

Session 10: Training Activities

These are some of the demonstrations and activities from the Big Story Training that you can use. Some activities help cast the vision for family mobilization. Other can be modeled for parents to practice and use at home.

Session 1: God's Story

Activity: How Many Know About Jesus?

Materials: none

(Invite 10 children to come to the front and stand in a line facing the group. If you are doing this activity with your family, you can line up ten objects and have your children do all of the motions.)

These 10 people represent the world – about 7 billion people!

Person 1: One knows, loves, and follows Jesus. (Have the first child in line cross both of his hands over his heart.)

Persons 2 and 3: Two are believers by name. If you asked them, "What religion do you follow?" they would say Christianity rather than Hinduism or Islam. They may not be true disciples of Jesus. (Have the next two people in line put only one hand over their heart.)

Persons 4, 5, 6: Three have heard about Jesus, but so far they have rejected the message. (Have the next three people put their hands out in front of them as if they are pushing away the message.)

Persons 7, 8, 9, 10: Four have never heard of Jesus. They do not know that He loves them and came to forgive their sins. (Have the last four people cover their ears with their hands.)

What does this demonstration show us? We can rejoice that about 2/3 of the people on earth have had the opportunity to hear about Jesus. But sadly, more than 1/3 of the world's population, 2.7 billion people, is still waiting to hear about Jesus for the first time.

Session 3: Children are Strategic

Potential of Mobilized Children and Families

Materials: one short candle and one tall candle

Now let us think about the potential children have to partner with God in His mission.

Suppose the electricity goes off in your village/community. You go to the store to purchase candles. Which one of these would you buy?

(Show the tall and short candles. Allow answers. Most people will choose the tall candle.)

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(Hold up the taller candle). But this one is bigger and will cost more. Why would you buy this one?

(Allow responses.)

This taller candle is worth the investment because it will burn longer in the darkness. Both of these candles represent people who understand God's mission and can be a light to the nations.

(Point to short candle) This candle stands for a person who began to understand his part in God's mission as an adult.

Surely God can use him in mighty ways, but he has already lived part of his life without this understanding. He will not have as long to join with God in blessing the nations.

(Point to taller candle) This candle represents someone who began to understand his part in God's mission as a child.

This boy or girl has their whole life to join with God in blessing the nations, to be a light in the darkness.

Think about children whose parents are discipling them to love both God and His mission.

Think about children growing up in families who understand that God loves the peoples of the world and invites them to participate in blessing them.

Imagine how God could use these children to bless those who have no way of hearing the good news of Jesus.

Not only that, but imagine how God could also use them to impact their families, friends, and their local churches for generations to come.

Why is Mobilization Needed?

Materials: none

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*.

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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?

Session 6: God's World

Activity: Reached versus Unreached

Materials: Bible, children's Christian DVD or music CD, picture of a church, mirror, bag labeled unreached

(Turn the bag so that the "Unreached" label is facing away from the children.) Here are some different ways that we can learn about God and His plans for us. (Spread out the items and have the children put each item in the bag as you describe it.)

Reading the Bible (put in bag) ... watching Christian movies/TV shows or listening to Christian music (put in bag) ... and going to church (put in bag).

(Have a child hold up the mirror.) Mirrors reflect. One of the main ways we learn about God is by being around other people who know Jesus, people who reflect what God is like by what they say and do. (Invite a child to add the mirror to the bag.)

(Turn the bag around and read the word "unreached.")

Unreached peoples around the world do not have access to even one Bible, God's revelation of Himself to us. (Invite a child to remove the Bible from the bag.)

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Unreached peoples have no movies or TV shows that show what God does or how He relates to people. They have never heard or sung a song of praise to the true, living God. (Invite a child to remove the DVD or CD from the bag.)

Unreached peoples live in places where it is impossible to attend a church where God's Word is taught—there aren't any! (Invite a child to remove the picture of the church from the bag.)

The families, friends, teachers, and neighbors of unreached children are unreached, too. These boys and girls do not have anyone who reflects God in their culture and no one who can show them what it looks like to follow Jesus in daily life. (Invite a child to remove the mirror from the bag.)

(Turn the bag upside down and shake it.) We have many ways of learning about God but unreached peoples have no way of learning about God.

God wants us to pray for unreached peoples. Look at these items. How could we pray for the unreached peoples? (Allow responses.) Enter into a time of prayer with your class or family.

