
Skits

Skits for use in
church services,
SRE, and children's
clubs etc

Anne Schaeffer

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GOD'S PRECIOUS GIFT AT CHRISTMAS

Bible basis: *For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16*



Aim: To show that God gave his son, Jesus, as a precious gift to the whole world, including each child.

Characters: Leader (to introduce skit), actor, some children.

Props: A small box containing red, stick-on heart shapes or a heart shape of some kind. Gift wrap the box with a bow. This should be hidden well before children arrive for church. Hide it in a nativity scene, or Jesus' manger, or under the Christmas tree, or a suitable place out the front of the church or hall, etc. If female actor, best to wear trousers!
Written in large print on paper:

**This is how much God loved the world:
He gave his Son,
His one and only Son.
John 3:16**

LEADER *Introduces the KIDS' TALK.*

ACTOR ***Actor crawls around on the floor, looking for the "gift", then pops***

head up and says to the audience:

I'll be with you in a minute.

Keep looking around for "gift".

LEADER Ah, excuse me It's time for the kids' talk ... Are you ready?

ACTOR Oh, I know it's time, but I can't stop now! You know how you get gifts for Christmas, well, God has given me a most precious gift and I can't stop till I find it!

Looks up at audience:

Would all the children like to come out the front and help me find my gift?

When children come out, ask them all:

I need you to look for a precious gift.

When a child (or you) finds the gift, take the gift from child gently.

Thank you! Now, gather round everyone.

Share opening the gift.

Ah, look what God has given me.

Hold up a red heart.

The precious gift is God's love.

He loves me! But look – it's not just for me! There's enough love in here for everyone!

Stick hearts on each child, each time saying:

God loves you.

When finished doing this, say:

The Bible says that God loves the whole world. On that very first Christmas, do you know what **gift** He gave to show us how much he loves us?

If no answer, say:

He gave his Son, Jesus.

Hold up John 3:16 written large on paper and ask children to help you read it:

This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, His one and only Son. John 3:16

ACCEPTING GOD'S GIFT AT CHRISTMAS



- Bible basis: *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God. John 1:12*
Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift. 2 Corinthians 9:15
- Aim: To show that God freely gave us his son to be Saviour of the world – to save us from our sins – but that we must each accept the gift personally.
- Characters: Group of four or five friends.
- Props: A Christmas tree with several presents underneath it. Wrap appropriate gift for each character – perhaps using their own possessions, eg. iPod. Several friends.
- Gift Giver: Merry Christmas everyone! Thanks for all coming to my Christmas Party – hope you have a good time.
- Guests: ***(All speaking together.)*** Thanks for inviting us – Thank you – We will – etc.
- Gift Giver: I've bought you all a lovely gift and I do hope you like them. ***(Choose one gift and use names of actors.)*** Thomas, this is for you. Happy Christmas.
- Thomas: ***(Opens gift happily.)*** Fantastic! Just what I wanted. Thank you.
Continue on giving gifts to friends with each accepting gift with joy.
- Final guest: Jenny, this is for you. I really hope you like it.
- Jenny: ***(Politely refusing.)*** Oh, no, really, thanks all the same.
- Gift Giver: Please, I bought it just for you.
- Jenny: But I didn't buy anything for you. Really, I couldn't accept.
- Gift Giver: Nobody did – this was my surprise for everyone.
- Jenny: Look, I really don't need anything. Please keep your gift.

Gift Giver: But I want you to have it – it's my gift of love just for you.

Jenny: ***(Firmly, stubbornly.)*** No! I don't want it. ***(Turns back on Gift Giver and walks away.)***

Guests: ***(Speaking one after the other.)***

Really, what's wrong with Jenny?

Jenny! Come back! This is for you!

Make her come back!

Gift Giver: No. If she doesn't want my gift, I can't force her to accept it.

Guests: Well, I'm sorry she's going to miss out.

But that's no reason for us not to enjoy our gifts!

Yeah! Come on, let's go and eat!

(All agree and leave stage together.)

Narrator: In the same way, God gave the world the gift of his Son. Some people feel unworthy of God's gift, because they have nothing to give. Well, what can anyone give to God? Some people don't feel that they need anything from God, and some people refuse God's gift because they don't want anything from God. Only those who accept the gift make it their own.

THE TRUE STORY OF CHRISTMAS

Bible Basis: *The accounts of Jesus' birth in Matthew and Luke.*

Aim: To give an accurate overview of the true story of "Christmas", as distinct from the fantasy stories told at Christmas time.



Characters: Cecilia B DeMill (or Bruce Bears-ford) / Narrator, Wise Men, Shepherds, Angels (at least two), Old Testament Prophets, Joseph, Mary, King Herod, Santa Clause.

Props: Gifts for Wise Men to carry, throne for Herod, Star, doll (Jesus), scrolls with Old Testament quotes, or Bibles, small roll of carpet for Joseph's bed.

Optional: appropriate dress for each character, toy sheep, manger (wooden box).

Cecil B: ***(All actors together on stage behind narrator, silently talking to one another.)*** Good evening/morning! My name is Cecelia B DeMill (Bruce Bears-ford). I'm sure you have all heard the Christmas story, but we usually hear bits and pieces of the story. So today, I've got a cast of thousands and we're going to act out the Christmas story so that you will know exactly what happened. ***(Narrator moves aside and actors spread out to speak to one another.)***

Mary: ***(To wise men.)*** Who are you?

Wise Men: We're the Wise Men and we've come from afar in the east with gifts for the king.

Mary: Ooh, presents! What have you got?

Shepherd 1: Wait a minute, they can't go first! We got to see Jesus first!

Shepherd 2: You should start with us!

Angel 1: You didn't know anything about it till we told you!

Angel 2: We should go first!

OT Prophet 1: Oi! Long before any of you saw anything, we told everyone what was going to happen.

OT Prophet 2: You have to start with us!

Santa Claus: Hey! Where do I fit in?

Cecil B: ***(Vaguely.)*** Oh, dear, Santa!

Everyone: What's he doing here?

Who's he?

You're not part of this!

Mary: Never mind him, there's no show without me!

King Herod: Who are all this riff raff? Where's my throne?

Joseph: I suppose I could make you one.

(All gather round: rhubarb, rhubarb. Cecil B speaks quietly to them and directs them all off-stage, except for the OT Prophets.)

Cecil B: Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. The true story of Christmas.

Many, many years before Jesus was even born, God told his messengers, the prophets, that one day he would send his Son to help us and to be our Saviour.

OT Prophet 1: ***(OT Prophets read slowly, carefully, with a full voice.)***

A virgin will have a baby boy and he will be called Jesus

He will save his people from their sins.

OT Prophet 2: He will be born in Bethlehem.

He will be a king and will care for his people.

(OT Prophets leave stage.)

Cecil B: Finally, at the right time, all that the prophets had said came to pass.

This is how it happened:

(Mary and Joseph come onto side of stage. Mary speaks, silently, to Joseph.)

Mary and Joseph had been engaged and were about to get married when Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant.

(Joseph puts his hand to his mouth, shocked. Mary turns away and leaves stage. Joseph stands silently for a moment, then lays out “bed” and goes to bed.)

Joseph knew he was not the father, so he decided to separate from Mary and not marry her. But as he lay sleeping, an angel spoke to him in a dream. ***(Angel appears suddenly on opposite side of stage from Joseph.)***

Angel 1: Joseph! ***(Joseph sits up, startled.)*** Don't be afraid to marry Mary because she is pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. She will have a son and you are to name him Jesus, because Jesus means “the Lord saves”. Jesus will save people from their sins. ***(Angel disappears quickly off stage.)***

Cecil B: ***(While Cecil B speaks, Joseph gets up, picks up bed and goes off-stage to get Mary. They walk slowly around stage till they come to the inn door – can use pulpit.)***

So Mary and Joseph got married, but instead of having a honeymoon, they had to walk all the way to Bethlehem, their family's home, to put their names down for the census that the government had ordered.

(Mary and Joseph knock on “door”. Innkeeper appears.)

Joseph: Good evening, sir. I was wondering if we could get a room for the night.
Do you have any vacancies?

Innkeeper: Aye, yi, yi! ***(wave arms around expressively.)*** I am full up! Such
crowds! No bookings! What can I do? There’s just no room!

Joseph: But my wife is exhausted and she’s going to have a baby really soon!
Please, we’re desperate!

Innkeeper: Oh, this is terrible! Look, all I can do is offer you the stable, at least
you’ll have a roof over your head.

(Joseph looks at Mary, who nods eagerly.)

Joseph: Thanks so much! We’ll take it.

Innkeeper: Least I can do, and only half price! ***(All walk behind the door/pulpit
and off stage. Shepherds come on-stage, facing across the stage.)***

Cecil B: So Mary and Joseph had a place to stay for the night. Meanwhile, that
same night, out in the fields some shepherds were looking after their
sheep. Jesus was born that very night and an amazing thing happened
to the shepherds. ***(Angels appear on opposite side of stage and
slightly back-stage of shepherds, so that they face the audience.)***

Angel 1: Don’t be afraid! I bring you good news of great joy! Today, the saviour
sent from God has been born.

Shepherds: Wow!

Shepherd 1: Can we see him?

Angel 2: Yes, you’ll find him in Bethlehem. You’ll know it’s him because he will
be wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Angels: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests. ***(Angels quickly leave stage.)***

Shepherds: Let's go! ***(Shepherds depart.)***

Cecil B: So the shepherds went straight to Bethlehem to find the new born baby Jesus. At last they found what they were looking for.

(Mary and Joseph with baby Jesus in a Manger in the back corner of the stage. Shepherds appear walking across stage from front side.)

Shepherd 1: Hey! I think I just heard a baby cry! Over there in the stable!

Shepherd 2: Do you think this saviour would be born in a stable?

Shepherd 1: Well, the angels did say we would find him in a manger – a feeding trough – so a stable is a good place to look for one.

Shepherd 2: ***(Shepherds walk over to Mary and Joseph.)***

Here's the baby. Lying in a manger and wrapped up in cloths just like the angels told us.

Shepherd 1: We've found the saviour!

(Shepherds kneel and look at baby, then all leave. Have star put up at back of stage.)

Cecil B: Now God also put a special sign in the heavens. A star, to mark the place where Jesus had been born. When some wise men from a far away country saw it, they knew that it meant a special king had been born and they went to worship him. They brought presents to give him, but first they went to see the king, King Herod, to find out exactly where in Israel they would find the new king. They didn't know that Herod was evil.

(King Herod sitting on throne to one side of stage. Wise men enter and bow to the king.)

Wise Men: Greetings King Herod!

Herod: Greetings Wise Men. Tell me the reason for your visit.

Wise Man 1: We've seen the special star shining in the heavens. This means a new king has been born.

(King Herod looks alarmed.)

Wise Man 2: Would you be kind enough to tell us exactly where we could find him.

Wise Man 3: We have some precious gifts to give him.

Herod: What! A new king! I mean, oh yes, of course, the new king. Let me ask the chief priests and teachers. ***(Go offstage, or speak with extras standing behind throne.)***

Bethlehem is where you need to go. Go and look for him, and when you find him make sure you come and let me know where he is so I can get him – I mean get him some presents too!

Wise Men: Thank you, O king.

(All exit – Wise Men in opposite direction from Herod. Mary and Joseph sit at back of stage with baby.)

Cecil B: So the wise men continued looking for Jesus until they found him.

Wise Men: ***(Entering.)*** Look! The star is right there.

We've found the new king at last!

Wise Man 1: We have gold.

Wise Man 2: And frankincense.

Wise Man 3: And myrrh.

(Kneel at manger and present gifts to Jesus.)

Cecil B: Fortunately, God warned them in a dream that King Herod was evil and they went home a different way so King Herod wouldn't find them.

(Wise Men leave, in opposite direction from their entrance. After they leave, Mary and Joseph lay out carpet and lie down to sleep.)

But Herod was already plotting how to find Jesus so that he could kill him. Joseph needed to know he couldn't stay there any longer! Who would tell him? Would the wicked King see the star and find Jesus? God had to do something! He sent an angel to Joseph again. ***(Angel stands close to Joseph and speaks quietly.)***

Angel 1: Joseph! ***(Joseph stirs, but remains lying down, and Mary stays sound asleep.)*** Get up and take Mary and Jesus away to Egypt. King Herod wants to kill Jesus, so stay in Egypt till I send another angel to tell you when it's safe to come back.

(Joseph rises quickly and wakes Mary. They pick up baby and bed and leave quickly.)

Cecil B: So Joseph took Mary and Jesus to Egypt where they lived happily until the wicked king was dead. This is the true story of Christmas.

(Santa enters.)

Santa: Hey! What about me? Where do I fit in?

Cecil B: Oh, Santa, you don't really fit into the Christmas story at all, but we call you Santa Claus after Saint Nicholas, who was a Godly old priest who loved to give presents to poor children. ***(Santa looks pleased. All characters back on stage to bow.)***

NO TREE FOR ME!



Bible basis: *Angels: Matt 1:19ff, Luke 1:26ff, Luke 2:8ff*

Star: Matt 2:1ff

Shepherds/little lambs: Luke 2:8ff

Lights: Luke 2:8, John 8:12

Nativity scenes and mangers: Luke 2:15ff

Presents: Matt 2:9ff

Carols: Luke 2:14

Christmas dinner: John 2:1ff

Nice to everyone and kind to our enemies: Luke 2:14

Aim: How to enjoy Christmas, with the trimmings! Many of our Christmas traditions have their origin in the Bible.

Characters: Two people. No need to follow the script word-for-word, just use the props to remind you of what to say.

Props: A Christmas tree, ready to be decorated with a star, angels, and lights. A nativity set.

Person 1: Isn't this a lovely tree – and now I'm going to decorate it! How about you give me a hand?

Person 2: Oh no! I'm sick of all this Christmas rubbish! I'm sick to death of hearing about Santa Claus and the reindeer and the elves. I don't want to see any more of those ridiculous angels and stars everywhere I turn. No more nativity scenes with silly shepherds and sheep and babies lying in feeding troughs for heaven's sake!

This Christmas I'm having a truly **Christian** Christmas. I'm not having anything that's not biblical and I'm not **doing** anything that's not biblical! This Christmas is going to be all about Jesus!

Person 1: Well, look, I'll agree that the Santa Claus thing is overdone and some shopkeepers think it's just all about money, money, money. But really, most of what we have at Christmas is quite biblical.

Person 2: Oh really! Well, what are those silly things you want to put all over the tree? I bet **they** don't come from the Bible.

