

Teaching 4 Year Olds

Why are we Children's Ministry teachers?

- Are we merely babysitting?

Inside the classroom victories are won for Christ and eternity. Statistics show that ___% of all commitments made to Christ occur between the ages of ___ and ___. Do we have that vision for the classroom? Do we expect God to draw 4 year olds to Himself?

How do we view children?

Do we see them as being _____ ?

Interaction with the children

Use the time inside the classroom to build _____ with the children.

Rules

BiblicalParenting.org.

Obey:

Doing what you're told
Right away
Without being reminded

Honor:

Treating people as special
Doing more than what's expected
And having a good attitude

Be Kind:

"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."
Ephesians 4:32

Tip!

When giving a command, first say the child's **name**, then say what they **need** to do, and end the command with the word **now**.

Example: Lucas, you need to put that toy away now.

Teaching 4 Year Olds

Worship

Worship time can be used to increase their understanding of who God is and His great love. Do not assume that they know what all the words in the songs mean. Explain what the words mean.

Accapella worship works well with this age and also simple hand motions that they can follow along with.

CD's can also be used to sing along with. **"Hide 'Em In Your Heart"** puts Scripture to music ("Love the Lord Your God").

"My First Hymnal" (75 Favorite Bible Songs and What They Mean) by: Karyn Henley

WORSHIP SONGS:

Jesus Loves Me

This Little Light of Mine

Awesome God

God Is So Good (I love Him so ~ He is my Lord ~ He cares for me)

God is so good///
He's so good to me

Jesus, I Love You (need, want, praise)

Jesus, I love You///
Yes I do

My God Is So Great

My God is so great, so strong and so mighty
There's nothing my God cannot do (clap, clap)//
The mountains are His, the rivers are His, the stars are His handiwork too (clap, clap)
My God is so great, so strong and so mighty
There's nothing my God cannot do (clap, clap)

Read My Bible and Pray Everyday

Read my Bible, pray everyday, pray everyday, pray everyday (*start on your knees*)
Read my Bible, pray everyday and I'll grow, grow, grow (*everyone starts growing*)
And I'll grow, grow, grow, and I'll grow, grow, grow (*continue growing*)
Read my Bible, pray everyday and I'll grow, grow, grow!!! (*now everyone's standing up*)

But if I don't read my Bible, forget to pray, forget to pray, forget to pray,
Don't read my Bible, forget to pray, then I'll shrink, shrink, shrink (*everyone starts shrinking*)
And I'll shrink, shrink, shrink, and I'll shrink, shrink, shrink (*continue shrinking*)
Don't read my Bible, forget to pray, then I'll shrink, shrink, shrink!!! (*back on your knees*)
But, if I read my Bible, pray everyday, pray everyday, pray everyday (*start on your knees*)
Read my Bible, pray everyday and I'll grow, grow, grow (*everyone starts growing*)
And I'll grow, grow, grow, and I'll grow, grow, grow (*continue growing*)
Read my Bible, pray everyday and I'll grow, grow, grow!!! (*now everyone's standing up*)

(Always be sure to explain what this song means! If we read our Bible and pray everyday that doesn't mean our bodies with grow! It means our love for Jesus will grow.)

Teaching 4 Year Olds

Bible Story

Instill into them that truth is found in the Bible, that God never lies, but always tells the truth.

Methods for teaching the Bible story:

- Flannel graphs
- A Beka Bible flash cards
- Acting the story out with props
- And other storytelling methods

Another way to help keep the children's attention during the Bible story is by asking them lots of _____.

Questions are great. You can ask questions throughout the story or at the end of the story. A few reasons questions are helpful:

- Questions cause children to be more _____ to your words.
- Questions allow for more _____ on the child's part.
- Questions give the teacher a much better idea of the child's level of _____.

Prayer Time

Should this be a time of corporate prayer or should the opportunity for each child to pray individually be given?

