



THREE-DAY TWELVE

A three-day training for those guiding children around the world to follow Jesus like the twelve disciples



VOLUME I INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Part of the 1for50 family
of training resources

Revised February 2020





About this Training

What if every child in every community had someone to reach, disciple and empower them to become an influential Kingdom Champion? This is the dream of the 1for50 Movement. And we believe it is possible, because this is God's dream, not ours.

This three-day 1for50 training is designed to equip children's ministry teachers and leaders. After completion of this training, participants will possess a strong biblical foundation for children's ministry and have practical teaching skills to effectively reach, disciple and empower children in their church, community outreach program, NGO or other ministry.

We want leaders to get the most out of participating in this three-day training. Adults are practical and learn best when they can participate, collaborate and bring their life experience to the training. For that reason, much of the lesson content is discussion and activity based, with guidelines for the trainer to help discussions stay on topic.

Lessons have been written so they can be taught individually or together in a module, depending on the amount of time you have. If using the lessons for a three-day training, it is best to teach them in the order they have been written.

Please feel free to adapt individual lessons for your unique training style, culture and context. As you make changes, always keep the lesson objectives in mind. Note, however, that for your training to be considered an official 1for50 training, you must include the 1for50 vision and an invitation to either learn more about 1for50 or to join in the movement. (See the Invitation Guide on page 108 for more details.)

After your training is completed, please reportify (report and testify) on your event. You can reportify by sending a report to your 1for50 Regional Champion, emailing the 1for50 Global Leadership Team at 1for50@gmail.com or by filling in the online Activity Form. (www.1for50.net/active)

How to Use This Manual

As you prepare to teach each lesson, prepare your own heart with prayer. Ask God to open hearts of participants and to help you share from your heart about the topic. Read through each lesson and the Scriptures used in the lesson. Also gather or prepare the materials listed for the lesson.

Lesson Format

The first page of every lesson offers an overview of the lesson, including:

Objectives: the goals and outcomes for the lesson

Lesson Overview: a list of the lesson's activities and time required to teach each activity

Materials & Illustration Options: a list of the materials to be prepared or gathered and video options to teach the lesson as it is written

The rest of the lesson (4-6 pages) includes:

Welcome and Warm-Up: a short opening activity to capture people's attention and introduce the lesson's topic and importance

Activities: three to five learning activities, each lasting from 5-20 minutes, providing a variety of creative interactions, group work, games, etc.

Reflection and Response: a time for review, reflection questions, commitment and prayer

Notations in the Instructor's Guide

Questions: All discussion questions asked by the presenter are in **bold** type.

Scriptures: All Scripture references are noted in **bold** type. Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are from the New International Version.

Instructions: Instructions for what the presenter should do are put in parentheses ().

Transitions: Transition statements help move the session from one section to the next and are presented in a yellow box between the sections. In addition, the beginning of each lesson explains how the lesson fits into the 1for50 vision—the key area it addresses on the 1for50 hand.

Participant Notes: Small images of the corresponding pages of participant notes are included in the sidebar of the Instructor's Guide.

Underlined Text: Words that are unlined indicate a blank in the participant notes that participants should fill in with that word.

Icons in the Presenter's Guide

The interactive icon indicates an activity to engage your audience in experiential learning.



The story icon indicates a story to engage the heart. Feel free to substitute the story with one more relevant to your context.



The ask icon indicates an interactive opportunity for you to ask your audience a question and invite responses.



The group icon indicates a small-group discussion or activity.

The slide icon indicates which PowerPoint slide to use for each section of content.



The handout icon indicates an optional printed document for you to distribute.

To reduce the size of the PowerPoint presentation, the videos used in this training have not been included in the PowerPoint. A PowerPoint slide holds the place of the videos, but the videos will need to be imbedded into the presentation manually.

An image of any other materials needed will be shown in the right column.

Note: Additional resources mentioned in this presentation can be downloaded from the 1for50 website (www.1for50.net).

Each lesson has two to four pages of participant notes containing key information and discussion questions from the lesson. These notes are not required for the lessons, but they offer support and information to participants. Notes may be photocopied in color or in black and white.



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Helping Children Grow as Disciples	41	65 min
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Approximate Total Time: 14 hours 30 minutes

Materials (needed for each lesson)

- Bible
- Presenter's script included in this manual
- Participant's notes for each participant
- PowerPoint presentation (optional)
- Pens or pencils and paper for participants to take notes
- Whiteboard, chalkboard or large piece of paper
- Whiteboard markers, chalk or permanent markers

Technical Needs (optional):

- Computer with PowerPoint installed
- Screen and projector to show slides and videos
- Microphone system (suggested for larger groups)



1for50 Training

The three-day TWELVE belongs to a family of training resources:

The One-Day TWELVE Curriculum equip children's ministry workers with basic skills to reach, disciple and empower children in their church and community. The One-Day TWELVE includes six lessons, along with an introduction and conclusion.

The Family & Parenting Training Module is a Next Step 1for50 Training. Next Step Training builds on Core Training, developing additional skills or going more deeply into specific topics in one or more of the seven key areas. The Family & Parenting Training includes thirteen lessons and equips parents to help their children become all that God created them to be. It can be taught in three or four days.

The TWELVE Enrichments are individual Next Step Training lessons covering specific topics in one of the seven key areas.

Changing or Adapting the Curriculum

This curriculum module is open source. In other words, there are no copyright restrictions. You have permission to reproduce, modify, translate, and distribute this resource while keeping it true to its intent. Since this curriculum is a free resource, it must be kept free (it cannot be sold for profit). If you translate these lessons into another language, we encourage you to share them with the 1for50 global family. Please send updates and translations to 1for50@gmail.com.

Jesus' Heart for Children

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand the needs facing children in our world today.
- Understand what the Scriptures say about God's heart for children.
- Know the important elements in preparing to work with children and which elements they need to strengthen in their own ministry.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
Our World Today	5 min
What did Jesus Teach About Children?	15 min
Discover God's Heart for Children	15 min
Preparing for Work with Children	5 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 50 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Candles – one tall and one half-burned
- Dots banner
- 100 cotton balls or substitute (beans, stones, etc.)
- God's heart objects: cross, heart, chain, candle, towel
- Three stones and a pot
- Colored paper (or substitute) for fire

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture passages:

- Matthew 18:1-14
- Mark 10:13-15
- 2 Peter 3:9
- Mark 12:30
- Romans 12:5
- 1 Timothy 4:12
- Matthew 5:16
- 1 Peter 4:10



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min

Two Candles Object Lesson



(Hold up two candles, one tall and one half burned.) **Which one of these two candles would you purchase? Why?** (Invite responses. People will choose the tall one because it will last longer.) **Would you buy it even if it is more costly?** (Invite responses.)



The two candles represent two people who come to believe in Jesus. One is an adult, and one is a child. **Which one do you think is the adult?** (Invite responses.) The half-burned candle is the adult. When an adult comes to believe in Jesus, they will begin to shine for him, but they will only shine for Jesus for the remainder of their life. The tall, unburned candle represents a child who comes to believe in Jesus. If we nurture that child in their faith, they have the potential to shine for Jesus for an entire lifetime.



Let me share a story with you. Mary grew up in a poor urban community in the Philippines. Her father was a drug addict, and she was abused as a child, filling her with a sense of shame and hopelessness. With the help of her aunt, Mary started attending church and came to know Jesus. Though her circumstances did not change, the message of the gospel slowly changed the way she viewed herself and her heavenly Father. Today as an adult, Mary runs a ministry for exploited women and children in the Philippines and leads a Christian radio broadcast with children that reaches half a million listeners!

It may seem like investing in children is too costly, but God's heart is for every child to know him and to follow him for their entire lives, just like Mary.

In this lesson, we will discuss the needs of children today and discover God's heart for them as revealed in his Word. We will also look at three essential elements for preparing to work with children and evaluate these elements in our current ministry to children.



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Our World Today

5 min

Right now, the world's population is 7.6 billion people. 2.3 billion of these people are children under the age of 18. What does 2.3 billion children look like? (If you are not using the PowerPoint, display the 2.3 Dots Banner, with each dot representing 100,000 children. The banner can be downloaded from the resource page on the 1for50 website.)

Imagine each circle represents 100,000 children. Ten circles would be 1 million children, 50 circles would be 5 million. Now look at 2.3 billion.

Now let's look at how many children are in our country. (Before the session, gather the statistics for the number of children under 18 in your country.)



5



The sheer number of children is staggering. But so are the challenges facing our children today. Two out of every three children today are living in crisis: (Share several statistics from the following list.)



- 28 million children are refugees (UNICEF).
- 100 million children are living on the streets (CYC-Net).
- 153 million children have lost one or both parents (UNICEF).
- 168 million children are trapped in child labor (UN).
- 2 million children are sexually exploited/trafficked every year (UNICEF).
- And 29,000 children die each day, mostly from preventable causes (UNICEF).

These are the big crises. But what about issues like bullying, internet addictions, pornography, child abuse and substance abuse? This list of needs is long.

While all these needs are significant, our children's greatest need is to know Jesus. Two out of every three children today do not know Christ, with many having little access to the gospel. Nearly half of the population in many unreached areas of the world are children.



How does this information make you feel? How do you think it makes God feel? (Share answers.)

In the Scriptures God reveals to us how he feels about children and the needs they face. Let's look together at what he says.

What did Jesus Teach About Children?

15 min

The Lost Sheep

(Ask a volunteer to read **Matthew 18:1-14** slowly and clearly in the local language. Invite participants to listen for the different truths Jesus stated about children. Then have participants work in pairs or small groups for five minutes going through the Scripture passage to list truths that Jesus taught the disciples about children. Share answers as a large group, listing them on a board. Answers should include:



- When we welcome children, we welcome Jesus.
- We must become like children to enter the Kingdom of heaven.
- We should not cause children to stumble.
- We should not look down on children.
- Children are important to God – he is not willing that any be lost.)

God is Not Willing for Children to be Lost

One of the most powerful parts of this passage is the story of the lost sheep in v.12-14. (Before class, hide one cotton ball "sheep" somewhere in the room. Review the story, using the cotton balls or substitute to illustrate, asking participants to confirm the details of how many sheep there were, how many sheep were missing, etc.)





(Explain that you have lost a sheep – the hidden cotton ball – and need to find it. What should we do if one is missing? Have everyone stand up and help search for this sheep. Celebrate when it is found. Show the cotton ball “sheep” joining the other ninety-nine.)



What would the story be like if we were to insert statistics from your community? **How many “sheep” are “lost” or “found” in your own community?** (Hear responses.)

If the shepherd was willing to go looking for just ONE sheep, what might he be willing to do – and want us as his followers to do – about so many who need to be found?

Reread **Matthew 18:14** (in participant notes). “Your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.” God longs for children to know him. It is his heart that none of them be lost.



The Importance of Children in the Kingdom



It is also his heart that we understand the value and importance of children. Think of children you know. **What words would you use to describe them?** (Hear responses.) Often people look down on children, seeing them as irresponsible, immature, and of not much value. But God sees them differently.

Read Mark 10:13-15. When people brought children to Jesus, the disciples tried to send the children away. **How did Jesus respond?** (Have participants circle in participant notes the important key words that Jesus said about children. Discover words like “come,” kingdom,” “do not hinder,” etc.)



Jesus used this opportunity to correct the disciples’ notion that children should be kept away from him. But he also said that we must become like them to enter the Kingdom of God. **Why?** (Hear responses. Answers might include children are trusting, children readily believe, children have nothing.)

God has gifted children with an amazing ability to trust. They are open to new ideas and ready to believe. It should not surprise us, then, that 70% of Christians come to know Christ between the ages of four and fourteen!



Children are also creative, bold, imaginative, energetic, intelligent and passionate. They are eager to make a difference in the world. When children come to know Jesus, they are the best at bringing their friends and family to Christ!

God loves children and has a place for them in his Kingdom. From what Jesus taught his disciples and the many references to children in the Bible, we learn much about God’s heart and dreams for the spiritual nurture of children. He wants them to know him, to love him, to fellowship together, to honor him, and to serve him. Let’s look together at each of these points.

Discover God's Heart for Children

15 min

(Go through each of the five points. State the point, explain the point, have a volunteer read the key verse for the point and explain it, give the biblical story of a child that illustrates the point, and show the object or teach a hand motion to help participants remember the point. As each point is presented, go back and review with the objects/motions.)



1. God wants children to KNOW God (Key Verse: **2 Peter 3:9**)

Knowing God is more than having head knowledge about God. God wants children to know him personally, to make a decision to follow Christ as their Savior. This is all about the child understanding the gospel and coming to a place of personal decision to follow Christ. Does the word "everyone" in **2 Peter 3:9** include children? Yes.



Story: the Lost Sheep
(God is not willing that even one of these little ones should perish.)

Object: cross
Because Jesus gave his life, children can know God personally.



Motion: make a cross with arms



2. God wants children to LOVE God (Key Verse: **Mark 12:30**)

God desires that children have a growing personal relationship or friendship with Christ, loving God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. This tenderness needs to grow in children through worship and prayer. Can children love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength? Yes. David's life is a great example.



Story: David (a young boy after God's own heart)

Object: heart
God wants children to love him with all their hearts.



Motion: cross arms over chest or make a heart with hands



3. God wants children to FELLOWSHIP together (Key Verse: **Romans 12:5**)

Children need to be included in the Church and in relationship with other believers. This is how they are mentored to grow. God calls us to invite children to belong and function as part of the Body of Christ. As they receive love from the Body of Christ, they learn to extend that love to others.



Story: Timothy (who grew in faith as if he were Paul's son)

Object: chain
Children need to be linked with others in the Body of Christ.



Motion: hold hands or join arms



4. God wants children to HONOR God (Key Verses: **1 Timothy 4:12**; **Matthew 5:16**)

Parents and church leaders want good behavior from children. To honor God is to do more than behave well when others are enforcing the behavior. It is doing right when others are not watching, making right choices from the heart. We want to teach children to live lives of obedience, making choices that honor God, and being examples to others.

Story: Daniel (he chose to follow God's ways, even in an ungodly nation)

Object: candle
As children honor God, they shine brightly for him.



Motion: arms raised



5. God wants children to SERVE God (Key Verse: **1 Peter 4:10**)

Children have been gifted by God to serve, and he desires that they learn how to use their gifts and serve with humility even in childhood.

Story: Joseph (he served faithfully at home, in captivity, in prison and finally in Pharaoh's palace)

Object: towel
Children can serve just as Jesus served and washed his disciples' feet.



Motion: arms forward



Together, all these dreams become a focus on making disciples. Is this the vision and heart you have for the children in your sphere of influence? Having this heart and vision is of absolute importance as we prepare for our work with children.



Preparing for Work with Children

5 min

(Set out three stones, pot and "fire" and dramatize with the group as you describe a three-stone cooking fire.) In some cultures, food is cooked over a fire using three stones. The stones are positioned around the fire in the center. These stones must be evenly sized and stable, or they will not hold the pot of food placed on them.

Our ministry to children can be compared to a three-stone fire. The fire in the center represents God's heart and passion for children. God's heart must be burning within us if we want to have a vital ministry with children. (Encourage participants to fill in the blanks in participant notes.)

The three stones represent the children's leader and three essential components they must have to prepare to do children's ministry well.

Stone 1: SKILLS refers to creativity, principles, teaching skills, ideas, etc., that we use to teach children. Most people think skills are the only requirement to prepare for ministry to children. But skills are only part of what is required.



Stone 2: BIBLE KNOWLEDGE means knowing God's Word, having it live in your heart and being able to teach accurately. Many people say that children's workers are "only teaching children," so they do not need Bible training. But children must be taught well to build a strong foundation of truth for the future.

Stone 3: SERVANT LEADERSHIP refers to being an example of Christ, being a person of compassion and integrity outside of class, not just with children. It means living out what you are teaching the children.



- **Should each of these three areas be strong and balanced? Why?**
- **What happens when one of the three areas is weak or missing?**

The pot represents the child and everything that goes into discipling them to be followers of Jesus. (Use the five objects from the previous section to illustrate what goes in the pot to make disciples: knowing God, loving God, fellowshiping together, honoring God, serving God.) Just as cooking requires attention, time and adding ingredients, making disciples of children also takes time, attention and continual teaching.

Reflection and Response

5 min

As we consider what we have learned in this lesson, we see that God is at the center of children's ministry. His heart for children is the "fire" that drives it all. But as children's leaders and workers, we also have a part to play. What has God been saying to you about your part?

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

1. **Is Jesus' heart for children also your heart for children? What might God be asking you to think or do differently as a result of what you have learned in this lesson?**
2. **What is one new thing you learned about God's heart for children? What next steps could you take to apply what you have learned?**
3. **We learned that Bible knowledge, skills and servant leadership are all important as we prepare to work with children. Which area needs strengthening so that all of your "stones" are balanced? What steps could you take to strengthen that area?**

As we close this lesson, let's spend time praying for one another. (Spend time in prayer together or in small groups. Pray for one another to grow an even deeper understanding of God's heart for children. Pray that each person would understand what God wants them to do and have the courage to obey.)



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22



23



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What is 1for50?

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Know the dream statement for 1for50 and be able to share it with someone else.
- Have a basic understanding of the mission and efforts of the 1for50 Movement.
- Know the seven components of the 1for50 Hand and be able to identify which area needs to be strengthened in their own children's ministry.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	10 min
The 1for50 Dream	5 min
About 1for50	5 min
The 1for50 Hand	5 min
The Great Commission and Children	5 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 35 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- 1for50 Hand page (optional)
- 1for50 Vision page (optional)
- 1for50 simple brochure (optional)
- Small car or picture of a car

Media options:

- PowerPoint slides for this lesson
- 1for50 promo video

Scripture passage:

Matthew 28:19-20



Welcome and Warm-Up

10 min

Activity: Getting to Know You Game



(Have participants get into groups of 8-10 and stand in a circle. Have each group choose one person to be first. Explain that this is a game to get to know one another better. Each person must say their name and then something they like or enjoy doing. For example, "My name is John, and I like to sing." When they say what they like to do, they must create a hand motion to go with the word. At that point, everyone else replies, "Hi, John, who likes to sing!" and does the same motion. As each person introduces themselves, the group adds their name and action to the greeting. "Hi, John, who likes to sing. Hi, Mary, who likes to cook, etc." Continue around the circle with introductions until everyone has introduced themselves and been greeted by the group.

Networking and relationships are invaluable components of the 1for50 Movement as we work together to reach, disciple and empower the next generation.

1for50 Promo (Show the "1for50 Promo" Video.)

In this next session we are going to learn about the 1for50 Movement. It is our hope that each of you will discover that God has a place for you in fulfilling this incredible vision!



2



3

The 1for50 Dream

5 min



What if every child in every community had someone to reach, disciple and empower them to become an influential Kingdom Champion? This is the dream of 1for50. Let's look at each part of the dream statement together. (Optional: Include the actions in parentheses below and have participants learn them with you.)

What if every child—Every infant. Every toddler. Every school-aged child. Every child in your home and in your church. Every child on your street; those who know Jesus and those who have never heard his name. Every child. (Imagine children are in front of you, and you are touching them on their heads one at a time.)

In every community—In your community, in communities in your city, your country and all around the world; rural and urban, rich and poor. Every community. (Imagine you are pointing to every community in the world.)

