God's promise to His children: "I-will-never-leave-you.")
5. Read John 10:28-29. (Use your fist to show how Jesus and God keep their people forever.)

Continue to grow in your faith now that you are forgiven.

1. Go to church.
2. Read the Bible.
3. Tell others about Jesus.
4. Pray.
5. Let Jesus be the Leader of your life every day.

NOTE: *The comments in parentheses are for counselors to read silently to themselves and then do.*



Obedience



THE BOSS PRINCIPLE: Christ is the Head of the church, and it is His vision you are called to fulfill.

Living out the steps of The Cross means walking in _____ to Christ. As children grow in their faith, they become increasingly sensitive to the guidance of God's Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly." (John 10:10)

Following the example of The Cross gives a consistent reminder of living a life of obedience to Christ daily.

Listen to the Holy Spirit

1. Teach them to _____ God's Word (James 1:22-25).
2. Teach children to _____ living inside of them.
3. Help them recognize His _____ (1 Kings 19:12-13).
4. Teach them to have a _____ attitude. As the Holy Spirit reveals sin, they need to confess those sins and turn from them (1 John 1:9).
5. Teach them to _____ and not quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19).
6. Teach them to avoid attitudes that _____ the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30).
7. If there is ever a question whether something is right or wrong, it has a high probability that it is a _____ (James 4:17).
8. Ask them to _____ and _____ the Holy Spirit for leadership (James 1:5).
9. Teach them to _____, _____, and _____. God is not in a hurry, and we cannot rush Him.
10. Guide them to ask the Holy Spirit for _____ of those He wants them to pray for (Ephesians 6:18).
11. Allow them to _____ what the Holy Spirit leads them to do (Acts 10:19-20; Acts 8:29).
12. _____ and allow them to minister.



CREATING A SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT FOR DISCIPLESHIP

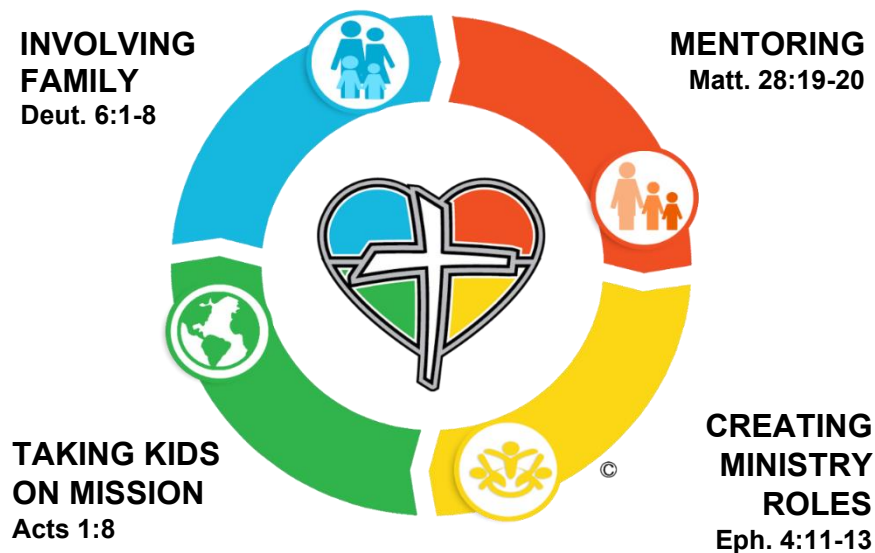
THE TIMOTHY PRINCIPLE: Every believing child is valuable and has a calling and purpose in the body of Christ, both now and in the future.

The L.I.T. **Heart** logo in the diagram below has four colors, each representing a key aspect of developing a _____ in a child.

The **Arrows** in the diagram indicate that it is a _____, not a one-time step. From these steps, the church builds a culture of belonging. This is the core process of making disciples that make disciples.

The **Cross** at the center of the heart logo signifies their _____ in Christ, shaping how they see the world through God's truth. Through the disciplines of The Cross (see **page 11**), they live out God's plan with purpose, reflecting His love and mission in their daily lives.

- **Blue** represents _____, emphasizing the foundational role of parents and guardians in a child's spiritual growth.
- **Red** represents the disciple group and the role of _____ a child and developing their personal walk with Christ.
- **Yellow** represents _____ for kids to serve in the church, using spiritual gifts to discover God's purpose for their lives.
- **Green** represents _____, equipping children to share the Gospel and live out The Great Commission in action.





Involving Family



THE FAMILY PRINCIPLE: Parents are divinely called by their Creator to disciple their children and intentionally pass on their faith to the next generation.

Parents are _____ to effectively disciple a child. We cannot _____ their call on their lives to live out their faith before their children (Deuteronomy 6:1-8).

30 Day Challenge for Families

This 30-day challenge is to kick-start the faith of children and their families. Take it seriously. It will be a battle, but a battle worth fighting and winning (Deuteronomy 6:1-8).

