

TheWordWorks

Expository Preaching Module 1: For the Preacher

How to give a bible talk to kids?

Aim of this module

To learn how to give a bible talk to kids effectively.

Recap

See Module "What is expository preaching".

Expository preaching is preaching which teaches the author's **main point** in order to achieve the author's **purpose** in a **current day situation** similar to the situation of the original hearers.



A 3 Step Process for preparing a Kids' Bible Talk

Using an example taken from Matthew 3:11 – 16

11 "I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John.

14 But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?"

15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

16 As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

STEP 1 – Simplify the Main Point and Purpose Statement

Work out the big idea of the book and the big idea of the passage you're giving the talk from.
(Using skills picked up from the "General Bible Handling Training" modules).

Matthew 3:11 – 16

Main Point: Jesus the **Holy Son of God identifies** himself with **Sinners** by being **baptised**.

Purpose Statement: Trust that Jesus has come to save **Sinners**.

Situation: It would be surprising to the Jew that Jesus would come, not for the righteous, but for sinners – and even to identify with them!

Doing the hard work of understanding the main point and the purpose of the passage is only the first part. For this to be conveyed to children effectively, we need to know how to speak in a language that children understand.

1. Identify the Jargon!

- a. Identifies
- b. Holy
- c. SIN or Sinners
- d. Baptised
- e. Son of God

2. How do I simplify the Jargon?

There are 4 ways to simplify Jargon in order of preference.

a. Do a Word-for-Word Translation

The easiest and most straightforward way to simplify jargon is to do a Word-for-Word translation. Take the complex word "Identifies" for example, a simpler word-for-word translation would be "*becomes like*" or "*understands*".

b. Do an Idea-for-Idea Translation

If a word for word translation will not suffice, we could do an Idea-for-Idea translation. Ask yourselves what word(s) would capture the idea of the passage sufficiently? Take the word "*Holy*" for example, which may be more literally translated as "*be set apart*". However, a simpler rendition that may capture the idea sufficiently would be the word "*Clean*".

c. Use Simple Explanations

Sometimes, when there are no equivalents for certain words, it becomes necessary to explain the terms. Take the word "SIN" for example - How would you explain what Sin is to children?

SIN is saying to God - "Shove off God. I'm in charge. Not you."

Alternatively, you can use Idea-for-Idea words such as "Dirty" or "Unclean" (Point b).

d. Make use of Illustrations

Sometimes, there are no equivalents for certain words, and neither will simple explanations suffice. In such cases, an illustration may help to paint a visual picture of the word. Take the word "*Baptised*" for example, what illustration would you use to help children understand "*Baptism*"?

"Doing Laundry"

Baptism is like doing the laundry. How many of you help Mummy each week to clean your dirty clothes? Sin is what makes us become like dirty clothes. When people are baptised in water, they show that they are being washed clean, just like how Mummy does the laundry.

Once you are done breaking down the jargon using (a) to (d), try to simplify your Main Point and Purpose Statement into something children can understand.

Now try to Simplify the Main Point and Purpose Statement of Matthew 3:11-16 on your own!

Matthew 3:11 – 16

Simplified Main Point

God's own Son Jesus is Holy [Clean].

But he becomes like Sinners [Dirty People who say Shove off God I'm in Charge Not You] by being baptised [Laundry illustration].

Simplified Purpose Statement

Trust that Jesus has come for Sinners.

Situation

It would be surprising to the Jew that Jesus would come not for the righteous, but for sinners – and even to identify with them!

STEP 2 – Apply the Purpose Statement *by* being Relevant and Specific to Children!

A. Be Relevant and Specific

You can be relevant and specific by thinking through the following:

- i. **Place**
- ii. **Issue**
- iii. **Time**
- iv. **Person**

[Alternatively: Where, What, When, Who?]

Apply the purpose statement of Matthew 3:11-16:

i. Place [Where?]

Help children to pinpoint spheres of life **where** they can apply what they have learnt. These include

- a. Home & Family
- b. School
- c. Church

ii. Issue [What?]

What does it mean for children to trust that Jesus identifies with unclean people who struggle with SIN?