Had someone—That "someone" could be a parent, grandparent, teacher, pastor, coach, neighbor or trusted friend. Someone. (Hold up one finger.)

To reach—We want to reach every child with the life-changing love of Jesus. Every child needs to hear the Good News. Reach. (Extend your hand in front of you as if you are reaching for someone who is slipping away from you.)



4



Disciple—We want every child to know, love and follow Jesus for a lifetime. We want to see children shaped into the image of Christ. Disciple. (Imagine you are molding a piece of clay like God, our Potter, is doing with us.)

And empower them—We want to partner with children, to come alongside them and mentor them in ministry. Empower. (Flex your biceps confidently.)

To become an influential Kingdom Champion—We want children to have their minds set on Kingdom things. We want to release them to use their gifts as children, to serve God in age-appropriate ways. As they do, they will influence others for the sake of God's Kingdom. (Form a crown with your fingers, then place the crown on your head.)

This is the dream of 1for50. And we believe it is possible because as we discovered in our first lesson, this is God's dream not ours.



About 1for50

5 min

The History of 1for50



1for50 was born at the first Global Children's Forum (GCF) in 2008. Leaders from around the world gathered to ask, "What might God be asking us to do together to reach the world's 2.2 billion children?" As they dreamed and prayed together, the idea of 1for50 began. They thought if one children's leader was trained for every 50 children around the world, we COULD possibly reach every child. Since 2008 1for50 has grown into a global grassroots training movement serving local churches, denominations, and organizations, as well as global networks including the 4/14 Movement and the Viva network for children at risk. With initial activity in more than 100 countries, 1for50 is a global move of God!

The Mission and Efforts



The mission of 1for50 has always been to reach unreached children with the life-changing love of Jesus, to disciple children to know and follow Jesus for a lifetime, and to empower children to be influential Kingdom Champions in their own families, communities and beyond. (Optional: Distribute the 1for50 Brochure or 1for50 Vision page.)



To accomplish this mission, 1for50 focuses on three main efforts. First, we mobilize local leaders to reach and disciple children. Through vision casting, we encourage and challenge leaders to share God's heart for children and to take action on their behalf. Second, we connect leaders with one another and help them to work together. The task of reaching the world's children is too big for any one church or ministry to accomplish on its own. We need to work together—to share resources and to support one another—so that together we can grow stronger for the sake of reaching and discipling children.



Our primary effort, however, is to equip leaders. At its heart, 1for50 is a training movement. We want children's leaders to go deeper in their ministry to children—to be equipped with relevant tools and ideas to reach, disciple and empower the next generation.

The 1for50 Hand

5 min



Before 1for50 developed its training material, we surveyed children's leaders in 80 countries, asking them what children's leaders needed to know to help children know and follow Jesus for a lifetime. Not surprisingly, the answers were quite similar! The responses were divided into seven areas, summarized on what we call the 1for50 Hand. (As you share the 1for50 Hand, demonstrate each point holding up the right number of fingers. Invite participants to do it with you. Optional: Distribute the 1for50 Hand Document.)

One, Making Disciples: At its core 1for50 is all about the ONE: ONE Savior loved by ONE children's leader, guiding ONE child at a time to love and follow Jesus wholeheartedly.

Two, Reaching the Unreached: ONE follower of Jesus obeying the great commission and reaching out to ONE child; now there are TWO. We need to discover the best ways to reach children both outside and inside the church who are still waiting to hear the gospel.

Three, Engaging Families: A child plus a mother and a father equals THREE. Discipleship must go beyond the church to the family. We need to consider how to reach the family as well. If a family knows Christ, we need to help them reach and disciple their own children.

Four, Nurturing the Whole Child: Nurturing the whole child is a focus on the FOUR parts of a child, the whole child: physical, mental, social-emotional, and spiritual.

Five, Building God's Kingdom Together: The thumb is an important part of the hand and works with our other fingers to hold onto things. In the same way our hand needs the thumb, we need each other. Building God's Kingdom together is about working together as the Body of Christ. The mission of reaching, discipling and empowering children is too great for any one church or ministry to do alone.

Six, Deepening the Leader's Heart: As your fingers extend from the palm of your hand, so reaching and discipling children begins inside our own heart. We must be following Jesus wholeheartedly ourselves.





Seven, Partnering with Children: You can take hold of the hand of a child. Each one of these six areas can be embraced by a child as we disciple them. Children are not simply the object of our ministry, but partners in it. Even though they are young, children can set an example for those around them, even taking the lead in ministry.



All 1for50 training events cover at least one area of the 1for50 Hand. A 1for50 training event could be as simple as a one-hour workshop on a specific training topic, or it could be a week-long training using 1for50 training materials.



The TWELVE Core Curriculum covers core principles in each of the seven areas of the 1for50 Hand, creating a solid foundation of knowledge and skills for anyone working with children.

1for50 Next Step Training builds on Core Training, developing additional skills or going more deeply into specific topics in one or more of the seven key areas. One example is The Family & Parenting Training Module.

We offer our training and resources free to the global Church to enhance the good work you are already doing. We want to see the vision God has placed on your heart for children become a reality.

The Great Commission and Children

5 min



As we close this session on 1for50, we want to focus again on why this vision is important. **Read Matthew 28:19-20. Does the Great Commission include children?** It absolutely does!



The dream of 1for50 is a missional dream. It flows from the heart of God for every person in every tribe and nation to love him as Savior and serve him as King. It flows from his heart that wants every hurting child, every hungry child, every child longing for purpose and acceptance, to find their place in his family and become all he created them to be.

Not only do children need the Church to bring the good news of Jesus to them, the Church also needs children to help them fulfill the Great Commission!

(Show a toy car or a picture of a car.) Ministry to and with children is like one of the wheels on a car. Children's ministry is not meant to be like a spare tire, hidden away in the trunk until needed. Just as each wheel is needed to make the car move forward effectively, ministry to children is needed for the Church to grow strong. A focus on children can help churches to make more disciples, reach more people for Christ, think creatively about solving problems and more!





Reflection and Response

5 min

Later in our training, we will share more about the 1for50 movement and how you can join hands with us to reach, disciple and empower the next generation. For now, we want to invite you to reflect on what you have learned in this session.

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

1. **The 1for50 dream is that every child in every community would have someone to reach, disciple and empower them to become an influential Kingdom Champion. Who do you know who needs to hear this vision? How can you share it with them?**
2. **The 1for50 Hand covers seven key areas for effective children's ministry. Which of these seven areas are the strongest in your children's ministry? Which areas do you need to give attention to and improve?**
3. **Is children's ministry in your church one of the four wheels, or is it like a spare tire in the trunk of the car? What is God saying to you about this?**

What if every child in every community had someone to reach, disciple and empower them to become an influential Kingdom Champion? May God help us as we work together towards this dream!

(Close in prayer.)



Jesus and the Children's Leader

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand what the Bible says about the ministry of a teacher and leader.
- Recognize the need for depending on God to be effective in ministry to children.
- Know practical ideas for "abiding in Christ."

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
What is Inside?	5 min
The Ministry of a Children's Leader	15 min
How will we Carry this Load?	5 min
The Vine and the Branches	15 min
Lessons from the Teapot	5 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 55 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Plastic zipper bag for each participant (if zipper-top bags are not available, use clear plastic bags)
- Pieces of paper for Bible verse references
- Objects for ministry of a leader: nametag, map/arrow, Bible, flashlight, towel, binoculars
- Large bag or backpack
- Branch with leaves or fruit, dead or alive
- A teapot

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture Passages:

- Ephesians 4:11-12
- James 3:1
- Deuteronomy 4:9
- Proverbs 22:6
- Romans 10:14
- 1 Thessalonians 2:4
- Nehemiah 8:8
- Matthew 13:52
- Mark 10:16
- John 13: 13-14, 34
- Philippians 2: 5-7
- Jeremiah 29:11
- Ephesians 3:17-18
- John 15:5,16



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min



Play a Game: Are You the Same as Me?



(Have all participants arrange their chairs into a circle with one person standing in the middle of the circle. There should be no empty chairs in the circle. The person in the middle asks, "Are you the same as me?" and then shares one characteristic about him/herself, e.g., I like candy, I have three children, or I play guitar. Encourage him/her not to say obvious things like parts of body or clothing. Everyone who shares that characteristic with him/her gets up and moves to a different chair. The person in the middle tries to sit in one of the empty chairs. Whoever does not get a chair becomes the new person in the middle. Play several rounds, then have participants return to their seats.)

We have many things in common. The greatest things include our love for Christ and our love for children.

This lesson lays a very important foundation in our work with children. We will be exploring what the Bible says about the role of teachers and leaders and their work with children. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson focuses on the "Heart of the Leader."**



What is Inside?

5 min

Examine the Plastic Bag



(Give each participant a plastic zipper bag.) **How is this bag similar to a children's leader/teacher?** (Listen to several answers from the group.)

One truth we discovered about the bag is that it is ready to be filled, and it needs to be filled with the right things. The character, attitudes and love for Christ that we have inside our hearts are very important if we desire to make a lasting spiritual influence in the lives of children.

Let's look at the Bible to see what needs to be inside a children's leader's life.



The Ministry of a Children's Leader

15 min

What Does the Bible Say?

(Before the lesson, write each Scripture reference on a small piece of paper. Hand out pieces of paper to participants who are willing to read the Bible verse as you call for it. If time is short, you may choose only one verse for each principle.)



**What does the Bible say about the ministry of teachers and leaders?**

(Ask a volunteer to come forward to represent a teacher. Read the statement, inviting participants to fill in the blank in their notes with the underlined words. Invite the assigned participants to read the Scripture under each principle and to briefly summarize the key thought. Show the object related to each statement as a reminder of the principle, and have the volunteer hold all objects. It will become increasingly difficult and awkward as the lesson progresses and he/she holds more and more.)

1. It is a calling from God. (Show name tag/badge and put it on the volunteer.)
Ephesians 4:11-12: Teaching is one of the spiritual gifts.
James 3:1: Teaching is a serious responsibility.
2. A leader guides and directs students to learn obedience. (Show map or arrow and have the volunteer hold it.)
Deuteronomy 4:9: The children's leader must live an example of obedience.
Proverbs 22:6: The leader helps to train a child.
3. A leader is entrusted to share the words of God. (Show Bible and have the volunteer hold it open.)
Romans 10:14: We must be faithful to share the truth, or children may not learn it.
1 Thessalonians 2:4: We represent God, not ourselves, when we teach.
4. A leader helps illuminate Bible truth and apply it to students' lives. (Show flashlight and have the volunteer shine it on the Bible.)
Nehemiah 8:8: Teachers make the meaning clear.
Matthew 13:52: Teachers bring out treasures of truth.
5. A leader serves like Christ. (Show towel and put it over the volunteer's arm or shoulder.)
Mark 10:16: Jesus loved and blessed the children.
John 13:13-14, 34: Jesus served and loved others.
Philippians 2:5-7: Jesus was a humble servant.
6. A leader imparts vision and hope for a student's future in Christ. (Show binoculars and have the volunteer look through them ... while still holding everything else.)
Jeremiah 29:11: We see a child's potential.
Ephesians 3:17-18: We wish God's fullness for students.



Each of these principles is important to consider as we teach and lead children to grow as disciples. Let's review them together.

How will we Carry this Load?

5 min

(Review the six principles of a leader again. As you mention each principle, point to the corresponding object the volunteer is holding. Check to see how the volunteer is feeling as they continue to hold all these objects.)

Many times, this is how we feel as we look at the task of reaching and discipling children. It feels like too much responsibility. We do not think we can continue doing it. The burden is too great. How can we carry it?

(Bring out a large bag or backpack. With the volunteer, place all the objects in the bag. Then ask the volunteer to carry the bag with all the objects inside.) Is it manageable now? Yes. The bag represents the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit provides this kind of help in our lives. He enables us to carry these responsibilities. He is the one who teaches us, guides us, helps us and comforts us as we work with children. We cannot do it alone.



16



17



The Vine and the Branches

15 min

Read About the Vine and the Branches

(Optional: Show a branch, either living or dead, as you talk through this section.) Jesus taught his disciples about the importance of dependence on God in ministry by using a vine and branches.

Read John 15:5 and John 15:16. (Invite participants to circle key words in participant notes describing the relationship and reward of being connected to the vine. Discover: remain or abide, bear much fruit, can do nothing, etc.)

Jesus is the vine; his followers are the branches. We must remain in him, stay close to him. We cannot do anything without him. But if we do stay close to him, we will bear much fruit—fruit that lasts. Do you want this?



18



19

Remaining in Christ



(Divide participants into groups of three or four. Instruct groups to discuss these questions found in their participant notes: **How do we "remain" in Christ? What are the obstacles to staying close to Christ, and how do we overcome them?** After five minutes come back together and share several answers.)



(Share an example of a time when you realized the importance of staying close to God to remain fruitful in your ministry.)

(Have participants individually work through the third question from the participant notes, silently reflecting on: What is your greatest obstacle?)



20



21

We can work with children in our own strength. But in doing so, we will miss out on the promises of Christ to his disciples: to bear fruit that will last.

Lessons from the Teapot

5 min

Our lives as children's leaders are like a teapot. (Show a teapot as you go through this section.)

Like the teapot:

- We must be clean.
- We must be open and available, ready to receive from God.
- We cannot fill ourselves; it comes from above.
- God pours his love (Romans 5:5), his grace (1 Timothy 1:14) and his Holy Spirit (Acts 10:45) into us to pour out to others.
- Sometimes there is a season of waiting while the tea inside "brews."
- We cannot pour ourselves. The owner (God) must determine when and where the blessings within us are to be poured out.
- The teapot is totally dependent on the owner for everything that fills it up and every act of usefulness.
- We must come back to the source for refilling.

While we might come to believe that our intelligence, preparation and creative gifts are the things that are needed by God, we soon realize that these cannot be useful to God without the attitudes of dependence and humility, just like a teapot in the hands of its owner.



(Share an example of someone who has influenced your life (or many others) and who has followed this principle. What would have happened if they had cut short the activities that lead to being filled with God's heart and attitudes?)



Reflection and Response

5 min

As we begin our journey of preparing to work with children, the condition of our hearts is more important than anything else.

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers before closing with a time of prayer.)

1. **What is something new you learned about being a children's leader? How can you implement this idea to make your children's ministry stronger?**
2. **What ideas or practices will you start or strengthen to help you abide in Christ?**

(Divide into pairs. Pray for one another to grow to love Jesus even more, to depend on him more and to be examples of wholehearted devotion to him as we work with children.)



Characteristics of Children

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Know the four areas in which all children grow.
- Understand important characteristics of children at different ages and how to adapt activities to children of different ages.
- Have practical ideas for involving all parts of a child in a lesson.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
How did God Create Children?	5 min
Four Parts of a Child	10 min
Children of Different Ages	20 min
Connecting with the Whole Child	10 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 55 min

Materials

Illustration option:

4-6 sets of Characteristics of Children chart, cut apart

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture passages:

- Psalm 139:13-16
- Luke 2:52
- Mark 12:30



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min

Sing an Action Song: Go Bananas



(Invite participants to stand.) One truth we know about children is that children love to move, so we are going to move too! One of the most commonly eaten fruits around the world is bananas. Kids love them. We love them. Let's do an action song/chant about bananas. (Do the following chant to a rhythm, and make the motions large and funny.)

First, we grow bananas, grow, grow bananas (Make motions of growing as you chant.)

Grow bananas, grow, grow bananas

Pick bananas, pick, pick bananas (Make large motions of picking.)

Pick bananas, pick, pick bananas

Peel bananas ...

Slice bananas ...

Mash bananas ...

Eat bananas ...

Share bananas ...

Go bananas ...! (Means go crazy.)

We all know children have potential to do amazing things. How can we help them grow to their full potential in every area of their lives, including spiritually? It helps if we understand how God created children to grow. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson helps us begin to consider how to "Nurture the Whole Child"** by understanding the basic developmental characteristics of children.



1



2



3

How did God Create Children?

5 min



Read Psalm 139:13-16. What does this Scripture teach us about how God created children? (Discover that he formed them. He was watching over them. He created their inner beings. God was planning their lives, even before birth.)



4

Four Parts of a Child

10 min

How God Created Children to Grow

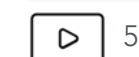


How are children and adults different? (Divide participants into two groups where they are sitting, and have groups take turns calling out answers, bouncing back and forth.)

We all know that children are different than adults, which is part of the way God created them. He is not surprised that children wiggle, move, cry, get tired, etc. He is well aware of their characteristics.



Even Jesus, as a child, was subject to growing in the ways of a typical child. **Read Luke 2:52. In what four ways did Jesus grow?** (Wisdom, stature, favor with God, favor with man)



5

Our children grow in the same way Jesus grew. Let us look at each of these four areas more closely. (Draw a large outline of a child on the board. As you discuss each of the four areas of growth, invite participants to think of a picture or symbol for each area and draw it on the child in their notes. Suggested symbols have been provided for you, but you may choose others that communicate better within your cultural context.



(Add funny personal stories as you talk about the four areas of growth.)

PHYSICAL (refer to the outline of the child's body): Luke 2:52 says Jesus grew "in stature," which refers to his physical growth. Our children's bodies are growing. We see how they change in size, in strength and in appetite! We watch them gain skills and learn to live in the world around them. They are taking in information through all parts of their bodies, including their five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. Even their play time is an important part of their physical growth.



MENTAL (draw a brain in the head of the child): Luke 2:52 says Jesus grew "in wisdom." Our children also are growing in knowledge and how to make wise choices based on their knowledge. They ask questions because their minds are constantly at work. But as they grow in knowledge, they also must learn to weigh the information, choose what is good and reject what is harmful.



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL (Draw a second figure and make them hold hands): Luke 2:52 says Jesus grew "in favor with men." Our children also are growing to understand their emotions and how to interact with others around them in appropriate ways. God created every child with a unique personality, and they can be quite different. Some are outgoing, while others are quiet and shy. Some like to laugh, while others are serious. Their emotions and their personalities influence their social behavior with other children, with teachers and in groups.



SPIRITUAL (Draw a heart with a cross inside in the middle of a child's body): Luke 2:52 says Jesus grew "in favor with God." Our children are growing spiritually, too, longing to know God and love him. A part of spiritual growth is inside the child, a part that only God can see. We want to help our children learn to experience God and respond to him.



(Review the four parts of a child: Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. You may even include hand motions.)

As our children seek to become all that God created them to be, they will grow in each of these areas. We will now look at how children grow in these four areas and the differences we see in children of different ages.

Children of Different Ages

20 min

Review the Chart of Age Characteristics

(Before class, make four to six photocopies of the Characteristics of Children chart. Cut apart each chart along the lines, so that each heading, age category and block of information are separated, ensuring each set has the complete information from the chart. Optional: An additional large set can be prepared to model the activity to the whole group.)



Ask participants to close their participant notes and set them aside. Divide the participants into four to six groups. Hand out one set of the chart pieces to each group. Without looking at their notes, each group must organize the characteristics of children into the correct age and development categories using their pieces from the chart. Optional: Demonstrate this using the large set. Allow ten minutes to complete the task. When finished, have them check their work by looking at the chart in their notes. Encourage groups to add any other characteristics they can think of in any of the categories.