- Corporate prayer sets a _____.
- But 4 year olds are usually _____ to pray (on their own).

Tip!

If a child's prayer is going long and you're running out of time, you can quietly say to the child who is praying, "Pray one more thing, and then say 'Amen'".

Salvation

Should we, as teachers, give 4 year olds the opportunity to receive Christ as their personal Savior?

Jesus said "Let the little children come to Me and do not forbid them for of such is the kingdom of God".

Reasons for not giving that opportunity:

- We don't believe they ____ receive Christ at their age.
- We assume they've _____ received Christ.

Teaching 4 Year Olds

Suggestions for leading children to Christ

- Follow the Holy Spirit's leading!
- Never force or pressure them into accepting Christ.
- Be as thorough as you can in explaining the Gospel, but trust God to do the work in their heart.
- Do not lead the entire class in a prayer of salvation corporately. Rather give a clear and distinct opportunity for them to pray individually. This way, they know this prayer is a special prayer to God with special meaning.
- Explain such concepts as: "Jesus comes into your heart/life" (a child might not be sure about letting Jesus into their heart from a lack of understanding that that isn't physical, but rather spiritual) Use phrases such as; "give your life to God/become part of God's family".
- Some stories that lead well into the Gospel message are: "Adam and Eve are Tempted" and "Jesus and Nicodemus".
- After explaining the Gospel, you can tell them that if they want to pray and give their hearts to God/be born again/become God's child (whatever terminology you use) they can come close to the front with you and pray to do that.

I like asking each child that comes up to pray, at least one of the following questions: Do you believe you do bad things, and do you want Jesus to forgive you? Do you want to be born again? Do you want to become God's child? Do you want to give your life to Jesus right now? These questions, and others like them, are just clarifying questions for both the teacher and child. They show that they've been tracking with what has been said previously regarding salvation.

I then tell them that I'm going to say the words and they will pray the words after me. After leading them in the prayer of salvation, I (with a big smile), tell each one of them that they are now God's child!!! I explain that they're still in their own family (that doesn't change!) but "now you're in God's family also and you're God's child!"

- It's a good idea to have your normal prayer time with all the children, before giving them the opportunity of accepting Jesus into their hearts. This is just one more way of making it clear that this is something different and special.
- After the child has prayed you can ask them "Do you know anyone in your family who loves Jesus? Tell them what you just did!"

Put yourself into the child's world

Examples of this could be: getting down on the floor with them (if you can) or sitting in a chair. Showing interest in the things they talk about. Being attentive when they're talking to us. Being enthusiastic with them. Not being distant, but involved with them in class. Remembering that they are persons!

Teaching 4 Year Olds

With God's help may we, as teachers, eagerly lead the children to Christ!

"The voices of childhood echo throughout life.
The first learned is generally the last forgotten"
-Spurgeon

"Give us the first seven years of a child, with God's grace, and we may defy the world, the flesh, and the devil to ruin that immortal soul. Those first years, when the clay is yet soft and plastic, go far to decide the form of the vessel. Do not say that your office, you who teach the young, is in the least degree inferior to ours, whose main business is with older folks. No, you have the first chance with these precious young souls. The impressions you make, since they come first, will endure to the last. I pray that they may be good, and only good!"
-Spurgeon

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor
is not in vain in the Lord."
1 Corinthians 15:58

Teaching 4 Year Olds

Random Ideas

Blue tape

If you're having a difficult time keeping the children in one area of the classroom during the Bible story/prayer time you can use blue painter's tape. Make a big circle or square on the carpet with the tape. Then have all the children get inside. If there's a boat in the Bible story that week, you could even make a boat out of blue tape and tell all the kids to "Get inside the boat". Maybe one of the children can't handle being so close to so many kids. Make a strip with the tape outside the "boat" and call it their "surfboard".

