Partner Discussion Questions

1. What are common proverbs about children?
2. How are children thought of and treated in your culture?

God’s View of Children

How does God view children? (Matthew 18:12-14)

How does God view ministry to children? (Matthew 18:5)

Potential of Children

Short candle:

Tall candle:

Agents of Ministry

1. God created children in a special way.

* Their hearts are soft towards the things of God.
* Children have great faith that acts.
* They lack fear and barriers—fear of rejection, lack of Bible knowledge, barriers of race or social status.
* They love to be committed to causes greater than themselves.

2. God has empowered children to serve.

* Children who follow Jesus have the same Holy Spirit as adults who follow Jesus.
* The Holy Spirit gives children gifts and abilities and places them into the Body of Christ.
* These gifts are not eggs waiting to hatch when children become adults.
* They are ready and ripe for use.

3. God has given children spheres of influence.

* Children can minister in places where adults cannot.
* I cannot go into a child’s classroom or onto the soccer field with his team, but he can.
* I do not spend hours in his home, but he does. Children who follow Jesus are one of the best bridges into a home where parents are unbelievers.
* A child is the best one to share Jesus with his teacher, classmates, and friends.
* A child is the best one to recruit other children to join him in ministry.

4. God uses children in His big story. Here are three examples:

* Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1, 8-10)
	+ God chose to speak through a young boy who was following and serving God.
* Naaman’s servant girl (2 Kings 5:1-3)
	+ God used her to bring hope to an unbelieving family.
* Josiah (2 Kings 22:1-2)
	+ God used Josiah to bring the people of Israel back to the straight path, the path of obedience to God’s laws.

Four Goals of Mobilization

*Mobilization:* to make ready for active service, to release for use

1. Raise up disciples who follow Jesus for a lifetime and set an example (1 Timothy 4:12).

2. Multiply lifelong followers of Jesus (Luke 10:2).

3. Foster multi-generational impact (Psalm 145:4).

4. Reach the unreached (Revelation 7:9-10).

# Activities and Instructions:

Parable of the Lost Sheep

***Materials:*** 100 cotton balls or small rocks, bag

***Getting Ready:*** Place 99 cotton balls/small rocks in a bag. Hide one cotton ball/rock in the room.

A shepherd had 100 sheep.

In the evening, he brought them down from the pastures where they were grazing and put them into the sheepfold for the night.

As they entered the fold, he counted them. (Take three cotton balls/rocks outs of the bag.) 97 … 98 … 99 —one sheep was missing.

What did the shepherd do?

Did he say, “It is getting late and I am tired. I already have 99 perfectly good sheep?” (Hold up the whole bag of cotton balls/rocks.) “I am not going out in the dark to search for one sheep.”

Was that his attitude?

No. Matthew 18 says that the shepherd left the 99 sheep and went to search for the one that was lost … and then he brought that sheep home and celebrated.

There is a sheep missing.

(Hold up a cotton ball/rock.) It looks just like this and it is somewhere in this room. Will you help me find it? (Have the participants hunt for the cotton ball and bring it to you. Cheer together.)

Just like the shepherd in the story, you kept looking until the missing sheep was located and then we rejoiced together.

Mobilization

Gather three participants to represent pastors, missionaries, and evangelists.

The rest of the group represents unreached people who have never heard about Jesus.

Your three volunteers can go select one person at a time and bring them to Jesus. They should take their hand and bring them to the front of the room.

Those who are selected and brought to the front should stay there until the activity is over.

Once your three volunteers bring someone to the front, they can go back into the group and repeat this. Instruct them to keep bringing people to Jesus until you say *stop.*

Allow them two minutes to do this. (For smaller groups, allow them less time to complete the task).

After two minutes, if they have not finished gathering the whole class, stop the activity and have everyone return to their seats except for your original three volunteers.

Have them try the activity again, but with the following instructions:

This time, when your evangelist, pastor, or missionary brings someone to Jesus, then that person can also go out and bring others to Jesus.

Stop the activity when no one is left sitting in the class. Everyone has been brought to Jesus. Ask everyone to be seated.

Here are some discussion questions you could use with this activity.

1. Why were we able to reach everyone faster the second time?
2. Are pastors, missionaries, and evangelists the only people who should be participating in the Great Commission? Who else?
3. If we are all active participants, what will we accomplish?

*“If tomorrow’s world of unreached people were waiting for our kids,*
*would our kids have a heart to reach them based on what we are giving them?*