1. Make Jesus Christ _____ of your household every day.
2. Live out the steps of _____ daily.
3. Put Christ _____ every day. Rise 15-30 minutes earlier every morning to spend time with the Lord.
4. Parents and children have a daily personal _____.
 - _____ your Bible.
 - _____ Scripture.
 - _____ together and alone.
5. Pray together as a family for the _____ of others and look for opportunities to minister to your neighbors.
6. Seek opportunities as a family to _____ to and love others.
7. Look for opportunities to _____ the Gospel with those around you.
8. Make church _____ as a family a priority. Take advantage of every opportunity to be a part of what is being done through the local body of believers.
9. Only listen to Christian radio and music.
10. _____ from movie, television, streaming, and social media content. Is what you are consuming pleasing to God? Fast from watching anything else during this challenge.

Top Five Predictors of a Child Having a Life-Sustaining Faith as a Young Adult

Current research reveals the impact of both what happens at home and at church on the spiritual life of a child.

1. The child regularly _____ while growing up.
2. The child regularly spends time in _____ while growing up.
3. The child regularly _____ in church while growing up.
4. The child primarily listens to _____ while growing up
5. The child participates in church _____/_____.¹⁸

These predictors are lived out through The Cross (reading God's Word, praying and worshipping, serving in the church, and going out on mission).

The Family and Church Working Together to Disciple a Child

The Cross helps parents and the church live out the top two commandments of scripture: Loving God and loving our neighbor.

At Home: Loving God

1. **Lordship:** Christ is Lord of the family.
2. **God's Word:** Parents and children are encouraged to read, study, and memorize God's Word on a regular basis.
3. **Prayer:** Parents pray with their children and encourage them to make prayer a regular part of their lives.
4. **Gifts and Ministry:** Parents make church attendance a priority and are committed to their child regularly serving in the church.
5. **Telling Others:** Parents model sharing the Gospel with friends and family members and encourage their child to do so as well.
6. **Obedience:** Parents focus their family on living out The Cross daily.



¹⁸ Jana Magruder, *Nothing Less: Engaging Kids in a Lifetime of Faith*, (Nashville, LifeWay Christian Resources, 2017), 50.

At Church: Loving Your Neighbor

The church supports parents by providing ministry opportunities and leadership to equip children for ministry and missions.

1. **Lordship:** The church is obedient to Christ's command to make _____.
2. **God's Word:** The church provides mentors who focus on bringing children _____ them to equip them to be a disciple makers themselves.
3. **Prayer:** Mentors regularly pray with their disciple groups, allowing the _____ to guide their prayers (Ephesians 6:18).
4. **Gifts and Ministry:** The church provides _____ for children to minister regularly.
5. **Tell Others:** Mentors _____ children how to share their faith, and the church offers ministry opportunities in the surrounding community or village.
6. **Obedience:** The church lives out a life of _____ for the children by living out each part of The Cross with them weekly.

How to Effectively Partner with Parents

1. In order for the church to effectively partner with parents in ministry, the vision has to be set in place in your church.
2. With your vision in place and the pastor, elders, deacons, your leadership, and church family on board to provide you support, you will have a _____ and _____ for families.
3. Parents need to understand that the church _____ them and are there to help them by providing resources as well as screened leaders who will assist in the discipleship of their child.
4. Parents must be _____ by the minister/director on how to properly prioritize their family's time.
5. The church family _____ for them in prayer.

What If Parents Are Not Believers?

In many cultures worldwide, parents allow their children to participate in religious activities, such as attending church services, midweek programs, and evangelistic events.

- Children can be reached with the Gospel and then join in _____ their faith with their parents.
- Children _____ for the salvation of their parents.
- In some situations, many children will _____ their parents to faith in Christ.

- Many children will not have parental support until this happens. In this case, the church can become the child's _____, like Paul did with Timothy (1 Timothy 1:18-19).



Mentoring Apprentices of Jesus



THE PAUL PRINCIPLE: Every young believer needs someone to walk alongside them—to disciple, mentor, and equip them for a life of ministry.

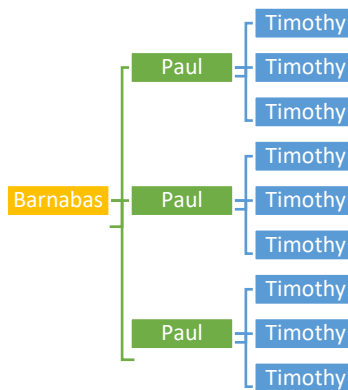
THE TIMOTHY PRINCIPLE: Every believing child has value, a calling, and a purpose in the body of Christ today and in the future.

“Making disciples is more than teaching...Disciples are followers. Disciples are apprentices. Disciples are imitators.”¹⁹

- As a mentor, The Cross on **page 9** serves as your template for discipling children.
 - ✓ Lordship—Boss
 - ✓ God’s Word
 - ✓ Prayer
 - ✓ Telling Others
 - ✓ Gifts and Ministry
 - ✓ Life of Obedience
- The leader sees children as _____ of Christ. Like Jesus with His disciples and Paul with Timothy, they have a calling to become disciple makers.
- You should build an _____ where every child feels welcomed, accepted, and loved.
- When a child feels _____, they become open to spiritual teachings.
- Children should be _____ and _____ by the leader. Show them that they have value in your conversations with them.
- The leaders look for every _____ for the child to live and experience their faith.
- The leader _____ faith and invites children to join them on their journey of faith.
- The leader is confidential and can be _____ by the child to share their burdens.