Person 1: It's true that a tree has nothing to do with Christmas, but all the decorations do: *(Talk about each of these using your own words.)*

Angels – An angel told Joseph that the virgin Mary was to have a son and he was to call him Jesus.

An angel told Mary the same message.

Angels announced the birth of Jesus to the world.

Stars – It was a star which lead the wise men from the East to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.

Lights – It was night time when the angels appeared in the sky, announcing Jesus' birth. The lights remind us of the stars in the night sky.

Person 2: But what about those Nativity scenes with Shepherds and little woolly lambs everywhere – where does it talk about that in the Bible?

Person 1: Shepherds, little lambs – It was a group of shepherds watching over their sheep one night who were the first to be told by the angels that Jesus was born and where they could find him.

Nativity scene – The shepherds followed the angels' advice and found the scene of the birth of Jesus just as the angels had said – even down to the detail of the baby using a manger for a bed.

Person 2: OK, OK! But really, why do we have to give presents at Christmas. Is that in the Bible too?!

Person 1: Presents – God gave Jesus as a gift to the world.

The wise men gave presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to Jesus.

Jesus gives us the gift of salvation.

So we give one another gifts!

Person 2: What about all those carols we sing at Christmas – now **they're** not in the Bible!

Person 1: Carols – A host of angels worshipped God when the birth of Jesus was first announced – how natural for us to want to join in the chorus.
We're happy too!

Person 2: Oh well, I suppose so, but what about having to do all that cooking for Christmas dinner? Where's that in the Bible?

Person 1: Jesus himself enjoyed celebrating a happy event by sharing a feast of good food and wine with his friends. He invites us all to join him in another great feast at the end of time, in heaven. We're just practising!

Person 2: Well, why do we have to go around being nice to everyone and kind to our enemies – I'll be blowed if I'm going to be nice to some of the people I know!

Person 1: You know, this is the whole point of Christmas. When Jesus was first born, the angels announced: "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace among men!" This is why Jesus came – to bring peace. Peace between us and God and peace between people.

Person 2: I forgot about that! You know what? I think I'm going to have to change my mind about a couple of things. I think I'm going to have to have a jolly good Christmas – angels, presents, carols – the lot!

HEROD'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

Bible Basis: *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. When King Herod heard this he was disturbed....When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem...this is what the prophet has written.....*



Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

....they went on their way.....When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." Matt 2:1-13

Aim: To tell the story of the Magi's visit to worship Jesus when God gave a sign in the heavens that a special king had been born and of Jesus' escape from Herod.

Characters: Matt, Elizabeth, 3 Wise Men, Herod, Priest, Mary, Joseph, Angel, Servant.

Props: Star, white sheet for angel, crown for Herod, a few suitable shawls, belts for characters, gold box, (frank)incense sticks, myrrh perfume, scroll, doll - infant Jesus.

SCENE 1: ***(Matt enters from the right. Star on far left.)***

Matt: What a lovely evening. Just look at the beautiful stars..... What!?

What's that? Elizabeth! Quick, come and look at this!

Elizabeth: What is it?

Matt: Look! Up there! Have you ever seen a star like that before?

Elizabeth: It's amazing! It's so bright!

(Wise men appear in the background carrying gifts and walk slowly from R to L and point up at star.)

Elizabeth: Look over there, Matt. Who are those people? And what are those parcels they are carrying? You know, they look like kings, or wise men!

Matt: They certainly don't look like they're from around here. And look where they're going!

Elizabeth: They're heading straight for that star. It's like the star is leading them – but where?

Matt: Well, if you look straight over in that direction, that's exactly where Bethlehem is. Maybe that's where they're headed.

Elizabeth: I wonder why? ***(Both exit.)***

SCENE 2: ***(Two wise men approach from far left towards King Herod, far right, seated on a "throne".)***

Wise Man 2: ***(Calls to Wise Man 1 offstage.)*** You'd better stay here and mind our gifts and the camels while we speak with the king.

Wise Man 1: ***(Whispers.)*** Look, that must be King Herod. ***(They approach Herod and bow.)***

Wise M2: Your Majesty! We bring you greetings from afar. We are scholars and we seek your help on our mission.

Herod: Your mission? What do you want?

Wise M2: Your Majesty! We have seen the royal star in the sky and have followed it from our country, far away, to here in Israel.

Herod: That star! I **knew** that star was significant. What can you Wise Men tell me about it?

Wise M2: Well, Your Majesty, it **is** a special star, which tells us that the new king of Israel has been born and we have come to worship him. But we don't know the **exact** place to go. Can you tell us where the new king is, so that we can go and worship him?

Herod: ***(Herod jumps at hearing this. Aside to audience – angry but whispering.)*** A **new** king!? **Worship** a new king!?

(To wise men:) Uh, err. Of course I'll help you. Um, I'll just ask the Priest where this, this **new** king is. Priest!

Priest: ***(Entering, bows.)*** Yes, Your Majesty.

Herod: Priest! You know all about where Israel's kings come from.

Priest: Yes, Your Majesty.

Herod: These Wise Men have followed that bright star we have seen in the sky. They say it means a new king has been born in Israel. WHERE IS HE!? I mean, can you tell them **exactly** where he is?

Priest: Ah, yes, Your Majesty. ***(Opening up scroll.)*** The prophets of old wrote that Bethlehem is where a great ruler is to be born. Bethlehem is the place you're looking for.

Herod: Dismissed! ***(Priest leaves. Herod paces back and forth, thinking, then addresses wise men.)*** Mmm. Now this is what I want you to do. Go to

Bethlehem and find the new king. Then come straight back here to me and tell me exactly where he is. I want to worship him too!

Wise M2: Yes, Your Majesty.

Wise M1: Thank you, Your Majesty! (*Wise Men bow and leave.*)

Herod: Aha! Those **Wise** Men will do all the searching for me, and then tell me **exactly** where this new king is – so I can go and **KILL HIM!** Harr. They won't look so wise then! (*Departs muttering:*) I will not tolerate any **rivals!**

SCENE 3: (*Mary holding infant Jesus on left. Star on far left. Wise men approach from right, each carrying a gift.*)

Wise M2: Look! Look! That must be him! There is the new king! We've found him!

Wise M1: At last!

All: HOORAY! (*All proceed to Mary and bow.*)

Wise M2: Madam!

Mary: Who are you? Can I help you?

Wise M2: Dear Woman, we are scholars from a country far away. We have come to worship the new king! It is so wonderful that we have found him. We have been following his star for many, many miles. May we present the new king with our humble gifts. (*Each wise man shows his gift to Mary and places them at her feet.*)

Wise M1: Gold.

Wise M2: Frankincense.

Wise M2: And myrrh.

Mary: Oh, thank you! These gifts are amazing! They are fit for a king!

Wise M2: We are glad you find them acceptable. Please, what is the child's name?

Mary: His name is Jesus.

All: We worship the new king. King Jesus! **(All bow.)**

Mary: **(Sounding amazed.)** You are so kind! Gifts for my son! You say you have travelled a long way, so please, let me give you some food and drink. Come and tell me about your journey and how you knew to follow the star. **(All leave, following Mary.)**

SCENE 4: **(Mary and Jesus and Joseph asleep, far left. Angel appears "above" them. Mary and Joseph make sleeping noises.)**

Angel: Joseph! Get up, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is searching for the child to kill him. You must go now! Don't delay! **(Angel departs.)**

Joseph: **(Getting up.)** What? Who was that?

Mary: What's wrong, Joseph?

Joseph: An angel just told me we have to get up and go to Egypt. King Herod is looking for Jesus – he wants to kill him!

Mary: Go to Egypt? We'll have to pack first thing in the morning!

Joseph: No, we have to go now!

Mary: But it's the middle of the night!

Joseph: The angel said we have to go **now**! It's life and death! Quick! It's a long way over in the West to Egypt, but the sooner we start, the sooner we get there.

(Both get up, pick up child and wise men's gifts.)

Mary: Oh, Joseph. I'm so glad we have these gifts. At least now we'll be able to pay for somewhere to stay in Egypt. I wonder how long we'll have to stay there, so far from home. Will they make us welcome, strangers in a far land? ***(Both leave.)***

SCENE 5: ***(Three wise men sleeping, far right. Angel appears above them. Wise men make sleeping noises.)***

Angel: Wise Men! I have a command for you from the Lord God Almighty. Get up and leave immediately! Do not go back to Herod – he wants to kill the new king. ***(Angel departs.)***

All: What? Who was that? ***(All get up.)***

Wise M2: I dreamt I saw an angel! He said Herod wanted to kill the new king!

Wise M1: I had the same dream!

Wise M3: I did too!

Wise M2: He said we must not go back to Herod. We must leave now! And we'll go back a different way, so Herod can't follow us!

Wise M1/2: Good idea!

Wise M2: I **thought** King Herod was only **pretending** he was glad a new king was born. ***(All leave.)***

SCENE 6:

Herod: ***(Pacing back and forth, angrily talking to himself. Servant waits to one side.)***

Where are those Wise Men? Why haven't they reported back to me?

Where are my spies? Why haven't they told me what's happened? It's

not far to Bethlehem! They should be back by now! Useless! The lot of them! Servant!

Servant: Yes, Your Majesty.

Herod: Go and bring that Priest back here.

Servant: Yes, Your Majesty. ***(Bows and leaves, then re-enters with Priest.)***

Herod: I thought you said the new king was to be born in Bethlehem.

Priest: ***(Bowing.)*** Yes, that's correct, Your Majesty.

Herod: Well?! Bethlehem is only a short distance from here. Surely those Wise Men have had time to go there and find him! Why aren't they back yet?

Priest: I have no idea, Your Majesty.

Herod: Useless! Get out of my sight! ***(Priest bows and exits. Herod yells at servant:)*** Go and find out where my spies are – err, I mean my advisors. Find out what's happened.

(Servant leave briefly.)

Herod: ***(Talking to himself.)*** It's been days! They should be back here by now! I've got to find that new king and **kill him** before he gets a chance to take over my throne!

Servant: ***(Re-enters.)*** Your majesty, I've spoken with your ... err, advisors, and they say they haven't been able to find the Wise Men. They've gone! They left in the middle of the night!

Herod: Gond!!! They've gone?! Why didn't those useless spies just catch up with them and bring them back here.

Servant: They tried, Your Majesty, but the Wise Men didn't go back the same way. They don't know which road they've taken, or even where they're headed.

Herod: Curse those stupid spies! Curse those Wise Men! I'll make them pay for this! Call the guards! Tell them to bring their swords! I won't stop until I make sure that child is dead! He will never be king!

(Both leave.)

SCENE 7: ***(Matt stands far right, looking to the left. Star has been removed.)***

Matt: Elizabeth! Quick! Come here and have a look!

Elizabeth: ***(Entering.)*** What's the matter?

Matt: Over there! ***(Points to the left.)***

Elizabeth: I don't see anything. There's nothing unusual there.

Matt: Exactly! There's no star! That beautiful big star that was shining over Bethlehem – it's gone! What do you suppose that means?

Elizabeth: Wasn't there a new king born in Bethlehem? Weren't people saying the star meant a new king was born?..... Perhaps the new king has left Bethlehem now.

Matt: I suppose you could be right.... But look, look!

(Wise Men depart via a different route from their entrance.)

It's those same Wise Men we saw arriving when we first noticed the star.

Elizabeth: It looks like they're **leaving** now. Do you think they went to see the new king and now they're going hom?

Matt: Well, if they are, they're going a different way from the way they came!

Elizabeth: I wonder why.... And I wonder if **we** will ever get to see the new king.

Matt: I hope so. But we'd have to take a gift for a new king, wouldn't we, and what gift could we bring a **king**? We're poor and we have nothing!

Elizabeth: I know we don't. But we could give him our love. That's a goof gift.

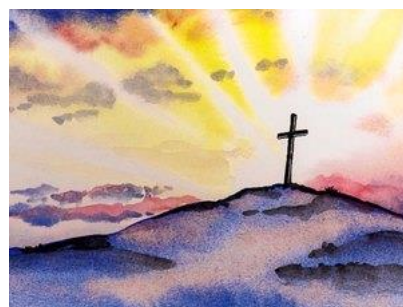
Matt: You know, it is. Fit for a king!

(Both laugh a little, then leave.)

A PROGRAM FOR A 4-WEEK KIDS CLUB AROUND THE THEME OF CHRISTMAS



WHO PUT THE “X” IN
“XMAS”?



THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

To explain to children (who may not know anything about the birth of Jesus except that we call this celebration “Christmas”) that Jesus was born to be our Saviour as God planned and he accomplished that by dying on the cross. It was God who put the “X” (cross) in “Xmas”.

SUGGESTED LEADERS AND ORGANISATION:

So that each person only has to prepare one part of the activities, have separate leaders for:

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Afternoon tea | Games leader | song and sharing time leader |
| prayer leader | story presenter | craft activity leader |

Parents who come are usually happy to help with activities.

It’s a good idea to give everyone a timetable showing the segments of the program each week and who is responsible each week, especially if some people are only able to do a task on one or two days of the program. The program can be run once a week after school in the month before school breaks up for Christmas. The children can be put into two teams (eg, Angels and Shepherds) and a record kept of points scored throughout the program.

BIBLE BASE: The accounts of Jesus’ birth in Matthew 1 & 2, Luke 1 & 2.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES COULD INCLUDE:

- 3.00 – 3.15 Afternoon tea – something quick and simple like fruit pieces, cold drinks
- 3.15 – 3.30 Game
- 3.30 – 3.35 Quiet down time – perhaps sing a song or briefly welcome children
- 3.35 – 3.45 Prayer – this could be a good time to teach children The Lords Prayer
- 3.45 – 4.00 Story / Presentation plus a short prayer
- 4.00 – 4.15 Activity – any age-appropriate craft activity – some suggestions given
- 4.15 – 4.30 Tidy up and songs or sharing

WEEK 1

GOD PROMISED A SAVIOUR

MEMORY VERSE: One day, I will send you a saviour. Isaiah 19:20

RESOURCES: Poster on wall showing: “Who put the “X” in “Xmas”?

Butchers paper and textas for each child

Outline of “special visitor” on butchers paper (see below)

List of promises about the promised Saviour on large whiteboard or paper

Words of memory verse written on A4 light cardboard X 2 (Wks 1 & 2)

Teams chart to keep a record of points won by each team

INTRODUCTION:

Ask children if they have ever seen “Christmas” spelt “Xmas”? We will find out why we can spell it this way over the next couple of weeks.