Debrief the activity together with the following questions:

- **What differences did you notice about children at the different ages?**
- **What surprised you? What challenged you?**
- **Why is it important for children's ministry leaders to understand the differences in the development of their children?**

"Normal" development varies widely, depending on culture and other background issues. However, these broad groupings help us notice and understand the differences in children's development as they grow.



10



Tell a Story to Children of Different Ages

(Before the lesson, prepare to tell a brief Bible story for children, like the story of Zacchaeus. Invite groups to imagine that they all are children in your Bible class. Assign each group one of the age groups of children: 2-4 years, 5-8 years, or 9-12 years. Explain that you will tell a short Bible story to them, and as you do, they must behave as children of their group's age would behave in a class setting. Try to tell the story, realizing that the class may be slightly chaotic as people act as children. You may not even finish the story!)

Discuss the following questions with the whole group:



- **What did you notice about the differences in the way the children acted in the classroom?**
- **How do those differences affect the way children learn?**
- **Should we expect children to learn in the same way at different ages?**



12



(Share a humorous example of teaching or leading children and having activities that were not age-appropriate.)

Adjusting Teaching Activities to Different Ages

(Invite participants to return to their "age groups." Have each group create a list of ideas or activities to help children of their age group learn better in the class time. After five minutes, allow groups to share some of their best ideas with all participants, writing them on the board. Add a few ideas of your own if groups seem stuck. You may also want people to think of *inappropriate* activities for their age group.)

We see that in order to help children grow as disciples of Jesus, we must be aware of their developmental needs and use that knowledge as we plan to teach them. As we teach, we must also be intentional to connect with the whole child, not just their minds.



13

**Connecting with the Whole Child**

10 min

Ideas for Connecting

Which parts of a child do we generally focus on in a classroom setting?

(Hear responses.)

Mental: teaching Bible verses and stories so children remember them

Social-Emotional: hoping children sit still and behave

We will find the most success in our work with children if we connect with all four parts of a child. This means we plan activities that include their minds, but also their bodies and their social parts.



What are some activities we can do while teaching that will involve these different parts of a child? (Hear responses. Answers may include:)

Mind: memorizing, discussion, etc.

Bodies: games, drama, actions for songs, etc.

Social: talking together, playing, solving problems, etc.



14

Connecting with a Child's Spirit

We also desire that children will grow spiritually. But this is a deep inner part of a child. We cannot always tell what is happening inside, even though it is so important.



What kinds of activities can you do in a teaching setting that will help a child's spirit connect to God? (Have participants form groups of three or four to discuss ideas for a few minutes. Then share answers together as a group. Answers may include: moments of quiet reflection or prayer,

reflective music, personal reflective questions, space to draw or write about the lessons that have been learned, reflective environments, nature, playing or singing worship songs, etc.)



(Share a powerful example of a teacher helping connect a child's spirit to God.)



15



Read Mark 12:30. (Have participants underline in their notes the words that refer to the four parts of the child.) If we help our children grow in every way, they will learn to respond in love to God with every part of who they are. That is the greatest gift they could ever give to God as his disciples.

Our goal in our ministry with children is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. To do that, we must help our children grow in every way, just as Jesus grew.



Reflection and Response

5 min

What is God saying to you about the children in your ministry? What will you do to help them grow as Jesus did?

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

- 1. How will you adapt your lessons to the age group you are teaching?**
- 2. We talked about four parts of a child and the importance of connecting with each part. Are you connecting with all four parts of children in your classroom? Which area could you strengthen or improve? Write down one practical idea for improving this area.**
- 3. Write down one new idea you can implement to help connect a child's spirit to God.**

Let's pray together. Pray that the children of your ministry will grow as Jesus grew. Ask God to help you be aware of all parts of the children you serve. Pray that you will teach them wisely and appropriately. Pray that they will grow to love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.

(Close with a group prayer time.)



Building Relationships with Children

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand scriptural foundations for building positive, loving relationships with children.
- Have practical ideas for welcoming children.
- Know four principles for building deeper relationships with children and ideas for implementing them.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
Preparing for an Important Guest	5 min
What is "Decomai?"	15 min
Welcoming Children	10 min
Building Relationships with Children	15 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 55 min

Materials

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture passages:

- Matthew 18:5
- Luke 2:28
- Acts 21:17
- Galatians 4:14
- Matthew 10:14
- Matthew 10:40
- Luke 16:4
- John 4:45
- Acts 7:38
- Mark 10:13-16



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min



(Ask participants to think about the month in which they were born. On the count of three, people are to find others that were born in the same month and form a group. After groups form, instruct people to introduce themselves and share about one person who either helped them come to know Jesus or who has helped them on their spiritual journey. When finished, invite everyone to be seated.)

God wants children to enjoy a growing relationship with him. The doorway to this relationship often begins and develops through relationships with parents and other teachers and leaders.

This lesson will help us learn important principles and practical ideas in building positive relationships with children. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson helps us focus on "Nurturing the Whole Child."**



1



2

Preparing for an Important Guest

5 min



Imagine that a very important person was coming to your home. Who might that be? (Decide on a person.) **How would you prepare for this guest?**

(Discuss together. Discover things like: clean the house, prepare special food, wear special clothes, make sure all work or interruptions were handled, etc.) **When that person arrived, how would you welcome them?**



(Tell a special or funny story about preparing for a guest at your home, or share what people in your home community might do.)



What if Jesus were coming to your home? How would you welcome him? (Hear responses.)

What if a child were coming to your home? How would you welcome him? Would it be different? The same? Let's look together at what the Bible says about welcoming children.



3



4

What is "Decomai" (dekh'-om-ahee)?

15 min

Read Matthew 18:5. Jesus' disciples were arguing about who was the greatest, and Jesus responded by bringing a small child into their midst and teaching about humility. Then Jesus spoke the words in v. 5, encouraging them, and us, to welcome "the little ones" as we would welcome Jesus. This powerful admonition would have been difficult for the disciples to understand, because it was the opposite of the way their culture treated children.

Matthew 18:5

And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

What Does it Mean to "Receive" a Child?

The word translated "receive" or "welcome" in Matthew 18:5 is the word "decomai" in Greek, the original language in which the New Testament was written. Many Scripture passages use this word "decomai." By doing a word study and looking at this word in each context, we can discover the meaning of the word "decomai" and get a picture of what Jesus was trying to teach in Matthew 18:5.

(Look up some or all of the verses together. Have volunteers read each verse aloud. Explain the context of each verse and how the word "decomai" is used in each passage. Then summarize how the verse teaches us to welcome children.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • Matthew 10:14 | not welcoming or listening |
| • Matthew 10:40 | welcome like Christ |
| • Luke 2:28 | to receive in his arms |
| • Luke 16:4 | welcome someone into home |
| • John 4:45 | welcome |
| • Acts 7:38 | receive as a word from God |
| • Acts 21:17 | welcome warmly, with joy |
| • Galatians 4:14 | receive as an angel from heaven not despising his condition |

Reread Matthew 18:5. What do all these passages tell us about welcoming a child? They tell us to receive the child as if he or she were Jesus himself.



(Share a story of a time you knew you needed to be more like Jesus in the way you welcomed a child.)

Does "decomai" describe how you welcome children at your church? Or at your home? Or to your classroom? Or into your presence? How can we practice "decomai" as we interact with children?

Welcoming Children

10 min



What might it look like to welcome or "decomai" children in your home or church? What kinds of things would a child notice that could help them feel loved and welcomed when they come to your church or group setting? (Divide participants into four groups and give two minutes for them to think of specific ways to welcome children in a loving and personal way. Invite them to think of ways to do this on a regular basis, not just on a first meeting. Then have each group share their lists. Answers may include smile, greet with handshake, use their name, touch on a shoulder, laugh, ask a question, listen to a story, eye contact, play, compliment, notice something new or different, etc.)



(Share several extremely different examples of ways – good or bad – you have heard of people communicating welcome in their churches to children: child-sized toilets, game park, greeters, no children allowed, etc.)

Children are open to build relationships with people who show care and acceptance of them. We can easily stop new relationships from forming by being “unwelcoming” to children. But our acceptance must go beyond the welcome. We need to continually show love to children and work to build relationships with them. Building meaningful relationships with children not only helps children grow in their faith journey, but it helps them thrive in other parts of their lives as well. So how do we build meaningful relationships with children?

Building Relationships With Children

15 min

While there are many ways to build relationships with children, here are four ideas to get us started. (Share each idea along with several of the examples included with each one.)



Take an interest in their lives – Children want to know that they matter to you beyond what they are learning in Sunday school. Take time to get to know who they are and what is happening in their lives.

- Listen well.
- Ask questions.
- Follow up with conversations the next week.
- Find out when their birthdays are.

Share about your own life – Not only is it important for you to get to know children, but children also need to get to know you. Take time to share with them about your own life and relationship with Jesus.

- Share how you came to know Jesus.
- Talk about your family.
- Share stories of how God has answered prayer.
- Share what you are praying about.
- Talk about your interests and hobbies.



Encourage them – Children need to hear words of affirmation. Look for ways to speak words of encouragement to them.

- Affirm them when they have tried their best.
- Acknowledge their positive, Christ-like behavior.
- Encourage them to use their gifts and talents.
- Tell them God loves them.
- Take time to listen when they are upset.



Show love outside of the classroom – It is important for children to know that you care about them as a person and not just as a member of your class. How can you show them love outside of your class time as well?

- Do a home visit.
- Say “hi” to children when you see them in church.
- Go to their school activity or sporting event.



(Invite participants to find a partner and ask them to think of one or two practical ideas for each of the four areas. After two minutes, invite each pair to find another pair and share their ideas. All four can add new ideas to their own lists. After another one to two minutes, invite each group of four to find another group of four to compare lists and share their ideas. If time allows, finish by asking each group of eight to select their favorite idea for each of the four areas and share it with the whole group.)



Jesus is the perfect example of building relationships with children. **Read Mark 10:13-16. What does this passage teach us about how Jesus welcomed and valued children?** (Invite responses. Discover things like placed his hand on them, let the little children come to me, took the children in his arms, blessed them, do not hinder them, etc.)



How do you think the children felt about coming close to Jesus? Why? (Hear responses.)



Reflection and Response

5 min

Children need to experience love, kindness and acceptance from us so they will be open to learn more about Christ as we teach and lead them. Building positive relationships with children helps them grow as followers of Christ.

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers on the “Action Steps” section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

- 1. How will you better build relationships with children by welcoming them? Write down one or two ideas you will implement in the coming weeks to welcome children to your home, classroom or Bible club.**
- 2. Which of the four principles for building relationships with children challenged you the most? How can you begin using the ideas that were shared?**

(Close in prayer that participants will welcome children like Jesus did and build positive relationships with them.)



Preparing to Teach Children

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Know key principles for creating a learning environment where children can learn and grow as disciples.
- Understand what makes a teacher a good teacher.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
A Good or Not-so-Good Teacher?	5 min
Creating a Learning Environment	15 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 30 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- A variety of sweets (2 per person minimum)
- Serving tray or basket
- 7 key words written on papers

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture passage:

Psalms 78:1-7



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min



Play a Game: Smash!



(Invite participants to stand and form groups of two or three people facing one another. Each person makes a fist with their right hand and stacks their fists on top of one another. Then do the same with the left hands, placing them on top of the right hands. When the leader calls "UP," the person whose fist is on the bottom of the stack moves his fist to the top. When the leader calls "DOWN," the person whose fist is on the top of the stack moves his fist to the bottom. When the leader calls "SMASH," the person whose fist is on the top of the stack tries to hit the other two people's fists with his fist. They try to pull their fists away before getting hit.)

When we work with children, we have "up" days and "down" days. Some days may feel like we are getting a beating, just like the game.

Teaching a group of children can be challenging, but we can create an environment where children can learn and grow by following several key principles. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson helps us consider important skills to help us "Make Disciples."**



A Good or Not-So-Good Teacher?

5 min



(Share a story about a good or bad teacher you had. How did they influence you positively or negatively?)



Present a Drama (Optional)

(Begin with a drama depicting an unprepared, disorganized teacher. Rush into the classroom as if late, looking at watch. Put down books, look around for supplies and ignore the class. Drop things on the floor. Look for a pen, chalk. Shuffle papers. Stop and shout at the class to sit down or be quiet. Talk on your mobile phone. Look for a Bible, then borrow one from a student. Start paging through, mumbling about what to teach today. Shout at class again. Finally give up looking for a story. Tell the class that you're just going to sing some songs today instead.)



Was this a good teacher? What was he/she doing that was not good? (Hear several responses.)



Think about a teacher from your own experience, either one that was very good or not so good. **What did that teacher do that made them a good or bad teacher?** (Have participants share stories in pairs. Then hear several answers from participants. You may want to list them on the board as participants write in their notes.)





Why is being a good teacher important? (Hear responses.)

Read Psalm 78:1-7. God has called us to pass along his truth to the next generation. If we do it well, according to verse 7, they will put their trust in God, will not forget his deeds and will keep his commands.

To do our part, we must be prepared so that the time we have with children will help them to grow as disciples of Christ.



Creating a Learning Environment

15 min

Seven Key Principles

(Before the lesson, put a variety of candies/sweets in a basket or on a tray. Begin passing out sweets to participants one by one. Look each participant in the eye, smile and allow each to choose their color/flavor. Instruct them that they can take one or two, and they can eat it now or later. As they eat, ask them if they like the sweets. If the group is very large, hand out sweets in a break before the lesson begins.)



We can prepare to teach children by creating a learning environment that will help children learn and grow. Sometimes we think children learn best when we give them sweets and prizes, but people who have researched and worked with children have discovered seven key principles for creating an environment that helps children learn best. The sweet you received will help us remember these key principles.

(Before the lesson write each of the seven principles on pieces of paper. Have volunteers come one at a time and take a paper. Read the principle, explain it and hang it on the wall or board. Principles can be presented in any order.)



1. LOVE (value, acceptance, personal attention, time): We showed love to you when giving you the sweet. We looked you in the eye, smiled, let you choose what you wanted, gave you something we knew you liked, etc. Of all the things we do in the classroom, showing love—God's love—is the most important. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13 that if we do not have love, we gain nothing. Love opens children's hearts to receive what we have to say.
2. STRUCTURE (order): We gave you instructions when we handed out the sweets: how many you could have, when to eat them. This created structure. Having order in their class time helps children feel safe and ready to receive what will be taught. They know the schedule—what comes first, next, last. They know the rules and expectations.



3. MEANINGFUL INFORMATION (relevance): You received a treat, something you enjoy, rather than a stone. A stone might not have been meaningful. Is the information you are sharing meaningful to children? Can they apply it to their walk with Jesus?
4. VARIETY (different types of learning activities): There were a variety of different colors/flavors of sweets. Did you all choose the same one? No, because you like different things. In the classroom we want to provide a variety of different activities to help children learn and remember the truths of following God. **What are some examples of different activities we can do in the classroom?** (Brainstorm ideas like singing, games, storytelling, drama, puppets, etc.) That is how we provide variety.
5. REPETITION (review, review, review): As you eat the sweet, notice you are repeating motions (suck, suck, suck or chew, chew, chew). Repeating allows you to enjoy the sweet more. In our learning environment we want to repeat and review what children have learned to firmly set it in their minds and hearts so they can apply it to their lives.
6. DIALOGUE (discussion, feedback, talking about it, reflection): As we handed out the sweets, we asked questions. Our children also need opportunities to respond to the things they are learning. A learning environment is more than just presenting the material to the children. Do we allow them to ask questions? To think about what God is saying to them? To talk about what they are learning?
7. PERMISSION TO BE THEMSELVES (let them be children, remember they are unique): Some of you ate the sweet. Some of you put it away for later. We allowed you to do what you preferred. As teachers, we must remember that we are teaching children, not adults, and allow children to be more active and creative. After all, that is how God made them! We must also remember that God has given each child a unique personality. Some are shy and thoughtful. Others love to talk. It is important to embrace these differences and adjust our teaching to help children become all that God uniquely created them to be.

Look at the list of seven principles and answer the following questions:



- Which of these principles is easiest for you to do in the classroom?
- Which of these is the most difficult for you?

(Invite participants to discuss in pairs and then share answers together.)



The Example of Jesus

Jesus demonstrated all these principles as he was helping his disciples grow. Let's look at a few examples together.



(Call out examples from the following list in any order, and ask participants to share which principle each example illustrates.)

- **Love:** Samaritan woman; Zacchaeus; blind Bartimaeus
- **Structure:** feeding of 5000; sending out the 72 disciples
- **Meaningful Information:** "Teach us to pray;" sermon on the Mount
- **Variety:** healings; miracles; storytelling; parables
- **Repetition:** Kingdom of heaven parables; Peter, do you love me?
- **Dialogue:** Nicodemus; Who do you say that I am?
- **Permission to be themselves:** Thomas; Mary and Martha

Jesus was the perfect teacher and disciple-maker. Because he practiced all seven principles in his teaching, we can learn from his example as we seek to create a good learning environment to make disciples of our children.

Reflection and Response

5 min

In this lesson we talked about being a good teacher and creating a learning environment where children can grow as disciples. What has God been saying to you?

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the handouts for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

1. **What is one thing you learned that you are doing well as a teacher? What is one thing you could do differently to be a better teacher?**
2. **What is one idea from this lesson you will implement to improve the learning environment in your work with children?**

(Close by praying that God would help us all to prepare our best to make disciples of the children he brings into our ministries.)



Helping Children Grow as Disciples

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Know the qualities of discipleship we can see in children.
- Understand how Jesus made disciples and how to implement those principles with children.
- Have practical skills and ideas to disciple children and help them grow in their relationship with Christ.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	10 min
What is a Disciple?	5 min
What does a Discipled Child look Like?	15 min
How do I Disciple Children?	20 min
Practical Ideas for Making Disciples	10 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 65 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Erasable board and writing supplies
- Several balloons
- Fruit containing seeds
- Small sticky notes or small slips of paper and tape (2 colors)
- 5 large sheets of paper
- Optional: objects or pictures from God's Heart for Children lesson

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture Passages:

- John 14:15
- Matthew 7:17-20
- John 15:4-8
- 1 Corinthians 11:1
- 1 Corinthians 3:6-7



Welcome and Warm-Up

10 min

Play a Game: The Balloon Game



(Inflate several large balloons. The more participants and larger the room, the more balloons you will need. Move everyone to an open space, and instruct participants that they are to keep all the balloons up in the air for three minutes. When finished, debrief with the following questions:



What did you notice happening during the game?

(Answers may include how some participants were very active, others stood on the edge and did not play, balloons fell and were forgotten, some just focused on one balloon, balloons popped, etc.)

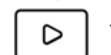


What did it require to keep all the balloons in the air?

(Pay attention, everyone involved, can't stop, some had to "rescue", etc.)

We can compare this game to the process of helping children grow strong as lifelong disciples. Discipleship is different than a simple outreach event. It is not even the same as a weekly Sunday school class. It requires attention, focus, help from many people, and it is ongoing. We cannot do it alone. And we cannot give up.

The goal of discipleship is lasting growth. This requires a new way of thinking about how we nurture spiritual growth in children. Today's lesson helps us understand essential elements of discipleship for children. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is a part of "Making Disciples."**



What is a Disciple?