¹⁹ Peters et al., 66.

- A discipler is one who says come _____ and I will show you how to live for the Master.



Guiding Children into the Spiritual Depths with God (Ezekiel 47:1-5)

THE EZEKIEL PRINCIPLE: When we lead children into deeper spiritual encounters with God, they begin to trust Him more deeply, experience His presence personally, and grow in lasting faith throughout their journey.

To lead children into _____, we must guide them from just standing on the riverbank observing to diving into the depths where they are fully surrendered to God and His will for their lives. As they deepen their faith, they transition from followers to apprentices, becoming imitators of Christ.

STEP ONE: I Do, You Watch (First Month—On the Bank)

Create an environment where they feel accepted. They will be more open to hearing what you have to say when they feel welcomed and loved.

1. Model your faith in front of them—live out The Cross. “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1, NASB)
 - You are fully submitted to the Lordship of Christ in your life.
 - You do daily quiet times.
 - You live a life of consistent prayer.
 - You memorize Scripture.
 - You faithfully serve in the body.
 - You do everything in your group.
 - You regularly attend worship.
 - You teach, and they observe you.

2. As you get to know the kids in your group, take time to share the Gospel with them and ask them to respond. Use the Counseling Card to sit down and talk with them about their decision to follow Jesus.

STEP TWO: I Do, You Help (Ankle Deep)

1. Hold them accountable.
 - They make effort to live out The Cross daily.
 - They try to have a consistent testimony at church and at home.
 - As they minister in your group, they should see it as an honor and do everything to the glory of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:31).
2. Invite them to walk alongside you as you live out your faith together.
3. Pray for discernment from the Holy Spirit.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you as you begin to allow kids to serve in your group and at church.
5. Look for ways to enable them to utilize their gifts to serve and lead within your group or ministry.
 - They help with setting up the class.
 - They read Scripture.
 - They help with records.
 - They pray during prayer time.
 - They help with the Bible lesson. (The week before, assign a small part for them to teach. Call and follow up before group time.)
 - They clean up and reset the classroom before they leave.
 - They love new kids and make them feel welcome in your group.

STEP THREE: You Do, I Help (Knee Deep)

As the Lord leads, begin to release them to minister to your group and church and help them when they need it.

1. Hold them accountable to live out The Cross daily (Luke 9:23). Ask them how they lived it out each week.
2. Remind them that living out The Cross helps them to become more like Jesus.
3. Look for other opportunities for them to serve in your church as well. Remember, they are your apprentices.

4. The more you release them to minister, the more they will experience Christ working in their lives and embrace His purpose for their lives in His church and the world.
5. Encourage them to minister at home and in their community to show God's love and compassion to their neighbors.

STEP FOUR: You Do, I Watch (Waist Deep)

At this point you step back more and begin to allow them to lead your group and take on more responsibility in your church.

1. At this time, they will need less input from you as they take ownership of the ministry.
2. Allow the child in your group with the gift of administration to plan out the following week's group time:
 - Who will lead the prayer time?
 - Who will minister to new people in your group or church?
 - Who will contact those who missed group time?
 - Who will teach the lesson?
 - Who will teach the memory verse?
 - They embrace their spiritual gifts and understand their place in the body of Christ.
3. The following week, the administrator/leader of your group reminds everyone where they are serving and their responsibilities.

STEP FIVE: You Do (Swimming)

At this point in the apprentice process, they are ready to be imitators of Christ and are released to serve in the body of Christ and on mission in your community and beyond.

1. Train them for a community outreach or mission trip. (They will share the Gospel, teach a Bible study, lead worship, pray, and share their testimonies.)
 - Once you go out into the community, the kids do everything while the mentor/discipler steps back.
 - You become less as the Lord moves in and through their lives (John 3:30).
 - You are there to help with discipline problems, maintain a safe environment, and keep outside distractions under control.
 - Remember, they are the missionaries. They are obeying their calling to fulfill The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

- As Jesus released His disciples with The Great Commission, so are you releasing them (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - As Paul released Timothy, you must also release them and trust that the Holy Spirit will move and guide them powerfully (1 Timothy 1:3).
2. Look for opportunities in your church for them to lead, disciple, and mentor younger children.
- Be there for them as they take this next step
 - Give clear guidelines and expectations for what they will be doing.
 - As they are faithful in little tasks, give them greater responsibility, entrusting them with more (Luke 16:10).
 - Fan the flame of their gifts and cover them with prayer (2 Timothy 1:6).

Spiritual Revelation

Spiritual Revelation is a deep _____ of God and His will that was previously unknown to the believer.

The biggest hindrance today for children is the idea that they are _____ or comprehend certain spiritual teachings or experiences.

