

Baptist
Mission
Australia



a s l i o n g s i d e r s

Alongsiders
Children's Resource

www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/Alongsiders



Alongsiders: Children's Resource Overview

Engaging with Mission all Year

In conjunction with this resource, we encourage you to help your children connect with Baptist Mission Australia's work and teams all year. Our website has a lot of information and resources, or you can contact your State Leader to connect with intercultural team members in your state.

Head to www.baptistmissionaustralia.org to explore more.

Ideas for Connecting with Mission:

- » Explore a map and find out more about the country and people
- » Send a letter / email to an intercultural team member or their children
- » Find an intercultural team member or ministry to partner with through prayer and giving
- » Pray for a particular team member
*(have fun choosing with this prayer wheel:
www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/PrayerWheel)*
- » Subscribe to resources and intercultural team member newsletters to stay informed
- » Highlight global mission and stories from our intercultural teams all year around

1. **Recharged and Ready!** (Mark 1:35–39)
We need to stop to pray and recharge, just like Jesus.
2. **Peace People** (Acts 16:11–15)
We're peacemakers and people of peace seekers!
3. **Sharing the Love** (John 5:1-15)
Let's love everyone like God loves them.
4. **Better Together** (Philippians 1:3–8)
We do it best when we work together with others and God.

This is a four session curriculum for primary aged children. This document can be printed as an A5 booklet on eight A4 pages.

The aim of this resource is for kids to learn from Jesus' example of loving all people and to explore how we can all live as alongsiders. Through the sessions, children will explore stories of Jesus in the Bible, as well as discover what it means for them and how they can be a part of God's mission. This is achieved through games, activities, Bible stories, discussion, videos and prayer.

Please use this resource as a launching pad and modify it for your context depending on the size, age, maturity and cultural background of the group.

If you have any questions or comments about this resource or anything else, please get in touch! **Contact:** info@baptistmissionaustralia.org or 1800 329 165



Explore more Alongsiders resources:
[www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/
Alongsiders](http://www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/Alongsiders)

1. Recharged and Ready!

Mark 1: 35-39

We need to stop to pray and recharge, just like Jesus.

CONNECT: Power Tag

What you need:

- » Space for running around
- » A designated 'out of power' zone with a leader
- » A watch, phone or timer to mark 30 seconds

How to play:

- » When the game starts, everyone is 'charged up'
- » Everyone runs around trying to tag the other players. When a player is tagged, they are out of power and need to sit down in the out of power zone to recharge.
- » Once a player has been in the out of power zone for 30 seconds, they have recharged and can rejoin the game. A designated leader lets players know when their 30 seconds is up.
- » Keep playing until you want to move on to the next section of your time together.

DEBRIEF

Leader Asks:

- » What happened in the game? (Factual questions)
- » What did you dislike? What did you like? (Feeling questions)

Leader Reflects:

In our game we needed to stay charged up to keep going. Life as a follower of Jesus is like that too. Let's find out how!

INTRODUCTION

What you need:

- » Flat iPad, laptop or phone
- » Charging cord for the above device

Gather the kids and share with them how excited you are to be showing them something (a game, photo or video) on your device. Build the anticipation!

Get out your device and express your disappointment when you discover that the battery is flat and it needs to be recharged. Ask the children what to do, and then plug it into a power source.

Charge it while the lesson continues - you'll come back to it at the end.

EXPLORE

Leader Explains:

Today we are reading from the book of Mark in the New Testament. So far in the book of Mark, Jesus has been super busy. There has been non-stop action! Jesus has been demonstrating God's amazing power through what He was teaching the people (verse 22) and through all the miracles He was performing (verses 26-34). There has been a lot going on! Jesus and his disciples were busy!!

Leader Asks:

- » Do you or your family ever get busy? What does that mean for you and your family?
- » Do you like being busy?

Leader Reflects:

Sometimes we might think that being busy is just something that we experience in our lives today, but Jesus knows what it is like to be busy as well.

So as this new day begins, let's find out what Jesus does when things get really busy. Hmm... I wonder what Jesus does to recharge and get ready the next stage of His ministry?