5 min

What is the Definition of a Disciple?



If our goal is to make disciples, we must understand what a disciple is. **How would you define a disciple?** (Give one minute for people to write down a definition and then hear several responses.)

At its essence, the Greek word for disciple means: learner. We all want children to grow as disciples of Jesus, but sometimes people do not consider what that looks like in the life of the child. To simplify discipleship to mean "obey what the Bible says" leads to legalism without a heart change. **Read John 14:15.** Jesus wanted his followers to understand that disciples love *and* obey him. The more children get to know Jesus, the more they will fall in love with him. The more they grow to love him, the more they will desire to obey him. There is a heart change that leads to outward actions of obedience.

A disciple is not:

- A clone (exactly like all others)
- A robot (doing things mechanically)
- Perfect (only God is perfect)
- Finished (we will always be growing)



Discipleship is not a program or a curriculum, but a journey and a process with each child, helping them to experience God, fall in love with him and allow him to work in their lives as they choose to pattern themselves after Jesus.

What Does a Discipled Child Look Like?

15 min

Fruit and Seeds

(Show a piece of local fruit.) This fruit is delicious, ripe, and ready to eat. But it did not start that way. It took time to grow and become ripe. It started as a seed. (Show seeds.)

Read Matthew 7:17-20 and **John 15:4-8**. Jesus used the picture of growing fruit to explain growing as disciples.

How do we Know if a Child is Following Jesus?

Think of a child you know that is obviously a disciple of Jesus. **How do you know if that child loves Jesus? How do you know if that child is learning to obey Jesus?** Briefly share in pairs what you see in that child that shows you the child is a disciple. (After one minute, have a few people share their comments with the entire group. Then share a personal story of a child you know who is growing as a disciple.)



(Invite a volunteer to come forward and stand beside you.) Let's imagine this person is a child who is following Jesus. **If we were to look at this child, how would we know he/she loves and is a disciple of Jesus? What fruit would we see—both inner and outer qualities—that show they love and obey Jesus?**



(Have participants form groups of three or four people. Each group will make a list of some of the fruit that would identify a child as a disciple of Jesus. Have half the groups list the inner qualities or fruit [character, attitudes] that identify that child as a disciple, writing their ideas on one color of sticky notes or paper—only one answer per paper. The other half will list outer qualities or fruit [behaviors, actions] that identify that child as a disciple using the second color of sticky notes or paper. Give three or four minutes for small group discussion and writing.

Share responses by having the groups come forward and tape sticky notes or tape papers all over the volunteer "child." [Option: draw an outline of a child on the board, and place sticky notes with inner qualities inside the child and outer qualities around the child.] Responses may include:

Inner fruit: love, joy, peace, patience, trust, thankfulness, honesty, generosity, fruit of Spirit

Outer fruit: compassion, service, love others, prayer, share gospel, obey, help, respect, worship)

What a wonderful disciple this child is! We look forward to seeing how he or she continues to follow Jesus for a lifetime.



Five Key Areas of Discipleship Growth

(If Lesson 1 "Jesus' Heart for Children" was taught previously in the training, go quickly through this section. The volunteer from the previous activity should remain standing at the front.)

As we look at this "child" and all our ideas, we can summarize them into five key areas of growth in a child's life. (Write the five titles on the board as you review them. Use objects, pictures and/or hand motions from Lesson 1 to review the five areas of growth.)

1. **KNOW** God (make a cross with arms): To know Jesus as Savior, to grow in understanding of God and their relationship with him.
2. **LOVE** God (arms across chest/heart): To love God with heart, soul, mind, strength, to worship him.
3. **FELLOWSHIP** Together (clasp hands or hold a neighbor's hand): To be part of the body of Christ, to love one another.
4. **HONOR** God (hands in air): To live a life of obedience, making choices that honor God.
5. **SERVE** God (hands forward, perhaps kneel): To serve God and others in big and small things.

(After describing the five areas of growth, invite ten volunteers to come forward to remove the small papers from the "child" and place them under one of the five titles where it best fits.)

We have a wonderful picture of the fruit we want to see in our children's lives, but the question we must ask next is *how* do we help our children grow as disciples?

How Do I Disciple Children?

20 min

To learn how to make disciples, let's look at the Master disciple-maker, Jesus. Jesus spent only three years with his disciples, but when he left them, they turned the world upside down. How did he do it?



(Divide participants into five groups. Explain that as you teach the remainder of the lesson, they will have opportunity to work and discuss in their groups. Optional: For each of the following principles, teach the hand motion or create your own to help participants remember.)

1. **Jesus set an example.** His words and his actions were perfectly consistent. For example, Jesus told his disciples to love their enemies (Matt. 5:44), and when he was on the cross he prayed for his enemies (Luke 23:33-34). He taught his disciples how to pray (Matt. 6:9-13), and also spent time in prayer (Matt. 14:23). **What are some other examples of Jesus putting his own teaching into practice?** (Ask groups to think of 2-3 examples. Then share ideas together. Answers may include):



- In Matthew 20:25-26, Jesus said "Be a servant." (Jesus washes His disciples' feet—John 13:2-15)
- In Matthew 6:6, Jesus said, "Pray in secret." (Jesus rises early to pray alone—Mark 1:35)

What does this mean for us as we make disciples of children? Sometimes our children are not loving and obeying Jesus, because their leaders are not doing so. Making disciples starts with falling in love with Jesus ourselves, determining to follow him wholeheartedly and living out our faith for children to follow. Just as Jesus set an example, we can make disciples by setting an example. (Hold hands to each side and turn palms up.)

2. **Jesus spent time with them.** Jesus was not a model at a distance. For three years he spent time with his disciples. Because Jesus spent time with them, he was also able to use teachable moments during their everyday life to help them learn from the situations they faced.

What were some of the things Jesus and his disciples did together? (Invite groups to brainstorm ideas together, then hear responses from groups. Answers may include:)

- Ate together (John 12:2)
- Attended a wedding (John 2:1-11)
- Celebrated festivals (Luke 22:7-16)
- Worked (John 6:12-13)
- Cried (John 11:33-35)
- Faced problems (John 6:5-6)

What does this mean for us as we make disciples of children? We need to be conscious about spending time with children as part of our discipleship. We also need to be looking for teachable moments: observing what is happening in children's lives, listening to what they are saying and following the promptings of the Holy Spirit to use those moments to point them to Jesus. (Cup an ear with one hand and place other hand over your heart.)

3. **Jesus taught them.** While modeling and time were very important, they were not enough for Jesus. Jesus chose to be intentional in the time he was with his disciples—he taught them God's truth in a variety of ways so they would understand what they learned and put it into practice. **What different ways or methods did Jesus use to teach them?** (Brainstorm together with the whole group. Answers may include:

- Telling stories and parables (Parable of Sower—Matthew 13, etc.)
- Preaching sermons (Sermon on the Mount—Matthew 5-7)
- Sharing object lessons (Roman coin—Matthew 22:18-20)
- Question and answer (Peter's confession—Matthew 16:13-16)



What does this mean for us as we make disciples of children? We also need to teach children about Jesus in age-appropriate ways that encourage them to apply what they have learned to their lives. (Move your index finger from your mouth toward other people.)

4. **Jesus gave them opportunities to serve.** Even though the disciples were still learning and growing, Jesus allowed them to minister on their own, even when they made mistakes. **Can you think of examples in your groups?** (Get responses. Answers may include:
- Jesus sends them out in twos (Mark 6:6-13).
 - The disciples try to cast out an evil spirit (Mark 9:17-18).
 - Jesus sends Peter to fish for a four-drachma coin (Matthew 17:24-27).
 - Jesus sends the disciples to get a colt (Matthew 21:2-7).

What does this mean for us as we make disciples of children? We need to allow our children to put what they are learning into practice, guiding them, even when they do not know how to do it well or they make mistakes. (Extend hands in front with palms up.)

5. **Jesus surrounded them with prayer.** He knew there would be difficult situations, temptations, other competing voices, etc., and he prayed for his followers (Peter—Luke 22:32, Disciples—John 17). He asked his heavenly Father to do *his* work in their lives.

We, too, need to surround our children with prayer. (Begin with hands near ears and make a large circle joining hands in front of face in prayer.)

(Review all five ways to make disciples, using the hand motions.)

Now that we know how Jesus made disciples, let's consider practical ways that we can apply these principles as we help children grow as disciples.

Practical Ideas for Making Disciples

10 min



(Assign each of the five groups one of the five ways Jesus made disciples. Ask them to answer this question: **What are some practical ideas for how we can apply this principle as we help children grow as disciples?** Give each group a large piece of paper on which to write down their answers. After five minutes, invite all groups to share their ideas.

Possible ideas may include:

- **Jesus set an example:** Be excited as you talk about Jesus; model compassion and patience; share what God has been teaching you.
- **Jesus spent time with them:** Do home visits; visit a child at school; take time in your class to get to know children and have conversations with them.



19



20



21



22



- **Jesus taught them:** Use Bible stories, memory verses, experiences, games, music to teach children about Jesus.
- **Jesus gave them opportunities to serve:** Ask children to help you teach the lesson or run a game; do a service project together.
- **Jesus surrounded them with prayer:** Pray for each child by name every week; set a time to pray with other volunteers for the children in your ministry.)

Reflection and Response

5 min

(Stand behind a screen or door and ask participants to do what you do while remaining in their seats. Make several hand motions, and then look to see if they are following you. They will not be doing it, so urge them again to do what you do. They will say they cannot see you. Then invite a volunteer to come stand where he/she can see you. Ask him/her to do what you do, and then have the rest of the participants follow him/her.) Are you doing it now? (Yes!) What made the difference? (They could see.)

This activity is a picture of the discipleship of our children. We ask them to follow God, but they cannot see him. Children are looking to us to model for them what it means to be a disciple. **Read 1 Corinthians 11:1.** Often people think if they had just the right curriculum or program, it would teach children to be disciples. However, the *most important* thing we can do is be models of growing disciples, setting the example for children to follow.

(For the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Be sure to pause and give them time to write before reading the closing Scripture.)

1. **How are you doing at modeling being an example of a growing disciple? What things are you doing well? What things could you improve with the Lord's help?**
2. **What are some other things you can do to help children come to love and obey Jesus more? Write down two or three practical ideas from this lesson that you will begin using in your ministry to children to help them grow as disciples.**

Read 1 Corinthians 3:6-7. This verse is an encouragement. We all must do our part to help our children grow as disciples. But God will make them grow. And unlike this fruit that will eventually go rotten (show fruit), our children will bear fruit that lasts a lifetime (John 15:16).

(Close in prayer that children would grow to become disciples who follow Jesus for a lifetime and that God would show us how to help them grow.)



The Learning Process

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand the learning process.
- Know how to apply the learning process as a key for discipleship.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	10 min
The Learning Process	15 min
Practicing the Learning Process	10 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 40 min

Materials

Illustration option:

Present, discuss, apply pictures (optional)

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture Passage:

John 13:1-17





Welcome and Warm-Up

10 min



Activity: Hippos and Honeybees Quiz¹



We are going to test our knowledge regarding two animals: hippos and honeybees. I will read several statements. If you think the statement is true, stand up. If you think the statement is false, stay seated. (Read the following statements. If the response is "false," share the corrected information.)

- Most hippos live on the continent of Africa. (True)
- Hippos eat about 10 kg (22 lbs.) of food a day. (False. Hippos eat about 40 kg (88lbs.) of food every day.)
- Hippos spend most of their time running and chasing other animals. (False: Hippos spend most of their time eating, sleeping and resting in rivers or lakes.)
- Each honeybee in a hive has a job to do to help the colony survive. (True)
- Worker bees can only work about four hours a day. (False. Worker bees can work up to 12 hours a day.)
- Honeybees communicate with each other by dancing. (True)

According to our quiz, hippos are consumers. They eat lots of vegetation but do little else. Honeybees, however, are creators. Each bee in the hive plays a key role in helping the colony survive and flourish. The way the bees work together to create honey is incredible!



When we think about helping our children grow as disciples, which animal should we want them to be more like? (Hear responses.) Why?

In most of our Sunday school classes and programs, we treat children like hippos. We give them lots of information to learn, and we believe they are growing as disciples because they know the information. However, this consumer-based approach to discipleship does not result in deep and lasting faith.

Instead, we need to treat children like honeybees, as active participants in the discipleship process. We need to give them opportunities to "do," to apply what they have learned to their lives.

One way we can do this is by using the learning process as we teach. In this lesson we will explore and practice the learning process. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is a part of "Making Disciples."**



¹ Hippo and Honeybee Illustration used by permission from Christian Endeavor – www.ceworks.faith

The Learning Process

15 min

Introduce the Learning Process

Imagine that a visitor from another country comes to your home. (If you are training in a culture different than your own, you may ask a volunteer to come up front and explain to you how to make a local food dish. Adjust the script and questions accordingly.) They smell the delicious food you are cooking and ask you to teach them how to make it. You explain to them step by step how to make the dish. **Do you think they have learned how to make the dish by you sharing the recipe?** (Hear responses.) **Why not?** You only gave them information.



How might your guest learn to make the dish? (Hear responses.) They would need to watch you make the dish and help with some of the preparations. They might need to ask questions to understand why you do things a certain way.



After they have watched and asked questions, have they learned to make the dish? (Hear responses.) Not yet. Even though you have discussed the dish with them and helped them to understand the information, they still need to make the dish themselves, applying what they have learned.

We have only truly learned something when we do it ourselves. This principle is true of everything we learn, including learning to be a disciple of Jesus. Part of teaching with excellence is taking children through the learning process and asking the Holy Spirit to take what we are teaching and move it from their heads, to their hearts and finally to their hands, where they live out what they have learned. So, what is the learning process?

Present, Discuss, Apply

There are three main steps in the learning process. (Refer participants to the chart in participant notes and to the example you gave above.)

1. **PRESENT:** The first step in the learning process is "Present." When we look at Jesus' relationship with his disciples, we see that he taught them. He used parables and object lessons, Old Testament Scriptures and teachable moments to present truths to his disciples. When we teach children, we will also present new information to them. As we teach truths, children will know the information in their head. (Point to your head.)



How might you creatively present Bible truths to children? (Hear responses. Be sure to include stories, object lessons, videos, pictures, music, drama, real experiences.)



2. **DISCUSS:** The second step in the learning process is "Discuss." Jesus also had many discussions with his disciples. He asked them questions. They asked him questions. He took time to talk with them about the things they were learning or did not understand. Children also need opportunities to think about the truths they are learning. We need to provide space for them to think, talk, and ask and answer questions to help them discover what the truths mean to them. We pray that as we do, the Holy Spirit will help children understand the truth, moving it from their head to their hearts. (Point to heart.)



How might you provide opportunities in your class to discuss new information with children? (Hear responses. Be sure to include inviting children to think, reflect, explore feelings, talk, ask and answer questions, give examples, consider various points of view.)

3. **APPLY:** The final step in the learning process is "Apply." Jesus gave his disciples opportunities to apply what he was teaching them. He treated them like honeybees! He not only presented and discussed truths, he invited them to live it out and apply it. We know they did not always get it right, but even their failure helped them to grow! Our children also need to be challenged to take the truth we have presented and discussed and apply it to their lives. We will only know they have truly learned when they live out the truth in their lives. Our prayer is that obedience would flow from their heart to their hands. (Hold out your hands.)



How can you challenge children to apply what they have learned to their lives? (Hear responses. Be sure to include asking for commitment, praying, planning in-class activities for students to try, challenging students to carry out specific projects outside of class, following-up the next week with questions.)

(Review by saying "Present-Discuss-Apply" and having participants point to their own heads, hearts and hands as they are saying the words.)

We must never forget that our goal is to make disciples of children. We want to move them to the point of life change, not simply knowing a little bit more about the Bible. Therefore, we intentionally need to go through the entire learning process over and over again as we teach: present-discuss-apply.



Practicing the Learning Process

10 min



Now it is your turn to practice using the learning process! (Divide participants into groups of four to six people. Give groups one of the following discipleship topics: prayer, worship, caring for others, giving—see participant notes—and explain that they must think about how to help children learn the topic. Alternatively, you also may assign a simple Bible story to groups.

Groups must decide what they want the children to learn and then answer the following questions:

- What creative ways might they PRESENT the topic to children?
- What key questions might help them DISCUSS the topic?
- What will they do to help children APPLY the topic to their lives?

Give five to seven minutes to work together. Have a few groups share.)



Reflection and Response

5 min

In **John 13:1-17** we read the account of Jesus washing his disciples' feet. We see in this encounter that Jesus used the learning process:

- Jesus washes his disciples' feet—Present; John 13:4-5
- Jesus and Peter discuss why Jesus is washing their feet—Discuss; John 13:6-11, 13
- Jesus encourages the disciples to wash one another's feet—Apply; John 13:14-17

We need to follow Jesus' example by using the learning process as we teach children. This will help children to be active participants in the discipleship process (honeybees) rather than consumers (hippos). How can you apply what you have learned today?

(Read the following question aloud and ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson.)

Is the learning process something you currently use when you teach children? If not, which area—present, discuss or apply—do you need to strengthen? What can you do to strengthen it?

(Close in prayer.)



Helping Children Engage with God's Word

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand why engaging children with God's Word is important.
- Know five key principles for engaging children with God's Word.
- Possess skills and practical ideas to help children more easily hear, read, memorize, study and obey God's Word.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
Why God's Word?	5 min
How Can Children Grasp God's Word?	5 min
Telling a Bible Story Well	20 min
Helping Children Read God's Word	10 min
Memorizing Scripture	10 min
Reflection and Response	10 min

Approximate Total Time: 65 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Bible memory verse review activity props
- Glass or bottle of water

Media options:

- Power Point slides for this lesson
- Wise and Foolish Builders video

Scripture Passages:

- Psalm 1:1-3
- Psalm 119:105
- Hebrews 4:12
- Psalm 119:11
- Matthew 4:4
- Luke 6:47-48
- Psalm 19:7-9
- Psalm 23:1-2



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min

Play a Game: Catch



(Ask participants to stand in a line or circle and have each person stretch out their left hand, palm up, toward the person on their left. Then have them point their right index finger and place it, pointing down in the palm of the person on their right. When the leader says "catch," each person must try to catch the finger of the person on the left, whose finger is in their left palm, while pulling their right finger from the person's palm to their right. Enjoy!)

Video Option: "Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXWHLB1f6_U

The number-one source of inspiration and information to help any of us grow as disciples of Jesus is the Bible. It is essential we learn how to help children "catch" or grasp God's Word and apply it to their own lives. This lesson will lay a foundation for helping children to engage with God's Word. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is a part of "Making Disciples."**



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2



3



4

Why God's Word?

5 min



(Divide participants into two teams. Have them hold up their Bibles in one hand. Call out one of the Bible references listed below. Then say "Go!" Teams race to find the Bible reference. The first person to find it will stand and read the verse. Then have the person summarize the benefit of God's Word. Participants can write a summary statement of the verse in their notes. Read as many verses as time allows.)

Psalms 1:1-3: meditate on God's Word; it helps us be firmly planted

Psalms 119:105: God's Word guides us, lights our path

Hebrews 4:12: God's Word is living and active, can change our lives

Psalms 119:11: memorize or hide God's Word in our heart so we do not sin

Matthew 4:4: feed on God's Word for life

Luke 6:47-48: we must put God's Word into practice

Psalms 19:7-9: God's Word is perfect, life changing



(Share an example of God's Word being a powerful help in your life.)