PROMISES:

- Make 2 promises to 2 children – eg, “If you both put away these chairs I will give you a sticker each.” – then don’t give the sticker!
- Can you trust people who don’t keep their promises?
- Do you know some people you would trust to keep their promises?
- Even those people can sometimes break their promises.
- Who never breaks a promise / always keeps his promises? (God!)

GOD’S BIG PROMISE:

Choose 9 children to hold up the words of the memory verse in front of the other children and have the children arrange these words into the memory verse.

(Hint: Begin sentence with a capital letter. End sentence with a full stop. "Isaiah 19:20" goes last.)

"SAVIOUR": Discuss what this word means and who needs a saviour with the following examples:

- fell off a cliff – hanging on to grass, slipping – hand reaches down)
- get swept out to sea in big surf – going under – surf lifesavers) **Saviour**
- camping in National Park – walk off and get totally lost – search & rescue)

Saviour is someone who saves you when you are helpless to save yourself.

God promised to send a **saviour** for us and all people everywhere. This is why:

- God is good
- When we do bad things, it's like turning our backs on him and walking away from him
- And when we continue to do more bad things, it's like walking away from the campsite in a National Park and getting lost in the bush
- We can't find our way back to God – we need to be rescued – we need a **saviour**
- This is what God promised he would send

IMAGINE: Principal promised that a special visitor would be coming to your school and asked you to make sure that you made them welcome! You watch the front gate, but there are many people coming and going – parents coming to help in the canteen/ plumber to fix leaking bubbler / delivery man with new equipment.

How would you know who the special visitor was?

What information would you need?

Using the outline on paper, fill in the following details as children suggest them:

- height, hair colour, eye colour, man or woman, clothes, when, where, name, etc.

God told his people lots of things about the promised Saviour so that everyone would know exactly who he was when he came:

Go through the list, allowing the children to tell you the answers to all these things about the saviour, if they can. Give answers and explain a little as needed.

- where he would be born (Bethlehem)
- where he would grow up (Nazareth)
- what family he would be from (King David's family)
- what sort of person he would be (care about sick, poor, people who lost their way)
- what kind of things he would do (heal the sick, do great signs)
- what his name would be (Jesus)

CONCLUSION:

God loves us so much that he doesn't want anyone to miss recognising the **saviour** because he is the only one who can save us when we get lost – he shows us the way back to God.

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you that you care about all people, even me. I would like to be your friend. Thank you for sending Jesus to be our saviour.
Amen.

ACTIVITY IDEA: In pairs:

- Draw outline of partner on butcher's paper
- Draw yourself as an angel or shepherd (or team names)
- Colour in / describe yourself
- Draw a heart and write who they love in it, including Jesus if wanted

WEEK 2

THE SAVIOUR WAS BORN

MEMORY VERSE: One day, I will send you a saviour. Isaiah 19:20

RESOURCES: Xmas tree decorations: Angels, star

Towels for shepherds' head dress if acting out story

Memory verse on cards X 2

Perfume, gold, incense, matches to light incense

Materials to make Xmas tree decoration

Information about Xmas decoration (see section at end)

Teams chart to keep a record of points won by each team

INTRODUCTION:

Review memory verse: Give one set of memory verse cards to each team. First team to put memory verse cards in order wins a point.

Review: A **saviour** is someone who saves us when we are helpless to save ourselves – like if we get lost in the bush we need someone to come and rescue us. When we do wrong things, it's like walking away from God until we are so far away it's like we are lost in the bush and we can't get back to God. We need a **saviour** who will rescue us and bring us back to God.

God promised to send a **saviour**, but to make sure no one would miss recognizing him when he came, God told his people:

- where he would be born (Bethlehem)
- where he would grow up (Nazareth)
- what family he would be from (King David's family)
- what sort of person he would be (care about sick, poor, people who lost their way)

- what kind of things he would do (heal the sick, do great signs)
- what his name would be (Jesus)

Get kids to tell you the answer to these as you go.

Tell them: I could probably do this about you (where you were born, where you grew up, your name etc)! BUT God told his people these things about the promised **saviour** hundreds of years before he was born!! And it's written in the Bible.

THE BIRTH OF THE SAVIOUR:

This was so that when the **saviour** was born, the people would be able to recognise him.

BUT: - What if they didn't know what God had said? (If they hadn't been reading – or couldn't read –their Bible?)

- What if the **saviour** was born and no one noticed?

God made sure that didn't happen – he made sure that when Jesus was born, lots of special things happened so that everyone would know that someone special had been born. God gave these special signs to mark the birth of Jesus: (Use props if you have them.)

ANGELS:

- First of all, God sent an angel to tell the Virgin Mary that she would be the mother of a special baby: that the power of the Holy Spirit would come upon her and she would have a baby who would be the Son of God. Mary named him Jesus, (which means the one who saves) just as the angel told her to do.
- An angel told Joseph it was OK to marry Mary, and that she was going to have a baby who was the Son of God. (Both Mary and Joseph were from King David's family.)

- On the night the baby was born, God sent a host of angels to tell some shepherds who were looking after their flocks of sheep that the **saviour** had been born in Bethlehem (this can be briefly acted out, or show a picture)

SHEPHERDS:

- The angels told the shepherds exactly where to find the baby – in Bethlehem – and lying in a manger (an animals' feeding trough)!
- The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to see the baby Jesus and they found him lying in a manger, just as the angels had told them

STAR:

- God also put a sign in the heavens to tell everyone that someone special had been born: a bright shining star
- Wise men from a far away country in the East saw the star and followed it, because they knew it meant that someone very special had been born
- These wise men brought precious gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh (beautiful perfume). Show children the gifts and allow them to put a little perfume on if they wish.

CONCLUSION:

Many of the things we hang on our Xmas trees remind us of the signs God gave to make sure we know that Jesus is the **saviour** he promised to send. (Explain the meaning of the Xmas decoration chosen for the craft activity.)

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for giving us so many signs to show that Jesus is our promised **saviour**. We are glad he can save us and we can be your friends. Amen.

ACTIVITY:

Make a Xmas tree decoration.

XMAS TREE DECORATIONS:

- Candy cane: A lolly maker in America made candy in the shape of “J” – for Jesus and also the shape of a shepherd’s crook to remind us that the first people who were told of the birth of the **saviour** were humble shepherds. It also reminds us that Jesus is the “Good Shepherd” who searches for each one of us, who like sheep have gone astray and need to be brought back to God.
- Star on top of Xmas tree: Reminds us of the star that guided the wise men to where Jesus was born.
- Angels: Remind us that an angel told Mary she would have a baby and that he was to be called Jesus – the one who **saves**. An angel also visited Joseph to tell him it was OK for him to marry Mary, because she was going to have a special baby. A host of angels filled the sky to announce the birth of Jesus to the shepherds and told them where they would find the baby – in Bethlehem, in a manger.
- Gifts: Sometimes small gifts are hung on the Xmas tree and we often place our Xmas gifts under the tree, to remind us that the wise men brought their gifts to Jesus. Gifts also remind us of God’s gift to us – Jesus himself, our **saviour**.

WEEK 3

JESUS PROVED HE IS THE SAVIOUR

MEMORY VERSE: One day, I will send you a saviour. Isaiah 19:20

RESOURCES: 2 X A4 sheets paper for ripping

2 large sheets of paper or 2 whiteboards/blackboards for spelling test

Picture book / Youtube / flannel graph / illustrate as you go for “Jesus calms the Storm” (Luke 8:22 – 25)

Activities resources as needed – see role play

Teams chart to keep a record of points won by each team

INTRODUCTION:

- **Review memory verse:** Have children in teams and ask children to put their hands up if they think they can recite the memory verse. Have all those children stand and recite memory verse together (to make it easier for everyone to get it right). Award 1 point to each team for each member who said the verse. Invite all children to stand and recite: “One day I will send you a saviour. Isaiah 19:20” (Say verse aloud for any newcomers and so that all can join in.) Award point to best team.

QUIZ:

Go through quiz questions quickly and fill in any gaps in the children’s knowledge.

- Ask children to put hands up to answer: What does “saviour” mean, or “What does a saviour do?” Award 1 point to team for the correct answer.
- Ask children to put hands up if they can explain why we need a saviour. Allow several answers, eg, We go so far away from God we get lost / we need someone to save us so we can find our way back to God. Allow children to answer and

award points, but if necessary gently affirm their answer and gently rephrase it more accurately.

- We learnt that God gave some **special signs** when Jesus was born so that people would know he was the promised **saviour** and so that everyone would notice when he was born. Can you name one of them? (Hands up – point for each correct answer.)
 - **Angels** (told: **Mary, Joseph, shepherds**)
 - Angels told shepherds Jesus was born in **Bethlehem**
 - Angels told shepherds they would find Jesus lying in a **manger**
 - A special **star** appeared to show that someone special had been born
 - **Wise men** followed the star
 - **Gifts** the wise men brought: **gold, frankincense, myrrh** (or perfume)

STRONGEST / FASTEST / SMARTEST:

This segment could be used instead of a separate “Games” activity.

Explain that you are going to try to find out which team is the strongest / fastest / smartest. You have devised three tests. Only allow a minute for each test.

TEST 1: STRONGEST (1 player from each team, award 1 point to winner)

Tear A4 sheet of paper in ½ as many times as possible. (Demonstrate, but it is usually too difficult after 5 or 6 times.) 1 point for winner, or 1 each for tie.

TEST 2: FASTEST (depending on numbers, 1 or more players from each team)

Line up for a hopping race. 1 point for winner.

TEST 3: SMARTEST (1 point for each correct spelling)

Choose words from the lessons, some easy, some harder. Children to put hand up if they think they can spell the word. A child may only answer once correctly, ie may only score once, then other children in team must answer.

Words: Bethlehem, saviour, shepherd, angel, manger (for older kids)
star, baby, one, day, send (for younger children)

JESUS PROVES HE IS THE SAVIOUR:

We used these tests to see if we could prove which is the strongest / fastest / smartest team. Sometimes we see contests where people prove they are the best in the world at something, eg swimming race, football grand final (whatever is current).

Ask rhetorical questions:

- How would Jesus be able to prove that he was the **saviour**?
- How would Jesus be able to prove that he was God's Son who was sent to **save** us?

Jesus did many things that no-one has ever been able to do before or since.

Absolutely incredible things that we call miracles, because ordinary people could not do them. Only someone who is God's Son could do them. Here is one of the miracles that Jesus did:

Tell the story of JESUS CALMS THE STORM Luke 8:22-25 using visual aids as suggested. Explain that "disciples" were Jesus' best friends and followers.

CONCLUSION:

Even the wind and the waves obeyed Jesus. The disciples knew that Jesus was special – they believed he was God's Son – the promised **saviour**.

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you for sending Jesus to be our saviour. We are glad he did so many miracles so we can be sure he really is our saviour.

Amen.

ACTIVITY:

A suggested activity could be to have children role play the story of Jesus calming the storm using whatever is available to create a boat (chairs or a rug) and have children rocking around in the storm while “Jesus” sleeps. If enough children, have each team perform their role play, with a child reading verses if able. A point for the best team.

WEEK 4

WHO PUT THE X IN XMAS?

MEMORY VERSE: One day, I will send you a saviour. Isaiah 19:20

RESOURCES: Readers' Theatre Scripts

Poster: Who put the X in Xmas? With a cross of Christ.

Activities Resources: Quiz

Teams chart to keep a record of points won by each team

Prizes for quiz winners + consolation prizes for runners up

INTRODUCTION:

- **Review memory verse:** First person who can recite the memory verse + Bible reference scores a point for team.
- We have learnt that God promised to send a **saviour** – someone who could save us and bring us back to God so we could be God's friends again – and that God made sure that everyone would know who the **saviour** was:
 - foretold – where he would be born, where he would grow up, who his family would be , what sort of things he would do
 - special signs when he was born – angels, shepherds, manger, star
 - This all happened when Jesus was born
 - To prove he was the **saviour** and **God's son**, Jesus did many miracles
- Ask: Do you remember what was the special miracle that Jesus did – that you heard about last week? (Jesus calms the storm – 1 point for first to answer)

SAVIOUR?

We know that Jesus was the promised **saviour**.

But how would Jesus become our **saviour**?

- Just because Jesus is God's son?
- Just because there were special signs like angels and a star in the heavens when Jesus was born?
- Just because Jesus did miracles – healed people and calmed the storm?

How does that make him our **saviour**?

GOD IS GOOD:

I told you that God is good, and when we do bad things, it's a bit like walking away from God – and each bad thing takes us further away from God, until we are lost and can't find our way back – unless someone **saves** us.

This is what God did about that:

Perform: **Readers Theatre** (see script). Arrange chairs so that the judge can be seated at the front, the accused to one side facing away from judge, the jury on the other side, and the other characters in a row facing the judge. Adjust numbers in the jury to the number of children available. Coach the jury to declare "Guilty!" when the judge asks them: "How do you find the defendant? Guilty or not guilty?"

CONCLUSION:

- When you break the rules at school or disobey parents, what happens?
(punished/disciplined, eg detention, lose pocket money)
- When we do wrong, God says we deserve to be disciplined/punished.
- But God is like the judge. We are like his sons and daughters and He doesn't want us to be punished like we deserve. But who could **save** us from being punished?
- God decided to punish **one person** for all the wrong things we do and that one person was **Jesus**.
- **Jesus** was willing to take **our** punishment so that **we** wouldn't have to be punished.

- The way he did this was when he died on a cross: Show POSTER with CROSS
- That's the whole reason why Jesus was born that first Christmas – to die on the CROSS to be our saviour.
- Thanks to Jesus, we can be God's friends again!
- **That's who put the X (cross) in XMAS! God did!**

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you for sending Jesus to be my saviour. Please help me always to remember why Jesus was born. Amen.

QUIZ: Points to teams.

1. God told his people lots of things about the promised saviour long before he was born, so that everyone would know exactly who he was when he came. Name one of these things. (Children may answer one each, using their own words.)

- where he would be born
- where he would grow up
- what family he would be from
- what sort of person he would be
- what kind of things he would do
- what his name would be

2. What special signs did God send when the saviour was born so that everyone would notice?

- angels
- star
- told shepherds about baby
- baby would be in a manger

3. Who did the angels talk to and what did they tell these people?

- told Mary she would have God's son / Jesus
 - told Joseph it was alright to marry Mary
 - told shepherds where to find Jesus / that the saviour was born
4. What was Jesus able to do when his disciples' boat got caught in a storm?
 - calm the storm
 5. What was Jesus doing in the boat when it was caught in the storm?
 - sleeping
 6. Why did Jesus do miracles like calming the storm and healing people?
 - To prove he was God's Son / saviour
 7. How did the Judge save his son from having to go to jail?
 - paid the fine
 8. How did God save us from having to be punished for the wrong things we have all done?
 - He punished Jesus instead / Jesus died on the cross
 9. Who put the X in Xmas?
 - God did!