Read Mark 1:35-39: Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!”

³⁸ Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.”

³⁹ So he travelled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons

Leader Asks:

- » What happened in these verses? Does anyone want to try retell the story?
- » What did Jesus do after His busy time?
- » How did other people respond?

Leader Reflects:

Jesus went off on His own to pray and spend time with His Father, God. He wanted to talk with Him and to listen to Him. It was only after doing this, that Jesus was recharged and ready to continue in His ministry, telling and showing the people who God was and how much God cared about them.

Jesus disciples were a bit frustrated with him (V37) but Jesus knew that spending time with God the Father was essential (really important) for Him, even if other people didn't understand.

Leader Asks:

- » Why do you think Jesus often stepped away to spend time with God in prayer?
- » What is prayer?
- » Why is it important for us to follow Jesus' example and pray too?

Leader Reflects:

Jesus shows us how to live as someone who loves God. It was important for Him to spend time with God and it is super important for us to do the same.

Prayer is our way of communicating with God. Just like we talk with our family and friends, we can talk to God. God loves it when we come to Him, he loves to hear about our lives, to hear what we need, what we are thankful for and how we feel.

Just like a great chat with a good friend brings us joy and peace, spending time with God also brings us joy and peace. It recharges us! It's like plugging into a power source or putting in new batteries.

Watch (optional):

- » ‘Why Do We Pray?’ video from Crossroads Kids’ Club:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jB10aU5t_as
- » ‘Jesus Prayed’ video from LifeKids:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S81k0SCzOCY>

Leader Asks:

- » How can you plan your time so that you have time to spend with God each day?
- » What time works? Where is a good place to spend time with God at your place?

Record these ideas if you can and check in next week to see how they are going.

ACTIVITY: Door Hanger

This is a craft activity where each child will create a daily prayer prompt door hanger. The door hanger will sit on the inside side of the door, so the child sees it as they head out each day.

What you need:

- » A printed door hanger template for each child (cardstock will work best): <http://ow.ly/aP8950NshOQ>
- » Scissors
- » Textas and colouring pencils (for writing and drawing)
- » *Optional: Coloured paper, glitter, stickers etc. (for decorations)*

What to do:

- » Write a short prayer on it to start your day. I.e. 'Dear God, Help me to love people like you do today. Amen' or 'Dear God, Thank you for being with me today. Amen'
- » Add colour, decorations and drawings on the door hanger.
- » Cut out door hanger
- » If there is extra time, the children could write a different prayer on the other side and decorate it
- » *Optional: If you didn't print the hangers on cardstock, you may want to stick them on card to make them more sturdy.*
- » *Optional: Laminate them for durability*

SONGS (optional)

- » 'The Lord's Prayer' song from Saddleback Kids:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqQMxMWXJ7E>
- » 'Hey God' song from Kidspring:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmATkk5F7WE&list=PLIrwXyh4FZgO89UAULHE23cP3B_z-pWe&index=2

AMAZING PEOPLE

Leader Says:

Chris, Ornella, Venerande and Isabella live in Malawi with their parents Jean-Claude and Joyce. Their parents serve as intercultural workers with Baptist Mission Australia. This means that the family has moved from Australia to Malawi to share God's love through the things they do and say.

Leader Asks:

- » Can you imagine moving to another country where you don't know the language and culture.
- » Has anyone in this group done that? What was it like?

Ornella, Venerande and Isabella filmed a video about growing up in Malawi. Watch it here: <https://vimeo.com/808131398>

PRAY

Pray together or in small groups to finish.

Depending on the age of the kids, they could pray about whatever they liked or follow a simple prayer structure such as 'thank you, sorry and please'. Leaders can model how to pray using this structure.

Encourage the children to be thinking about others in their community, their country and beyond.

Give the children time to be quiet before God and listen to Him.

2. Peace People

Acts 16:11–15

We're peacemakers
and people of peace seekers!