World Beliefs Prayer Walk

Materials:

- Teaching script (You may wish to cut it apart and put the appropriate text at each station.)
- Animist: sign that says "tribal, rock
- Hindu station: sign that says "Hindu," bell
- Atheist: sign that says "Unreligious," mirror, notebook and pen
- Muslim: sign that says "Muslim," large bowl of water and towel
- Buddhist: sign that says "Buddhist," empty jar/bottle, Bible
- tape for attaching five signs to the wall (optional)

Setting Up:

- Large space: Set up 5 stations around the room and have the children rotate through these stations. At each station, tape the corresponding sign on the wall or place it on the floor. Place props at each station.
- Small space: Set up 1 station. Put the signs and props on a small table, desk, or bench. Choose different children to experience each station. Make sure everyone gets a turn.

Introduction

If many people in the world have never heard about Jesus, what do they believe? Let's go on a world beliefs prayer walk. We will learn about five different religious groups and pray for them to come to know Jesus.

(If you are moving around the room, explain where the children will start and how they will move around the room. Add additional instructions that will help your children.)

First, let's visit the first station and learn about what Tribal people believe. (Move to the first station.)

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Animist Station

(Hold up or point to the Animist sign.) Animistic people believe that spirits live in things in nature – rocks, trees, mountains, and water. They fear these spirits and work hard to please them (show the rock).

Animistic people worship through song and dance. Can you think of a song you know that praises God? (Choose one song from those suggested.) Let's sing the song together. You can clap and dance if you want to. (Sing the song.)

Let's pray that animistic people would worship God, the Creator of the universe instead of spirits. Who would like to pray? (Let children pray aloud. Move to the Hindu station.)

Hindu Station

(Hold up or point to the Hindu sign.) Hindus believe in many different gods. They worship and pray to idols, or statues, of these gods.

(Hand the bell to a child and have him ring it.) When Hindus enter the temple, they ring a bell to wake up any of their gods who might be sleeping. They burn incense and set gifts of flowers, food, or drinks in front of the idols.

Let's pray that Hindus would turn from idols to worship the true and living God, the God who never sleeps and always hears our prayers. Who would like to pray? (Let children

pray aloud. Move to the Atheist station.)

Atheist Station

(Hold up or point to the Atheist sign.) Atheistic people do not believe that God exists. What do you see when you look in a mirror? (Hold up the mirror and let children look in it.) Instead of trust in God, atheists trust in themselves. They count on their own knowledge and science to explain the world.

Let's think about things around us that prove God exists and then write them down in this notebook. What should we write? (Let children share ideas. Choose someone to write them in the notebook.)

Let's pray that atheistic people would see God through creation and come to know Jesus as their Savior. Who would like to pray? (Let children pray aloud. Move to the Muslim station.)

Muslim Station

(Hold up or point to the Muslim sign.) Muslims believe in one god called Allah. They try to please Allah by doing good things. They believe that if they do more good things than bad, Allah will allow them to enter heaven.

Muslims go to the mosque to pray and worship. Before going inside, they must wash their hands, feet, and face. This shows their desire to have a clean heart before God.

Let's take turns washing our hands. (Allow the children to wash and dry their hands.)

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Let's pray that Muslims would know that their hearts can be washed clean only by the blood of Jesus! Who would like to pray? (Let children pray aloud. Move to the Buddhist station.)

Buddhist Station

(Hold up or point to the Buddhist sign.) Buddhists go to the temple to meditate. (Show the empty jar/bottle.) This is empty.

When Buddhists meditate, they try to empty their minds of all evil thoughts and selfish desires and think about nothing. They believe this is a way to get rid of suffering and bring peace into their lives.

Let's sit down and cross our legs in a meditation position. (Demonstrate this and have the children copy you.) God wants us to meditate on Him and His Word.

Here's a Bible. Let's pick a favorite Bible verse and read it aloud. (Take a few suggestions and choose one verse. Read it, or have a child read it, aloud.) Let's close our eyes and quietly meditate, or think about, what the words mean.

Let's pray that Buddhists around the world would learn about Jesus and meditate on the truth of God's Word. Who would like to pray? (Let children pray aloud. Have the children return to their seats.)

Conclusion

Thank you for joining me on this world beliefs prayer walk. What is something new that you learned about the beliefs of people who don't know Jesus? (Let children share.) Why do you think it is important for us to continue to pray for these people? (Let children share.)

These are just a few of the strategies that God has used and still uses as He works to spread His truth to the peoples of the world.