ACTIVITY:

Game: Sleeping Sheep

Cordon off an area for the sheep pen. Elect a shepherd or two, depending on size of group. The rest of the children then lie on the floor as still as they can, pretending to be "sleeping sheep". The Shepherd watches over them and when he/she sees a "sheep" moving / make a sound, they must go to the sheep pen. These awake sheep are not allowed to speak or point out if someone is moving, but they are allowed to **bleat** and be a general annoyance!

READERS' THEATRE:

The Scene: In a courtroom. Children read parts.

Judge accusing lawyer defence lawyer policeman 1

policeman 2 jury court official criminal

COURT OFFICIAL: Hear ye, Hear ye! The court is in session! All stand!

JUDGE: What is the case this morning?

ACCUSING LAWYER: Your Honour, this man has been charged with stealing all the
money from his boss.

JUDGE: What a terrible thing to do! What happened?

POLICEMAN 1: Your Honour, we received a 'phone call down at the Police
Station from Miss Jones that she thought someone was in the
office at night, when everyone should have gone home.

POLICEMAN 2: She just happened to be driving past when she saw the light in
the window. She knew she had turned the light off when she
locked up, so she called the Police straight away.

POLICEMAN 1: We caught him red-handed, Your Honour, with a bag full of
money.

JUDGE: Does the accused wish to say anything in his own defence?

DEFENCE LAWYER: He needed the money, Your Honour. He doesn't get paid much
and he needed the money to pay all his bills. He is very sorry,
Your Honour.

JUDGE: What were the bills for?

DEFENCE LAWYER: His new car and his new house.

JUDGE: What was wrong with his old car and his old house?

DEFENCE LAWYER: They weren't very good, Your Honour. He wanted something better to come home to after his overseas holiday.

ACCUSING LAWYER: You see, Your Honour, he was just greedy. He deserves to go to jail!

JUDGE: Well, jury. You have heard all the evidence. How do you find the defendant? Guilty or not guilty?

JURY: GUILTY!

COURT OFFICIAL: Defendant! Rise and face the judge for your sentence.

JUDGE: Son!

CRIMINAL: Dad! I'm really sorry.

JUDGE: I am the judge. I must treat you the same as everybody else. You are hereby fined fifty thousand dollars. If the fine is not paid, you will go to jail for 5 years.

CRIMINAL: But dad! I don't have any money. That's why I stole the money from my boss. Please save me dad. I'm really sorry.

JUDGE: The fine is \$50,000. It must be paid or you go to jail.

COURT OFFICIAL: You heard the judge. The fine must be paid or I must take you to jail.

CRIMINAL: I'm helpless! I can't pay!

COURT OFFICIAL: Then off you go to jail!

Wait! Your Honour! What are you doing?

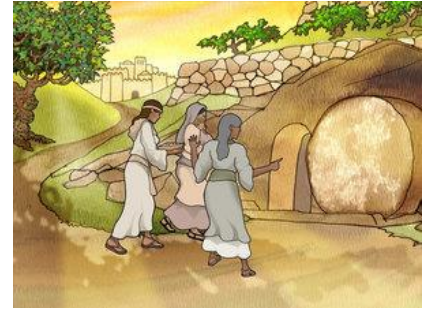
JUDGE: Here is my cheque for \$50,000. I am paying the fine so that my son does not have to go to jail.

CRIMINAL: Thanks dad, thank you! You saved me!

GOOD FRIDAY
(A short skit and puppet show)

Bible Basis: *Luke 24: 1-10*

Aim: To explain why we call the day of Jesus' death "Good" Friday. The skit can be used with Maynard's Groovy Tunes – "Good Friday"



Characters: Character 1 and 2 (Pam and Jan)
Puppet voices: Mary, old man, Angel

Props: Puppet show: Mary, old man, and Angel Puppets, tomb backdrop.
Song: "Good Friday" www.maynardsgroovytunes.co.uk on Powerpoint.
Easter egg.

Jan: Happy Easter, Pam!

Pam: Happy Easter.

Jan: Isn't it great to get a holiday for Easter!

Pam: Sure is!

Jan: Got any Easter eggs? I can't wait to eat mine.

Pam: Hey, you can't eat them till Easter Sunday. We don't eat them on Good Friday!

Jan: ?? What's Good Friday?

Pam: It's the day Jesus died.

Jan: The day Jesus died!! That sounds BAD to me. Wasn't he God's son?

Pam: Yes.

Jan: If he was God's son, and this is the day he died, why do you call it good? That's MAD.

Pam: Well, you know how we all do wrong things sometimes – that's called sin. And the Bible tells us that God will punish sin. But God didn't want to punish us, so instead he punished Jesus.

Jan: This is only gettin' worse! Jesus didn't just die, he died because he was punished instead of us! That's SAD. I really don't think you should call it Good Friday.

Pam: Look, it only makes sense if you know the whole story:

- In the past, if people wanted to say sorry to God, they had to sacrifice a sheep.

- but the next time they did wrong, they had to sacrifice another sheep

- every time they did wrong, they had to sacrifice a sheep

- over and over again, they had to sacrifice sheep

- But God had a plan!

- God sent his own son, Jesus – who was perfect and did no wrong – and sacrificed him – the perfect sacrifice. Because he was perfect, we don't have to go on sacrificing sheep. Jesus died, once and for all, for us.

Jan: That's amazing..... But I still don't think we should call it Good Friday.

I'm glad Jesus died for us, but he's dead! And that's not good.

Pam: Wait! That's not the end of the story. Remember I told you to wait till Easter Sunday before you can eat your Easter eggs. That's the other half of the Easter story. Let's see what happened.

[Old Man with walking stick left stage, tending garden. Mary walks past him sobbing, towards cave, centre right.]

Man: Why are you crying?

Mary: Jesus died. He's in that tomb.

Man: Oh, yes, I heard he'd been killed – and he was such a good man. He never did any wrong. But why are you going to the tomb if he's dead and buried there.

Mary: We didn't have time to prepare his body for burial, so I'm going to do it now, with this beautiful perfume. It's the least I can do.

Man: That's a lovely thing to do. But who will open the tomb for you? I would help, but I just wouldn't have the strength, I'm sorry. Anyway, there are three soldiers guarding the tomb – they won't let you in.

Mary: I don't know, but I have to try! Perhaps if they see it's just a woman and all I want is to put this perfume on his body..... I must try.

[Walk towards tomb, old man walks off to left.]

Mary: Oh no! The guards are gone! What? The stone has been rolled away and the tomb is open! Oh no! Has someone stolen Jesus' body?

[Looks into tomb. Angel appears to Mary.]

Mary: Oh!!

Angel: Don't be afraid Mary.

Mary: Wher...Where's Jesus' body?

Angel: Why are you looking for the living among the dead?
He is not here! He has risen!

[Angel departs. Mary looks around, then walks back the way she came on. Old man comes back on.]

Mary: He's alive! He's alive!

Man: What's happened?! Who's alive?

Mary: It's so wonderful! Jesus is alive again!

Man: But you said he was dead and buried.

Mary: Yes, he was. But when I got to the tomb, it was empty! I looked in, but Jesus was gone. Then an angel appeared! He told me Jesus wasn't there any more. He was alive again.

Man: He was dead, but now he's alive?

Mary: I must go! I have to tell Jesus' disciples the good news!

Man: Wow – Jesus is alive again. I'd better spread the good news!

(Pam and Jan come back on.)

Pam: And you know, Mary did tell Jesus' friends the good news, and they told everyone too.

So, do you understand now how we can say Easter Friday is Good Friday?

Jan: I think so: Jesus died on the Friday. And that sounds BAD.

Pam: It does.

Jan: And he was God's Son – so that sounds MAD.

Pam: It does.

Jan: And he died so we wouldn't be punished and that sounds SAD.

Pam: It does.

Jan: But, because he died, we can be forgiven for doing wrong things, and that's GOOD!

Pam: Right!

Jan: And he didn't stay dead. He came alive again on Easter Sunday!

Pam: And that's good.

Jan: So we can celebrate by eating chocolate eggs

Pam: !!

Jan: and Jesus lived to be a very old man.

Pam: No! Jesus never died again. He lives forever! He's in heaven with God.

Jan: !!

Pam: That's why it's so good to be God's friends. We can live forever with
him in heaven.

And that's good news.

Jan: Sure is.

REMEMBERING EASTER

Bible Base: The account of Jesus' death and resurrection in any of the Gospels, eg *Luke 22 – 24*.

Aim: To show children that everyday things they see around them can remind them of the Easter story.



Characters: Adult and two children: Anne and Tom, Josie.
This can be done with the Adult addressing two puppets.

Props: Backdrop of a street scene with the following included in the scene:

- a bakery
- a courthouse
- a crossing road sign
- a large rock

Anne: ***(Introduce the puppet skit to children.)***
You've watched the story of Easter tonight, and perhaps you've heard a bit about Easter in Scripture lessons or somewhere else like Sunday School. But I wonder how much you remember and I wonder if there's things around us that could help us remember what happened at Easter. Tom and Josie might be able to help.

ANNE: ***(Turning to puppets.)*** Hi Tom. Hi Josie!

TOM & JOSIE: Hi / Hey!

ANNE: Do you guys know much about the story of Easter?

JOSIE: Yeah, I think so.

TOM: Um, I don't think I can remember much.

ANNE Well, what if I try to help you remember by finding some clues.

J / TOM Clues? / Where?

ANNE Just around us here. For example: Do you remember what Jesus and his disciples ate when they shared the last meal they had with Jesus before he died?

TOM Give us a clue.

ANNE What shop are you standing near?

TOM The bakery!

ANNE And what do they sell?

JOSIE Bread! I remember now – Jesus broke the bread and shared it with his friends. He said breaking the bread was like breaking his body – you know – when he died.

ANNE See, you do know! That’s why every time we break bread at church we remember that Jesus died. Whenever you pass the bakery, you can remember that.

TOM Mmm. That bakery sure smells good.

ANNE Hey, look at the Court house.

TOM I think I can smell HOT CROSS BUNS!

ANNE That courthouse reminds me of the next part of the Easter story.

JOSIE I know! When Jesus was tried by Pontius Pilate! But it was a crooked trial – the witnesses told lies. Jesus did nothing wrong, but Pilate had him killed anyway.

TOM That’s BAD! Why would he do that? Wasn’t Jesus a really good man?

ANNE Yes, he was. But Pilate knew that the big mob of people outside the court wanted Jesus dead, and Pilate wanted to be popular. So he had Jesus killed. Can you remember how Jesus was killed?

TOM Umm.

JOSIE Can you give us a clue.

ANNE Look at that road sign – that'll give you a clue. What's on it?

JOSIE A cross! Jesus died on the cross.

ANNE Correct!

TOM Aahh, that's sad. To think that Jesus died.

ANNE That's not the end of the story, Tom. And there's another clue right behind you, next to that bush.

TOM A rock?

JOSIE Didn't they put a huge rock in front of Jesus' tomb, so that his friends couldn't steal his body?

TOM Why would anyone want to steal a dead body??

ANNE Because Jesus said he was going to rise from the dead. No-one believed him, but they didn't want Jesus' friends to steal his body and then pretend he had risen from the dead.

TOM Did anyone try to break in?

ANNE No. Jesus broke out! He rose again, just like he said. And he's alive forever!

JOSIE And God made him our King, didn't he.

ANNE That's right. All this happened at Easter – and whenever you walk down the street you might be able to remember parts of the Easter story.

TOM Especially the bakery!

ANNE The bread?

TOM No. Smell those HOT CROSS BUNS! Let's go to the bakery! (Both exit)

ANNE *(If desired, address audience:)* Do you know why they make hot cross buns at Easter?.....

GIVE TO OTHERS AND GOD WILL GIVE TO YOU

Bible basis: *Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Luke 6:38*
As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." Luke 21:1-4



Aim: To help children understand the principles of biblical giving.

Characters: Leader (to introduce skit), actor, some children.

Props: A cake or some other delicious food that you can share with children after the skit. A handful of sultanas.

Leader: Now it's time for the Kid's Talk. (***Get kids to the front.***) Are you ready
..... (name)?

Actor: What? Now?

Leader: Yes!

Actor: But I'm just about to have morning tea.

Leader: Well, it's time for the Kid's Talk!

Actor: But I'm hungry! And I want my morning tea!

Leader: Well, bring it with you!

Actor: OK! (***While holding a plate full of the delicious food, actor munches and crunches his/her way through a piece of a large cake while addressing kids.***) Have you heard about [40 Hour Famine – or other fund-raiser for poverty/famine etc]? World Vision is organising a 40 Hour Famine to raise awareness of hunger and poverty and to raise

funds to help overcome these problems in Australia and around the world. (***Munch, scrunch.***) I think it's a great idea and I think all Christians would agree because the Bible says it's a good thing to "give to others" and to "feed the hungry".

Are any of you hungry? (***Stop munching and crunching.***) Good, then you'll understand how I felt. I was hungry too! Now, the Bible says we should feed the hungry, so I'm going to give you something to eat! I want you all to stand up and hold out your hands. (***Put delicious food aside and get out the sultanas. Making a big display as you hand out each sultana, place one sultana in each child's hands.***) The Bible also says, "Give to others and God will give to you." OK – off you go.

Mmm. "Give to others and God will give to you." I wonder what God is going to give to me!

Leader: I have some good news and some bad news for you. The good news is, yes, the Bible does say "Give to others and God will give to you." but the bad news is it also says, "The measure you use for others is the one that God will use for you."

You could share your cake with the children.

Actor: No! That's mine! I don't mind sharing my sultanas (***Walk off with the cake.***)

Leader: (***Addressing the children, ask:***) Kids, do you think (actor) was very generous to you? (***Draw out that actor was quite mean in only giving each child one sultana, when he/she could have shared his/her cake. Open Bible and read to them.***) This is what Jesus said about being

generous. “As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. “I tell you the truth,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.” (Luke 21:1-4)

(Share cake with children after the service.)

THE PROGRAM (FORGIVENESS OF SINS)

Bible basis: *As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Psalm 103:12*

Aim: An introduction to teaching about forgiveness of sins.

Characters: Leader (to introduce skit), actor.

Props: A program folder from program currently running in church or church group or Bible in a folder or cover which doesn't have "Bible" written on it.