5-12

God's Word is alive and powerful. The more children engage with it, the more they will meet Jesus within its pages. The more they meet Jesus, the more they will grow to love him and follow him. How can we help children engage with Scripture in meaningful ways?

How Can Children Grasp God's Word?

5 min

Keys for Grasping God's Word

Any disciple of Jesus can learn to engage in meaningful ways with God's Word through five activities, represented by the five fingers on our hands. (This hand is different from the 1for50 Hand.)

We use our hands to grasp objects. (Demonstrate by holding your Bible.) The more fingers we use, the stronger our grasp will be. These five activities help children "grasp" God's Word more and more strongly in their hearts. (After explaining each point, have a participant try to pull the Bible from your hand.)



HEAR: (Hold your Bible with your pinky/small finger only.) The small finger represents hearing God's Word. For children, hearing mostly takes place as children's workers and family members share Bible stories or as they hear sermons. But simply hearing God's Word does not give children a strong grasp of God's Word.

READ: (Hold your Bible with your small finger and the finger beside it, the ring finger.) The second/ring finger represents reading God's Word. Many children cannot read on their own or do not have Bibles. They will still be dependent on people to read the Bible to them or on recorded versions of God's Word. Children who can read can be encouraged to read a verse or a chapter each day. But they are still limited in their "grasp" of God's Word.

MEMORIZE: (Add your middle/tallest finger and hold your Bible.) The middle finger represents memorizing God's Word. Children are highly capable of learning large quantities of Scripture, and we can encourage them to meditate upon the words they learn. Their grasp of God's Word is getting stronger, but there is more they can do.

STUDY: (Add the index/pointer finger and hold up the Bible with four fingers.) The index finger represents studying God's Word. While children may not be ready for deep Bible study, they can learn to ask critical and reflective questions about what they read and hear from Scripture so that they grow in spiritual understanding, not just in accumulation of information.

OBEY: (Hold Bible with all five fingers.) The thumb gives our hand strength to fully grasp something. The thumb represents obeying God's Word. The other four activities are dependent on obeying to truly grasp God's Word. Obedience is the most important activity for our children to truly experience God's Word.



Let's get practical now and look at three specific ways to help our children grasp God's words and grow as disciples, always guiding them to obey/apply it to their lives.

HEAR: Telling a Bible Story Well

20 min



What Makes a Good Storyteller?

Since children will be dependent on a teacher for much of the "hearing" they will experience, teachers need to learn to be good storytellers.

(Tell a short, well-known Bible story, such as Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4:35-41, but tell it poorly without using any of the ideas below.)



Was I a good storyteller? What did I do poorly? What should I have done differently? (Hear responses. Answers may include:

- Know your story
- Use eye contact
- Use facial expressions for emotions
- Use gestures or body movements
- Use different pitches and volumes and speed in speaking
- Do not be afraid of silence
- Involve children with call/answer phrases or actions)



A good storyteller uses all these skills. (Tell the same Bible story, this time doing it well, using all the above skills.)



Involving Children in the Story

Good storytellers activate students' imaginations by involving them in the story. We can involve children's bodies and minds in the story without them even leaving their seats. This technique differs from doing drama, because every child is involved rather than a few children at the front of the class.



Think about all the parts of the body that God has given children. **How could they use those parts in the story?** (Brainstorm ideas for each body part.)

- Mouth/voice: sound effects, whisper, shout, call/answer, repeated phrases
- Face: sad, happy, angry, emotions
- Eyes: close, blink, search
- Hands/fingers: clap, touch, wave, pat, count, wiggle, walk
- Feet/toes: step, tap, wiggle
- Knees/legs: bend, knock, stand



(Have participants get in groups of four people. Using the Bible story you told previously, ask groups to think of ideas/actions they could do to involve children in the story. After five minutes, share ideas as a whole group. Then tell the story once more, using the technique of involving the children and having participants do the actions in their seats as you tell the story.)

Involving Movement in the Classroom

If you have enough room in your classroom, you can use your classroom space as you tell the story and allow children to move around. (Demonstrate a few of the following examples together.)

- Huddle in a corner. Talk about David hiding from Saul in a cave.
- Find a tree and climb it like Zacchaeus.
- March around Jericho.
- Walk through the Red Sea.



How can all these activities help children better “hear” the Word of God? (Hear responses.)

Remember that we want children to fully grasp God’s Word, so in your storytelling, always guide children to obey/apply.

**READ: Helping Children Read God’s Word**

10 min

Learning to Read and Think about God’s Word

As children learn to *read* God’s Word on their own, they need to be encouraged to do more than just read the words. They also need to *think* about it. This is the first step in helping children learn to *study* God’s Word.

They can practice asking some of the questions listed below, even if they are reading with a picture Bible, listening to audio recordings of the Bible, or hearing a Bible story read to them by others.

Remind children that God is the teacher. His Holy Spirit promises to help them understand. So always begin a time of reading and thinking about God’s word with a prayer, asking for God’s help.



Read/Observe
(I receive)

What does it say?
(about God, Jesus,
people)



Interpret
(I think)

What does it
mean?
(Why is this
important?)



Apply
(I try)

What does God
want me to do?
(obey)



Do you notice how these questions follow the same pattern as the learning process from “The Learning Process” (Present-Discuss-Apply)? But this time God is the teacher. He presents information (we observe), helps us to process and discuss it (we interpret), and then we apply it to our lives.

(Have participants individually practice the three-question process with a short text: **Psalms 23:1-2**. After a few minutes ask two or three people to share what the Lord revealed to them.)





(Share an example of a child learning to think about and apply God's Word through their own reading and studying.)



How can these activities help children better "read" the Word of God?
(Hear responses.)

When reading and studying God's Word, always guide children to *obey/apply*.



MEMORIZE: Memorizing Scripture

10 min

The Process of Memorizing Scripture

Memorizing Scripture is more than being able to repeat a verse. There is a process to move the Scripture to children's hearts and lives. (Have participants fill in the blanks in their notes as you explain the process.)

1. PRESENT (memorize) Children learn what it says.
2. DISCUSS (understand) Children learn what it means.
3. APPLY (apply) Children learn what it means to them.

Does this sound familiar? This is the same learning process we used for reading and thinking about God's Word. It is more than memorizing words. It is all about learning to apply what the words say.



Helping Children Understand the Verse

There are simple ways that teachers can help children better understand the meaning of the verse and its relevance to their lives.

- Define words and concepts. Even "sin," a short word, may need an explanation so children understand.
- Ask children to help describe words and phrases.
- Ask children how this Bible verse might be important for them.



Helping Children Remember the Verse

(Demonstrate a few of the following activities with participants using a simple memory verse.)

- Erase or remove words one or two at a time from a board.
- Write memory verse words on separate papers, balloons, etc., and have children put them in correct order.
- Toss a ball or object back and forth, saying one word of the verse with each toss.
- Sing the verse.
- Use actions or hand motions for certain words in the verse.
- Replace words with pictures or symbols.
- Recite verse in different ways (loud voice, soft voice, while jumping).
- Write or recite the verse incorrectly. Children must find the error.



Check back the following week ...

- Do children remember what the verse says?
- Do children remember what the verse means?
- Can children share what the verse means to them?



How can all these activities help children better “memorize” the Word of God? (Hear responses.)

When memorizing Scripture, always guide the children to obey/apply.

Reflection and Response

10 min

God's Word is like Water



(Show participants a bottle or glass of water.) **In what ways is water beneficial?** (Hear answers. Answers may include refreshing, life-giving, necessary for life, cleansing, renews us, useful, etc.)



Water can be beneficial, but it can also be very harmful and cause damage. **In what ways can water cause damage or destruction?** (Answers may include torrential rain, storms, floods, drowning, erosion, etc.)

God's Word can be beneficial to our children—refreshing, life-giving, renewing—or it can be damaging to them if we use it incorrectly. We want God's Word to be full of benefits for children. We want their experience with God's Word to help them to grow strong as disciples. We must pray that as we help children to understand God's Word, we do not use it in a way that destroys children's hope, pushes them into legalism, or misrepresents God's heart for them. How can you apply what you have learned today to help children engage with God's Word in life-giving ways?

(For the following question, ask participants to write their answers in the “Action Steps” section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read the question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

For each of the following activities, write down one or two ideas you learned today that you will begin implementing or strengthening as you teach children God's Word.

Hear: Telling a Bible story well

Read: Helping children read God's Word

Memorize: Helping children memorize Scripture

(Pray together. Praise God for his Word. Ask God for help as we guide children to experience his Word in their lives in a way that helps them grow strong as followers of Jesus.)



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Empowering Children to be Kingdom Champions

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand the biblical reasons for partnering with children to empower them in ministry.
- Know the benefits and challenges of empowering children for ministry.
- Have practical ideas for involving children in ministry.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
Kingdom Champion Children in the Bible	15 min
Partnering with Children: Benefits and Challenges	15 min
What Children Need from Adults	10 min
What can Children Do?	10 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 60 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- 4 large sheets of flip chart paper and markers
- Bicycle wheel or picture of wheel

Media options:

- PowerPoint slides for this lesson
- "Voice of a Child" video
- "Lead India – The Tree" video

Scripture Passages:

- 1 Samuel 3:1-21
- 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- 1 Samuel 17:17-51
- 2 Kings 5:1-17
- Ephesians 2:10
- 1 Timothy 4:12



Welcome and Warm Up

5 min



Missing Body Parts



(Ask participants to perform the following tasks:

- Stand up from your chair, using only one foot, no hands
- Greet your neighbor with a handshake, eyes closed
- Pick up your notebook or Bible, no hands
- Write your name, no hands
- Tie your shoe, one hand



Have participants sit down and debrief with the following question):

How did the activities go without using every part of your body?

It is difficult to do activities well when some parts of the body are left out. The same is true of the church, or the body of Christ. God has called us to accomplish his mission together, but in many churches, children are an overlooked part of the body and not included as participants in God's mission.

Video options: "Voice of a Child – Involvement in God's Mission" video

(<https://www.max7.org/en/resource/voiceofachildmission>)

"Lead India – The Tree" video

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPeeZ6viNgY>)



What might it look like to empower our children to be Kingdom Champions, partnering with us in accomplishing God's mission for the church? This lesson looks at ways to empower children for ministry and mission. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is a part of "Partnering with Children."**



Kingdom Champion Children in the Bible

15 min

Biblical Examples of Children God Used



Scripture is filled with examples of God using children and youth as participants in his mission. **Who were some of the children God used in the Bible?** (Answers should include: Joseph, Miriam, Samuel, David, Josiah, Naaman's servant girl, Daniel, Esther, the boy with the loaves and fish.) God often chose children in Scripture to fulfill specific roles for his Kingdom purposes, serving in ways that adults could not. It is very significant to think that their stories are recorded in Scripture, because it is God's reminder to us to pay attention to their examples.



(Invite participants to form four groups. Give each of the groups one of the children listed below.

Samuel – **1 Samuel 3:1-21**

David – **1 Samuel 16:1-13**

David (and Goliath) – **1 Samuel 17:17-51**

Naaman's slave girl – **2 Kings 5:1-17**



Ask groups to read the passage and answer the following questions together:

1. **How did God use the child?**
2. **Why do you think God used a child in this story?**
3. **What did the adults learn from the ministry/service of the child?**

After discussing the questions, groups must create a living snapshot to illustrate their story. One member of the group will report on the answers to the questions, while the remaining group members must freeze in position like statues, as if someone took a snapshot of one scene from their Bible story.

When groups are ready, invite them to share their snapshot and discussion with the whole group.)

Samuel, David, and Naaman's servant girl were Kingdom Champions, used by God in ways they never could imagine, because they were open to God's leading and obedient to it. They are good examples for us to consider as we look at children today.

God's Word is for Children

Sometimes when we read the Bible we forget that God's words, commands and promises are written for and applicable to our children, just as they are for adults. **Read Ephesians 2:10** and **1 Timothy 4:12** together.



What do these verses say to a child who wants to be a partner in God's work? How do these verses apply to children?

Ephesians 2:10: all have been created for good works

1 Timothy 4:12: children can be an example to others

When we look at Scripture with children in mind, we see that God is ready to use them in big and small ways. They have been created to do good and to live out their love for God in service. The problem is that the church does not always see children as partners in ministry and therefore doesn't empower children.

Partnering with Children: Benefits and Challenges 15 min

What attitudes or understandings prevent the church from seeing children as partners in God's mission? (Brainstorm together. Answers may include:

- Cultural views of children
- Children do not understand everything
- Children not seen as able to offer good ideas or perspectives
- Lack of maturity (physical, emotional, spiritual)



- Children's ministry skills are not developed
- Children have limited influence and freedom
- Fear of exploitation
- Negative personal views of children)

How many of these reasons are biblical? How many are cultural/personal?



(Share a personal story of serving—or not being able to serve—as a child in the church, or share a story of a child who has served in the church and influenced others.)

Benefits of Empowering Children

Partnering with children in God's mission and ministry results in many benefits for the children, for the church and for the community. We must change our negative perceptions of children to see the good God can do when children partner with us.



(On the board write three headings: CHILD, CHURCH, and COMMUNITY. Divide participants into groups of four or five people, and have groups brainstorm the benefits of empowering children for ministry by answering the three questions below. After five minutes have groups share answers, writing them on the board under the headings.

- **What are the benefits to a child when he/she is empowered for ministry?**
- **What are the benefits to the church when children are empowered for ministry?**
- **What are the benefits to the community when children are empowered for ministry?**

When finished, celebrate the good answers. Answers may include:

- **For the child:** build skill, greater confidence, grow in faith, develop a heart for service, feel useful, discover gifts, learn from older mentors, greater self-worth, see God working
- **For the church:** children bring energy, new ideas, creativity, boldness, opportunities to invest in next generation
- **For the community:** children can meet community needs, evangelize friends and neighbors, set examples for other children)

It is exciting to see all the benefits when we partner with children and empower them for ministry. The greatest benefit is that we are helping them to grow as disciples. But children are still children. In order to participate effectively in ministry, children need some very specific things from adults.



What Children Need from Adults

10 min

(Show a picture of a bicycle wheel or bring in a real wheel.) What keeps this wheel strong or in shape? (the spokes) The spokes must be balanced and strong to keep the wheel round so it can roll effectively. This wheel helps us understand how adults can best empower children for ministry. It's called the Wheel of Participation.² (Draw and label the wheel as you talk.)

The center of the wheel, the hub, is Respect. If there is no respect for children, it is very difficult for them to be seen as partners. Children are made in the image of God and are worthy of our respect.



What does showing respect to children look like? (Listen to a few responses.) We show respect by listening to what children say, asking for their opinions, explaining decisions and actions, and giving all children equal treatment. Three spokes or principles flowing from that central truth of respect are opportunity, responsibility, and support.

Opportunities: Children need opportunities to use their God-given gifts to meet needs and serve. Sometimes adults will design the opportunities, but sometimes children will have their own ideas of what they can do and will act on the ideas.

Responsibility: If children are given responsibility, they learn to be decision-makers. That means adults must let go of being in control. They also should assist children to see the impact of their decisions or actions.

Support: Most children need several different types of support from adults. Support may include providing children with information, training, skills or materials to act. Adults also can help meet children's emotional needs, like comfort, encouragement and praise to help children gain confidence in ministry.



(Have participants turn to a neighbor and share a personal story that exemplifies one or more of the above principles when partnering with children in ministry.)

When we empower children for ministry, we must remember that it is a partnership. They are agents of God's Kingdom, but they are vulnerable agents and need us to come alongside them as mentors, coaches and cheerleaders to guide them to success and learn from failures. Now let's dream about all that children can do.



²From "Child Participation," by Paul Stephenson. UK: Tearfund, 2004, 14.

What Can Children Do?

10 min



As we think of the ways children can be Kingdom Champions, we must realize that children cannot do everything adults can do. **What types of ministry activities would be inappropriate for children?** (Hear several responses.)

Ministries Children Can Do:

(Put four large papers on the wall or on tables around the room and title them: In the Church; In the Community; To their Peers/Family; For the World.)

Children are agents of God's mission. We are now going to create several lists of ministries children can do, remembering that we adults have the responsibility to support and empower children as they serve Christ. Be creative!



(Divide participants into four groups and have each group stand by one of the papers. Give groups two minutes to write ideas of ministries children can do. After two minutes have groups rotate to a new paper and add ideas to the list already written. Continue until groups have written on all four papers. Then have everyone sit down. Ask four volunteers to bring the papers to the front of the room and read the lists.)

The ministry potential in our children is incredible. When we learn to see them as Kingdom Champions and we empower them to do what God is calling them to do, who knows what God will do through them.



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Reflection and Response

5 min

Take a moment to reflect on what God has been saying to you in this lesson. Think of the children in your ministry or family. What is God saying to you about partnering with children in his Kingdom work?

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

In this lesson, we learned four things we as adults need to do to effectively empower children for ministry. For each of the following questions, write down one or two practical ideas you can begin implementing in your work with children.



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1. How can you show deeper respect for children?
2. What opportunities can you provide for children to use their gifts to serve God?
3. How can you give children in your ministry more responsibility?
4. What will you do to support children as they step out into ministry?

Children are ready now to be a part of the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world. Are we ready to partner with them and empower them to be Kingdom Champions? As we close in prayer, let's ask God to help us join hands with children and build his Kingdom together.

(Close in prayer.)



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Engaging Families

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand the challenges contemporary families face.
- Know the God-given role of families in the spiritual nurture of children and practical steps for daily discipleship of children.
- Identify ways the church can connect with and support families.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
What are Families Like in Your Community?	20 min
What is God's Heart for Families?	5 min
Helping Families Disciple Their Children	15 min
Supporting Families	10 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 60 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Erasable board and writing supplies
- 168 cm or inches of string, marked
- Family cards and income cards
- Large paper heart, cut into 5 pieces
- Table, chairs, 2 eating plates/bowls, serving dish, spoon, salt

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture passages:

- Genesis 2:24-25
- Deuteronomy 6:4-7
- Psalm 78:3-7
- Proverbs 22:6
- Ephesians 6:1-4
- Ephesians 6:4
- Matthew 5:16



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min



Let me Tell You About my Family



(Invite participants to stand up and find a partner, preferably someone they do not know well. Have them take turns telling their partner about their family ... if they are married, how many children or siblings, boys or girls, their occupation, etc. However, the actor *cannot* speak. They can only use actions to communicate. The person observing must guess what the actor is trying to communicate and say it aloud so the actor can confirm if they are correct. When the first person is finished, switch roles and have the second person tell about their family using only actions. There will be a lot of laughter. When finished, the participants can sit down.)

(Before the lesson, create a rope 168 inches or 168 centimeters long. Mark it every inch/centimeter to show all the hours of the week. Ask two volunteers to hold the ends of the rope, stretching it so participants can see the markings.) This rope represents the timeline of a whole week, 168 hours total. **How many hours do children spend with us in children's ministry programs? 1-2 hours?** (Show 1-2 hours on the rope.) **How many hours do children spend with their families?** Many more. Discipleship must go beyond the church to the family.