When children step out of what is comfortable, they often _____ in new and powerful ways:

1. Become _____ when discipling a child. Don't let age hinder your faith in what the Lord can do through them.
2. Push them out of what is _____ for them.
3. Quickly move children (within weeks) from just _____ and _____ to showing them how to minister and releasing them in the power of the Spirit to do so.
4. Encourage them to trust the _____ to empower them to minister.
5. Give them the _____, and then watch the God of the possible move in their lives powerfully.
6. The more they experience God working in their lives, the more they will _____ their identity in Christ.
7. Do not _____ them when the ministry gets hard. These are the times that you _____ with them and _____ them to trust Christ to walk them through the challenge.

If this feels extremely _____ for you, ask the Lord to strengthen your faith in what He can do through a child. The more you step back, the more He works in their hearts and lives.

How the Holy Spirit Works in Children in Alignment with The Great Commission (Acts 1:8)

The following points show many consistent markers from more than 22 years of observing children sharing the Gospel on mission for Christ:

1. Children become bold _____ for the lost (Hebrews 4:16).
2. The Holy Spirit _____ and _____ through them powerfully (Acts 1:8).
3. When the Holy Spirit takes over, He speaks through them, and they have no _____ of what they shared (Mark 10:19).
4. They sense His _____ in their lives.
5. They become _____ to the Holy Spirit's leading (Acts 8:29).
6. They become _____ in sharing their faith (1 Timothy 1:7).
7. There is _____ spiritual growth that occurs in ministry and missions (Hebrews 5:13-14).
8. Their spiritual gifts _____ very quickly in ministry and missions (1 Peter 4:10).
9. They become _____ with God and His heart for the lost in the world (2 Peter 3:9).
10. They are _____ by age. The Holy Spirit works freely in all age groups (Luke 2:41-52).
11. They embrace the expectation that they will _____ to serve and be leaders in the church for the rest of their lives.



Creating Ministry Roles



THE LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE: The minister has a calling to equip the saints, including children for building up the body of Christ.

THE EZEKIEL PRINCIPLE: Spiritual encounters with God come through taking children into the spiritual depths with Him. They encounter Him as you take them down a path that finds Him.

PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER: Every member of the church is called to minister (1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 5:16).

If you have a leadership shortage in your church, look down—they are right in front of you. Children are ready and willing to serve and lead.

Finding Purpose through Ministry (1 Peter 4:10)

- “As _____ has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (1 Peter 4:10)
- God’s plan gives children a _____ to serve in the body of Christ today, ministering using their spiritual gift(s).
- Leaders are called to _____ and _____ children to minister in the body of Christ and their community (Ephesians 4:11-13).
- Christ has chosen them to bear fruit now (John 15:16).
- Through embracing their new life, they find purpose and freedom in Christ (Galatians 2:20).
- Through their _____, they discover God’s purpose and plan for their lives. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)
- As they walk with Christ, they will _____ as they abide in Him (John 15:5).
- They were created for His glory. “All things were created through Him and for Him.” (Colossians 1:16)

The Acceptance of the Church Family

The church must be a place where every child feels free to make _____, knowing the body of Christ will come _____ them to encourage and empower them to do even more _____ things for the Lord.

- This is possible when the church creates an _____ that allows them to minister and thrive.
- Now more than ever, they need the _____ to succeed within the church.
- Their _____ has a plan, and we are part of that plan—to help them _____ in the church, in the world, and in life.

Working Together for Their Success

1. Work _____ with all children workers.
2. As they observe children serving, they will recognize the kids' _____ of teaching, leadership, etc.
3. Look for opportunities to take certain children to the next level of service when they show increased _____.
4. _____ and communicate with older age-group leaders to inform them that you are training future leaders and volunteers who will be moving into their ministries.
5. Younger children look up to them and _____ when they can serve.
6. Their experiences with God create an _____ to continue using their gifts and time to serve in the church.
7. They _____ their church and want to help it grow.

Expected Outcomes from Children Serving

1. Their spiritual gifts _____ in the midst of ministry.
2. Their _____ level will accelerate by actively serving.
3. They embrace God's _____ for their lives.
4. They find _____ in the body of Christ.
5. They have a _____ in the body of Christ.
6. They have the opportunity to _____ in others.

Planning for Their Success in Ministry

1. Encourage them to pray and ask for the Holy Spirit's leadership. Do not be surprised when He shows them what He desires of them to do.
2. If you have a position for them, provide a simple job description for them.
3. Do not assume they will know what to do without proper training.
4. Allow them to be a part of the planning.
5. Allow their job to become their ministry.
6. Expect excellence.
7. Expect them to follow through.
8. Have adult leaders in place to observe, keep them on track, and hold them accountable.
9. As they are faithful in small things, allow them to go to the next level.
10. Let them own the ministry.