Leader: Now we're going to take a moment out from the service so (name) can do a quick add for a program she/he's just done.

Actor: ***(Walk out carrying program folder under your arm.)*** Good morning!

Leader: Good morning! So, you've done a program.

Actor: Yep, I sure have.

Leader: Gosh, if you don't mind me saying so, you're looking really great!

Actor: Thanks. Yes, I've lost heaps! I feel like a new person since I did this program.

Leader: Is that what it is! Well, it certainly worked! Can men join the program too? ***(Pat your tummy – not that you need to!)***

Actor: Of course! Men and women, children too – you're never too old, never too young. We have all ages do this program.

Leader: Good, and how much does it cost?

Actor: It's absolutely free!

Leader: Free! And it works! That's great. It's almost too good to believe.



Actor: Well, it comes with a lifetime guarantee that once it's gone - that's it – it's gone for good.

Leader: Tell me, how long does it take?

Actor: Just a few seconds really.

Leader: Seconds!!! How can that possibly work. I've heard that if you lose it quickly, you put it back on quickly.

Actor: Put it back on? No way. As I said, there's a guarantee.

Leader: I'm sorry (name), but everyone I know who's ever lost weight **quickly** just puts it all back on, **and more!**

Actor: Weight?? Weight?? Who said anything about losing weight?

Leader: You did! You said you'd done a weight loss program.

Actor: It's not a **weight loss** program I'm promoting – it's a SIN LOSS PROGRAM. Guaranteed in the Bible: "If we confess our sins, God will take them away from us, as far as the east is from the west." (Ps 103.12) It doesn't take long at all – just the time it takes to say a prayer – and we lose all those sins we've ever done. Everyone can join – it's free!

Leader: So, "confess our sins", that's like admitting we've done wrong?

Actor: That's right – we just have to tell God that we know we've done wrong things and that we are sorry.

Leader: I know I need to say I'm sorry. If anyone would like to say sorry with me, just say "Amen." at the end of this prayer.

(Pray a brief prayer such as: Dear God, I know I've done wrong things.

I'm sorry. Please forgive me and take away my sins. Thank you Lord.

Amen.)

THE MIRACLE CLEANER (A Mothers Day Skit)

Bible Basis: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9*

"Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." Isaiah 1:18



Aim: To show that doing wrong is like getting dirty – dirty on the inside – and that only God can make us clean again.

Characters: 2 speakers – speaker 1 is female

Props: A bucket with a modern translation of the Bible inside – out of sight.
A modern translation of Isaiah 1:18 which emphasises “whiter than white” or “white as snow”, written on large sheet of paper.
Salesman could be dressed like a current TV advertisement salesman who is selling the latest wonder cleaner.
Change the lines to sound like the lines used in the TV ad.

Speaker 1: ***(Standing in front, addressing “Wonder worker” salesman)***

Hello! Who are you?

Wonder Worker: Hi! I’m (eg, “Wonder Worker” Wilma / Krazy Kleaner Kev /
name of current cleaner), and I’m excited! ***(Or phrase used on TV ad)***.

Speaker 1: What about?

W Worker: I’ve got something here that will clean whiter than white. Cleaner than
clean. I’m excited!

Speaker 1: Oh no! Not **another** bathroom cleaner.

W Worker: This is not for your **bathroom** – it’s for you! It will make **you** clean
again! That’s why I’m so excited!

Speaker 1: No thanks! Every Mother’s Day I get more soap! I’ve got enough soap
to last a lifetime.

W Worker: No! You don't understand – this will make you clean on the inside!

Speaker 1: On the inside? What do you mean? How do I get dirty on the inside?

W Worker: The Bible says that when we do wrong things, when we sin, it's like getting dirty – only you can't see the **stain** – it's on the inside.

Speaker 1: On the inside! Yuk! How are we supposed to get **that** clean? Swallow that stuff? *(Pointing to the bucket.)*

W Worker: Definitely not! You don't "**swallow**" anything that cleans. Besides, there's nothing we can do to get clean again. We just have to **believe**.

Speaker 1: Believe! Believe what?

W Worker: *(Taking Bible out of bucket.)* Believe what the Bible says.

(Read 1 John 1:9) "If we confess our sins, (God) will..... forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When we say sorry to God for the wrong things we do, **He** washes us clean. Whiter than white! I'm excited!

Speaker 1: Does the Bible really say that!

W Worker: Sure does! *(Read Isaiah 1:18)* "You are stained red with sin, but I will wash you as white as snow."

(Hold up the verse written on paper and read through a couple of times.)

Speaker 1: Wow (Wonder Wilma / Krazy Kev), I'm excited too. How about we go off to Sunday School to learn some more about what the Bible teaches. *(Or other appropriate exit.)*

TELEPHONE TO GLORY



- Bible basis:** *In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Eph 3:12*
- Aim:** To show that we have access direct to God the Father through Jesus Christ.
- Characters:** A person phoning a call centre and then “praying” and voices for the following: a call centre person, advertising voice, an angel, a Scottish angel, advertising angel. (One person can do all the voices if desired.)
- Props:** A skit for an older audience. A microphone, off stage, for call centre voices, a telephone for person praying. If used, a “telephone” song should be suited to age of audience - for an older audience - “Telephone to Glory” by Jimmy Little; for a mixed audience “Ring Ring, Why Don’t You Give Me a Call” (Abba). Have these on power point and a CD or YouTube clip.
- Caller:** ***Explain the experience of trying to speak to someone at a company or organisation such as Telstra, but only getting recorded messages or connected to a call centre.***
- Pick up ‘phone and pretend to dial Telstra.***
- Right, Telstra, 13 2000.
- Call centre:** ***(With a whining call centre voice.)*** Welcome to Telstra
- Caller:** Good morning, I
- Call centre:** So that I can direct your call to the right place, please state the reason for your call.
- Caller:** I was wanting to
- Call centre:** You may choose from one of the following options:
- For all billing enquiries, please press 1
- For enquiries about internet connections, please press 2
- For enquiries about new products and services, please press 3

For service difficulties and faults, please press 4

Caller: Four. (**Press 4 on phone.**)

Ad person: (**With a sparkling advertising voice.**) Have you heard about Telstra's latest offers

Caller: Hello! I'm just trying

Ad person: designed to save you money! If you connect your telephone, internet, and fax all with Telstra, we'll give you 10% off the cost of all your local calls – made between the hours of 2 am and 4 am. To hear more about this exciting offer, please press the hash key, located just below the 9.

..... (Pause)

Call centre: Please select from the following options:

If you are experiencing difficulties with your telephone life, please press 1

If you wish to report damage to your handset, please press 2

If you wish to report damage to a public telephone, please press 3

If you wish to return to the main menu, please press 4

Caller: (**Beginning to sound impatient.**) But none of these is what I want! Oh, I'll go back to the main menu.

Call centre: You may choose from one of the following options:

For all billing enquiries, please press 1

For enquiries about internet connections, please press 2

For enquiries about new products and services, please press 3

For service difficulties and faults, please press 4

Caller: This is hopeless, none of these is any good! I'll just wait? (Pause)

Call centre: (**Sing-song voice.**) Your call is important to us. We are currently experiencing delays and your call has been placed in a queue. Your call will be answered by the first available operator.

Caller: Oh, for heaven's sake! How long is this going to take?

Call centre: Thank you for waiting. Your call is important to us. Due to unexpected delays, we suggest you call back at a later time.

If you would like to hear about our exciting new products, please press the hash key. It is located just below.....

Caller: Blow you! (***Bang phone down to hang up.***)

Caller: Discuss how frustrating the experience was – when you need help, you need to be able to speak with someone about your problem. Relate this to how good it is that we don't have to go through Telstra to talk to God.

Caller: When I need help, I just pray, "Dear Lord....."

Angel: (***In sweet voice.***) Welcome to the Heavenly Hot Line. Your prayer is important to us. If you would like to praise God, please say "Hallelujah".

If you would like to confess a sin, please say "Hosanna".

If you would like help with a major crisis requiring a miracle, please say "Deliverance".

If you would like to make intercession, please say "Holy, holy, holy".

If you would like to ask God for something, please say "Amen".

Caller: Amen!

Angel: If you wish to ask for a material blessing, please say "Praise God".

If you wish to pray for safety, please say "Shalom".

If you wish to pray for healing, please say "Glory".

All other requests, please say "Yea Lord".

Caller: Yea Lord!

Angel: Please hold the line and you will be connected to the next available angel.

Caller: Thank you.

Angel: All our angels are currently busy. Your prayer is important to us. Please keep your eyes closed. Your prayer will be placed in a queue and you will be answered by the next available angel.

Ad angel: Have you considered joining our Heavenly Hotline Priority Access Club? For just \$500 pa + GST for Silver Membership, you can have instant access to a senior angel. And for just \$1000 pa + GST you can have Gold Membership! Gold Membership entitles you to instant access to an **archangel!** If you would like to join the Heavenly Hotline Priority Access Club, please kneel on your right knee. It is located just below your right thigh.

Caller: Oh, for heaven's sake!

Angel: Thank you for waiting. You are being connected.

Scottish *(In a Scottish accent.)* Och aye the noo, this is Angus here! Hoo might I help ye?

Angel: ye?

Caller: That's a funny name for an angel!

Scot angel: Ach well, I'm the guardian angel for the wee Free Presbyterians and there's no' many o' us aroond.

Caller: Well, Angus, what I wanted was to sort out a problem with Telstra. You see ...

Scot angel: Ach well, I canna help ye there lassie. I'm only a wee junior angel and with problems with Telstra you need to ask for "help with a major crisis requiring a miracle." I'll put ye back to the main menu.

Angel: Welcome to the Heavenly Hotline. Your prayer is important to us. If you would like to praise God, please say "Hallelujah....."

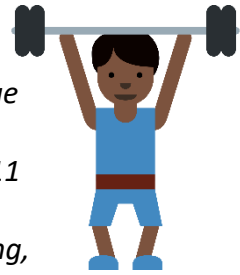
Caller: No!!!

Caller: **(Talk about how we don't have to go through all this – we have a direct line to our Heavenly Father.)**
Introduce "Telephone to Glory" or "Ring Ring" if used.

STUDY THE SCRIPTURES DAILY

Bible Basis: *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Acts 17:11*

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17



Aim: To show the importance of daily Bible study in our growth as strong Christians.

Characters: Leader, actor, weight-lifter, child to read Bible verses.

Props: If possible, metal, body-building weights with removable weights on the ends.
Bible opened at 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Leader: Introduces kids' talk. ***(Get all the kids down the front, to one side.)***

Weight-lifter: ***(Weight-lifter does some bicep curls.)***

Actor: What are you doing that for?

Weight-lifter: I'm doing weight-lifting exercises so I'll get big muscles.

(Puts down weights and shows muscles.)

Actor: Wow! I want muscles like that! Just think of the great things I could do if I were ***that*** strong! I could lay concrete, be a brickie, dig ditches!

That would be great! Move over, let me have a go.

(Tries, but can't lift weights off the floor.)

Weight-lifter: Here, let me help you. ***(Takes a weight off each end, and when actor still can't lift the bar, continue taking weights off until the bar is empty.)***

Actor: ***(Lifts the empty bar three or four times, then demonstrates big muscles.)***

Now I've got big muscles. Now I'm strong, I'll have big muscles for the rest of my life.

Weight-lifter: Wait a minute! You're not strong yet! You had to start with very light weights and you don't just do the exercises once and expect to be strong and stay that way for the rest of your life.

You have to start with very little weights and practise every day and slowly you'll get stronger and be able to lift heavier weights. A little practice every day.

Actor: Oh really! So it takes a long time and I have to do it every day.

Weight-lifter: Yes. ***(Weight-lifter leaves and actor starts to follow him.)***

Leader: Hey, (actor's name)! What about the kids' talk?

Actor: Oh, yes! ***(Walk over to kids.)***

Now, I see my friend (child's name) is here this morning – would you come out here for a minute please? would you please read these verses from the Bible.

Child: ***(Reads 2 Tim 3:16, 17.)***

Actor: Thanks (child's name). These verses say that the Scriptures (that is, the Bible) are good because they tell us the truth and correct our faults – is that correct, (child's name)?

Child: Yes.

Actor: So do you agree that it is very important to read the Bible and to know what the Bible says?

Child: Yes.

Actor: Right! Well, I'm going to make a first-class bible student out of you.

Here, take this Bible home and read all of it tonight. Then you'll know everything the Bible says and you'll never have to worry about it again!

OK! (*Push child off, back to his/her seat. Begin to walk off back to your seat.*)

Leader: Wait a minute! You can't do that!

Actor: What?

Leader: You can't just give someone a Bible and tell them to read it all in one go, and then expect them to know everything the Bible says!

Actor: But surely if you've read the Bible, that's all you need to do!

Leader: No, it doesn't work like that.

Actor: Please explain!

Leader: Well, it's like weight-lifting. You have to start off with very little weights, then keep practising every day and slowly build up till you can lift heavy weights. Well, when you first start reading the Bible, you just read a little bit at a time – and read it every day. Then slowly as you get older you'll be able to read lots more and understand more – until you really d become a first-class Bible student.)

Actor: OK, I see. So (child's name) should just read a little each day to start with and gradually he'll be able to read and understand lots more, right?

Leader: Yes – and there's one more thing.

Actor: Yes!

Leader: Remember how Peter had to help you with the weight-lifting?

Actor: Yes.

Leader: Well, we have to ask the Holy Spirit to help us to understand the Bible when we read.

Actor: OK. So, we: read a little
every day
and ask the Holy Spirit to help us.

Leader; Right!

THE TWO POT PLANTS (CHRISTIAN GROWTH)

Bible Basis: *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful." John 15:1-2*



Aim: To show that, just as plants need to be pruned to grow beautifully and fruitfully, we need discipline to grow as Christians.

Characters: An interviewer and two gardeners with a pot plant each.

Props: Two pot plants. One pot plant is lush and thriving, the other is doing very poorly.

A picture of: the sun, water, secateurs.

Interviewer: (***Introduces the first "gardener".***) Could you show us your pot plant?

Gardener 1: (***Produces a beautiful pot plant.***)

Interviewer: That's a lovely plant,(*name of gardener*)! (Make some comments about the appearance of the plant, what type of plant it is, etc.)

Could you tell us a little about how you get it to look so lovely and healthy?

Gardener 1: Sure: well, I keep it well watered and well drained (whatever the plant needs) and I check it out every now and then to make sure there are no bugs on it.

Interviewer: How do you get it to look so lush and colourful (whatever is appropriate)?