Families are the number-one spiritual influence in the lives of children. We cannot work for lasting impact without considering the role of families, the challenges they face and the opportunities they offer for the future health of the Church. This is what we will discuss today. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is a part of "Engaging Families."**



What are Families Like in Your Community?

20 min

(Before the lesson, prepare several "family" cards showing various types of family groupings, similar to the one on this page. Make sure every grouping is a little different. Also prepare several "income" cards with one, two or three coins on the cards, representing poor, average and wealthy.



Explain that the local families in our community have different dynamics and different economic levels. Form groups of five or six people. Give each group one of the family cards and one of the income cards. Each group's assignment is to create a family scenario using the family grouping and economic status they have been given. The group will determine ages and genders of children, occupations of parents, where they live, the reason for the family being in the grouping it is, and whether the family is Christian or non-Christian.



Give groups ten minutes to imagine and discuss what life might be like for their fictitious family, using the questions in their participant notes as a guideline. Encourage groups to be creative!



- **What is daily life like? What practical issues overwhelm the family?**
- **How is the marriage? Are there issues?**
- **How are the parents doing with their children?**
- **What are the financial or economic issues?**
- **What other community issues are impacting the family?**

(If there are only a few groups, allow each group to briefly describe their family to the other participants and share some thoughts about the types of issues their family is likely most concerned about. If there are several groups, have groups share about their families with one other group.)



How are these families like real families in your community?
What are the biggest issues facing local families in your community?
 (Write responses on the board.)



Families are the most important spiritual influence in the life of a child. But families face a lot of challenges. We need to consider God's heart for families.

What is God's Heart for Families?

5 min



(Before the lesson cut a large heart from paper and cut it into five pieces. Write one Scripture reference on each piece.)

To understand God's heart for families, we must discover what the Bible says about families. (Hand out the pieces of the heart to volunteers to read the Scriptures out loud. Summarize each principle and begin to assemble the heart by taping it onto the board.)



Genesis 2:24-25

Families are created by God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

Families are responsible to teach children about God.

Psalms 78:3-7

Families are God's tools to make himself known throughout generations.

Proverbs 22:6

Families are to guide their children.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Families are to honor each other and to train their children in love.



Families are a key institution created by God. They came before Sunday schools, church buildings, and children's programs. Families are God's great plan to grow healthy individuals, healthy communities and a healthy world. In healthy families children (and adults!) can best receive holistic care, gain confidence, learn and grow to be all God intended. This is God's heart for families!

Is this always how families work? No. Many things tear our families apart. (Move pieces of the heart apart and list several issues that tear families apart between the pieces.) But God's plan for families, revealed in God's Word, is much different. (Put the heart back together.)

We can help families fulfill God's plan for them by equipping parents to disciple their children.

Helping Families Disciple Their Children at Home

15 min

(Prepare a table as if for a meal, with two plates/bowls, a serving dish, serving spoon and salt. Adapt for meal settings that would be common in the local culture.)

How can we encourage families to nurture their children spiritually as disciples at home? This table is set with several items that remind us how to make disciples in the home.

Make the Most of Teachable Moments (table, chairs)

The table and chairs set for a meal illustrate an ordinary activity we do as families—meals. They remind us of a Bible passage we read earlier. **Read Deuteronomy 6:4-7.** Moses first challenged the people of Israel to love God with their whole being. Then he challenged parents to watch day and night for opportunities to teach their children while they were "sitting at home, walking on the road, lying down and getting up." We call these "teachable moments." Teachable moments occur all day long, every day.



(Share a personal example to illustrate a teachable moment.)



What are some examples of teachable moments with children in your life? (In pairs, have participants share personal examples of teachable moments.)

If parents believe they need to follow an intricate program of discipleship and Biblical instruction, they may be intimidated. Not many would do it. However, all of us can teach our children by our example as part of our daily lives.

Build Relationships Every Day (the plates or bowls)

The plates/bowls remind us of something we do every day—eat! We feed our families physical food every day, but there is more we can give our children. Some parents want to disciple their children, but they try to do so without building good relationships with their children first. Children will not be open to our spiritual encouragement or instruction if they do not feel at ease with us and enjoy our company. **What can parents do with their children daily to build stronger relationships?** (Discuss as a group.



Answers may include:)



- Talk together, share normal conversation.
- Listen to each other with your mind and heart.
- Laugh together, enjoy life together.
- Pray together, before bedtime or another time of day.
- Work together to take care of the home and each other.
- Speak God's Word together, teaching as you live.
- Express your love with words and touch.

Whatever you do, the important thing to remember is to fill your child's emotional "plate" daily with activities that build relationship with them.

Discipline for Growth (salt)

One of the most intense "teachable moments" comes when a child has done something wrong and needs discipline. It is so easy for parents to respond to these moments in such a way that we wound a child's spirit. When we discipline wisely, we actually help our children to grow strong in their relationship with Christ.

Read Ephesians 6:4. The two words used in this verse to describe how we bring up children, "nurture and admonish," have interesting core meanings in the original Greek language. One means to "teach with great love," and the other means to "love with great teaching." The words show that there should be a balance between firmness and love.

Table salt helps us to understand this balance. Salt is made of two chemicals: sodium and chlorine. Each of these chemicals is toxic by itself. Poisonous. But together, they form salt, something wonderful, healing, helpful, flavorful and useful. In the same way, if parents are overly permissive with their children and only love without correcting or giving guidelines for behavior, this can be toxic to children's growth in faith. If parents are only harsh with their children without showing love, children can become resentful, and this can also harm their spiritual growth.

Children need a balance of firmness and love. When disciplining, our desire should not be to punish children but to correct and guide them, giving them healthy boundaries for living. Love is far more effective than unreasonable force at building disciples who love and follow Jesus.

Serve God Together (the serving dish and spoon)

The serving dish full of food for everyone reminds us that a family that loves and obeys Jesus is to be showing and sharing his love to others outside the family. (Use the spoon to imagine serving this.) This is not something all families think of doing.



Read Matthew 5:16. How can families serve together to help non-Christian families come to know and love Jesus? (Brainstorm ideas together. Answers may include:)



- Get to know other families by having them into your home or visiting their home.
- Invite a family on a picnic away from your home and get to know them. Spend recreational time with them.
- If there is a family in need, do what you can to meet their need—food, lodging or other resources that you can arrange.
- Pray together for families in need.
- Invite and bring them to a church event.
- Just be friends to them; honestly care about them.

By intentionally using these opportunities and ideas, parents can disciple children in the home. However, they will also need some support.

Supporting Families

10 min

Parents have a challenging job. They need support and encouragement from the Body of Christ as they work to raise their children to be disciples of Christ.

- **How can the church's children's leaders support/encourage Christian families in the discipleship of their children?**
- **How can children's leaders support/encourage unbelieving families whose children attend the program?**



(Divide participants into groups of four or five people. Have half the groups discuss the first question and half discuss the second question. After five minutes, invite groups to share. Answers may include:)

- Pray for them by name; let them know you pray for them.
- Ask for prayer needs/requests.
- Encourage them about their child; share stories of spiritual interest and growth in their child; share positive and fun stories.
- Talk with them; be sincerely interested in them.
- Give them a vision for their child's potential.
- Send home worksheets or notes from your class or program so they can see what their child is learning.
- Encourage children to pray for and serve their own parents.
- Visit the child and family in their home.

We also realize, especially with unbelieving families, that our influence is limited. The more we build relationship, encourage and watch for simple moments to share positive words about children with their parents, the more open these families will be to considering their own spiritual growth as well as their child's.



Reflection and Response

5 min

Families are so important in helping children grow as disciples of Jesus. What is God saying to you about how you can better support families?



(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participants notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

1. **Which principle from "Helping Families Disciple Their Children at Home" challenged you the most? If you are a parent, how can you put this principle into practice in your home? If you are not a parent, how can you implement this principle in your children's ministry?**
2. **Write down one practical idea of how you can start supporting or encouraging Christian families in your church or ministry to disciple their children at home.**
3. **Write down one practical idea of how you can start supporting or encouraging the unbelieving families of children who attend your church or ministry program.**

God's heart is for families to be strong and to love and serve him together. Let's close by praying together for our own families, families in our church and families in our communities.



(Close in prayer.)

Sharing the Gospel with Today's Children

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Know four key principles for effectively sharing the gospel with children.
- Be able to share the gospel with children in a way they will understand.
- Possess basic skills to contextualize the gospel.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	10 min
Understanding the Purpose	5 min
Understanding the Gospel	20 min
Understanding the Audience	20 min
Understanding the Process	10 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 70 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Several sheets of paper
- 1 set of gospel colors for each participant

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture passages:

- Matthew 28:18-20
- Acts 17:26-27
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 5:8
- John 1:12
- Ephesians 2:10



Welcome and Warm-Up

10 min

Play a Game: Pass the Drawing



(Divide participants into groups of five and ask each group to stand in a line, one behind the other. Show a simple picture such as a star or tree to the last person in each line. When you say, "Go," the last person must use their finger to draw the picture on the back of the person in front of them. Then that person draws it on the back of the next person, and so on. When the drawing reaches the first person in line, that person draws the picture on a piece of paper. No talking is allowed. When each team has finished, show the original picture and each team's completed drawing. Then discuss the following questions:



- **How did your team do? Did you end up with the correct drawing?**
- **What made passing the drawing difficult?**
- **What could you do differently to be better "understood?"**
- **How is this game similar to sharing the gospel with children?** (Can be challenging; children do not always understand what we share with them; we may need to adjust our approach to make things clear.)

Many children are still waiting to hear the gospel and to understand it clearly so they can choose whether or not to follow Jesus. In this lesson we will learn four key principles for clearly sharing the gospel with children. **THE 1for50 HAND:** This lesson is part of "Reaching the Unreached."



Understanding the Purpose

5 min

The first principle is "Understanding the Purpose." Think about a child you want to reach. What is your purpose in sharing the gospel with them? What do you want to see happen in that child's life?



Read Matthew 28:18-20. According to this passage, what is the purpose of sharing the gospel? (Hear responses.) The purpose is to make disciples, helping children come to know, love and follow Jesus for a lifetime.



Why is it so important to understand this first principle? (Hear responses.) Our purpose will shape our actions. As we begin our discussion of children and the gospel, it is important to remember that the end goal is discipleship, not just a one-time prayer of salvation. We want to share the gospel with children in such a way that they understand the basic truths of the gospel, desire to respond and take serious action to begin a new life of following Jesus. It is all about discipleship.



Sharing the gospel so children can understand and respond to it begins with understanding the purpose. The next important principle is understanding—and loving—the gospel itself.



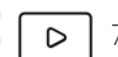
Understanding the Gospel

20 min

What is the Gospel?



How would you define the gospel? What are the key points anyone—including a child—would need to know and understand? (Discuss answers in groups of four or five people. After several minutes, share answers together.)



The word “gospel” in the Bible means good news. The gospel, then, is the good news that Jesus lived, died and rose so that we can enjoy a right relationship with God and that eventually all the results of sin will be destroyed. The gospel is complete and complex, yet so simple a child can understand it!

The Gospel Colors

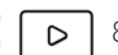
Many tools have been created to help adults share the gospel with children. While tools are not necessary to share the gospel, they can help us remember the main points we want to share. One wonderful tool is the gospel colors.

(Provide participants with paper, bracelet, or bookmark, etc., which shows the gospel colors.)

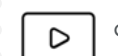


When we use the gospel colors, we want to make sure that we place the truths of the gospel into the larger context of the whole story of the Bible. This helps children not only understand the context of the gospel, but shows them that God’s story is big and for the whole world. Listen to the gospel story as I share it. (Explain the gospel colors as if you were sharing them with a child. Be sure to include the Scriptures and transition statements. Hold up each color as you describe it.)

GREEN (Acts 17:26-27) reminds us of creation. God, the Father, created the world including the first two people Adam and Eve. God loved Adam and Eve. He gave them honor and authority to rule over creation. God made them to be in perfect relationship with himself, each other and the world around them. God made us and loves us, too. But there is a problem.



DARK (Romans 3:23) reminds us of sin. God’s enemy, Satan, tricked Adam and Eve, and they chose to rebel against God. They were disloyal and disobeyed him—this is called sin. We, too, have done wrong things and have disobeyed God. Our sin brings shame, fear and separation from



God. Sin breaks our relationships with other people. Creation also feels the effects of sin through death, sickness and destruction. We can do nothing to make things right again. But God has made a way.

RED (**Romans 5:8**) reminds us of Jesus and his love. Out of his great love for us, God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born and to live in the world. Jesus healed people and cast out demons. He taught people about God. He lived a perfect life and bled and died on a cross. When he died, he took the shame and punishment for our sin and the sin of the world. He then came back to life, conquering sin and death and winning victory over Satan. Because of what Jesus did, we can now enjoy a relationship with God as part of his family.



CLEAN (**John 1:12**) reminds us of forgiveness. When we choose to trust Jesus and follow him, he comes to live inside of us. He cleans our hearts from sin and welcomes us into his family. He gives us honor as his children and power to live for him. This new relationship we have with Jesus starts now and will last forever.



YELLOW/GOLD (**Ephesians 2:10**) reminds us of life with Jesus. When we trust Jesus, one day we will go to heaven and receive the crown of honor. We will live and rule with God forever. But our life with Jesus starts now, and He wants us to live for him. He wants us to show his love to others and to do his good work in the world. He wants everyone to know the good news about Jesus so that they can know him, too. Jesus promises that one day he will come and make all things new again, and we will live in his perfect Kingdom forever.



In a moment, you will practice sharing the gospel. As you practice:

- **SPEAK FROM YOUR HEART:** Use your own words and share from your heart. Try not to read the script.
- **KEEP IT SIMPLE:** Use simple language a child can understand. Avoid deep explanations of Bible passages. Stick to the basics of the gospel.
- **SHARE ABOUT RELATIONSHIP:** Share the gospel as the beginning of a forever relationship, not as a key to receiving heaven or God's favor.



(Invite participants to practice in pairs, sharing the gospel colors as if sharing with a child. Give the first partner 4-5 minutes to share and then ask them to switch roles. Then give the second partner another 4-5 minutes to share. Ask partners to tell one another one thing they enjoyed about the presentation and one thing to improve or practice for next time.)

Great job, everyone! The gospel colors are just one way to share the gospel with children. It is important to know that you can change how you share the gospel depending on the child or the situation. This point leads us to our next principle, "Understanding the Audience."



Understanding the Audience

20 min

There is only one, true gospel for all people. However, the way we share the gospel with one child might differ from how we share it with another. People call this "contextualization." Contextualization simply means explaining Bible truths in ways that those to whom you are talking can understand and apply to their lives.



For example, how might the way you share the gospel with an adult be different from how you might share it with a child? (Hear responses.

Answers may include the words we use, length of conversation, examples of sin, etc.)



Let's consider a few ways to contextualize sharing the gospel with children.

Explain Gospel Words

Many words we use in sharing the gospel are difficult to understand, especially for children. We need to consider how to keep our language clear and simple when talking with them. (Ask participants to stand and find a partner. Partners must decide who will be the adult and who will be the child. Explain that you will call out a word, and the "adult" must explain that word to the "child" in a way a child would understand. After 30 seconds, call, "Switch" and introduce a new word. The child becomes the adult and explains the new word. Do as many words as time allows.

- Sin
- Savior
- Forgive
- Trust
- Prayer
- Faith
- Confess
- Spirit



(After the activity ask: **Which of the definitions you heard were the most helpful as you consider explaining these words to children?**)



Children and Connection Points

Different children will have different points of connection to the gospel. A child's family, culture, life experience and religious background will all affect how a child interacts with the truth about Jesus.

For example, a child who feels left out might connect with the acceptance that Jesus provides, yet this truth might not interest a child who is secure in their friendships. Instead, that child might need to know that Jesus is the best friend of all because he gave his life for his friends. An orphaned child might need to hear that they can become a part of God's family.



(Divide participants into four groups and assign each group one of the following child situations. Adjust the categories as needed to match your cultural context.)

- Child from another faith
- Child living as a refugee
- Child living in wealth
- Child experiencing crisis

Have groups answer the following questions for their situation:

- **What is life like for this child? What are their needs? What parts of the gospel might they connect with most?**
- **How would you adapt sharing the gospel colors with this particular child?**

After several minutes, ask groups to share answers with the whole group.)

Sometimes we can easily identify a child's connection point to the gospel. However, the best way to understand our audience is through relationship. If we truly want to meaningfully and effectively communicate the gospel with today's children, we must build relationships with them. We will discuss the importance of relationship in our next lesson.

As we build relationships with children and understand their context, we also need to listen to the Holy Spirit and rely on him. This leads to our final principle, "Understanding the Process."



Understanding the Process

10 min

Activity: The Slow Turn



(Invite each participant to find a place to stand, keeping some distance from each other. Tell them you will time them for three minutes. Participants must turn slowly, trying to complete one – and only one – full circle in exactly three minutes without looking at their watch or phone. At the end of the three minutes, tell participants to stop. Then debrief with these questions:)



- **What was enjoyable about your turn? What was difficult?**
- **What did you notice, think and feel while you were turning?**
- **How is this activity similar to the process a child goes through as they consider following Jesus?**
 - It takes time—you cannot rush it.
 - There was a process. Think again about your own story of coming to Christ. Did it happen all at once? Who helped you? How long did you think about Christ before responding? Was there a moment or prayer of decision? What happened before your decision? What happened after?
 - The process involved thinking and feeling. Children will also have different thoughts and feelings as they consider following Jesus. We need to allow them time and space to process them.



- Everyone turned at a different speed, just as every child's journey of coming to know Jesus will look different. Some children need to think about it for a long time. Others seem to be ready the first time the gospel is presented to them.

One important thing to remember is that a child's story of coming to Christ is rarely about just *one point* in time. While there may be a moment of prayer or decision, we need to provide space and opportunity for children to think, ask questions, and come to Christ when they are ready. We also need to remember that much follow up, discipleship, and growth takes place after a child has begun to follow Christ.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Ultimately, the Holy Spirit is the one in charge of the process. While we do everything we can to share the gospel clearly with children, he is the only one who can change their hearts and minds and draw them to Jesus. We must rely on him and follow his lead through every step of this process.



Reflection and Response

5 min

The gospel is the good news of the ages: we can be in relationship with the Creator of the universe! How can you put into practice what you have learned in this lesson so that children can hear and respond to this great news?

(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)



- 1. How has your understanding of the gospel been changed or enriched by this lesson? How will it help you share the gospel better with children?**
- 2. Write down one or two ways you can adjust sharing the gospel so that the children in your class or ministry will better understand it.**

Let's close our time in prayer, praising Jesus for who he is and what he has done for us. Let's ask him to stir our hearts again with the wonderful truth of the gospel. Let's ask him to help us clearly share this wonderful news of Jesus with children.



(Close in prayer.)