➔ Breaking issues down – e.g. **“Struggles with Sin”**

- How do children struggle with the Big “S” SIN (i.e. Shove off God, I’m in charge, Not You)?
 - When is God second place... third place... or 100th place?
 - What kind of idols may children have that are more important than God?
 - School Grades and Achievements
 - Money
 - Toys and Gadgets
 - ... etc

- What kinds of small “s” sins do children struggle with?
 - Lying
 - Disobeying their parents
 - Bullying & ostracizing
 - Fighting
 - Greed
 - Unforgiveness
 - ... etc

iii. Time [When?]

Make use of Time Phrases in your application because it helps children to pinpoint exactly **when** they can apply what they have learnt.

Tomorrow... In the coming week... Next Sunday...

iv. People [Who?]

Identify people to **whom** children can apply what they have learnt.

These include - Parents, School Friends, Church friends, & Me

The more specific – the better.

Avoid generic groups of people like “Christians” or “People”.

Putting it together, you may come up with something like this...

[Time] In the **coming week**...

[Place] At **home**....

[Issue] When you **struggle with Sin**,

[People] and find it so hard to obey your **parents**

And **you** feel really discouraged...

[Purpose] Remember the **Good News** this week -

Jesus has come to save sinners like you and I!

He shows it by becoming like us and being baptised.

B. Avoid the Common and Convenient “Bolt-on” Applications

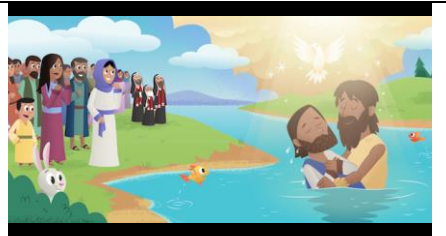
- Read the bible more
- Pray everyday
- Be more obedient
- Trust more
- Be a good christian
- ...etc

STEP 3 – The Presentation

Scripting and Practise...Practise...Practise...!

It is important to write a script because for many of us, speaking in child-friendly language is not immediately intuitive. More often than not, we tend to speak in jargon as we do to other adults.

A Sample Kids' Talk Script:

Script [Matthew 3:11-16]	Visuals [Slides / Props]
Good morning children! My name is Uncle XXX. Today we will look at a real story in the bible when John baptises Jesus.	
But before we go into the story, Children, I have an important question I want us to think about today What is something that you would never do?	WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU WOULD NEVER DO?
To help us think through this question, Today I am going to teach us a little about doing laundry. *takes out a clean white shirt *crumpled and dirty clothes *prop: A big pail When doing the laundry, What is one thing that your mummy would never do? Here is a white and clean shirt. And here is a stack of soiled and dirty and smelly clothes. The one thing that your mummy never does, is to mix the clean and white shirt with the soiled and dirty clothes in the same water. Children, do you know why mummy does not mix clean clothes with dirty clothes? Because under water, the dirty clothes will soil and stain the clean ones.	Props: Pail and Crumpled Clothes
Now, in the book of Matthew – Jesus comes to John the Baptist. Now John was called the Baptist, because he was someone who baptises unclean people with water (Just like that in the picture behind us). You see, we SIN when we tell God “Shove off, I’m in charge, Not you.” And Sin is what makes everyone unclean,	