CONNECT: Colour Time

What you need:

- » Ziplock bags
- » Blue and red paint
- » Sticky tape

How to play:

- » In a ziplock bag, place ½ tsp of blue paint in one corner and 1 tsp red paint in the opposite corner
- » Expel the air and close the zip lock. Add a layer of sticky tape over the ziplock to make sure the seal is strong.
- » Let the kids have a go at spreading the paint around the bag. Talk about how it is mixing and creating something different. Keep spreading the paint until you have a bag of purple paint.

DEBRIEF

Leader Asks:

- » What happened when we mixed the colours?
(Factual questions)
- » What did you dislike? What did you like? (Feeling questions)

Leader Reflects:

In our experiment today, we saw how the paint spread all through the bags they were in. As the paint mixed together it made a new colour. It changed.

Today we are looking at a passage in the Bible that talks about how Jesus changed the world. We also look at how someone who loved the colour purple was part of God's plan to change the world!!

INTRODUCTION

Leader Says:

As we open the book of Acts, we see that Jesus has returned to heaven and the first church is booming!!

The followers of Jesus were a bit like this paint. Everywhere they went, things changed. BIG things happened and lots of people were choosing to become followers of Jesus. It was a really exciting and sometimes dangerous time for the disciples.

EXPLORE

Leader Explains:

The book of Acts is all about the start of the very first church when Jesus took a group of fishermen and turned the world upside down!

Today we look at the story in Act 16:11-15. Paul, Timothy, Silas and Luke were travelling around a place called Philippi telling people about Jesus. They told people who He was and what He had done. Paul goes to a place outside the city gates and meets a woman called Lydia. Do you know any one called Lydia?

Lydia is described in the Bible as a woman who was a dealer in purple cloth. I wonder if her favourite colour was purple?

The area of Philippi where Lydia lived in was famous for purple dyes and Lydia had a good business and plenty of money from making and selling purple material. Her money allowed her to live in a big spacious house.

Lydia was also someone who wanted to know more about God. She often met with people to pray and was trying to work out who God was and what that meant to her. Lydia is someone that we call a person of peace.

Leader Asks:

- » What is peace? What is the opposite of peace?
- » What do think it means if someone is a person of peace?
- » Can you think of anyone in your life who is a peacemaker?

Watch (optional):

- » 'Fruit of the Spirit: Peace' from Crossroads Kids' Club:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdGdLwF0Yhw>

Leader Reflects:

We call Lydia a person of peace because she was interested in finding out more about God. Her heart was open to God and she wanted to show love, care and welcome to others. God was already at work in her heart and when she heard about Jesus from Paul, she chose to follow Him.

Her life was changed when she became a follower of Jesus and she invited Paul and his friends to come and live in her large house. She wanted to make sure others heard about Jesus too. All of her family and lots of her friends also came to know and love Jesus.

Read Acts 16 11-15: Lydia becomes a follower of Jesus

- ¹¹ From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis.
- ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.
- ¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.
- ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

Watch (optional):

- » 'The Story of Lydia' from Bible Kids:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWiwyrDIN84>

Leader Asks:

- » What happens in these verses? Does anyone want to try retell the story?
- » Do you think God planned for Paul and Lydia to meet that day?
- » *Older kids: Lydia was open to hearing about Jesus... but is this always the case? What's been your experience.*

Leader Reflects:

Paul did not know God's plans for Lydia, but he just faithfully went where God asked him to go.

Paul faithfully talked about Jesus and lived in a way that showed he loved Jesus, and through that the knowledge and love of Jesus spread and changed the world (just like the paint at the start of the lesson).

God used Paul and many others to spread the message of Jesus across the world. And He uses us today!

ACTIVITY: Peace Display

This is a craft activity where together you create an artwork to display in your space.

What you need:

- » One large piece of card (A3, A2 or A1 depending on your space). If you have a large group, you may choose to do multiple versions of this artwork.
- » Assortment of coloured paper and card
- » Scissors
- » Glue
- » Textas and colouring pencils (for writing and drawing)
- » *Optional: photos, glitter, stickers, stamps etc. (for decorations)*

What to do:

- » Use the large piece of card as your base
- » Cut out letters of the word 'Peacemakers' and invite different children to decorate each letter. Glue the letters onto the large piece of card. Peacemakers should fill up about one third of the card.
- » Invite each child to add in a word or phrase onto the card about how they are going to be peacemakers. E.g. 'I will show kindness', 'I will say sorry when I need to', 'I will welcome people', 'I will tell people about Jesus' etc.
- » Add additional decorations and drawings to the card
- » Display in a prominent spot in your space and refer to it in the future.

