

The Great Commission

PreK-
K

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

Sharing is an idea that young kids know about, but are not always ready to do. Evangelism emphasizes the idea of sharing our faith. Encourage kids to understand evangelism as telling others about Jesus. We are sharing something very important when we tell others about God’s love.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Crayons
- Scissors

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Yarn (precut 12-in. pieces, 2 per kid)
- Single-hole punches

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Invite kids to help get your classroom ready. Have kids set out supplies and help cut the yarn pieces to be used later. **We're going to learn about how Jesus gave his disciples an important job. What kinds of jobs do you help with at home? At school?**

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Jesus wanted his disciples to teach and help people. **This was an important job! The disciples were afraid to go without Jesus. What do you look like when you're afraid?** Invite kids to stand in a circle facing outward. **Jesus said he'd be with the disciples wherever they went. He was with them in the city.** Have kids take a big step. **And he was with them as they went into the whole world.** Have kids take another big step.

Pray together: **Thank you, Jesus, for being with us wherever we go. We want to share our excitement about you with everyone we know. Amen.**

Pass out leaflets and crayons.

In our Bible story today, we're going to hear about how Jesus sent the disciples to places all over the world to tell others about God's love. **Imagine you are going with them. What would you pack?** Invite kids to circle the items they would pack. **Would you take a favorite stuffed toy? What snack would you bring? How about a water bottle? Which books would you take? You might need a jacket. Don't forget your toothbrush! The heart reminds us that Jesus will be with us wherever we go.** Have kids circle the heart. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



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

In the video today, some of the Whirl kids are confused about what Jesus meant when he told his followers to make disciples and baptize people. Watch how Jax clears it all up, but not before things get wet!

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

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Where is the green water coming from?
- Why are the boys spraying people with green water?
- How are people usually baptized?
- Who tells the boys not to spray people with water?
- What is one thing you could tell a friend about 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 the disciples' scared and smiling faces.

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

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **What job did Jesus give the disciples to do?**
- **How did the disciples feel about what Jesus told them?**
- **Who helps you with things that are hard to do?**
- **Where did Jesus tell the disciples to go?**
- **What new word did Jesus use for the disciples after he sent them to travel the world?**



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

Point out the Testament (New) and character image (Apostles). **Today's Bible story is about Jesus giving the apostles an important job. They were afraid, but Jesus promised to always be with them. Let's add a sticker to remind us of where Jesus told the apostles to go** (world). Point to the corresponding images of the apostles and the world on pages 342 and 343 in the Whirl Kids Story Bible.



Play together!

Jesus' disciples followed him closely in everything he said and did. Let's play a game where we try to follow the leader as closely as we can. Try following my actions. Invite kids to imitate leader's actions—pat your head, hop on one foot, turn around, clap your hands, wiggle, and jump like a frog. **Was it easy or hard to do what I did? Now let's do what Jesus did.** Have kids imitate the leader giving a high five or a hug to show God's love; touching a friend on the shoulder like they're healing someone; and saying, "God loves you!" to teach people. **The last thing Jesus told his apostles to do was to go into all the world and do the things he had taught and done for people.** Have kids imitate the leader going to the corners of the classroom and saying as loudly as they can, "God loves everyone!"

BIBLE BIT

This passage is a summary of Jesus' entire ministry on earth and an invitation for his disciples to keep it moving forward by teaching, healing, and baptizing in Jesus' name.

WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, have the kids watch the people who are hit with water from the balloons and hose. Ask the kids how they'd react if it happened to them.

OUR CHURCH

Find out more about mission partners your church supports. Show kids a map of where they are in the world, or invite a mission participant to visit your class.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets and crayons.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **When Jesus told his disciples to go into the whole world, they were afraid. The world is a big place!**
2. **Let's do what Jesus said and take God's love to all the people in the world. Your leaflet has a picture of the whole world on it. Footsteps show us the people who live all over the world.** After you talk about each picture, have kids finger-walk to the picture and color the heart.
3. **Find the picture with the blue border. It's a family having a picnic. Let's take them God's love.** Have kids finger-walk to the picture and color the heart.
4. **Next is the picture with the green border. It's a dad and some kids playing soccer. Let's take some of God's love there.**
5. **The picture with the yellow border is a mom and her son. Let's share God's love with them.**
6. **Look for the picture with the red border. It is of some kids swimming. Share God's love with the kids in the pool.**
7. **Look for the picture with the orange border. It's of a girl reading a story with her grandpa. Let's share God's love with them.**
8. **The last picture has a purple border. The girl learning to ride her bike and her family are God's people too. Let's share God's love with them.**
9. **That's a lot of people! Jesus wants us to tell people everywhere, all over the world, about God's love.** Invite kids to circle their arms like they're circling the whole world and say, "God loves everyone!"

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today we learned how we tell others about Jesus and invite them to follow God. Jesus promised to always be with us as we share the good news with others. We can go into the world and tell people about God's love. **Whom do you want to tell about God's love?** Take time to hear kids' responses.

Pass out leaflet panels, single-hole punches, scissors, and yarn.

Help kids cut leaflets in half, punch holes in each upper corner, thread yarn through and tie one to each shin like paper shin guards. **Your legs say, "GO!" Let's go tell people about Jesus!**

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.