Immediate Places Where Children Can Serve

- Help lead children's worship
- Assist in their Sunday school class
- Use their spiritual gifts during Disciple Group time
- Help in Vacation Bible School
- Greet and welcome members and visitors
- Lead games in kids' church
- Present object lessons
- Be a Special Needs Buddy
- Participate in community outreaches
- Participate in mission trips
- Others: _____



Taking Kids on Mission



THE MISSION PRINCIPLE: The calling of the body of Christ is The Great Commission. We are called to reach the lost and disciple and equip them so they might do the same.

PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER: Every member of the church is called to minister (1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 5:16).

“Children are not only the church of today, but they are also the missionaries of today and the evangelists of today. I pray that each one of us will have eyes to see what God is doing and the willingness to get behind it...He has filled the church with young souls who know Him and love Him passionately. The Lord of the harvest has heard the prayers of the saints, and He has responded. He has sent a child to lead them.”

—Jennifer Toledo²⁰

“Prayer is the furnace that fuels missions.” —Tyler Staton²¹

Acts 1:8 Model of Ministry

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Jerusalem: Where you live²²

- Children are trained how to _____ their faith.
- Children are encouraged to _____ for their lost friends.
- Children know how to _____ share their faith.
- The _____ provides ministry opportunities in the church for children to share the Gospel (i.e., children’s church, evangelistic events, etc.).

²⁰Jennifer Toledo, *Children and the Supernatural: True Accounts of Kids Unlocking the Power of God Through Visions, Healings, and Miracles* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2012), 195-96.

²¹ Tyler Staton, *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan: 2022), 142.

²² <https://carm.org/christianity/sermons/acts-18-you-will-be-my-witnesses>

Judea and Samaria: The _____ your church or your city or village²³

- The church helps the child fulfill this command by providing _____ where children have opportunities to present the Gospel.
- The community event should be _____ in nature.

The Ends of the Earth: _____ (missions in foreign countries)

- For children, obedience to this call is a _____ with the purpose of presenting the Gospel.
- Plans should be put into place for _____ to take the next step of this call in an international setting.

Mobilizing Children to Go into Your Community to Share the Gospel

Train every child who will be going out how to _____ their faith.

1. Find _____ in your community for ministry, such as public schools, apartments, parks, etc.
2. Determine what kinds of _____ you will do.
3. Train at church with the idea of taking children into your _____ as a top priority.
4. Decide the _____ of service or activities and how to set up. This should be assigned to a child to lead the planning. Work together as a ministry team and do it one day at a time. The goal is to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to the children on the trip and have them step up to lead out where He is leading them.
 - Games
 - Set up
 - Opening prayer
 - Testimonies
 - Memory verse
 - Teaching lesson
 - Counseling
 - Serve food or snacks
 - Clean up

²³ <http://www.step-by-step.org/acts1-8.htm>

5. The _____ should be presented at the event by a preteen.
6. Children should be given an opportunity to _____. Allow a child to share the message. Adults can step in if clarification is needed.
7. Let children do the _____.

Preparing Children and Students for a Mission Trip

1. Determine a day to _____ on a weekly basis.
2. Begin training approximately _____ or more before your trip to be properly prepared.
3. Find _____ to sing on the trip (two to three max). You can be creative by choosing songs and allowing certain children to create the motions for the songs. Record them and use them to train your group.
4. Practice the songs _____ so the children will have the motions memorized before you take your trip. Require everyone to memorize the motions exactly as they are presented.
5. Allow all children time to practice teaching the _____ that they will be teaching each week.
6. Prepare simple daily _____.
7. Develop a _____ that the children can fill out each day.
8. Let the mission trip be _____.

Talking With Children After They Minister: Debrief Questions

Debriefing helps children assess their experiences and deepen their faith in the discipleship process.

1. How did God _____ today to minister to others?
2. How do you feel the children _____ to our message?
3. What has God shown you today/this week in how you can be used by Him?
4. What are some _____ where you saw God work?
5. What do you think we could do better tomorrow?
6. What is something that the _____ can do to make things go easier tomorrow?
7. What was the _____ of today's ministry?
8. What was the _____ of today's ministry?

Looking for Teachable Moments as They Minister

This is true discipleship. Jesus released His disciples with authority to go and proclaim the Kingdom of God. You are doing the same.

1. Correct them _____ when there is individual behavior that does not glorify Christ.
2. Correct them as a _____ if they are not imitating Christ in their behavior.
3. Use the _____ during these teachable moments (2 Timothy 3:16).
4. Celebrate their _____.
5. _____ with them when they fall.
6. Be their greatest champion and _____.

Live Out The Cross on Mission

1. **Surrender** to the Holy Spirit
2. **God's Word**—Teach the Word of God and claiming its promises.
3. **Prayer**—Pray at all times during your outreach. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to share and minister.
4. **Tell Others**—Claim Acts 1:8 and God's power while sharing the Good News of Christ.
5. **Ministry**—Step back and release them to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit.
6. **Obedience**—Remind them that living out The Cross is obedience to Christ.





CHILDREN & STUDENTS DISCIPLING OTHERS



THE PAUL PRINCIPLE: Every young believer needs a person in their life to disciple and equip them for ministry.