Gardener 1: Oh, that's because I give it a bit of fertiliser every now and then and I also make sure that its roots are not too crowded – if they are, I re-pot it.

Interviewer: Right, I see. It doesn't seem to be too worried by being indoors.

Gardener 1: No, that's because I move it round so that it still gets plenty of sun.

Interviewer: And I see there are no dead leaves either.

Gardener 1: Well, I prune it regularly too of course, to get rid of any dead leaves or stems. That way the plant will grow much bigger and have more fruit/flowers.

Interviewer: You certainly take good care of it, no wonder it's such a lovely plant.
Many thanks for coming along and showing us your plant.

(Gardener 1 leaves stage, leaving her plant behind.)

Interviewer: Now, we have another guest with her/his pot plant. ***(Welcome
(name) second Gardener and introduce him/her to audience.)***
.... (name), could you show us your pot plant.

Gardener 2: ***(Produces a straggly looking plant.)***

Interviewer: ***(Looking startled.)*** Oh my! That certainly is a ... a... plant!

Gardener 2: ***(Looking oblivious.)*** Yes, I grew it myself.

Interviewer: Oh, and how often do you water it?

Gardener 2: Oh yeah! I knew there was something I meant to do!

Interviewer: ***(Examining leaves.)*** I think something's been eating the leaves.

Gardener 2: Has it?

Interviewer: Do you fertilise it?

Gardener 2: Nup.

Interviewer: Do you prune it?

Gardener 2: Nup.

Interviewer: Do you check to see if it needs re-potting?

Gardener 2: Nup.

Interviewer: Have you moved around so it still gets plenty of light?

Gardener 2: Nup.

Interviewer: Er, well, thanks for coming (name). I think we can see how you got your plant looking that way!

Gardener 2: You're welcome.

Interviewer: ***(Addressing children.)***

You know, the Bible says we are like plants and God is the GARDENER.

I can understand how we need feeding and watering to grow strong and healthy. But how does God prune us? Does he chop off an arm or a leg or a few fingers to make us grow better? No. The dead bits that God prunes off us are the bad things we have let into our lives. Things like unkindness or selfishness. These things stop us from being the kind of people God meant us to be.

Has anyone ever been in trouble at school and been disciplined for breaking the rules? ***(Briefly discuss the way we are disciplined at school and note that we usually don't like being disciplined!)*** The purpose of discipline is the same as pruning – so that we grow into good and fruitful people.

So next time you are disciplined, and you don't like it much (!), just remember the two pot plants (***show the pot plants***) and be glad that you will grow like the good pot plant.

DON'T JUST LISTEN – DO IT!

Bible Basis: *Don't just listen to the word – Do what it says. James 1:22*

Aim: Encourage children to put Bible teaching into practice.

Characters: Exercise leader, group of children

Props: James 1:22 in large print.
Small exercise towels/hand towels for self and children to “wear”.
Copy of script for each child, with just their lines.



Exercise leader: ***(Beforehand if possible, give 5 children a copy of the script with just their lines on it. Explain quietly to children that you are going to pretend to be an exercise leader and that, although you are going to tell them to follow your exercises, they are to ignore you and stand and watch only. Explain “aerobic capacity”. Have them stand in a line facing you, with towels around their necks.)***

Ex. Leader: Good morning everyone! Welcome to Fast and Furious Fitness Class.

Today we're going to continue our exercises that will improve our fitness, build up our muscles, and improve our aerobic capacity. Let's get moving! ***(Turn back on children and commence exercises, yelling out instructions as you go. Perform some simple step exercises for a minute or so.)***

Ex. Leader: Well, class, I hope you enjoyed that and that you're getting fitter, and stronger, and have more aerobic capacity! ***(Leave stage.)***

Child 1: Hey, are you getting any stronger?

Child 2: No, my muscles aren't any bigger, and I come every week.

Child 3: I don't think I'm any fitter since I started coming here.

Child 4: Me neither, and I haven't missed a week.

Child 5: At least our aerobic capacity is better I suppose.

Child 4: What is aerobic capacity?

Child 6: I don't know for sure, I think it's got something to do with having a lot of wind.

All Children: Eeeyoo! *(Sounding slightly disgusted.)*

Ex. Leader: ***(Minus towel.)*** Thank children for taking part and ask them why they weren't getting fitter or stronger or having more aerobic capacity.

That's right, if we come along every week and just **listen** to the Exercise Leader, but don't **do** any exercises, we won't get any stronger.

That reminds me of what the Bible says: "Don't just listen to the word.. Do what it says." James 1:22

Ex. Leader: If we come and listen to our Sunday School/Kids Club/Scripture Teachers every week as they teach us about what the Bible says to do, but then never bother about it for the rest of the week, we can't be surprised if we don't seem to be getting stronger in our faith or getting better at doing what we know is right. ***(Hold up Bible verse and have children read with you.)***

Don't just listen to the word. Do what it says. James 1:22

CAREERS FOR CHRISTIAN KIDS

Bible Basis: *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for men." Colossians 3:23*

"Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.If they were all one part, where would the body be?" 1 Corinthians 12: 14, 19



Aim: An address aimed at older children to show that we can serve God in a variety of careers, not just a select few that sound more worthy than others. Whatever you do, you can be serving God.

Characters: 2 speakers

Props: Colossians 3:23 in large print

Speaker 1: ***(Addressing children.)***

I know some of you are studying for your Higher School

Certificate/Leaving Certificate etc. Soon you will be leaving school and looking for work or heading off to TAFE or university. It is important to try to find the right career, so I am here to help you choose your career today.

(Make this address as though you are thinking it through as you go.

No need to learn word for word, just the main points to keep it flowing. It is meant to sound a little ridiculous.)

First: As Christians, we want to do something noble and good!

Something that God would be really pleased with!

DOCTOR! Doctors heal the sick, cure diseases, mend broken bones.

You can ALL BE DOCTORS!

No, wait a minute! You need really high marks to get into medicine, and some people can't stand the sight of blood. But we still want a career where we can help people and do good in the community.

Mmm.

TEACHER! They do lots of good – they teach us all about the world around us, they help kids with disabilities to learn, they help brainy people to learn physics!! You can ALL BE TEACHERS!

No! Not everyone can teach well – some people couldn't teach a bird to fly. What about a career where you tell people about Jesus.

PREACHER! People learn heaps about God from a preacher. Think of all Jesus' Apostles taught! You can ALL BE PREACHERS!

Wait a minute! Out of the 12 Apostles, Jesus' 3 closest friends were all fishermen. [*Or "fishers" if you prefer.*] Jesus chose fishermen!

FISHERMEN! You can ALL BE FISHERMEN!

But then again, Jesus wasn't a fisherman. He was a carpenter. If the greatest man who ever lived was a carpenter, then that must be the best career!

CARPENTER! You can ALL BE CARPENTERS!

THAT'S SETTLED THEN!

Speaker 2: Wait a minute (*name*). I appreciate you're trying to help, but you can't just expect all these young people to grow up to be the same thing – ALL CARPENTERS or ALL TEACHERS.

The Bible says that all of us in the Church are like parts of a **body** - all **different** – all **important**. You can't say, "eyes are important, THE WHOLE BODY BE EYES!" Or, "hands are important, THE WHOLE BODY BE HANDS!" You wouldn't be able to do much with that body!

It's the same thing with choosing a career. You can't say "Doctors are important, ALL BE DOCTORS!"

If we were all doctors, who would fix our drains?

If we were all fishermen, who would teach us to read and write?

Speaker 1: But I wanted to help them choose a job they could do where they would really be **pleasing the Lord and serving Him**.

Speaker 2: The Bible says: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord, and not for men." Colossians 3:23. (*Show verse on paper if used.*)

So, **whatever** work you do, if you do it **with all your heart to please the Lord**, it will be the **best** job you can do and you will ALL BE SERVING GOD.

HOW OLD IS GOD?

Bible Basis: *The Lord is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King.*” Jeremiah 10:10

Aim: To explain that God has no beginning and no end, he was not born like humans and he was not made. This skit best suits being done in summer.



Characters: Leader, female acting like an old woman (or male acting like old man)

Props: Walking stick, shawl (woman) or warm vest (man), Bible verse

Leader: ***(Introduce skit.)*** Now it's time for the Children's talk.

Old woman: ***(Walking shakily, hunched over walking stick, to the front.)***

Oh dear, oh dear!

Leader: What's the matter with you (name)? Why are you wearing that shawl?!!

Old woman: I thought I'd better have it just in case there was a chilly breeze.

Leader: !! Chilly breeze?? And what's that walking stick for?

Old woman: Just in case my legs give out.

Leader: What are you going on about? And why are you talking so strangely?

Old woman: I've just realised how old I am! Australia is one hundred and years old, so I'm about half ***(or whatever fraction your age is relative to the nation's age)*** as old as Australia! I must be so old!

Leader: That's silly! For a start, Australia may be one hundred and years old, but that doesn't make it old! It's only a young nation. Some nations are many hundreds of years old, some even thousands of years old!

Old woman: Really! That's a relief! ***(Shake off shawl and put walking stick aside.)*** I feel much younger now. Imagine, nations thousands of years old! They

must be the oldest things ever.

Leader: Well, no. Think of the earth itself. It was around for millions of years before any nations ever existed!

Old woman: Wow! The earth must be the oldest thing ever! Nothing could be older than the earth!

Leader: Well, actually someone has to be older than the earth. Someone had to create the earth and the moon and the stars. (*Ask children:*) Who created the earth and the moon and the stars? (*Assuming they answer correctly:*) Yes, God. God has always existed.

[If a child/children answer, “the big bang” or something like it, answer: “Well, no one knows exactly how the universe began, but the Bible tells us who was the one creating everything. It was God. God has always existed.”]

- He didn’t get born like we do. He has always been alive
- He didn’t begin like a nation. He was always there.
- He didn’t get made like the earth. He has always been.

(Hold up Bible verse.) The Bible says: **The Lord is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King.** (Jeremiah 10:10)

Old woman: What does “eternal” mean?

Leader: “Eternal” means he has no beginning and no end. God has always been and always will be. For ever and ever and ever!

Old woman: For ever and ever! That makes all of us here very young!

Leader: It does indeed.

BLIND GUIDES

Bible Basis: *"Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, 'What? Are we blind too?' Jesus said, 'If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.'" John 9:40, 41*



"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" John 14:6

Aim: To warn children that if we want to know the way to God we need to look to Jesus and to learn from people who believe in and follow Jesus themselves.

Props: Dark glasses. Large "map" showing directions to somewhere silly and way too far to walk. For example to the zoo, nearby National Park, up a local mountain. Another large "map" showing simple route from where you are to a nearby spot. For example, from the Church to the Sunday School.

Bible verse: John 14:6 on paper in large print.

Characters: A "blind" guide, Leader

Blind guide: ***(Wander around a bit, wearing dark glasses, as though blind, then stand facing away from the children.)*** Good morning children. This morning I thought I would take you for a little walk

Leader: Hang on a minute! What are you doing? You're facing the wrong way!
(Blind guide turns in another direction, but still not facing the children.)

Blind guide: Now, I want you children to follow me....

Leader: Wait! You're still facing the wrong way!

Blind guide: Well, tell the kids to stop moving!

(Leader turns the blind guide to face the children.)

Now, children. I'm going to lead, and you're going to follow.

Leader: You can't lead the children anywhere!

Blind guide: Why not? I've got a map! *(Feel for map, as though blind, then hold up map of the way to the zoo – or other place, changing script to suit.)*

Leader: That's a map of the way to the zoo. You can't take the children there for your little walk. It's over 50km away. They can't walk that far.

Blind Guide: Sorry! That's the wrong map. This is the map. *(Without looking at the map, as though blind, hold the map up upside-down.)*

Leader: It's 'round the wrong way.

Blind Guide: Oops! *(Turn map right way up.)*

Leader: This is hopeless! You can't lead anyone anywhere!

Blind Guide: Why not?

Leader: Let's face it, you're blind! A **blind guide** can't lead anyone anywhere. They'll both end up lost.

Blind Guide: You know, you're right! *(Take off glasses and address audience normally.)*

It **would** be silly if I was really blind to try to show you where to go. It's just the same as someone who doesn't believe in Jesus saying they can show you the **way** to heaven, or tell you the **truth** about God, or teach you the right way to **live** to please God.

They are just like **blind guides** – if they don't **believe** in Jesus and **follow** him they can't show us the way to heaven – even if they were someone important, like a bishop.

Listen to what the Bible says: *(Hold up John 14:6)* Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No-one comes to the Father but by me."

Jesus is the only way to heaven, and anyone who tries to show you another way is like a **blind guide** – if you follow them, you'll both end up lost.

I AM THE VINE

Bible Basis: *I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown in the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. John 15: 5-8*



Aim: This skit illustrates this teaching and provides an introduction for further teaching of the meaning of these verses – that we need to keep in close fellowship with Jesus.
This skit works well as a puppet show, but needs practice so that props can be handled by puppets, with help from a third party if needed.

Characters: Gardener, Bright spark.

Props: Pot plant, scissors, bowl of oranges, dead branch

SCENE 1:

Gardener: ***(Tending plant.)*** Ah, this plant is looking good. The leaves look healthy, that's a good sign.

Bright spark: ***(Entering from side.)*** Hey! What sort of tree is that?

Gardener: Oh, hi. This is my orange tree. I'm really looking forward to eating the fruit.

Bright spark: Orange tree?! I don't see any fruit.

Gardener: Well, not yet. The fruit has to grow, but see the buds here. That's the beginning of the fruit. This plant should have lots of fruit.

Bright spark: Fantastic! I love oranges! Can I have some?

Gardener: Sure! When they're ready. The fruit has to grow first.

Bright spark: But can't I break off a branch now and take it home and pick the fruit when it's ripe?

Gardener: That won't work, I'm afraid. If you break a branch off, it will just die, and then you won't get any fruit.

Bright spark: But surely it would be alright.

Gardener: No, it wouldn't! Plants need water. If the branch isn't attached to the tree, how will it get water? It doesn't have any roots.

Bright spark: I'll stick it in a vase of water when I get home.

Gardener: Well, that may keep it alive for a little while, but the branch will still eventually die, and no fruit will ever grow.

Bright spark: Ahh, you just don't want me to have any of your oranges!

Gardener: Not at all! I'd be happy to share. But if the branch is cut off from the tree, it won't get any nourishment and will die. You won't get any fruit then, will you?

Bright spark: I think you're making that up. I want a branch – let me have one!