Talking with Children About Following Jesus

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand the importance of relationship and dialogue in talking with children about following Christ.
- Have skills in asking children questions as they consider following Jesus.
- Know how to lead a child to Christ and help them begin their relationship with Jesus.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
Gospel Conversations in the Bible	15 min
Questions and Dialogue	15 min
Leading a Child to Christ	15 min
Practice Talking with a Child	10 min
Reflection and Response	10 min

Approximate Total Time: 70 min

Materials

Illustration Options:

- 1 set of gospel colors
- Signs with gospel colors
- Post-it notes or small slips of paper, 1/participant

Media Option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Scripture Passages:

- John 3:1-17
- Acts 8:26-38
- John 4:7-14, 39
- Mark 10:17-22
- Colossians 4:2-6



Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min

Activity: Mobile Phone Toss



(Ask participants to get with a partner and find an item they would be willing to throw back and forth such as a pen or keys or a coin. Tell partners to face each other, standing about a meter apart. The person holding the item must toss it to their partner. If they catch it, both partners take a step back. Continue until one partner drops the item. See how far apart they can get.)

Next, ask teams to get their mobile phones and stand close together again. Ask them to toss their phones. Watch their reactions. Before they toss their phones, ask them to be seated and debrief with the following questions:)



Were you willing to toss your phone? Why? What is the difference between your mobile phone and a pen? (Value)

Inviting a child to follow Jesus is like the mobile phone. It has extraordinary value. It is not something we want to “toss at” children from a distance; it is best shared in the context of trust and relationship.

We want children to both understand the gospel and feel the love and invitation of Jesus. In this lesson we will learn ways to talk with children about following Jesus. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is part of “Reaching the Unreached.”**

Gospel Conversations in the Bible

15 min

Let's look at several New Testament passages to see how Jesus and the apostles approached talking with people about following him/Jesus.



(Divide participants into groups of four or five and assign each group one of the following Scripture passages. Have them discuss the question, **“What can we learn about sharing the gospel from this encounter?”**)

- **John 3:1-17**
- **Acts 8:26-38**
- **John 4:7-14, 39**
- **Mark 10:17-22**

After ten minutes, have each group share one or two of their observations. Some important things to note:)

- There are natural dialogues and conversations, not formal presentations.
- The leader uses a personal point of reference to share truth.
- The Holy Spirit has already been involved in each life.
- The encounters take place in the context of “real-life.”
- Some chose to follow Jesus; others did not.

We can learn so much from these passages about talking with children—or anyone—about what it means to follow Jesus. We will be referring to these examples throughout the lesson.



1



2



3



4-8

Questions and Dialogue

15 min

In the encounters we just read, we noted the importance of conversation and dialogue. Rather than one person “presenting” spiritual truths and the other simply listening, both individuals were engaged in a conversation.

We can engage children in conversations about Jesus by using questions. Jesus was a master at using questions, asking 307 questions in the gospels!

Asking Questions

Let’s use the gospel colors again. This time we will turn a presentation of the gospel into a conversation about the gospel by asking children questions. Here are a few examples of questions we could ask children:

Green: Who is God? Why do you think God made people?

Dark: What are some good/bad things going on in the world today?

Red: Whom do you love most in the world? Would you be willing to give up that person to help someone else? Why or why not?

Clean: What do you think it means to trust Jesus?

Yellow/Gold: What kinds of things can we do to help grow God’s Kingdom on earth?

As you think about questions to ask children, remember:

- Use questions that spark curiosity and get children to think.
- Ask questions that require more than a yes/no or one-word answer.
- Questions should not make kids feel uncomfortable.



(Divide participants into groups of four or five people. Ask groups to brainstorm as many questions as they can for each gospel color. After five minutes, invite groups to share three questions from their lists.)

Answering Questions

As in any conversation with children, not only will we ask them questions, but they will also ask questions of us! When children ask us questions, our tendency is to respond by giving them the answer. But when people asked Jesus a question, he often (though not always) answered it by asking a question of his own. We can do the same and help children discover important truths about Jesus.

(Ask a volunteer to role-play the child with you in the following scenario.)

Child: Why is there so much suffering in the world?

You: What do you think?

Child: I don’t know.

You: Can you give me some examples of suffering? (Other possible questions: Did God ever suffer? How does God feel when people suffer?)



9



10-14



15



16

(Place five labels around the room: "Green," "Dark," "Red," "Clean" and "Yellow/Gold." Give each participant a post-it note. Ask them to write one question a child might ask about the gospel. When they are finished writing, have them place their question underneath its corresponding color.



When everyone has posted their question, ask them to find a partner and stand next to a gospel color. Each pair must take a question and then role-play answering that question with a question. After two minutes, call "Change." Partners must go to a different color and answer a new question.)

Dialoguing with children not only helps them think more deeply about the gospel, but it also provides a natural space to invite children into a relationship with Jesus.



Leading a Child to Christ

15 min

Inviting Children to Follow Jesus

We can offer an invitation to children by simply asking, "Would you like to begin a forever relationship with Jesus?" Inviting children to follow Jesus can take place after sharing the gospel with a large group or when having a conversation with just one child. After children respond to an invitation, they need people to meet with them, talk with them, answer questions and pray with them. We want to ensure they understand their decision.

To make a true, lasting and personal decision to follow Jesus, children need to:

- Admit their own sin and separation from God.
- Believe that Jesus died and rose again to take the punishment and shame for their sin.
- Choose on their own to follow Jesus and to begin a life-long relationship with him.

We can assess a child's understanding and readiness by asking them some simple questions:

- Have you ever asked Jesus to be your Savior?
- Why do you need Jesus?
- What do you believe about Jesus and what he did on the cross?
- Why do you want to follow Jesus?
- Would you like to begin your relationship with Jesus now? (Pray together.)



17

Demonstrate Leading a Child to Christ

(Ask for a volunteer to be a "child" and demonstrate how *not* to lead a child to Christ. Sit far away from the child, be distracted, do not use the child's name, preach, tell the child he will receive a prize for receiving Christ, etc. Afterward, ask participants:)



- **What did you notice during this conversation?**
- **What should I have done differently in talking with this child?**

The process of coming to Christ belongs to the child and to the Holy Spirit. However, we can help children in this process simply by talking with them and asking questions. Again, this is why our relationship with a child is so important.

When a Child Is Ready

If a child is ready to make a choice to follow Christ, they may need your help to pray a prayer of commitment. Praying a prayer is not necessary for salvation to take place, as we observed with the Ethiopian and the Samaritan woman. We are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9, John 1:12). However, it is important for children to verbalize to the Lord their decision to follow Christ.

- Explain that prayer is simply talking with God.
- Invite the child to use his or her own words to pray. You might pray first, then have the child pray a personal prayer to God.
- Allow the child to pray privately, with a parent, or to write a prayer to God and pray it later.
- In the prayer, thank God for sending Jesus, ask for forgiveness, commit to follow Christ and ask for help to grow to love him always.

After praying with a child, celebrate their decision to follow Christ! Then take a few moments to open God's Word with them and share about their new relationship with Jesus. (Scriptures are for reference and do not need to be read.)

- Explain that they are now God's child and that Jesus lives inside them by his Holy Spirit. (Galatians 4:6, John 1:12)
- Explain that the Holy Spirit will help them to make choices that are honoring to God. (Romans 8:9)
- Help children understand that Jesus will still love them even if they sin and promises to forgive them if they ask. (1 John 1:9, Psalm 103:11-12)
- Encourage children to attend a Bible-believing church so that they can continue to grow in their relationship with God. (Hebrews 10:25, Ephesians 2:22)
- Encourage children to pray and read the Bible. You may need to give them some help and explain what to do. (Philippians 4:6-7, Psalm 119:105)



When a Child Is Not Ready

In the Scripture passages we read earlier, we noticed that some were ready to make a decision for Christ and others were not. Sometimes after talking with a child, we can tell a child is not yet ready. Perhaps they responded to the invitation because their friend responded. Or maybe they don't believe they have sinned. **So what should we do if a child is not yet ready to follow Christ? What should we not do?** (Discuss as a large group.)



- Do reassure them of Jesus' love for them.
- Do give them permission to think and pray and ask more questions at a later time.
- Do expect a deepening response over time. You may not always get to see their response to follow Christ. Did Nicodemus choose to follow Jesus during their evening conversation? We do not really know.
- Do not feel like you need to have the child make a commitment. Jesus let the rich, young ruler walk away.
- Do not frighten the child about going to hell.
- Do not manipulate children by offering a reward for receiving Jesus.

How can we be sure that we are not forcing or manipulating children in their spiritual journey to choose Christ? We must stay sensitive to the child—to their motivations, their wishes, and their personal issues. We must act in ways that are best for the child, not for our "spiritual" goals for them. And we must stay sensitive to the Holy Spirit, follow his leading, and trust he is at work in the child's heart.

Now it time to practice putting these principles into action!

Practice Talking with a Child

10 min



Find a partner. One of you will be the adult. The other will be a child interested in saying yes to following Jesus, but who has a few questions. Remember, some of the children may not be ready!

(After three minutes, ask the partners to switch roles, even if they are not yet finished. This will ensure that each participant can practice. Ask partners to give one point of positive feedback and one suggestion for improvement for the next time.)

Great job, everyone! Many children in our world today are still waiting to hear this wonderful news about Jesus and to be reached with his life-changing love. How will you use what you have learned in this lesson to help them respond to this good news?



25



26

Reflection and Response

10 min

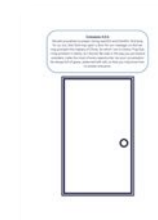
(For each of the following questions, ask participants to write their answers in the “Action Steps” section in the participant notes for this lesson. Read each question aloud, and be sure to pause and allow participants time to write their answers.)

1. **At the beginning of the lesson we explored conversations in the New Testament. What did you learn from looking at these Scripture examples? How will this change your approach to sharing the gospel with children?**
2. **How can you use questions and dialogue more as you share the gospel with children?**
3. **We also discussed inviting children to follow Jesus and simple things we can do to help them begin their relationship with Christ. Do you currently take time to talk individually with children after you give an invitation for them to receive Christ? If not, how can you give your invitations differently?**

Read Colossians 4:2-6. From Paul’s words, we can see his heart of dependence on God as he spread the good news. He encouraged believers to pray, to look for opportunities, to proclaim it clearly, to be wise and to carefully answer everyone. This is all excellent and fitting advice for us as we reach out to children as well.

On your door in your participant notes, write the name or names of children you want to see come to know Jesus. If you do not know of any children, write the names of adults or whole families.

(Ask participants to kneel and lay their hands on their paper. Then close with a time of prayer.) Pray for the children we have named—that God would open their hearts to the truths of the gospel. Pray that they would choose to follow Jesus. And pray, too, that we would be wise and make the most out of every opportunity as we talk with children about following Jesus.



Building Bridges of Outreach

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Have a map identifying the needs of children in the community.
- Possess ideas of specific ways to build bridges of outreach to unreached children in their communities.
- Consider next steps to begin reaching more children in the community.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	10 min
Community Outreach Assessment	20 min
What is Outreach?	10 min
Ideas for Outreach	10 min
Impossibilities	15 min
Reflection and Response	5 min

Approximate Total Time: 70 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Erasable board and supplies
- Several large sheets of drawing paper
- Colored pencils or crayons or markers (optional)
- Flat block of wood with one nail hammered into it and six flat-topped nails

Media options:

- PowerPoint slides for this lesson
- "What If the World were 100 People" video

Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 24:14
- Matthew 19:26



Welcome and Warm-Up

10 min

Play a Game: Reach a Generation



Have participants form groups of three people in an open space. Two people join hands and make a "tent" over the third. The two holding hands represent the church, and the third represents the child. Participants must follow the instructions of the leader. Leader calls the commands in any order multiple times:

"Child go to church"—all the "children" move to stand under a different set of hands.

"Church go to child"—all the "churches" move and find another child to stand over.

"Reach a Generation"—everyone moves and forms new groups of three.

After playing several rounds, debrief with the following questions:



- **What did you notice happening during the game?**
- **What can we learn from this activity about reaching this generation with the good news of Jesus?**

Many times we focus our ministry on the children who come to the church. But not every child goes to church. How can we reach them? The church must find ways to go to the child. And we must look creatively at changing what we are doing for children to more effectively reach them, or we may lose a generation. What are we doing to go to the child? And are we changing our strategies so we can reach the lost generation?

Video option: "What If the World were 100 People"
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3nIBT9ACg>)

In the world today, at least 2/3 of the children still need to know Christ. This lesson helps us focus on building bridges of outreach to these children. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson helps us consider how to "Reach the Unreached."**

Community Outreach Assessment

20 min

(To prepare for this activity, draw your own community map on paper or be prepared to draw it on a board for the participants during the lesson.)

Read Matthew 24:14. Jesus pointed out the importance of the gospel going to every nation, and that includes the children of those nations.



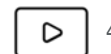
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Before missionaries or church-planters begin working in a new community or with an unreached people group, they attempt to understand that group of people. Some type of assessment is done of the community to find out about the people living there. The process is called Community Outreach Assessment and involves asking several big questions (see Participant Notes):

1. **Who are these people? What activities do they do?**
2. **What are their needs—spiritual, physical, emotional or other?**
3. **What are the barriers or obstacles that need to be considered or overcome before they can be reached with the gospel?**

The people we are seeking to reach are children, so in this activity we will assess the children of our community by drawing a picture of the community and answering the first three big questions. (Show your drawing to the class, describing your community and pointing out the answers to the questions in the drawing, or draw a sample picture on the board.)



(Divide participants into groups of four to six people or into church/ministry groups. Give each group a blank sheet of paper and crayons or markers. Ask each group to choose *one* community on which to focus and draw a picture of the children's world in that community. The picture should have simple drawings that illustrate answers to the detailed questions on the Community Outreach Assessment Guide Part 1. The pictures do not have to be physical representations of a community—they do not have to draw all the streets—but pictures can be symbolic of the needs in the world of the children of the community. NOTE: If Participant Notes and PowerPoint are not available, write the questions on a board or read them for the group to remember.



Allow groups to discuss and draw for 10-12 minutes. Then have each group find one other group with whom to share their assessment pictures, describing the needs and realities of children in their community. If you have only a few groups, all groups may share their assessment pictures with the whole group. Note the common needs and difficulties shared by groups.)



(Share some truths about children in your community that really challenge you but also motivate you to reach out to them with the love of Christ.)

Once we have an understanding of the local community, we can more effectively begin to plan outreach ministries that are appropriate for building bridges of relationship with unreached children. But what do we mean by the word "outreach"?



What is Outreach?

10 min



Some people define outreach as any activity that occurs outside the church building. Others define outreach as events that invite people inside the church walls. Some think it is only outreach if the gospel message is shared.

How do you define outreach? (Hear several responses.)

(True or False? Ask participants to stand in a circle facing the middle. Explain that you are going to read some statements about outreach. As you read each statement, participants must turn to the *right* if they think it is *true* and to the *left* if they think it is *false*. If they find themselves face to face with the person next to them, they have different opinions and must explain why they have answered the way they did. Enjoy the dialogue. There are no right or wrong answers; the statements are according to people's opinions. If time is short, select only five or six statements.)

1. Sunday School and outreach are the same.
2. You can do outreach even if you have very little money.
3. Non-Christian children are just like Christian children.
4. If we present the gospel, children will always listen and understand.
5. Children do not need words. They will understand the gospel if we simply show them love.
6. Children are too young to make a serious commitment to follow Jesus.
7. The bigger the outreach event, the better it is.
8. What works in one place will work everywhere to reach children.
9. Children can lead other children to Christ.
10. If children do not receive Christ at an outreach, it is a failure.
11. It is okay to have humor or games at an outreach.
12. Parents should not watch an outreach event.

Discuss some of the following outreach principles as they arise:

- Outreach can be very different from Sunday School.
- Outreach does not need to take a lot of money.
- The gospel needs to be given in a child's language.
- Children are old enough to consider following Jesus.
- It is very easy to compare ourselves with others in outreach.



Have participants sit down and discuss the following question with a partner:

Which of these statements challenges you the most? (Hear responses.)



(Share a story of an outreach event or program that worked well or one that was not effective. What did you learn from this experience?)

Jesus has already done the real work of salvation. Children simply need to know about what he did and be offered an opportunity to choose him for themselves. God is calling us to build bridges from his heart to the children in our neighborhoods. But what might those bridges look like?



8-19

Ideas for Outreach

10 min

Brainstorm Contest

Now it is time to think of outreach ideas that can build bridges to unreached children. It may be a feeding program, showing a Christian film, having a children's carnival or something else that builds relational bridges to children.



(Divide the class into two to four groups. Explain that you are going to have a competition. Groups will have three–five minutes to create a list of possible outreach ideas, programs, or methods. In this exercise, there is no such thing as a bad idea. Encourage participants to think about their community outreach assessments for ideas on what issues may offer opportunities to build bridges to children and their families. Or consider ideas they have heard others do.

When time is finished, have all groups share their lists or select the top ideas from their list and share those ideas. Celebrate the diversity of ideas. Optional: give a prize to the group with the longest list.)



Now, go back to your Community Outreach Assessment group. Choose two or three outreach and bridge-building ideas that could possibly be effective for the community that your group has drawn. Look at the following questions as you discuss: (Participants can find the questions in the Community Outreach Assessment Part 2 in their participant notes.)



How might we reach them? How do we build bridges of relationship?

- What methods could be used?
- What kind of outreach will be best for the children you hope to reach?
- What resources do you have?
- What can you do within the limits of these resources?
- What must be considered for lasting impact with children?
- How will you connect with families?
- How will this be linked to the ministry of the local church?
- Who should be invited to be partners in this?
- What are the challenges that will require prayer? Who will pray?

(After a few minutes, have each group find one other group and share their ideas with each other, or ask two or three groups to share their ideas with the whole group.)

Impossibilities

15 min

(Before the lesson collect a small block of wood and hammer one flat-topped nail into it.) Sometimes when we consider ideas to reach our children, they seem impossible, too difficult or not likely to work. But when we listen to God and follow his plan, we discover that it really *is* possible.

(Show the block of wood with the nail in it. Invite a volunteer to balance one nail on the top of the nail that is hammered into the block of wood. This is usually accomplished easily. Next, give the volunteer a second nail and ask them to balance two nails on top of the nail in the block of wood. Let them try a few times. Before the task can be completed, interrupt. Ask them to do an even bigger task: give them all six nails and ask them to balance six nails on the head of the one nail. The nails cannot touch the block of wood, and they cannot use any other materials. Continue encouraging the volunteer to try, to get ideas from others, not to give up. Eventually they will give up saying, "It's impossible.")

Sometimes when we think about reaching the children of our community, it seems impossible. The obstacles are too great. When Jesus' disciples were faced with a question about who could be saved, Jesus shared a different perspective. **Read Matthew 19:26.** Jesus reminded his disciples that *all* things are possible with God. It is possible to reach the children of your community. You just need God's strategy.

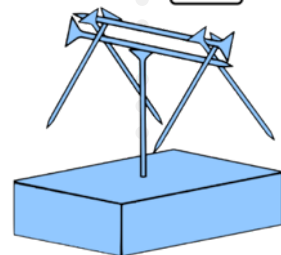
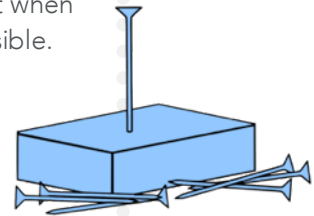
It is possible to balance six nails on one nail! Do you want to know the strategy? (Demonstrate how to accomplish the task. After the lesson, allow the participants to try it for themselves. For a demonstration on how to balance six nails on one nail, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnmHbz-e50M>)



(Share a story of "impossible" outreach, where God worked to bring people to himself that people thought could not be reached.)