APPLICATION: Scenarios

In small groups, read these scenarios then explore possible responses.

Scenario 1

There is a new child in the class who has just arrived at school in term 2. This new child name is Amenhotep - a name you have never heard before. At lunch time you notice his lunch box is full of food that looks like rolled up leaves and they look a bit slimy.

After two weeks of being at school, Amenhotep invites the whole class to his 10th birthday party. After school that day your friends are gathered at the park talking about the invitation.

What do you tell them? Here's what your friends say:

- » **Ben** says there is no way he is going to the party. He says Amenhoeps food looks weird and thinks the party will have yucky food too.
- » **Archie** says he will go. He is a bit nervous but realises that Amenhoeps might not have many friends to invite because he is at a new school.
- » **Sam** says he will go if the others do, but is not going to eat anything or play any strange games.

Who do you think is a person of peace in this scenario?

Scenario 2

Today is your Basketball final. This season your team has done really well and it looks like you might win the grand final game. The scores are really close and then one of your team mates falls badly. The coaches call 'time out' while the parents of your team mate help her off the court and take her in the car to the hospital.

Your team wins the game! Everyone is super excited and they make a plan to go out for dinner together.

One of the mums offers to take some kids to visit the injured friend on the way to dinner.

How do you respond? This is how your friends respond:

- » **Jasmin** says no because she is exhausted after the game and just wants to eat and have fun with her friends.
- » **Grace** says she hates medical stuff, so doesn't want to visit as it might make her feel sick.
- » **Hannah** is a bit unsure because she doesn't know the injured player very well, but thinks it would be good to include her in the celebrations by bringing her some food.
- » **Lara** says she will go too, but will just go for a short visit because she doesn't want to waste too much time there.

Who do you think is a person of peace in this scenario?

SONG (optional)

- » 'Away We Go' song from KidSpring Children's Ministry:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvlxuVQblMg&list=PLlrwxXyh4FZgO89UAULHE23cP3B_z-pWe&index=12

AMAZING PEOPLE

Leader Says:

Tobias and Heather live in Mozambique in Africa. A long way away! In the community they live, there is group of people who don't have the Bible in their own language. Tobias has done lots of training and study, so he can help translate the Bible for this community. It is long, hard work... but it is worth it! Because it means that people can read and hear about Jesus, the ultimate peacemaker.

You can find out more about Tobias, Heather and their kids here: www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/TobiasHeather

Leader Asks:

- » Can you imagine not having the Bible in your language? How would you learn about God?
- » What's your favourite story in the Bible?

PRAY

Pray together or in small groups to finish.

Depending on the age of the kids, they could pray about whatever they liked or follow a simple prayer structure such as 'thank you, sorry and please'. Leaders can model how to pray using this structure.

Encourage the children to be thinking about how they can be peacemakers and how they can connect with people of peace in their life.

Give the children time to be quiet before God and listen to Him.

3. Sharing the Love

John 5:1-15

Let's love everyone
like God loves them.

CONNECT: Relay Race

What you need:

- » Cut out heart shapes (printed on coloured A4 paper):
<http://ow.ly/4s4m50NENzE>
- » Heart outlines page (printed on white A4 paper):
<http://ow.ly/4s4m50NENzE>
- » Blu-tack
- » Obstacles (i.e. chairs, skipping rope, blocks etc.)

How to set up:

- » On one side of the room, put the heart outline pages on the wall. You will need one per team.
- » Immediately in front of where the relay teams are standing, place a pile of four cut out hearts with a bit of Blu-tack on the back of each. Between the cut out hearts and the other side of the room, place obstacles for children to interact with as they run across the room.

Make the obstacles as simple or complex as is appropriate for your group. You could add a chair that they have to sit on or circle twice, a skipping rope on the ground they have jump or hop over five times or blocks they have to weave through. Ensure the obstacles are the same for all teams.

