

VBS 2019: SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH KIDS CONFERENCE PLAN (1 HOUR)

Purpose Statement

This one-hour plan is designed to train and equip VBS leaders to help kids encounter Jesus in a personal way through sharing the gospel.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2019 Devotional Bible for Kids*—Mark Matthew 18:1-5.
- *VBS 2019 Gospel Guide*
- *VBS 2019 ABC Wristbands*
- *VBS 2019 Parent Guide*
- *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* (1 per conferee)
- *What Is a Christian? Answers for Kids*
- *Leading a Child to Christ Training Pack*
- *I'm a Christian Now: Growing in My Faith*
- 10 *VBS 2019 Photo Frames* — Write the main points (in bold type) from step 2 on each frame (1 point per frame). Place under 10 different chairs.
- *VBS 2019 Rotation Signs* — Attach to the focal wall and use in step 6.
- 5 sticky tabs — Write the following on sticky tabs and place each at the appropriate reference in the Bible: **GOD RULES**—*Genesis 1:1*, **WE SINNED**—*Romans 3:23*, **GOD PROVIDED**—*Ephesians 2:8-9*, **JESUS GIVES**—*Romans 5:8*, **WE RESPOND**—*Romans 10:9-10*.
- Blurry photo of your choosing in a simple frame with stand
- Clear, favorite photo of your choosing in a simple frame with stand
- Sticky notes (3 per participant)
- Pens (for participants)

Room Setup

Arrange seating in groups of 3–5 chairs for small group interaction. Cover a table with a *VBS 2019 Tablecloth* and place witnessing and teaching tools on the table with other decorative theme items such as a camera, binoculars, backpack, animal items, etc. Place the blurry and clear photos on stands to one side of the table.

Teaching Steps

1. Get Ready for the Best Photos (5 minutes)

- Greet participants as they arrive. Direct them to a chair and ask them to find a photo on their phones or in their wallets to share with the people around them. Guide them to share the where, when, why, and who about their photo. They can also share something about their favorite place to take photos; a cool feature of their camera; or favorite ways to store, share, or display photos.
- Introduce yourself and show your clear photo (displayed on the table). Then show the blurry picture and discuss the frustration of not getting the best photos. Mention that we can learn to be better photographers, just like we can learn to share the gospel well with kids.
- Read Matthew 18:1-5 aloud.
 - Briefly discuss how kids are valuable to Jesus.
 - Mention that God's will is for kids to be saved and have a relationship with Him.

2. Tips for Getting the Best Photos (20 minutes)

- Direct participants to grab the picture frames from under their chairs and be ready to share what is written in the frame.
- Discuss each step using these points as a guide.
- **Keep It Simple**
 - Trust the Holy Spirit to guide and lead you.
 - Start with prayer.
 - Don't crowd your shot with too many things to look at
- **Zoom In on Your Subject**
 - Get on a kid's level and avoid distractions.
 - Take a knee or a seat and give kids your full attention.
 - Avoid distractions by finding a quiet spot or, if in a large room, having the child face the wall.
 - Consider kid/leader safety—invite another adult if needed.
- **Frame the Shot. Draw the Eye to the Focal Point.**
 - Open your physical Bible to frame what you are saying to kids.
 - Let scripture be the focal point of the gospel. (Mention that later on in the conference, we will look closely at the gospel steps by marking our physical Bibles.)
 - Remember, God's Word does His work!
- **Slow Down Before Pressing the Shutter**
 - Ask open-ended questions.
 - Get kids talking.
 - Ask questions that avoid leading kids to the "right" response.
 - Don't jump to conclusions. Kids may just be curious or asking for more information and may not be ready to respond to the gospel.
- **Be Aware of What's in the Background**
 - Use kid-friendly language.
 - Know your audience.
 - Use clear, concrete (not abstract) language when talking about the gospel.
- **Get In Close and Fill the Frame**
 - Explain the difference between becoming a Christian, being baptized, and joining a church.
- **Share Your Album**
 - Tell your story (testimony).
 - You don't keep your photos secret—you share them!
 - Tell kids the story of your salvation.
 - Kids need a clear picture of how the gospel transformed your life, told to them in age-appropriate language.
- **Avoid Overexposure**
 - Balance the emotional side and never rush a kid into a decision.
 - Avoid large group appeals.
 - Avoid pressuring kids to make a decision.
 - Avoid giving a reward to kids for making a decision.
- **Hold the Camera Properly to Avoid Camera Shake**
 - Deal with each child individually.
 - Kids deserve one-on-one attention.
 - Take your time and let the child lead the conversation.
- **Develop the Photos. Don't Leave Them on Your Camera!**