In mission and in evangelism, we need to remember the story of Joshua. Jericho presented a huge obstacle. Joshua waited on the Lord for direction, and the Lord gave it to him. Joshua followed the directions exactly, and the Israelites were victorious (Joshua 2, 5, 6).

The next battle, however, was different. There was sin in the camp. The next battle required a new strategy. Joshua and the Israelites moved ahead, thinking that with God on their side they were assured victory. They lost. As they returned to their knees, God showed them a new strategy for success. In the book of Joshua, every time the Israelites forgot to ask God for his plan, they had problems. Every time they listened for God's plan and obeyed, they experienced success. We must do the same in outreach.



God's ways are higher than our ways, and because he has a plan and strategy to help us reach our children, his plans will succeed. With God all things are possible. We must go to him in prayer and ask for his wisdom and instruction, believing that he will lead us!

Reflection and Response

5 min

There are children all around us who will not hear about Jesus unless we take the gospel to them. What might God be leading you to do to reach them?

(For the following question, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson. Be sure to pause and give them time to write before closing in prayer.)

As you consider your community maps and outreach ideas, write down 1-2 next steps you can take toward making your outreach idea become a reality.

Possible next steps might include:

- **Recruit a team to help you with the outreach.**
- **Prayerfully choose which outreach idea you want to implement.**
- **Prepare and plan the details of your outreach.**
- **Promote your outreach in the community.**

(Pray together for the unreached children of their communities, using the community outreach pictures, asking God to show you how to build bridges to reach them with the gospel.)



Building God's Kingdom Together

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Know God's heart is for his people to work together in unity to build his Kingdom.
- Have practical ideas for children's ministry workers to connect with others and begin working together.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	10 min
Farmer and the Turnip Story	15 min
Why is Working Together Important?	5 min
Idea Exchange	10 min
Reflection and Response	10 min

Approximate Total Time: 50 min

Materials

Illustration options:

- Erasable board and writing supplies
- 10 small objects (keys, pens, pencils, etc.)
- 4 chairs
- 1 paper puzzle piece for each participant

Media options:

- Power Point slides for this lesson
- "Lighthouse" video
- "It's Smarter to Travel in Groups – Take the Bus" video

Scripture Passages:

- John 13:34-35
- John 17:20-21
- Ephesians 4:16
- Romans 12:3-5



Welcome and Warm-Up

10 min

A Game: The Moving Nest



(Put one chair in the center of an open space. Place three other chairs about 5 feet/1.5m away from the center chair and an equal distance from the other 2 chairs, forming a triangle. On the center chair place ten small common items such as keys, pens, etc. Invite nine volunteers forward and divide them into three teams of three members. Have each team stand beside one of the three empty chairs. Read the following instructions *exactly* as written:

1. "Transfer all the items to one chair."
2. "Transfer all the items one at a time."
3. "You may steal from each other's chair."
4. "You cannot stop anyone from stealing from your chair."

Let the game begin. Teams will likely rush to the center chair and attempt to transfer all the items to their respective chairs. After about 30 seconds of play, stop the game and ask each team to count the number of items on their respective chairs. Do we have all items on one chair? Not yet.

Let the game resume. Invariably the same thing will happen for several rounds. If teams do not make any progress after three attempts, ask them to listen carefully to the instructions and very slowly repeat them in the correct order. At this time one person will start to understand, and may even pass it on to others that you had asked them to transfer the items to *one* chair.

The game is over when all the items are transferred to just one chair – it does not matter which chair! Debrief with the following questions:)

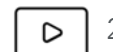


- **Which team won the game?** (All the teams, everyone)
- **Why did it take so long** (if it took several attempts) **to win?**
- **What did we learn from this activity about working together?**
- **What does the Bible say about some of the things we learned?**

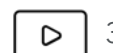
Working together is so important for reaching children in a lasting way. This lesson will help us consider God's heart for his people to work together. We will also consider practical issues related to working with others. **THE 1for50 HAND: This lesson is a part of "Building God's Kingdom Together."**



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The Farmer and the Turnip Story

15 min



(Note to Presenter: A turnip is a large root vegetable that is cooked and eaten. You may substitute a local vegetable to tell the story, e.g., cassava. Tell the story of the farmer and the turnip with energy. Invite participants forward to dramatize the story as you tell it.)

One day a farmer wanted turnip stew. He went to his garden, grabbed a large turnip and pulled. He pulled and pulled. But the turnip just would not come out.

So the farmer called his wife for help. The wife pulled the farmer, and the farmer pulled the turnip. They pulled and pulled. But that turnip just would not come out.

The wife fetched the girl. The girl pulled the wife, who pulled the farmer, who pulled the turnip. They pulled and pulled. But that turnip just would not come out.

The girl fetched the boy. The boy pulled the girl, who pulled the wife, who pulled the farmer, who pulled the turnip. They pulled and pulled. But that turnip just would not come out.

They called for their dog. The dog pulled the boy, who pulled the girl, who pulled the wife, who pulled the farmer, who pulled the turnip. They pulled and pulled. But that turnip just would not come out.

Then they called for their cat. The cat pulled the dog, who pulled the boy, who pulled the girl, who pulled the wife, who pulled the farmer, who pulled the turnip. They pulled and pulled. But that turnip just would not come out.

The cat called for the mouse. The mouse pulled the cat, who pulled the dog, who pulled the boy, who pulled the girl, who pulled the wife, who pulled the farmer, who pulled the turnip. They pulled and pulled. And do you know what happened? The earth cracked, and out came the turnip!

That night the farmer, the wife, the boy, the girl, the dog, the cat and the mouse dined on the tastiest turnip stew ever imagined.



What lessons can we learn from this story about working together? (Let participants discuss in pairs for a few minutes and then share together. Write a list of lessons learned about working together on the board as they are mentioned. Guide participants to discover other lessons from the list below if not mentioned by the group.)

- **Diversity:** Each character in the story was distinctly different, just as all of us are distinctly different from each other in our personalities and gifts in ministry.
- **Unity:** The size of the task required everyone working together in unity. So also the Kingdom can never be built unless there is unity amongst ourselves.



- **Dependence:** No one person or group has everything. We need to depend on each other to accomplish the task.
- **Reconciliation:** We have to put aside our differences to accomplish the task.
- **Equality:** Though each of the characters was different, all were equally important, just as all of us are equally important. Even the smallest one was necessary.
- **Commitment:** Every person had to give his/her best. We also are called to serve the Lord with our whole heart so as to achieve or accomplish what he has called us to in the Kingdom.
- **Shared Vision:** Everyone had the common goal of pulling the turnip, but they needed each other to accomplish the task.
- **Patience and Perseverance:** There may have been times of frustration when they could not pull out the turnip, but they needed to keep going. So also patience and perseverance are both required when working with other people in the Kingdom.

We have learned so much from this simple story about working together! The Bible also has much to say about the importance of working together to build God's Kingdom. Let's look at a few passages together.

Why is Working Together So Important?

5 min

(Have volunteers read the three Scriptures, also found in participant's notes. Discuss the principle highlighted in each scripture.)

- **John 13:34-35** We shine brighter together.
- **John 17:20-21** Jesus prayed for our unity.
- **Ephesians 4:16** God's design is that we work together.



As we work together, we help the name of Jesus to be known in this world. We help Jesus' prayers to be answered, and ours, too. It is especially important for us to work together as we consider the children.

(Invite participants to turn to the "Working Together" chart in their participant notes. In the "Local Church" column, instruct them to write the names of people or groups in their local church with whom they may need to work to reach/disciple children, such as families, pastors, leaders, other teachers, etc. In the "Others" column, have them write the names of other Christian individuals, churches or ministries reaching and discipling children in the community. You will use the lists later in the lesson.)



The ultimate champion of working together and partnership is God himself. Just think of all he could do by himself. Yet he chooses to work through us and with us. We feel amazing love, purpose and belonging in this.

The Idea Exchange

10 min

How can Leaders Work Together?



(Have participants form groups of four or five people and think of ideas that the people of God might do together to reach and disciple more children and families for Christ. Encourage them to use the lists they wrote earlier with names of people in local churches and groups in the community as a reference to help think of ideas or partnerships. Think of simple activities as well as larger projects.



Share a few innovative/creative ideas from your experience.

After five minutes, ask groups to share some of their ideas. Answers may include:)

- Put on a shared children's event as outreach.
- Ask local churches to adopt each school and offer loving prayer and support to teachers or leaders.
- Work together to put on a training event for children's leaders from multiple local churches or groups.
- Start a children's ministries prayer support group or network for sharing ideas, training and encouragement.
- Other?

Great things can be accomplished when we work together.

Video Options: "Lighthouse" video

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ieuXKcYM_M)

"It's Smarter to Travel in Groups – Take The Bus"

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfkIh_4ZaNs)



God loves to see his people work together in love and unity to make his name known to the world. We want to share his vision for working together for the sake of loving, reaching and discipling children for Christ. What has the Lord been saying to you during this lesson?

Reflection and Response

10 min

(For the following question, ask participants to write their answers in the "Action Steps" section in the participant notes for this lesson.)

How could you work with another church or ministry or person to reach, disciple and empower children in your church or community?



Puzzle Piece: What is Your Part?

(Before the lesson, cut a paper puzzle piece for each person. Give each participant a puzzle piece. Encourage them to work alone. On one side of the piece, write a few words or phrases of what they learned in this lesson that was most impactful. Then have participants turn over the puzzle piece and answer these questions with words or pictures:

1. **What gifts, talents, skills, etc., do you have to share?**
2. **What is your part to play in helping reach and disciple our children?**

When participants are finished, ask them to form a circle in a central place. One by one, invite participants to place their puzzle pieces in the center of the circle, either on a table or floor, as a symbol of offering themselves to the Lord.

Read Romans 12:3-5. For a puzzle to be complete, every part must be in its place. No piece is more important than any other. For a body to be complete, all parts must be doing what they were created to do. God is asking all of us to take our place in his big picture and fulfill our role as part of the Body.

(Pray together. Commit to work together in unity. Commit to continue listening to God's heart of love for the children, for families and for the world. Commit to offer what we have to help build the Kingdom and, together, bring glory and honor to God.)





Invitation to Join the Movement

Objectives

After this lesson participants will:

- Understand the different roles within the 1for50 Movement.
- Know how to join the movement in one of the five roles.

Lesson Overview

Welcome and Warm-Up	5 min
1for50 Roles	10 min
Joining the Movement	15 min
Reflection and Response	10 min

Approximate Total Time: 40 min

Materials

Illustration Options:

- Join the Movement sign-up sheets (optional)
- Three signs: "Reach" "Disciple" and "Empower"

Media option:

PowerPoint slides for this lesson

Welcome and Warm-Up

5 min

We have covered a lot of material over these past few days! We have considered God's heart for children and how to build positive relationships with children. We have learned the importance of helping children grow as disciples and empowering them for ministry. We have been equipped with ideas and skills to reach out to children in our communities and to effectively share the gospel with them. And for each lesson, we have also written specific next steps to put into practice what we have learned.

At the end of this lesson, we will close with a special time of prayer. Before we do, we want to share how you can connect to the 1for50 network for ongoing encouragement, resources and ministry to children and their leaders.



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1for50 Roles

10 min

Over the years, people have connected with the movement in different roles, identifying how they can use their gifts and calling to further the cause of reaching kids for Jesus. (Stories have been included to illustrate each role. You may substitute these stories with ones from your own context. Use as many stories as time allows.)

Connecting as Friends

Some leaders connect as Friends. A friend may be a local pastor willing to host a 1for50 training event, a translator able to translate training resources, a donor who contributes financially or practically, or a ministry leader who wants to endorse the movement to others.



A local pastor attended a 1for50 training event in Indonesia. At the training he repented because he had only focused on adults in his ministry and had neglected the children. He committed to share the vision and materials of 1for50 with his church, so that together they could start investing in the next generation. That pastor connected as a Friend.

Connecting as ONES

Some people connect as ONES. They work directly with children in their church or community to reach, disciple and empower them. After a 1for50 training in Zimbabwe, a local leader connected as a ONE and established two large outreach clubs in her community. Because of her efforts, many children are meeting Jesus for the first time and choosing to follow him.



Another leader in India identified as a ONE and set up a children's club in a very poor neighborhood in his city. After a year, fifty children were attending weekly and over half of the children had received Christ. He also began discipling them, empowering them to pray on their own, worship meaningfully and read God's Word. He is seeing their lives transformed!



Are you passionate to reach, disciple and empower children? You might connect as a ONE.



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Connecting as Trainers and Master Trainers

Some people connect as Trainers or Master Trainers. They use 1for50 materials to equip local leaders with the skills and perspective they need to effectively reach and disciple children. Master Trainers also equip, mentor and mobilize other 1for50 Trainers.



In Syria, a leader had a vision to train children's workers but did not have contextualized material to use. After receiving 1for50 training, he recruited three other Trainers, and together they trained local leaders at various churches. Those local leaders are now reaching kids for Jesus in this war-torn nation.



In Indonesia, the national children's ministry director for a large denomination attended a 1for50 training. Afterward she said, "I am a pastor and I have been working with children for 20 years. I have never heard this teaching before. We need to share this in all our churches." She identified as a Trainer and coordinated training events for her denomination across all of Indonesia.

Are you passionate to equip others to reach and disciple children? Are you passionate to mentor other trainers? Then your place of connection might be as a Trainer or Master Trainer.

Connecting as Regional Champions

Some leaders connect as Regional Champions. Regional Champions provide leadership for the movement at the city, state or national level. They network, strategize and mobilize others to move 1for50 forward.



A leader from Malawi caught the vision of 1for50 and identified as a Regional Champion. She connected with key leaders and organized the first-ever 1for50 training in the nation. Afterward the team even met with the leader of Malawi's Evangelical Association, mobilizing him for the cause of focusing on children. Are you passionate to mobilize others and bring key leaders together on behalf of kids? Then you might connect as a Regional Champion.

All these individuals share several things in common and demonstrate what it means to join the 1for50 Movement.



Joining the Movement

15 min

First, these leaders caught the vision of 1for50. Second, they chose to serve children and leaders in their area of gifting and calling. And lastly, they stayed connected to 1for50 through ongoing communication and relationship.

Today we want to invite you to join the 1for50 Movement. We invite you to embrace the vision of reaching, discipling and empowering children. We invite you to consider how your gifts connect with the movement and to choose a role to serve in. And we invite you to stay in communication with us so that we can support you and celebrate with you the good things God is doing. We want to join hands so that together we can reach, disciple and empower more children around the world to be influential Kingdom Champions.

Note to presenter:

Please consider the most appropriate invitation for your audience. You can use the 1for50 Invitation Guide to help you.



Does anyone have any questions about the roles or what it means to join the movement? (Take a few minutes and answer any questions from participants.)

Perhaps God has stirred your heart and you are ready to join hands with 1for50. If so, we invite you to join the movement today! Joining the movement is easy and can happen in several different ways.

First, you can join the movement online by going to www.1for50.net/trainee-join. The web form will take you through several questions and then give you an opportunity to set up a free online account. Setting up the account is important because it will give you access to the online resource library. 1for50 has created and assembled a wealth of training and ministry resources for you to help you effectively serve in your role. Most of these resources are only available to you once you join the 1for50 Movement.



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You can also sign up on this "Join the Movement" form. (Send around copies of the "Join the Movement Registration" Form. Be sure to talk through each element of the form and encourage people to write neatly. You can let the forms circulate while you continue talking.)

We know that not everyone is called to join the movement. That is alright! We bless you and the ministry God has called you to. If you are not ready to join now, you can join later. Simply visit the 1for50 website and click on "Join the Movement." There is a "Join the Movement Take Home" form in your participant notes with instructions.



**Staying Connected**

We want to stay connected with everyone who joins the movement so that we can support and encourage one another. You will begin receiving email updates regarding the movement. You can also go to Facebook and request to join the 1for50 Global Network page.

But we also want to stay connected at a local level (insert how you plan to stay connected with those in the room and what your next steps will be with them.)

It is important that we hear from you as well! We want to hear your stories of how God is working and answer any questions or concerns you may have. Our word for this is "reportify." We want you to testify to the mighty deeds of God and report on it to the global 1for50 family. As you have stories and events to reportify, please share them on Facebook, in your local WhatsApp group or email the Global Team at 1for50@gmail.com. You can also use the link to the online 1for50 Activity Form at www.1for50.net/Active.

**Taking Next Steps**

After you join the movement, your next steps will vary based upon your role. If you connect as a ONE, a next step could be identifying ways you could empower children in your ministry to serve.

If you connect as Trainer or Master Trainer, your next step might be to conduct a 1for50 training for your church, organization or for the churches in your area.

If you connect as a Regional Champion, your next step might be to share the 1for50 vision with other key leaders already in your sphere of influence.

In some nations we have seen people who join the movement come together and form a team to accomplish the 1for50 dream in their nation. We call this the DREAM Team. (Share if you have a DREAM Team in your nation and what you do as a team. Invite anyone wanting more information about being a part of the DREAM Team to speak to you after the session.)



Another step each of you can take is continuing to grow your skills and knowledge as a children's ministry leader. The 4/14 Academy is an online training platform comprising a variety of workshops, seminars and courses designed to equip the global Church for effective ministry to, with and for children. The classes are free and can be completed at your own pace. You can access the 4/14 Academy by visiting 1for50.net.

Final Story

1for50 is bringing transformation to people's hearts, to churches, to families and especially to children. Recently a 1for50 Master Trainer in northern Cameroon conducted a one-week training for student pastors in a Bible school. When one of the students graduated, he decided to focus strictly on children. He has planted seven churches, and his focus is children. The



children are the ones bringing their parents to church. Before the training this pastor did not know that children could be saved or even believe. After the training he is expanding and moving to other areas to help other individuals know how to minister to kids.

This story embodies the vision of the 1for50 Movement. The Kingdom of God is growing! Why? Because someone reached children with the life-changing love of Jesus. Someone disciplined them to follow Jesus for a lifetime. And someone empowered them to be influential Kingdom Champions in their own families and community.

Reflection and Response

10 min

(Create three prayer stations—one for “Reach,” one for “Disciple” and one for “Empower.” The station can simply be a sign hung on the wall or table. If stations are impractical, simply lead participants through a time of prayer.)

Over the past three days, we have learned practical ideas for reaching, discipling and empowering children. Before we leave today, we want to commit what we have learned to the Lord and ask him to help us implement what we have learned. Around the room you will see prayer stations for Reach, Disciple and Empower. At each station, pray for two specific things. First, pray for children who need to be reached, disciplined or empowered. Pray for children that you know, children in your communities, children in your nation or children around the world. Cry out to God on their behalf that they would be reached with the life-changing love of Jesus, disciplined to know and follow Jesus for a lifetime and empowered to become influential Kingdom Champions.

Second, pray over your plans. Consider the things you have learned today and ask God to help you to take action on the specific ideas he has given you.

We will have about ten minutes to pray. You can start at any station and you can move from one station to another at your own pace.



(Invite participants to find a station and begin praying. After about ten minutes, call everyone back together and pray for the group.)

(Optional: At the end of the three-day training, hand out certificates to participants for completing the training. You can also ask participants to fill out a training evaluation form.)