<p>Just like dirty clothes.</p> <p>This is the reason why John baptised people in water.</p> <p>In doing so, they show that they are being washed clean, just like how Mummy cleans your clothes in the laundry.</p> <p>But you see... John was very shocked that Jesus wanted to be baptised. He was shocked because John knew that Jesus was not dirty like us. He couldn't believe what he heard.</p>	
<p>Now when Jesus asked to be baptised, it is something like this.</p> <p>It is like taking your favourite clean and white shirt ... And mixing it with soiled and dirty clothes in the same basket...</p> <p><i>*mixes clean white shirt with crumpled and dirty clothes into the box</i></p> <p>Wash them together...</p> <p><i>*pour in flask of water of 1.5L water</i></p> <p>So that the clean clothes become like the dirty ones!</p> <p>When that happens, even Mummy would be shocked too! And so John was SUPER shocked! Because Baptism is something that only dirty sinners do.</p> <p>But Jesus wasn't a Sinner.</p> <p><i>*continue to pour in flask of water (fake)</i></p> <p>Instead he was like that perfectly white & clean shirt. He is not like us, and he pleased God in every way. He didn't need any washing.</p> <p><i>*pretend to wash</i></p> <p>Yet, children... you see... Jesus still asked to be baptized by John, to do the same thing that only dirty sinners do.</p>	<p>Props: Pail. Clean and Crumpled Clothes. A Flask of Water</p>
<p>Children, do you know why Jesus did that?</p> <p>Because Jesus has come to earth, to help sinners like us.</p> <p>He comes to help really soiled and dirty people.</p> <p>Jesus gets himself stained and dirty... so that he might eventually wash us clean of our Sins.</p> <p>And in the end, He makes it possible for soiled and dirty sinners like us, to become really clean and white again.</p>	<p>Props: Pail and Clean Clothes.</p>

<p><i>*take out of the pail neatly folded white clothes with Jesus's white shirt</i></p>	
<p>This is the greatest news ever! Children will you remember this in the coming week and thank Jesus?</p> <p>So in the <i>coming week</i>...</p> <p>At <i>home</i>....</p> <p>When you <i>struggle with Sin</i>, and find it so hard to obey your <i>parents</i> and feel really discouraged...</p> <p>Can you remember the Good News this week - Jesus has come to save sinners like You and I!</p> <p>Remember to thank him for becoming like us, in order to save sinners today!</p>	

Now this is not the perfect script. Look through it, identify jargon and think about how to simplify it further!

Think also how to apply the purpose of Matthew 3:11-16 more specifically to children!

Tips to remember!

Before the Talk

- **PRAY** through the preparation period
- **Prepare well by**
 - **Writing a Script**
 - Keep sentences very short! As a rule of thumb, avoid saying more than what you can in a single breath.
 - Bold, Highlight, Capitalise important words or phrases that you want to emphasise.
 - Write your Actions & Drama into the script.
 - Script in fun & interactive segments – e.g. questions for participation.
 - Time your script ~7 minutes, not too long!
 - Keep it simple!
 - Use concrete expressions (e.g. as tall as a giraffe)
 - **Knowing your talk by heart!** Because this will really help you to
 - Maintain eye contact with the children rather than on the Script
 - Speak loudly, clearly with an energetic voice!
 - Make your talk come alive!
 - **Using Visuals and Props** to your advantage, in order to dramatize and emphasise important points. Remember that children need their attention drawn, unlike adults who can sit through hour-long lectures.
 - **Tips for PowerPoint slides:** One image, no words. One word, no image. No blinking words.

During the Talk

- **Get their attention and behaviour** before you start
- **Position and Posturing**
 - Watch your **height** – come to their level
 - Watch your **posture**. Be confident.
 - Show an interested **body / facial language** and keep **eye contact**
- **Tone and Pacing**
 - **Pace** yourself for the kids – most common mistake!
 - Watch your **Tone**: Use an affirming tone, vary volume-tone
 - Allow learning to happen – **don't rush to dismiss** them. A few seconds are crucial.

