

# The Great Commission

Grades  
**3-4**

## 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?

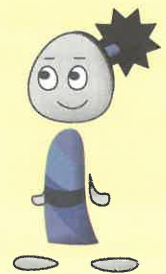
Kids—especially younger ones—know what it’s like to be excited to share. Whether sharing toys, stories, or just information, kids know this impulse well. While challenging for some church communities, evangelism, at its core, is simply this fervent desire to share with others something that gives us 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

The kids in your group most likely won’t have a well-developed theological defense of their faith yet! Remind them throughout that the way they treat others is their best means to show God’s love.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- White paper
- Scissors
- Clear tape
- Pens

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Inkpad
- Hand wipes
- Play dough (small ball per kid)
- Toothpicks (2 per kid)

**WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL KIDS STUDY BIBLES • DVD • WALL CHART • LEAFLETS**

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Provide markers and paper for kids to create a list of friends they could invite to join the group.

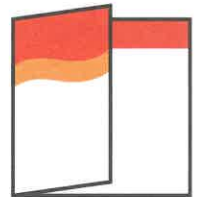
## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Today's theme is a big word: *Evangelism*. Can anyone tell us what *evangelism* means? Allow for responses. **Evangelism is when we invite others to join us in following Jesus. We can do this with our words, but we can also do it with how we live our lives. When you're passionate or enthusiastic about something, sharing it with others comes naturally. How do you let others know about things you really care about?**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you that, through Jesus, you invite us into a relationship with you. Help us remember to extend that invitation to everyone we meet. Amen.**

## Pass out leaflets and markers.

What things are you excited about? What hobbies do you have? Put a star next to the symbols that show things you are good at and enjoy. Do you have a special skill you can share with others? In the blank circle on the leaflet, draw a symbol that represents something you are enthusiastic about. When kids are finished, give each kid a moment to share something about the thing they are passionate about. **When you are enthusiastic about something, it is usually easy to talk about it. Why do you think this is so?**



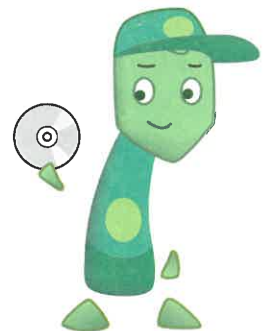
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Have you ever had a conversation with yourself? Today, Gabe hears something in the sermon that sets off a discussion in his head. Let's watch!

View Episode 9, "Awkward Evangelist," on the Year Gold Spring Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Why was Gabe's brain trying to get him to yell about Jesus?
- When have you heard someone try to talk about God the way Gabe tried?
- How did other people react to Gabe's attempts to share about Jesus?
- When have you tried to talk about Jesus to other people?
- What did Gabe decide is the best way to share his faith?



## Open your Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Today's passage is in the book of Matthew. It's in the New Testament in the Gospels and Acts section of the Bible. If this is your first time reading from Matthew, invite kids to check out the book introduction and comic on page 1156.



Today we will hear Jesus' final words to his disciples. It's a little like a locker room speech a coach might give right before the players rush into the game! He's trying to motivate them, but also to let them know he loves and supports them.

Help kids find Matthew 28:16-20 and read it in this creative way together: **You can follow along in your own Bible, but as we take turns reading verses, let's pass a single Bible around to read from—just like we pass on Jesus' love to others. Be sure to point out to the next person where your verse ends and theirs begins.**

Invite kids to check out what Gabe says about Matthew 28:16-20.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **When have you heard some of these words before?**
- **What did Jesus want the disciples to do?**
- **What stands out to you from these verses? Why?**
- **What do you think the disciples would have found challenging about Jesus' command?**
- **How do you think someone becomes a disciple of Jesus?**

## Make your mark on the Wall Chart.

Look at the chart and find the theme for today. Give kids time to find the word *Evangelism*. **Jesus' disciples followed in his footsteps, and we're invited to do the same. Let's mark the chart with a footprint in the box by *Evangelism*.** Invite one or more volunteers to make an ink blot footprint by pressing the pinkie side of a fist on an inkpad and then on the chart, followed by five small fingerprints above it.



### BIBLE BIT

This passage includes a rare biblical mention of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—directly together. Jesus is naming out loud his rightful place in the Trinity.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, pay close attention to how Gabe explains “making disciples” to his brain.

### OUR CHURCH

Does your church have an established way of doing evangelism? Have someone visit to talk about how your congregation invites people into discipleship.



# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets and pass out scissors, markers, pens, play dough, tape, and toothpicks.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. Assign half of the kids the green side of the map and half the yellow side. If you have an odd number, join in the activity.
2. **Create a new country on your side of the map. Choose a name for it and write it on the map. Fill out the basic information in the legend, which is the box next to your country. Use the blank boxes from the top of the leaflet panel to make two identical flags for your country. Cut off the flags, tape them each to a toothpick, and stick one in a small ball of play dough on your map.**
3. **Now trade squares with a friend who used the other side of the map. Put the information from the country you created—including your flag—on the other side of their map. Trade back when you've finished.**
4. Let kids share information about their countries as time permits.
5. **The disciples were told to bring the message of Jesus to all nations. Imagine that the other country on your map doesn't know about Jesus. How would you tell them about Jesus? What challenges would there be?**
6. **You don't have your own country, but you are your own person. You'll meet lots of people who don't believe in God or may never have heard about Jesus. What have you learned today about how to share?**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

If you'd been asked to tell someone about Jesus before today, what would you have said? Take time to hear kids' responses. **Gabe got it right! Our words do matter, and we'll sometimes talk to others about Jesus. But the best way to show someone Jesus is to let them see how he has changed your life for the better.**

## Return to the leaflet panels and pass out markers.

**Write a new motto for our Sunday school class that expresses how we can share God's love with other nations.** Post the mottoes where congregation members will be able to see them.

## 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.