Beanbag toss

Have the children try tossing a beanbag into a bucket. This game works well when using the wordless book colored beanbags. Have the child tell you what color, the beanbag they are holding, stands for.

Duck, duck, goose (memory verse game)

Have children sit in a circle. Start the game by the teacher being "it". Walk around the circle tapping each child on the head for each word you say in the memory verse. The child whose head you tap on the last word of the verse chases you around the circle and you sit down in their spot. They then repeat the game. Have the children say the verse together as the tapper goes around the circle.

Pass the object (memory verse game)

Have the children sit in a circle. Select a soft object to use as the potato. Pass the object around in the circle saying one word from the memory verse for each child the object is passed to. The child holding the object on the last word is the winner.

Ideas to make the Bible story visual:

Dress up like the character in the story and tell the story as that character.

Bring in props like a blue bed sheet for water or green for grass.

Use puppets to tell the story.

Make a boat out of a cardboard box.

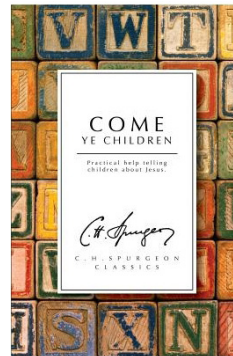
Bring in stuffed animals.

Have the children help act out the story.

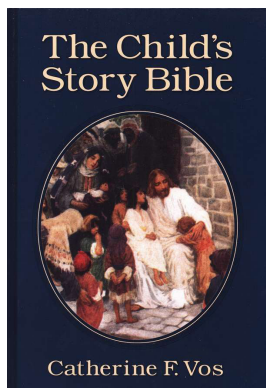
Most of these resources can be purchased from christianbook.com or amazon.com.



Spiritual Parenting
by C.H. Spurgeon
(Out of print, but might be able to be found online)

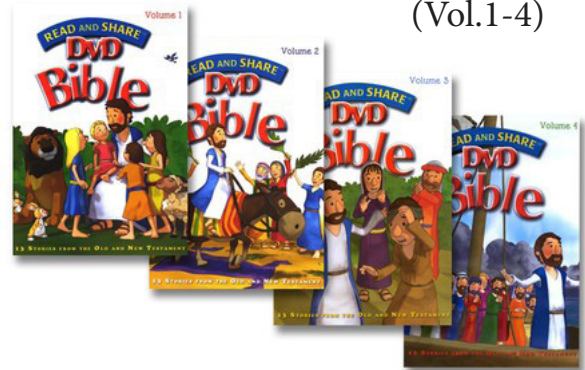


Come Ye Children
by C.H. Spurgeon
(Basically the same as *Spiritual Parenting*)

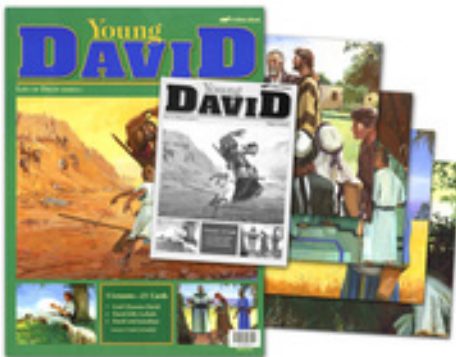


The Child's Story Bible
by Catherine F. Vos
Great for reference or reading to children

Read and Share DVD Bible
(Vol.1-4)



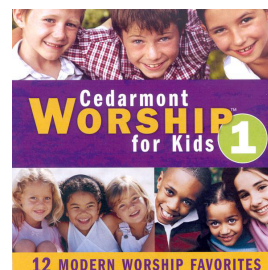
A Beka Flash-A-Cards (abeka.com)



Hide 'Em In Your Heart
(Steve Green), for worship.
Vol. 1 has "Love The Lord Your God"



Here I Am to Worship for Kids
(Vol. 1-3) Great for background worship music



Cedarmont Worship for Kids (Vol. 1-4)
Great for background worship music