THE TIMOTHY PRINCIPLE: Every believing child has value, a calling, and a purpose in the body of Christ today and in the future.

THE EZEKIEL PRINCIPLE: Spiritual encounters with God come through taking children into the spiritual depths with Him. They encounter Him as you take them down a path that finds Him.

PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER: Every member of the church is called to minister (1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 5:16).

Children Discipling Children

1. The process of allowing children to _____ others should be determined by the minister/church leaders.
2. They must be a _____ in Christ.
3. Children who will be discipling younger children should be held to a _____. (They submit to authority, parents, and leadership and are not a discipline problem.)
4. The child is _____ to the Lordship of Christ in their life.
5. They are a _____ to younger children. You do not want anyone to become a stumbling block.
6. When you release older children to disciple younger children, it _____ in them a desire to be a model for younger children.
7. Young children are looking for heroes and _____. If the church raises up _____, the younger children will want to follow them. Otherwise, they will find their heroes in the world and the culture.
8. Release them to disciple with adults present, like Paul/Timothy.

Giving God-Sized Challenges

“His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”
(Matthew 25:23)

1. They are released in tasks that are _____ to their faith.
2. Their faith is built as they _____.
3. The greater the challenges, the greater the _____ of the child.
 - Start small and then move _____ to larger and larger tasks.
 - Have a high _____.
 - They must prove to you that they can follow through. When something is asked of them, they must _____ the task.
4. The church recognizes them as a voice in the body, and they become _____ and _____ leaders in the church.
5. They are _____ in their mission.
6. Children discover their _____ and _____ in the church.
7. They have become _____.



GOD AND CHURCH

THE BOSS PRINCIPLE: Christ is the Head of the church, and it is His vision you are called to fulfill.

THE POWER PRINCIPLE: Prayer is the ultimate source of power, wisdom, and vision for your ministry setting.

THE NEHEMIAH PRINCIPLE: The vision God gives you must lead you to prayer and an effective plan of action for your ministry

Seek God for a Clear Vision for Your Ministry

1. Christ is Lord and Head of His church. His will is the focal point of everything we do.
2. He must be at the center of your planning and implementation of your ministry.
3. Before you start the journey of discipling and releasing children, you must take the time to get away and seek God for clear vision and direction for your ministry and how you will engage children in your church and on mission.

Develop Your Prayer Team

1. You need to seek the Lord for His power and presence in your life. You cannot teach something that you are not living out in your life yourself.
2. Develop a list of people who will be on your prayer team.
3. Have your prayer team pray over every step you take in getting started and throughout your time of ministry.
4. Have your prayer team intercede for the children and families involved in your ministry. You need those who will stand in the gap for families (Ezekiel 22:30).

Casting the Vision



The vision of Empowering The Next Generation is a large paradigm shift from what is being done in the church today. You must take steps to inform and educate each level of leadership in your church as well as parents in order to have success. This provides levels of protection for you as you move forward in implementing the ministry.

1. Make sure your vision aligns with the pastor of your church. You need his support before moving forward.
2. Share the vision with your deacons or elders. It is very critical to make sure they are on board with the process before you start.
3. Meet with your leadership, and share the vision of L.I.T.
4. Share the vision with your church family.
5. Meet with parents and share your vision with your church.
6. When the pastor, elders, your leadership, parents, and your church know and understand the vision, they will support you through the process.
7. When you have cast the vision from the top down, you will have a level of support that will sustain you as you launch this ministry for children in your church. You will not be walking alone.

Planning for Success: Developing Your Timeline

1. Christ must be in the forefront of your vision, planning, and implementation of your ministry.
2. A timeline lays out a full plan of action.
3. You should develop a strategic plan before you begin the ministry.
4. A timeline is critical to your success and the maximum impact on the lives of children.
5. Without a plan, you will be unsuccessful, and you will frustrate your people.
6. A clear plan breeds excitement from leaders because they know where you are heading.
7. The quickest way to fail is NOT to plan.
8. The P's formula for planning for success
 - Prayer
 - Planning
 - Prepare
 - Performance

Planning for Success

Phase One—Cast the Vision

1. Enlist a Prayer Team
 - To pray for God's protection and wisdom from above as you share your vision for your church
 - To pray for meetings with your pastor and church leadership
 - To pray for God to raise up leaders whom God calls to disciple and serve alongside children in this ministry
 - To pray for God to give families a desire to become actively involved in the discipleship and spiritual development of their child
 - To pray for the church family to catch the vision
2. Set up a meeting to cast the vision with your pastor.
3. Set up a meeting to cast the vision with your elders and deacons.
4. Set up a meeting with your church leadership.

5. Share the vision with your church family.
6. Meet with families to share the vision (before the first Parent Orientation).

NOTE: Not everyone will catch the vision. This is normal.