How to play:

- » Split the children up into teams of four (include leaders in the teams if needed). Line the teams up in a straight line near their heart outline page.

- » When the leader says “go”, the first child from each team picks up a cut out heart and moves through the obstacles to touch the wall. Then they run back past their team to put their heart inside one of the heart outlines. They stand at the back of their team's line.
- » Once they have returned to their team, the next team member can go.
- » When the whole team has gone, the team sits down. The team that finishes first, wins.

DEBRIEF

Leader Asks:

- » What made it difficult or easy to get the heart to the outline? (Factual questions)
- » What did you dislike? What did you like? (Feeling questions)

Leader Reflects:

In our game, we used the colourful heart to fill the outline. It wasn't always easy, but it was worth it because in the end, all the hearts were filled up with colour.

Showing love to people isn't always the easiest option, but it does make a lasting difference to people. In our Bible story today, we will hear about how Jesus showed love to someone.

INTRODUCTION

Leader Says:

God loves everyone. Everyone you know and everyone you don't know - all over the world, from every country and culture, in the past, present and future. Jesus showed this to us by the way He loved people when He walked on Earth as a human.

Jesus showed love to people that other people rejected, ignored or were unkind to. People from different cultural backgrounds (the Samaritan woman at the well), children, people who were dishonest (Zacchaeus the tax collector) and - as we will hear about in this story - people who had a disability.

As followers of Jesus, God wants us to follow Jesus' example and love all people too.

Watch (optional):

- » 'Fruit of the Spirit: Love' from Crossroads Kids' Club:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsXPZT5ojkU>

Leader Asks:

- » If someone is loving, how would you describe them? How would you describe them if they were *not* loving?
- » Can you remember a time when someone *unexpectedly* showed love to you? What happened and how did you feel?
- » When is it easy to love someone? When is it hard to love someone?

EXPLORE

This section is based off material from Ministry-To-Children.com

Leader Explains:

In the story we are going to read, there is a pool. This pool was near a temple and so it was considered extra special or holy. People who wanted to be healed would sit or lie around the pool, because they believed that the water could heal them. There was a popular story at the time, which said that every now and again, an angel would come and stir up the water in the pool. The first person to get into the water after it bubbled up was said to receive healing.

So, a lot of people with disabilities or sickness gathered around this pool. Some stayed there for years. In those days, there was little support or medical help for people with disabilities, so some people had to put their trust in this pool. It was a desperate and sad place.

Jesus went to this pool and met a man who had not been able to walk for 38 years. Jesus showed love to this man by stopping to talk with him, healing him physically and then healing him on the inside.

Let's read the story.

Read John 5:1-15: The healing at the pool

¹ Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish feasts. ² In Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate is a pool. In the Aramaic language it is called Bethesda. It is surrounded by five rows of columns with a roof over them. ³⁻⁴ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie down. Among them were those who were blind, those who could not walk, and those who could hardly move. ⁵ One person was there who had not been able to walk for 38 years. ⁶ Jesus saw him lying there. He knew that the man had been in that condition for a long time. So he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

⁷ "Sir," the disabled man replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when an angel stirs up the water. I try to get in, but someone else always goes down ahead of me."

⁸ Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk."

⁹ The man was healed right away. He picked up his mat and walked. This happened on a Sabbath day. ¹⁰ So the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath day. The law does not allow you to carry your mat."

¹¹ But he replied, "The one who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

¹² They asked him, "Who is this fellow? Who told you to pick it up and walk?"

¹³ The one who was healed had no idea who it was. Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

¹⁴ Later Jesus found him at the temple. Jesus said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning, or something worse may happen to you." ¹⁵ The man went away. He told the Jewish leaders it was Jesus who had made him well.

Watch (optional):

- » 'Jesus Heals' from Crossroads Kids' Club:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1cykPOiMuY>

Leader Asks:

- » What happens in this story? Does anyone want to try retell it?
- » Do you have any questions about this story?
- » Why do you think Jesus healed the man on the outside and on the inside? Which is more important?

