

The Great Commission

Grades
1-2

EVANGELISM

MATTHEW 28:16-20

What is happening in this story?

Matthew presents Jesus as the one promised in the Old Testament—both sovereign king and humble servant. This is very different from what most people anticipated in a Messiah. Followers of Jesus are invited into the understanding that God’s kingdom is both present and future, now and not yet. One day it will be fulfilled completely. However, in the meantime, we are to follow the ways of Jesus and lead others into a life that changes things both here and now, and for all eternity.

Why does this story matter for kids?

Kids—especially younger ones—know what it’s like to be excited to share. Whether sharing toys, stories, or just information, kids know this impulse well. While challenging for some church communities, evangelism, at its core, is simply this fervent desire to share with others something that gives us joy. When we truly experience the love of God and the good news of Jesus, we are compelled to share it through our words and deeds.

Why this theme?

Evangelism comes directly from the Greek for “gospel” or “good news.” What better news is there than the assurance that Jesus is with us “always, to the end of the age”? Whenever we share Jesus’ teachings and love with others, we evangelize—we spread the good news. Kids are some of the very best at doing this!

AGE LEVEL TIP

Talk about jobs kids might do at home or at school, to make a connection to this story. Help kids remember that the disciples were given a job to do and that they had each other and Jesus to help them do it.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Pencils
- Markers
- Glue sticks

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Whiteboard with markers
- Sticky notes
- Tissue paper (green)

WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL KIDS STORY BIBLES • DVD • WALL CHART & STICKER • LEAFLETS

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Write *Jobs We Do* on a whiteboard. Make four columns below the title and add the words *home, school, church, neighborhood*. Invite kids to think about jobs they do in each place; write or draw them on sticky notes; and add them to the whiteboard.

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

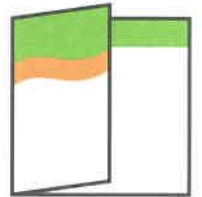
Think about teachers you have at school or here at church. How do they help you learn? (read a story, show you how to play a game, etc.) **Each thing you named is a job or a kind of work. Family members might have a job that they leave your home to do each day. In today's Bible story, we will learn about a special job that Jesus asked his followers to do.**

Pray together: **Dear God, help us to remember that we are never alone because Jesus is with us now and forever. Amen.**

Pass out leaflets and pencils.

We are going to use these pictures to spell a mystery word. Name each picture (1. dog; 2. ice cubes; 3. sun; 4. cookies; 5. igloo; 6. pig; 7. lamp; 8. eggs; 9. shadow) and write the letter for the beginning sound on the blank line at the bottom with the number that matches

the picture. Do the first one together. Continue naming the pictures as kids write letters. **What do these letters spell? D-I-S-C-I-P-L-E-S! Disciples follow Jesus. Jesus gave his disciples the job of traveling everywhere to teach others about him after he went to heaven.** Collect their leaflets until Respond.



Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Let's watch to find out what makes a big splash while Ada and Jax are playing.

View Episode 9, "Baptism Barrage," on the Year Gold Spring PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- What are Ada and Jax doing?
- Why is the older boy, Billy, soaked with green water?
- What is happening on the church roof?
- How does the spyglass help Otto?
- When have you told someone about God or Jesus?



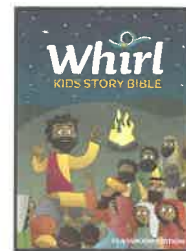
Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles.

Let's find our story for today! Help kids find "The Great Commission" on page 342. Before you read, invite kids to look for Jesus talking to the disciples.

Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

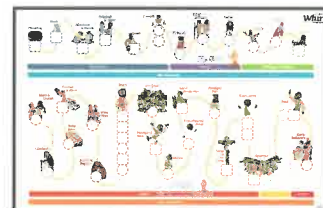
Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **Where did the disciples see Jesus?**
- **What does Peter think might happen?**
- **What does Jesus tell the disciples to do?**
- **When have you been asked to do something you thought you couldn't do?**
- **Jesus used a new word to call his friends. How can you be an apostle?**



Gather near the Wall Chart to place today's sticker.

Point out the Testament (New), Bible section (Gospels), and character image (Apostles). **Today's Bible story is about Jesus telling his disciples to teach and heal in his name—to be his apostles. Let's add a sticker to remind us of where Jesus wanted his apostles to go (world).** Point to the corresponding images of apostles and the world on pages 343 and 345 in the Whirl Kids Story Bible.



Play together!

We can all be apostles by telling others about Jesus. Let's use stomping, clapping, and jumping to make a pattern that can be repeated. Demonstrate how to create a four-beat rhythm using actions such as clap, clap, stomp, jump or jump, clap, stomp, jump. Invite kids to stand and do the pattern with you two times. Choose a new leader to start. **Make your own pattern and demonstrate it to the group two times. Then, ask one friend at a time to join you: "[Name], let's get moving and tell people about Jesus."** Repeat your pattern together. After all kids have been called, ask everyone to do that leader's pattern once more. Repeat, choosing different leaders to create new rhythm patterns.

BIBLE BIT

The disciples had not yet chosen a replacement for Judas, so there were eleven of them on a mountain in Galilee when Jesus gave them the Great Commission.

WATCH IT AGAIN

Listen to find out what Victor, Otto, and Monty think it means to go and baptize all nations.

OUR CHURCH

Make a list of the different ways that your church welcomes visitors and new members.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, markers, glue sticks, and green tissue paper.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. Point to the words written around the circle in the center of the leaflet. **Let's say these words together: "Travel all over the world. Teach and heal people."**
2. **Jesus calls all of us to be apostles and teach others about him.**
3. **We are going to make the circle in the middle look like Earth, where we live.** Ask kids to color the whole circle blue. **This is the water.**
4. Give each kid a piece of green tissue paper. **Tear your tissue paper into different shapes and glue them on the circle to show land.**
5. **What are some ways that we can be apostles?** (invite a friend to church, share a Bible story, help someone who is hurt, etc.) Write kids' ideas on the whiteboard.
6. Point to the three white spaces under the picture of Earth. **Write or draw a way that you can be an apostle in each space.** Kids can use ideas on whiteboard or come up with their own.
7. After everyone has finished, join hands, stand in a circle, and shout, **"Let's go out and share the good news about Jesus with everyone!"**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Eleven disciples hoped that Jesus was going to continue teaching and healing so they could still follow him. Jesus told them it was their turn to teach people about God's love—to become apostles. The disciples wondered if they could really do this and were reminded that Jesus would always be with them. What could you tell people about Jesus? Take time to hear kids' responses.

Pass out leaflet panels and pencils.

Invite kids to pair up. **Interview your partner about a time when they have shared God's love with someone.** Kids write their partner's answers next to *Who*, *When*, and *What*. If they identify a specific time they have done this before, encourage them to think about a time they could do it this week. Fill in the blanks as a plan to do it.

Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.