(Reaches for a branch, but is stopped by Gardener.)

Gardener: Don't you dare break that off! Now, buzz off!! Don't come back!

Bright spark: ***(Slinks off to side, almost out of sight, muttering.)*** Humph! Stupid old gardener – what would he know!

Gardener: Good, I'm glad he's gone. I don't want any of these branches to be broken off and die. *(Fusses around plant a bit, then leaves.)*

Bright spark: *(Waits for gardener to leave, then sneaks over to plant and breaks off a branch.)*

SCENE 2

Gardener: *(Admiring bowl of oranges.)* What a fine crop of oranges – all that fruit from one tree. What a pity that silly boy broke a branch off before there was any fruit on it.

Bright spark: *(Carrying a dead branch.)* Boy, what a useless branch! Not even one little orange. *(Looks over to gardener and his bowl of oranges.)* Wow! Where did you get all those oranges?!

Gardener: I picked them off my orange tree, of course. They grew on the plant until they were ready to eat, just as I told you they would, and then I picked them.

Bright spark: My stupid branch is dead as a dodo. Not a single orange.

Gardener: I don't think it's the branch that's the stupid one.

Bright spark: What'll I do with the branch?

Gardener: Throw it in the fire. That's all it's good for.

Bright spark: *(Throws the branch away.)* Boy, you sure have some delicious oranges. I bet they taste good.

Gardener: They sure do. Come on, we'll go and pick some more for you.

Bright spark: Thanks! ***(Both leave.)***

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Bible basis: *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12*



"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16.

Aim: To show that Jesus, as the light of the world, shows us the way to live and warns us of danger if we are headed in the wrong direction. As followers of Jesus, we should reflect that light to others by our example.

Characters: Two characters going for a walk. This skit can be done as a puppet show.

Props: Torch in a box, backpack, mirror.

(Characters walk along a track.)

Jill: What a beautiful evening!

Jack: Sure is. Why don't we go for a walk out on the headland?

Jill: OK. ***(Characters walk back and forth.)***

Jack: We just have to follow the path.

Jill: I'm not sure I can **see** the path very clearly.

Jack: Don't go near the edge, it's a bit dangerous.

Jill: I'm not sure this was such a good idea. ***(Starting to sound nervous.)***

Jack: We'll be right. Just stay on the path – that's the right way.

Jill: Boy it's dark. I can't see a thing!

Jack: Me neither, actually. ***(Looking around to find the right way.)***

Jill: Is this the right way?

Jack: I don't know. I can't see. ***(Both of them look around.)***

Jill: Whooa! We can't go that way, can we?

Jack: Not if it's dangerous.

Jill: I can't really see if there's anything in the way.

Jack: I don't think so. **(Not sounding sure.)**

Jill: Is this the right way?

Jack: Not sure. We need a light!

Jill: If we want to stay on this path and keep away from danger, we definitely need a light!

Jack: I have a torch!

Jill: A light! Great!

Jack: How lucky are you that I've brought my "you-beaut" torch?!

Jill: I am lucky that you have a torch. But where is it?

Jack: It's in my backpack.

Jill: Good, how about you get it out?

Jack: **(Rummage around for torch in box out of backpack.)** It's water-proof and shock proof?

Jill: Terrific.

Jack: And it's got an LED globe – it lasts a lifetime!

Jill: That's good too, but right now it's still very dark.

Jack: Here it is!! **(Produce torch, still in the box.)**

Jill: Great. Now, we'll be right.

(Jack continues to admire torch in box.)

Jill: Jack, until you take it out of the box, turn it on, and let it shine some light on the path, we still won't know the way, we still won't be able to see if we're headed for danger.

(Jack gets torch out of box and turns it on. Shin it towards the audience.)

Jill: Ahh, at last, we can see the way to go and we can see any dangers too!

Jack: Come on, let's follow the light!

(Both proceed off-stage.)

Leader: Discuss the skit with the following points:

- The light of the torch was handy to:
 - show the path
 - show dangers
- Discuss how the light from lighthouses warn of danger to sailors and shows them the right way to go.
- Ask: Where are lighthouses usually built? (High ground.)
- Ask: Why are they put there? (Highly visible.)
- Jesus said: “I am the light of the world.” What do you think this means?
 - He can show us the right way to live (the right path for our lives).
 - He can warn us if we are going the wrong way.
- If we know Jesus and we know how he wants us to live, Jesus says that’s like having a light: When you have a light, you don’t put a box on it – you put it on a stand so everyone can see it.
- Don’t keep it a secret. Let other people see the light too.
- You’ve seen how bright the moon can shine at night. Can anyone explain how the moon shines? Where does it get its light?
- Demonstrate torch light reflecting in mirror.
- Need to keep mirror facing the light if we are to see light shining from the mirror.
- In the same way, if we want to reflect the light of Jesus in our lives, we need to keep looking at Jesus.

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Bible Basis:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep." John 10:11-13



Aim:

To explain what a good shepherd is like and to explain that Jesus cares for us the way a good shepherd cares for his sheep.

Characters:

Leader, bad shepherd, good shepherd, wolf, sheep or two.
For optional puppet skit at end, a boy and a girl puppet.

Props:

This skit can be presented as a puppet show. Shady tree for good shepherd. Wolf silhouette if doing a puppet show. Shepherd's staff.

INTRODUCTION

Leader:

The Bible tells us that Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd."

Ask: What does a shepherd do?

Sometimes wild animals like wolves – and feral dogs - attack sheep.

Jesus said that a good shepherd would **save** his sheep if they get attacked by wild animals or if they wander off into the bush and get lost.

Keep your eyes open because I want you to warn the shepherd if you see a wolf!

SCENE 1:

(Just one palm tree on stage. Shepherd walks on.)

Bad Shepherd:

Boy it's hot! This is as **far** as I want to **walk**. This tree'll give me a bit of shade to sit under, so I'll be OK. Hmph! ***(Sits down.)***

There's not much grass growing here – the sheep'll just have to walk a bit further to find a feed.

Sheep:

Baa, baa.

Bad Shepherd:

That muddy water should be good enough to give them a drink.

(Wolf silhouette appears, then leaves silently.)

Sheep: Baa, baa.

Bad Shepherd: No point in bleating about it! You can have a good drink when you get back home! Yeah, I'm looking forward to getting home and getting paid.

(Wolf silhouette appears and howls, then stays visible.)

Bad Shepherd: What's that!? ***(Wolf silhouette howls and departs.)***

Bad Shepherd: I hope that's not a wolf! I'm here all by myself and I've heard some bad stories about wolves attacking **shepherds!**

(Wolf appears from one side of stage and howls.)

Bad Shepherd: If he comes near me, I'm out of here! I don't get paid enough for this.

(Wolf growls and springs across to shepherd.)

Bad Shepherd: Aaargh! Get away! ***(Bad shepherd runs away with wolf chasing him.)***

(Off stage, wolf growls and sheep baas, then stops suddenly.

Wolf howls. Optional: Wolf puppet slinks back across stage with a lamb in his jaws and continues off-stage.)

INTERVAL:

Leader: Boy, I don't think much of **that** shepherd! He certainly wasn't a good shepherd.

Ask: What did he do when the wolf came? That's right. He only cared about himself and he ran away and let the wolf attack the sheep. I hope the next story is a bit happier. But still

keep your eyes open for any wolves.

SCENE 2: ***(More shady trees. Good shepherd enters carrying a staff.)***

Good Shepherd: Ah, yes, this is a good spot! There's plenty of good pasture and there's a lovely cool creek just over there so my sheep can all have a good drink. There's a few more trees here too, so they can get out of the sun. It was certainly worth the long walk. I'll just go and check the sheep are all here and settled. ***(Shepherd leaves briefly, returns and sits down under trees.)*** Yes, they're fine – now I can have a rest too. Phew.

(Brief pauses, then wolf silhouette appears briefly and howls.)

Good Shepherd: ***(Springs up.)*** A wolf! Where is he?

(Wolf silhouette appears and howls, then leaves.)

Good Shepherd: Yeah, that's a wolf alright! If he thinks he can come here and steal any of my sheep he's got another thing coming. My trusty staff will soon teach him a lesson. I won't let him harm any of my sheep!

(Wolf appears at corner of stage, growling. Wolf starts to run towards shepherd. Shepherd moves towards wolf and hits him with the staff as he chases the wolf away. Wolf runs off yelping.)

Good Shepherd: What a day! I don't want that wolf sneaking back again. It's time to gather my flock together again and get them safely back home. ***(Exit, calling:)*** Come on sheep, over to me – time to go home.

LEADER:

Did you like the good shepherd better?

What things did the good shepherd do for his sheep?

- made sure they had food
- made sure they had water
- kept them safe
- protected/saved them from wolf

Jesus says he is the Good Shepherd and we are his sheep. So he care for us. This means we can ask him:

- for the things we need
- to protect us

Jesus also said that, like a good shepherd, if any of his sheep stray away into the bush and get **lost** he will go and find them and **save** them.

(Optional prayer: Dear Jesus, Thank you that you care for us, just like a good shepherd cares for his sheep. Please watch over us and our families. Thank you for Amen

OPTIONAL PUPPET SKIT:

Girl: Did you enjoy that?

Boy: Yeah! Those wolves were cool! Oooo! ***(Imitate wolf howl.)***

Girl: Aren't you glad Jesus is the Good Shepherd?

Boy: Not really.

Girl: ??!???

Boy: I haven't got any sheep, let alone any **lost** sheep that need to be saved.

Girl: Jesus doesn't save **sheep**!

Boy: He doesn't? Does he just let the wolves **eat** them?

Girl: Noo..... it's not that – it's that Jesus is talking about **people** – not sheep.

Boy: People?

Girl: Yes, boys and girls, men and women. Jesus came to save **us**.

Boy: Ooh! I see. Jesus is a Lifesaver! Will he be at the beach on the weekend?

Girl: Noo.... He's not a lifesaver at the beach!

Boy: But you said he came to **save** us.

Girl: Look, long, long ago, God and people were best friends. But when the people decided to disobey God, they couldn't be friends any more.

Boy: Whooa....that doesn't sound good.

Girl: No, it wasn't. But God **did** promise that one day he would send a saviour, who would make a way for people and God to be friends again. He would **save** us. Can you guess who this is?

Boy: Jesus?

Girl: Yes! God sent Jesus to save **us**.

Boy: The he **is** a lifesaver!

Girl: Well, I guess you're right.

Boy: Yeah, and I **am** glad about that, even if no-one is looking after the sheep. **(Exit.)**

Girl: **(Following.)** But, but...

THE PRODIGAL SON



Bible basis: *The Parable of the Prodigal Son: Luke 15:11-32*

Aim: To show God's love for us is like a father's love for his wayward son: Like a loving father, God waits for his rebellious children to turn back to him and when they do he joyfully welcomes them even though they don't deserve it – ie, grace – and that we should not resent God's grace, but rather join in the celebration.

Characters: Sam (younger son), Ben (older son), Father, Girl 1, Girl 2, Landlord, Pig – for play, image of pig.

Props: This skit can be performed as both a puppet show and a play. Money bag, pitch fork and farmer's hat for Ben, smart vest for Sam, shabby vest for Sam.

Extras: Rooftop house for puppet show. Disco light. Pig sty fence/gate. Bucket. Party noises.

Suggested Music: "The Garden Song" (Inch by inch) by Arlo Guthrie, "I Like to Move It" by Robin Williams in "Madagascar", "Homeless" by Paul Simon, "Hey It's Good to be Back Home Again" by John Denver.

SCENE 1 ***(Intro music: "Inch by Inch". Sam on rooftop for puppet show.)***

Sam: Huh! Another stinkin' hot day. I'm sick of spending every summer sweating in those stinkin' fields. Work, work, work! That's all I ever do!

Ben: Sam, Sam! Where are you?

(Sam tries to hide.)

Ben: There you are! When do you think you're goin' to START? The rest of us have already put in a morning's work and you're still here!

Sam: So what? I don't have to work if I don't want!

Ben: Oh yes you do! We all have to pull our weight around here, even you.

Father: What's all the shouting? I can hear you a block away!

Ben: It's that good-for-nothing son of yours. As usual, he won't work!

Father: Sam? You know we've got to get the harvest in before the storm comes – look at those clouds over there. Go and help Ben.

Sam: Why should I? That's what we've got servants for. Why don't you pay **them** to do the work?

Ben: We won't be able to pay **anyone** if we don't get the harvest in!

Sam: See if I care. I'm sick of nothing but work. I want to enjoy life!

Father: But Sam, you know all this work is to pay off the farm so that you and Ben can own the farm when I'm gone.

Sam: Yeah, yeah! How many times have I heard that before. Well, I'm sick of waiting! I want **my share now!**

Father: But Sam

Sam: Forget it. I'm sick of this boring farm and this boring little town full of boring people. I want to see some **real** life.

Father: But Sam, if you just wait

Sam: I don't want to wait till my life is half over before **you** finally fall off the perch. Give me my share of the money now!

Father: ***(Sadly)*** Well son, if that's what you want ***(Hands over bag full of money.)***

Sam: Great! Now I can see some **real** life. Big city here I come!

(Storms off past Ben, carrying bag full of money.)

SCENE 2

***(For puppet show, play “fill” music between scenes.)
(Disco scene, “I’ve Got to Move It” plays as characters dance.)***

Girl 1: Oh Sammy boy, what great parties you throw.

Girl 2: Hey, let’s dance the night away!

Girl 1: This is thirsty work. I’m off to get another drink! Weeee!

(Leaves)

Girl 2: How’s about a dance, Sammy?

Sam: This is the life. Fun, fun, fun. A party every night, and I’ve never had so many friends!

Girl 1: ***(Returns holding a drink – not for puppet play.)*** Hey, how about a drive in your 4WD, Sammy boy?

Girl 2: Yeah! Let’s go to the Casino!

All: Yeah / Great / Let’s go! ***(All leave, with Sam carrying half-empty money bag.)***

SCENE 3

***(For puppet show, fill music between scenes.)
(Disco scene again, totally empty money bag to one side.)***

Girl 1: Let’s dance, dance, dance! We’ve got all night!

Girl 2: That was so much fun at the Casino! How many bets did I make at the roulette wheel?!

Sam: I don’t know, I was too busy trying to win at poker. I need more practice! I was so close, but just missed out every time!

Girl 1: I just love Sammy’s parties!

(Music finishes)

Girl 1: Let's get a drink while the music's stopped.

Girl 2: I'm with you. **(Both leave)**

Sam: Now, what songs will I play next?