Leader Reflects:

Jesus shows that he loves the man as a whole person. It's not enough just to heal him physically. Jesus cares about the man's heart as well. He cares what is happening on the inside. And so Jesus tells him to stop sinning.

When we love people like God does, it's like we are sharing God's love. Just like Jesus, God wants us to love those around us as whole people.

Imagine you have a friend, and they have everything they need. Food, clothes, toys, books and more. They have more than they need... they have everything they want too! But, they are sad. What do you do?

Do you keep giving them more and more stuff? Or do you ask them what's wrong and let them know you are there for them?

Or imagine you have another friend who is really hungry. They are over at your house and they let you know they are super hungry because they don't have enough food at their house and didn't eat breakfast. What do you do?

Do you tell them that you are sorry they are hungry and that you are praying for them? Or do you go and get some of your food for them? (*Praying for them is good too... but right now, they also need a practical response.*)

God wants us to love people through our words and our actions, just like Jesus. It's not always easy, but the Holy Spirit is there to help us. We can always pray and ask for help to love people.

ACTIVITY: Origami Hearts

This is a craft activity where each child creates an origami heart to take home as a reminder to love people like God loves them.

What you need:

- » Coloured square paper
- » Textas or coloured pencils

What to do:

- » Leaders learn how to make an origami heart to teach children: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8xAFBeJJUA&t=72s>
- » Create an origami heart and then add a short prayer or statement to the front. (I.e. 'God, help me to love people like you do', 'God is Love', or 'Jesus loves me and everyone' etc.)
- » Add additional decorations as desired.

SONGS (optional)

- » 'Love Will Never Fail' song from KidSpring Children's Ministry: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2C_9oOaWB8&list=PLlrwxXyh4FZgO89UAULHE23cP3B_z-pWe&index=33
- » 'Love One Another' song by Dakota Pyle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYlkcoAfLU4>

AMAZING PEOPLE

Leader Says:

Fiona is preparing to join Baptist Mission Australia's South Asia team. She is a midwife, which means she helps women give birth. She is passionate about helping women have safe deliveries so that they and their babies are healthy. Australia has great hospitals and free healthcare. Sometimes things still go wrong, but overall, Australia is a safe place to have a baby.

It's very different in South Asia. Many women are very poor and give birth with no midwife or medical support. Sadly many babies are born with disabilities due to complications during labour.

This breaks Fiona's heart because she knows that many of these complications are preventable. She uses her training and skills to help women giving birth so that their babies are healthy. She shares God's love in practical ways - through her actions and her words.

*You can find out more about Fiona here:
www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/Fiona*

Leader Asks:

- » Are there any skills or gifts that you have, that you could use to show love to other people?

PRAY

Pray together or in small groups to finish.

Invite each child to say this sentence and finish it with their own words: "God, help me to love..." (I.e "God, help me to love... my neighbours / my cousins / the new student in my class etc.)

Leaders can model how to pray using this structure and help any children who are not sure what to say. *If a child doesn't want to pray out loud, they can tap the shoulder of the next person to let them know that it's now their turn.*

Give the children time to be quiet before God and listen to Him.

Alongsiders:

4. Better Together

Philippians 1:3–8

We do it best when we work together with others and God.

CONNECT: Relocation Station

What you need:

- » 30+ small objects (i.e. marbles, bouncy balls, paper clips etc.)
- » Two containers (or two marked circles on floor) that comfortably fit the 30+ small objects

How to play:

- » Put all the objects into one of the containers. Invite one child to relocate all the objects from one container to the other, one at a time, as fast as they can. Time how long it takes them to complete the task.
- » Then invite two children to do the same thing - relocating all the objects one at a time from one container to the other. Time them also.
- » Then invite all the children to see how fast they can do it together. Time them as well.

DEBRIEF

Leader Asks:

- » What happened in the game? Who moved the objects the most quickly?
- » Why was that?

Leader Reflects:

In our game, we saw that when everyone works together, we can get things done better. We are better together! And that's what our Bible passage is about today.

Let's get into it.