Phase Two—Set Important Dates

1. Leader training
2. Parent training meeting
3. Program start and end dates for the year
4. Second community ministry opportunity (Mission Trip)

Phase Three—Determine Where Children Will Serve in Your Church and Community

1. Form a Prayer Team to pray for wisdom and clear direction on where to place children in ministry.
2. Talk with church leadership about opportunities they might have.
3. Gain their support to allow children to serve.
4. Look for places in your areas of responsibility where children can serve, such as children's church, door greeters, resource room, check in, records, preschool, etc.
5. Write up job descriptions and training for children. Do not assume they know what to do.
6. Train leadership and show them how to train and release children in ministry.
7. Look at possible places of service in the community.

Phase Four—Enlist Leadership

1. Determine How Many Leaders You Will Need
 - Should aim for a 1:5 ratio max (preferably two adults in each room)
2. Steps for Enlisting Leaders
 - A. Prayer team prays for the following:
 - For God to raise up leaders who are called by God to serve in this ministry
 - For leaders who are sold out for Christ

- For training sessions, that leaders will grasp the principles of discipleship and empowering children
- For God to give families a desire to become actively involved in the discipleship and spiritual development of their child

B. Set Leadership Training date: _____

C. Print out copies of “Leadership Handbook.”

D. Set up opportunities to train during your weekly meeting times.

E. Discuss child safety standards with leaders.

3. **First Training Meeting**

A. Walk through the Spiritual Disciplines of The Cross.

B. Walk through the Mentoring Apprentices of Jesus section (see **page 32**).

C. Walk through the Ezekiel Principle, using this model to disciple and equip children (see **page 33**).

D. Discuss stage one of the Ezekiel Principle: “I Do, You Watch.” (For the first month or two, spend time on this stage until you know your group’s spiritual maturity and readiness to move forward.)

NOTE: Train as you go! It is better to share small portions of the philosophy and give leaders opportunities to put them into practice. Then, go to the next step, and see them accomplish that task.



TWELVE LANDMINES TO AVOID

Potential Landmines that Lead to Failure

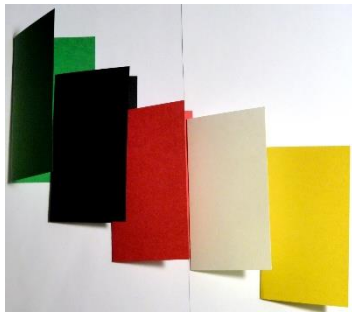
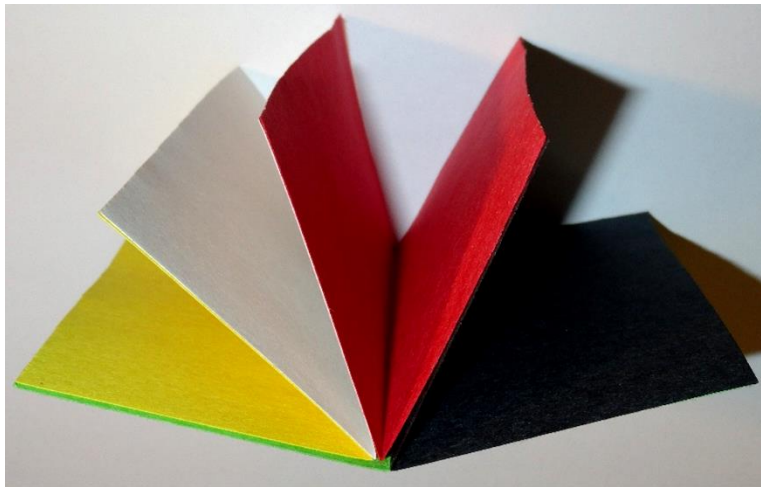
1. Not having a vision or plan of action or timeline
2. Not taking proper steps to cast the vision with leadership
3. Loss of focus on evangelism and discipleship
4. Not properly training parents—no parent orientation
5. Untrained leadership
6. Not having a place for children to serve
7. Lack of child safety procedures
8. Failure to engage children in the community
9. Believing that all children are at the same spiritual level (Jesus had twelve disciples; however, He invested the majority of His time in three.)
10. Not checking Bible studies and memory verses to hold children accountable
11. The idea that every child will be excited about having a daily quiet time
12. Believing that all of your parents will be on board with this philosophy of ministry with children



APPENDIX

THE WORDLESS BOOK CRAFT

A



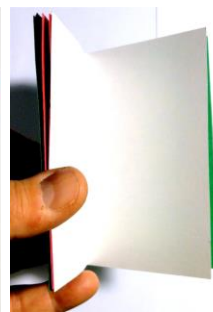
B



C



D



E



F

Supplies Needed

Construction paper (black, red, white, yellow, and green), glue sticks, scissors or a paper cutting board

The Wordless Book is a very simple craft with a very powerful message. It becomes a tool for sharing the Gospel and a reminder to a lost or saved child of God's gift of eternal life.