- Follow up with kids.
- Have a plan for continued discipleship.
- Share potential resources:
 - *I'm a Christian Now: Growing in My Faith*
 - *I'm a Christian Now: Leader Kit (Revised)*
 - *What is a Christian: Answers for Kids*

3. Read Your Camera's Manual (5 minutes)

- Show *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* as a "manual" (a tool) for sharing the gospel with kids.
- Distribute *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* booklets to each conferee. Take time to talk through each step:
 - God Rules
 - We Sinned
 - God Provided
 - Jesus Gives
 - We Respond

4. Don't Get Bugged Down By Equipment (5 Minutes)

- Remind conferees that a well marked Bible is the only equipment they need to share the gospel.
- Invite participants to mark their own (physical) Bibles.
 - Distribute several sticky notes and a pen to each participant.
 - Show them how to fold and gently tear each sticky note in half to create 5 strips.
 - Lead them to write the following on their sticky notes (1 per note):
 - *GOD RULES—Genesis 1:1*
 - *WE SINNED—Romans 3:23*
 - *GOD PROVIDED—Ephesians 2:8-9*
 - *JESUS GIVES—Romans 5:8*
 - *WE RESPOND—Romans 10:9-10*
- Lead participants to find each verse in their Bibles and mark it with sticky notes.

5. Have a Camera On You at All Times (5 minutes)

- Capture spontaneous and unique moments.
- Be ready for kids to respond. They may respond by:
 - Taking steps toward God.
 - Kids start seeking, but might not be ready.
 - Kids go through four stages before they are ready to make a decision for salvation.
 1. Curious
 - They begin asking questions like, "Can I be baptized?"
 2. Concern
 - They ask questions like, "Where do people go when they die?"
 3. Conviction
 - They begin to understand that they have sinned and that sin separates them from God.
 4. Conversion
 - A child asks God to save her from her sins. Invites Jesus to be Lord of her life.

- Some children may need assurance of their salvation. Kids may have doubts or not fully understand a previous commitment.
- A child may remember praying for salvation at some other point and wonder if she “did it right.”
- She may need encouragement and discipleship.
- When there is a readiness to profess faith in Jesus, kids are ready to A-B-C (Admit, Believe, Confess).

6. Don't Miss the Shot Because You're Looking at the Back Screen (5 minutes)

- Find the teachable moments—moments when spiritual conversations can turn into a gospel-centered conversation.
- Discuss ways to share the gospel in each rotation. Point to the rotation signs on the wall as you discuss ways to have gospel conversations in each rotation:
 - Crafts
 - Review the Bible story and verse.
 - Missions
 - Talk how missionaries share the gospel.
 - Snacks
 - Ask kids what they are learning today.
 - Recreation
 - Debrief activities and connect to the gospel.
 - Music
 - Connect lyrics to Bible stories and Bible verses.
 - Walking to and from rotations
 - Just have conversations with kids—

7. Charge Your Batteries So You're Always Prepared (2 minutes)

- You aren't ready for VBS until you're ready to share the gospel with kids!
 - Be familiar with *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me*.
 - Mark your Bible.
 - PRAY for opportunities to share the gospel.

8. Grab Your Gear and Go! (3 minutes)

- Break into small groups and lead groups to pray for gospel-sharing opportunities during VBS!