INTRODUCTION

This section is based off material from Ministry-To-Children.com

Leader Says:

We are going to read a passage from a book in the Bible called Philippians. This book is a letter written by Paul to a church in Philippi. *Just like people from Australia are called Australians, people from Philippi are called Philippians.*

Paul was actually in prison when he wrote this letter, but he thought very highly of the Philippian people. They had helped him a lot and his words to them are full of joy and thankful memories. He starts his letter by expressing how much he appreciates these Philippian friends.

Paul is thankful for them. He says that every time he remembers them, he gives thanks to God. Even though Paul is far from these people, and in jail, he can still rejoice and give thanks, and he knows that the Philippian church is continuing to do God's work.

One of the best things we can do for someone is encourage them. And one of the best things we can do for ourselves, is to have an attitude of gratitude. Even though he is having a hard time and in prison, Paul finds things to be grateful for and encourages his friends in Philippi.

Leader Asks:

- » How does it feel when someone encourages you?
- » Are there some people in your life who you want to thank God for?
- » How can you encourage someone this week?

EXPLORE

Let's read Paul's letter.

Read Philippians 1:3–8: Letter from Paul

³ I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸ God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Leader Asks:

- » What does Paul say in his letter to the Philippians? Can anyone give us an overview?
- » Do you have any questions about the letter?
- » Why do you think Paul thanks God every time he remembers them?
- » What do you think 'partnership in the Gospel' means?

Leader Reflects:

Paul and the Philippian church are working together. They are supporting each other, encouraging each other and showing love to each other. But what kind of work are they doing?

They are working together in the Gospel. This means they are looking for opportunities to share the good news of Jesus with people in their community, and to build up the faith of those who have chosen to follow Jesus.

Paul travels to different churches - and communities where there are no churches - to tell people about Jesus. This travel costs money, and the church in Philippi are generously giving him money so he can go. They also pray for him and encourage him.

Even though the Philippian believers are not actually travelling with Paul, they are partners with him as he goes because of their gifts and prayers. They are working together.

It's the same when we partner with intercultural team members (or missionaries) today. They can only go and tell people about Jesus when people and churches partner with them through giving, praying and encouraging.

We are going to encourage some mission workers now!

ACTIVITY: Postcards

This is a craft activity where each child writes or draws an encouragement for a Baptist Mission Australia intercultural team member, team or family. Alternatively, you could create a single larger piece together as group. *Email or mail the encouragements and we will send them to the relevant team or team member.*

What you need:

- » Printed postcards (cut out): <http://ow.ly/KMOa50NGFJ7>
- » Textas, pens and coloured pencils
- » Printed out photos of team members (optional): <http://ow.ly/QFB050NFyWU>

What to do:

- » Choose who you would like to send an encouragement to. *The photos of team members could be used here.*
- » Write or draw an encouragement, prayer or verse on a postcard.
- » If there is extra time, do another one for someone else!
- » *Leaders: Email or mail the encouragements to Baptist Mission Australia for us to pass on.*

SONGS (optional)

- » 'We Are Family' by Kidspring Children's Ministry: <http://ow.ly/rCQ750HZZIq>

AMAZING PEOPLE

Leader Says:

Villy and Muana have been serving God in Thailand for 20 years! How have they been able to do that? Well there are a few key reasons. One, God has called them and sustained them. Two, they have been willing to listen to God and serve Him in Thailand. And three, people and churches have supported them.

Without people partnering with them through gifts, prayers and encouragement... they cannot be there! And if they weren't there, then many people would not have been able to hear about Jesus from Villy and Muana.

Our partnership makes a difference!

*You can find out more about Muana and Villy here:
www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/MuanaVilly*

PRAY

Pray together or in small groups to finish.



Have fun using our prayer wheel to pray for different intercultural team members:

www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/PrayerWheel

Invite each child to hit the wheel and then pray for that person. If you don't know anything about their ministry, then you can pray a simple prayer such as *"Dear God, help XXX show your love today. Amen"* or *"Dear God, I pray that you will be with XXX as they talk to and listen to friends today. Amen"* or *"Dear God, I pray that XXX experiences joy today. Amen"*

Give the children time to be quiet before God and listen to Him.



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