(Girls return quickly)

Girl 1: Sammy! There's no more drinks! Quick, let's go and buy some before the Bottle-O closes

Sam: **(Looks in empty money bag.)** !! There's no money left! I don't know where it's gone?!

Girl 1: But Sammy, you had **plenty** of money when we went to the Casino. Where's it all gone?

Sam: I don't know. I guess I lost more than I realised at poker - I thought I was on a winner. Err, could you loan me some money? **(To Girl 1)**

Girl 1: **Me** – loan **you** money! You must be joking!

Sam: **(To Girl 2)** What about you? We don't want to spoil the party – lend us a few bucks, hey?

Girl 2: No way! If you're out of booze, we're out of here!

Sam: Hey! But what about all the great parties we've had?

Girl 1: See you later loser!

Girl 2: Call us if you find some more dough! **(Both laugh and leave.)**

Sam: But I thought we were friends?

(Girls laugh off-stage. Sam looks downcast. Sound of knocking on door.)

Sam: They're back! Come in! **(Landlord enters.)**

Sam: Landlord! What do you want?

Landlord: I'm here for the rent, Sammy boy!

Sam: Er, um, could you come back in the morning?

Landlord: **No!** I've been knocking on your door every morning, but I can never wake you up! So here I am. Pay up!

Sam: But I'm out of money. Can you give me some time to pay? I'll, I'll – get a job!

Landlord: Not a chance! There's no work around here for people who sleep all day! Times are tough! So out you go!

Sam: But it's late! Where'll I go?

Landlord: That's your problem. **OUT!**

(Sam leaves, downcast, while "Homeless" plays.)

SCENE 4 *(Pig in sty.)*

Pig: Oink, oink!

Sam: *(Enters carrying a bucket of feed.)* Alright, alright, I'm coming! Here's your dinner.

Pig: Oink!

Sam: Oh, I'm soo hungry. Even this swill smells good. I wish I was fed as well as these pigs.

What am I doing here?! I've been such a fool. Here I am, nearly starving, and working all day and still not earning enough to buy enough food to eat – while back at home my father's servants always eat well. *(Hangs head in shame, then looks up.)* I know what I'm going to do!!

Pig: Oink?

Sam: I'm going home and I'm going to tell dad I'm **really sorry** for being such a fool. I'm going to say: "I know I've done wrong and I don't deserve to be your son. But if you would please give me a job, I'll work as one of your servants." **(Hurries off.)**

SCENE 5 **(Fill music plays.)**

(Father (on rooftop for puppet show) looking one way, then the other.)

Ben: **(Enters)** Come on Dad. Every day you come up here looking for Sam. Forget about him!

Father: You never know. This may be the day he comes home.

Ben: You're wasting your

Father: Look! Look! Over there! It's Sam! It's really him!

(Sam appears side stage. Father goes down towards Sam.)

Sam: Dad! Dad, I'm so sorry. What I did was wrong, and I don't deserve to be your son, but please, if

Father **(Father interrupts, and while hugging Sam yells:)** Ben! Call the cook, call everyone! Sam's home! Let's have a party! Light the barbie – we'll have T-bone steaks! Chicken kebabs! Mum's mince patties! Chips! The lot!

Sam: And lots of onion?!

Father: Piles of onion! Come on, let's clean you up and put you in some new clothes! Only the best! **(Leave together, laughing. Ben remains on roof. Party sounds start.)**

Ben: Humph! Listen to that party! Humph!

Father: ***(Father returns to roof.)*** Ben, what's wrong? Come to the party!

Ben: Humph! When did you ever throw a party for **me**? When did you ever have a big bar-b-que for me? All I have ever done is work, while Sam spent all that money on booze and wild women. Then, when he comes home you go and throw a party for him! It's not fair!

Father: Ben, everything I own is yours – you've always enjoyed a good home. And we thought Sam was dead, but now he's alive. He was lost, but now he's found! Of course we have to have a party! Won't you join in the celebration? Come on, I'll choose a big juicy T-bone for you!

(Father goes back to party. Ben stays on roof.)

(Party noises, hip hip hooray, then, "Hey It's Good to be Back Home Again" plays.)

Ask children:

- Do you think Ben joined the party?
- What would you do?
- Who does the kind father remind you of?
- Discuss how none of us is perfect – we have all done some wrong things – so we all need to say "sorry" to God and he always forgives us – like when you say sorry to your mum and she gives you a big hug.
- How do you think we should feel when someone who has done something really bad asks God to forgive him/her and then is full of joy because God forgives them?
- Depending on the age of the audience and time available, you may need to discuss the fact that there are still consequences for wrong-doing.

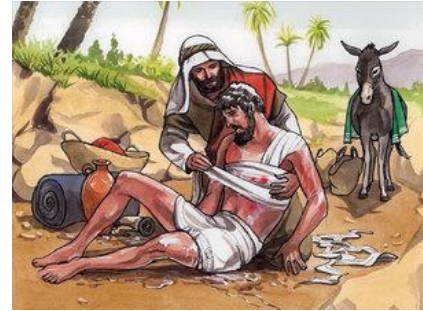
THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Bible basis:

The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Luke 10:25-37

Aim:

To put the parable in a modern setting and to challenge the audience to consider how they can “Love your neighbour”.



To exemplify keeping the “Second Commandment”: “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

Characters:

Priest, Lawyer, Refugee, Interviewer, two Robbers, (female) Victim.

Props:

The skit can be performed as a puppet show or as a play.
Props for an acted skit: 3 torches, huge Bible, two Degrees rolled up – one big, one bigger, plastic club or bat, black scarves for robbers to cover faces, purse, “bed” for victim, blanket, sound effect for phone ringing. Mahmood wears a jacket.

Some appropriate music is suggested for between the scenes breaks.

For both a skit and a puppet show: The audience is told that three people will be interviewed for a job. The position vacant is for someone to teach others what it means when the Bible says to “love your neighbour”. The audience will decide, at the end, who gets the job.

SCENE 1

“Neighbours” theme song.

(Three job applicants sit facing their interviewer.)

Priest:

They’re running a bit late for this interview! We’ve been here for ages and I have an appointment to get to. I hope they start soon.

Lawyer:

Yes! Time is money!

Refugee:

I am nervous. I hope interview is soon.

Interviewer:

(Enters) Welcome gentlemen (and lady). My apologies for the

delay. I see that you all managed to follow my directions to get the bus to our office without too much trouble. Now, you have all applied for the job of teaching others what it means when the Bible says to “love your neighbour”. Let’s get to know one another first, so please introduce yourselves and tell us what you do.

Priest: ***(Holding a big degree.)*** My name is Rev Obadiah Omygoodness and I am a humble priest. As you can see, I have a degree in theology, which means that I know everything there is to know about the Bible, which of course would be a pre-requisite for this job, don’t you agree!

Interviewer: Quite! Thank you Obadiah,

Priest: **Reverend** Obadiah!

Interviewer: **Reverend** Obadiah. Now, who’s next?

Lawyer: ***(Holding a bigger degree.)*** My name is Lawrence/Lauren Lockmeup and I am a learned lawyer, as you can see by my **Honours** degree in Law.

Priest: Oh, I have a **Masters** degree – I forgot to mention!

Lawyer: Well done, Obadiah!

Priest: **Reverend** Obadiah!

Lawyer: ***(Condescendingly)*** I think it’s wonderful that you can go back to university to get a **Masters** degree if you weren’t quite clever enough to get an **Honours** degree.

Priest: What?!

Interviewer: **(Interrupting)** Thank you Lawrence/Lauren! Now, we just need to meet our third applicant.

Samaritan: Hello. I am Mahmood. I have no job, yet, sorry.

(Silence)

Interviewer: Ah, yes, well, now Obadiah,

Priest: **Reverend** Obadiah!

Interviewer: Yes, **Reverend** Obadiah, Lawrence/Lauren, Mahmood, I would like you to tell me what makes you think you would do a good job teaching others what it means when the Bible says to “love your neighbour”. Obadiah?

Priest: **Reverend** Obadiah. Certainly! As a priest, of course I know all there is about the Bible. I know the Bible from front to back and I have read every story. I can talk for hours about any topic in the Bible. Talking is one thing I do very well, if I do say so myself. If you need someone to explain what “love your neighbour” means, then I’m your man!

Interviewer: Thank you Obadiah.

Priest: **Reverend** Obadiah.

Interviewer: **Reverend** Obadiah!! Now, Lawrence/Lauren – or do you prefer Mr/Miss Lockemup?

Lawyer: Why not just call me your Learned Friend?

Interviewer: So, my Learned Friend, how do you propose to teach people what the Bible means by “love your neighbour”?

Lawyer: May I suggest that we first define the meaning of “love” and

“neighbour”. *(Use fingers to indicate quotations*

marks.) There’s not much point in asking others to love their neighbour, if they don’t know who his is! Perhaps we should

take a moment to consider the implications of this important

legal point! What are the legal requirements? Of particular

note is that “love” has several definitions. The chose definition

will of course affect the manner in which “love” is shown to a

“neighbour”.

As you know, I am very learned and I could take you through this

step by step

Interviewer: *(Interrupts quickly)* Well, I’m sure we would be glad to hear

more, but time is short and perhaps we should hear from

Mahmood first. May I call you “Mahmood”? *(Slightly*

impatiently)

Samaritan: Yes! Fine!

Interviewer: Good! What university qualifications do you have for this job,

Mahmood?

Samaritan: I don’t have qualifications yet. But I think I could do the job. I

think I could teach what the Bible means by “love your

neighbour”. I come here by boat – from Afghanistan – I have

nothing. I need help. Many Australians are kind to me. Give me

a home. Give me money. Teach me English. Help me, like a

neighbour. I want everyone to know how good that is!

Interviewer: Mm. Well, thank you all: **Reverend** Obadiah – my Learned

Friend – Mahmood. That has all been very interesting indeed!

We had better finish now so you can catch the late bus. I will consider all your applications. I'm sure I'll be able to pick one of you to do this job.

(Phone rings. Interviewer leaves to answer.)

Interviewer: Excuse me a moment.

(Returns) That was the Council. They've closed the main road – it's blocked by an accident, so you'll all have to walk down Shadow Street to get to the bus stop. I know it can be a bit dangerous there at night, so take care – but seeing as it's only a short walk, you should be right. Good evening to you all and I'll be in touch soon.

Priest: ***(Rushing off)*** I'm off! I have an important church service to run and I mustn't be late – the Bishop might be there!

Lawyer: Goodness me! Is that the time? I had better get going too. I do hope you are able to get a qualification of some sort or other Mahmood. Without a good education it's very difficult to get a job in Australia.

Mahmood: Yes, thank you.

(Lawyer leaves)

Mahmood: ***(Talking to himself, head bent over, sighs.)*** In Afghanistan I have good job. Good qualifications. But not so easy here.

(Straightens up) I will keep trying. I will get a job! ***(Leaves)***

(Pause, then play scary music, eg Prokofiev, "Dance of the

Knights".)

SCENE 2

(A dark street. A person walking along is suddenly attacked, beaten, and robbed, then left lying by the robbers on the side of the road. The Priest walks along road towards the victim, coming from the opposite direction to the victim's entry. Discovers victim.)

Robber 1: This sheila looks like she might have a bit of money, hey!

Robber 2: Quick, let's get her! *(They both jump out and "bash" woman and steal her purse.)*

Victim: Uuugh! *(Falls down as robbers run off.)*

Priest: *(Enters from opposite direction to robbers' exit.)*

Goodness, it's quite dark. I'd better get a move on. I know it's rather a rough area around here.

Victim: Help, help! *(Weakly)*

Priest: Oh dear!! What's happened here? Goodness! Someone's been mugged! Probably a gang member. I mustn't get involved with any criminal types. *(Looks over at victim, but keeps his distance.)*

Victim: Help, help! *(Weakly)*

Priest: Ooh. She looks all bloody. I can't get my suit dirty, I have a church service in half an hour and it's important I get there! There's probably other robbers too *(Looks around)* – I really don't want to hang around – after all, I'm doing **God's** work, and that's more important. *(Walks off, straight past victim)*

Lawyer: ***(Enters and sees the victim, then stands at a safe distance from her.)*** What have we here? There is a possibility that this person is injured! Or they may just be resting!

Victim: Aauugh. Help, help! ***(Weakly)***

Lawyer: Maybe not. Ooh, err. Let me consider this situation:

- I'm not qualified to render First Aid and, after all
- I cannot ascertain the exact nature of the injuries
- If I render the incorrect aid, I may make the injury worse and thus render myself liable to be sued for negligence
- It would be safer for this person if I continue on and not interfere
- And of course, I must think of my reputation! It would not do to be seen to be consorting with unsavoury types such as this person may be – after all, she looks like she has been fighting!

Yes, after careful consideration, I'm off! ***(Lawyer walks off, straight past victim. Mahmood enters.)***

Victim: Help, help! ***(Weakly. Mahmood sees victim and rushes over.)***

Mahmood: Ooh! What happened to you!? Poor woman! Is very bad. I fix arm. ***(Takes off jacket and drapes around victim's shoulders and holds arm carefully.)***

Then I help you back. We get taxi.

Victim: ***(Weakly)*** No money. They took my purse.

Mahmood: Don't worry. I pay for taxi. Where do you live?

Victim: Not from around here. Nowhere to stay.

Mahmood: It will be OK. First I take you to doctor. I help you.... ***(Mahmood helps victim to walk offstage.)***
(At end of Scene 2: Bill Withers: “Lean on Me” – 2 mins, fade.)

SCENE 3: ***(Mahmood and victim, bandaged, arrive at Motel room.)***

Mahmood: Here you are. Nice clean room. Nice clean bed. You stay here until you are better.

Victim: Thank you for your help, you have been so kind. But how can I pay for this room? I have no money – the robbers took it all.

Mahmood: My friend! Is OK! I pay for room for two weeks, and for meals. If you need more – stay! I have to go now, but when I come back I pay for motel if you need to stay longer.

Victim: How can I ever thank you?

Mahmood: Is OK. **My** neighbours gave me the money and they gave me a bed and a place to live when I was far from home. Is OK.

Goodbye! Goodbye! ***(Waves goodbye and leaves.)***

At the end of Scene 3, play the 2nd half of Bill Withers: “Lean on Me”.)

ASK CHILDREN:

- Which of the 3 people – Rev Obadiah, our Learned Friend, or Mahmood would you employ to teach people what God means by saying “love your neighbour”?
- Why would you choose this person?
- Who is **our** neighbour? (Anyone who needs our help.)
- What is the best way for us to show others how to “love your neighbour”?