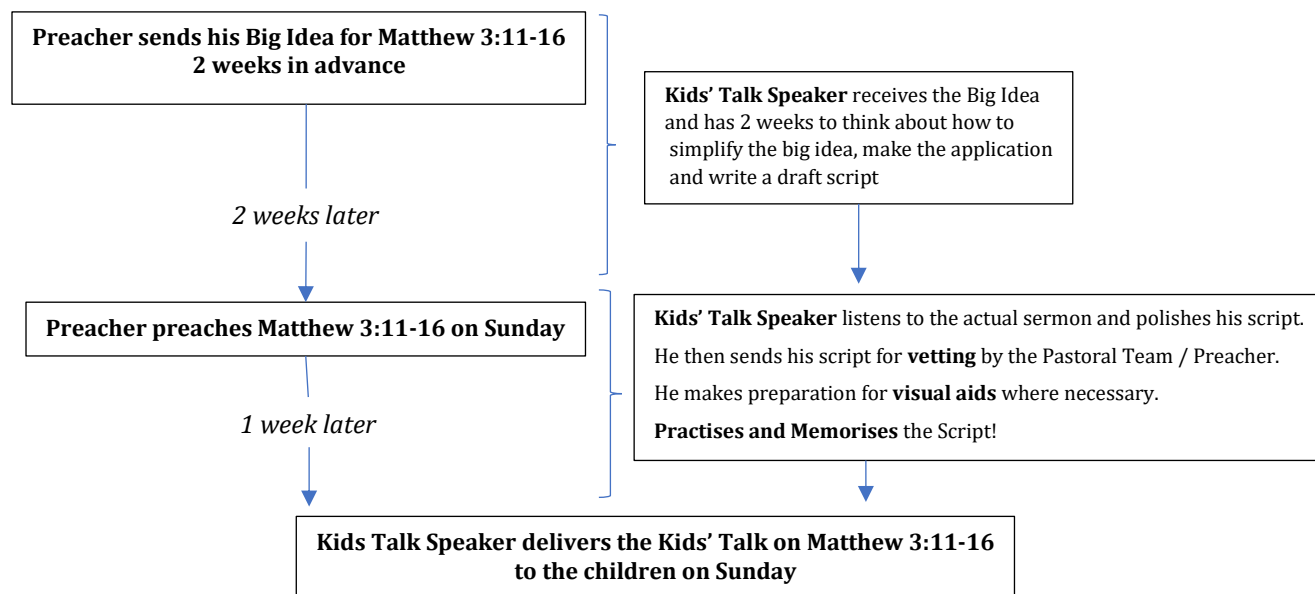
How to Prepare for a Kids' Talk Series in Churches

- At our home church, the Kids Talks are delivered during the main service when the whole church family is present.
- The Kids' Talks follow the current Sunday Sermon Series. This is advantageous because –
 - The Big Idea would have already been prepared by the Speaker - that's half the work done for you!
 - Your Job then is to simplify it and make it relevant for Children!
- In our church, our Kids' Talks lag the pulpit calendar by 1 week. Hence the children are learning what the adults did one week ago.

The Kids' Talk Preparation Process:

1. Preachers send out the Big Idea of their Sermons 2 weeks in advance.
2. The assigned **Kids' Talk Speaker** will
 - a. Pick up the preacher's Big Idea in advance and start thinking about how he can
 - (i) simplify the big idea
 - (ii) make the application for children
 - (iii) write a draft script
 - b. Listen also to the actual sermon preached on the *first* Sunday and make further edits to his script
3. The **Kids' Talk Speaker** will prepare the Script, send it to the pastoral staff for vetting, and get help for whatever visuals he requires (e.g. powerpoint, graphics, actors, props).
4. Once vetted, the **Kids' Talk Speaker** will internalise and memorise the script for delivery on the *second* Sunday.

Kids' Talk Preparation Process



Now try it out on your own using Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 below!

Big Idea of Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

Main Point

All of life under the Sun is Vain [i.e. a mere breath]

Purpose Statement

Accept it!

Situation

Sinners cannot accept that life today is ultimately vain. We choose to believe that apart from God, we can still be in control, we can find everlasting satisfaction, and our lives are forever.

Sunday Sermon Outline:

Bubbles

1. All of Life under the Sun IS Vain (v2-3)
2. Because...
 - a. You are quickly passing (v4)
 - b. You will never find lasting satisfaction while you live (v5-8)
 - c. You will never make a lasting difference after you die (v9-11)

Accept it!

STEP 1 – Simplify the Main Point and Purpose Statement

- Identify the Jargons
 -
 -
 -
 - [...]
- Simplify the Jargons by thinking through these steps:
 - (i) Word-for-Word
 - (ii) Idea-for-Idea
 - (iii) Simple Explanation
 - (iv) Use Illustrations

STEP 2 – Apply the Purpose Statement *by* being Relevant and Specific to Children!

- Place
- Issue
- Time
- People

STEP 3 – The Presentation [Script & Practice]

- Write out a simple Kids' Talk Script.
- Think about the visuals you will use.
- Memorise and Practise - Remember the tips on Page 7.