How to Make the Craft

1. Using a cutting board, cut the construction paper into even quarters. If you are using scissors, you can fold each sheet in half, then fold it in half again. Use the crease as a cutting line for a perfectly even cut.
2. Once you have cut your pieces to proper size, fold each of the colored pieces in half. (B)
3. Open the **green** piece of paper and lay it flat on a table with the center fold in a vertical position. Now place the folded **black** sheet on the left half of the green sheet with the fold on the vertical crease of the green sheet. Apply glue between the green and black sheets. (C)
4. With the green sheet still open and the black sheet folded, place the folded **red** sheet on the black with the fold on the crease of the green sheet. Apply glue between the black and red sheets. (D)
5. With the green sheet still open and the black and red sheets folded, place the folded **white** sheet on the red with the fold on the crease of the green sheet. Apply glue between the red and white sheets. (E)
6. With the green sheet still open and the black, red, and white sheets folded, place the folded **yellow** sheet on the white with the fold on the crease of the green sheet. Apply glue between the white and yellow sheets. (F)
7. With the yellow sheet folded, apply glue between the yellow and the right half of the green sheet to finish up the book.
8. The pages should open so that only one color is seen each time you turn the page. When closed, your book should show only the green front and back cover. (A)

THE WORDLESS BOOK MESSAGE

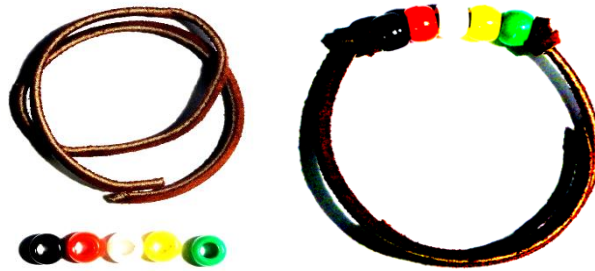
The Wordless Book has a wonderful message in it. By using this book, you can help a person understand the Gospel so that they might make a personal decision for Christ and be saved.

1. Read John 3:16 aloud.
2. God loves you and wants you to spend eternity in a wonderful place called Heaven.
3. Let's look at the different colors in the Wordless Book.
4. **Gold Page:** The gold page stands for Heaven and eternal life.
 - What will be in Heaven? (God, Jesus, streets of gold, angels, the Lamb's Book of Life, people who have already gone to Heaven)
 - What won't be in Heaven? (Sickness, death, pain or suffering, a lamp—God's glory will light up Heaven, sin—absolutely no sin)

- When we accept Christ as our Savior and Lord, our sins are forgiven and we will spend eternity with Him in Heaven one day. (John 3:16)
5. **Black Page:** The black page stands for sin.
- What is sin? (Sin is anything you think, say, or do that displeases God.)
 - Can anyone name some sins? (Lying, cheating, stealing, disobeying parents)
 - Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
 - Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - Sin cannot get into Heaven. It sounds like a big problem, but not with God.
 - Who has sinned? (Everyone
6. **Red Page:** The red page stands for the blood of Jesus, who died for our sins on a cross.
- 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 says, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."
 - Who is Christ? (Jesus, the Son of God)
 - He came to Earth as a man (first as a baby).
 - He never sinned once.
 - Jesus died on a cross for our sins.
 - Jesus died in our place.
7. **White Page:** The white page stands for forgiveness.
- When we believe that Jesus died for our sins, we have forgiveness of our sins. (John 1:12)
 - We are considered clean, or righteous, in God's eyes because of Jesus.
8. **Green Page:** The green cover stands for growth.
- We are to grow in our faith by reading God's Word and walking with Him daily.
 - 2 Peter 3:18 says, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."
9. **Invitation:** Would you bow your head right now?
- Pray a brief prayer without saying amen.

- Ask: “If you would like to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord, would you show me by raising your hand?”
- “If you raised your hand, would you slip out right now and come forward during the music to talk to someone?”
- “We want to show you how to make this decision.”

THE POWER BAND CRAFT



Supplies Needed

Leather cord, pony beads in the following colors: black, red, white, yellow, and green. (Every child should get one cord and one of each color bead.) You can find the supplies at your local craft store, discount store, or online.

Print out the meaning of each color bead on small pieces of paper to give to each child.

How to Make the Craft

1. Cut the leather cords approximately 8-10" long.
2. Tie a knot about three inches from one end of the cord.
3. Slide each bead onto the leather cord in the following order: green, yellow, white, red, and black.
4. After all of the beads are in place, tie a knot at the other end after the beads.

THE POWER BAND MESSAGE

The power band is a great way to understand the Gospel message.

- **Black:** Start with the black bead. The Bible says, "For the wages of sin *is* **death**, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Remember, through Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden, sin entered the world and death came as a punishment for sin.
- **Red:** The red bead stands for Jesus' **blood** and death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. First Corinthians 15:3-4 says, "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." God sent Jesus many years after creation to take the punishment for our sins.
- **White:** If you believe that Jesus died for your sins and rose on the third day, you will have eternal life. You will become a **child of God**. John 1:12 says, "But as

many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

- **Yellow:** The yellow bead stands for **Heaven**. When you become a child of God, you receive the promise of eternal life in Heaven with God. Revelation 21:21 describes Heaven: “The street of the city was pure gold.”
- **Green:** Once you accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you will want to **grow** in your faith using the Bible as your guide. Second Peter 3:18a says, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

