



# TREASURE CHEST

... a container filled with valuable items

Quarterly/ Free  
March 2016 issue

e-NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.  
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*We are entrusted to pass  
the baton of faith from  
one generation to the next*

He commanded our fathers to teach them to their children, so the next generation might know them and they in turn will teach their own children. Psalm 78



## Jelly Bean Bias Object Lesson

**Point:** God has made each of us different. He has no favourites.

**Key verse:** As believers in Jesus Christ, do not show favouritism. (James 2:1)

**Lesson:** (*Pick up a jelly bean and eat it.*) Yum! I love jelly beans, don't you? I especially love these ones (*pick a particular colour out, show it and eat it.*) They're my favourite. (*Pick out another colour you don't like.*) As for these, well I'd be quite happy if they didn't even put them in the bag. I don't really like these at all. Do you have favourites? What are your favourite colour jelly beans? (*Ask a few kids to contribute.*) Are there any you don't like? What about the black ones? Who likes yellow ones? (*Get a response*) Who doesn't like red ones or boring old white ones?



Every one of us has different ideas about which one is the best. Just as each jelly bean has a different flavour and colour, people are all different too. Some are dark, some are white. Some have different shaped eyes or

noses. Even our hair is different. Some people don't look the same as us, or even speak the same language. Some people may not want to have anything to do with some other people simply because they are different. But we need to understand that God has made us all. We are all made in his image. God want us to love others no matter what and even if others don't like us, because we are different, he wants us to love them too. How hard can that be? Sometimes it's really tough to do, but God helps us to love those we struggle with. God wants us all to love one another – even those we think may be our enemies. (*Hold up jelly beans again.*)

So next time you don't want to play with that new girl at school because she walks funny, or you and your friends want to make fun of that boy because his nose or ears are big, remember these jelly beans. God has no favourites. He made every one of us and he wants us to love others too.

**Prayer:** Thank you God that we can choose friends. But help me not to think I am better than other people and help me not to treat people differently.

## Why Kids Misbehave

Aside from a neurological or biological conditions, kids do what they do because of three basic reasons.

### 1. Kids misbehave when they feel they don't belong.

Girls tend to cooperate in groups. They play together, develop social ties, and trot to the toilet together. Boys, in contrast, are competitive. They create conflict and attempt to claim superiority. Older children also rebel to capture the attention of the opposite sex. It's a matter of belonging.

Initially it's simple attention-getting: whispering, kicking a table, giving goofy answers, or burping. Each action draws attention as he asserts, "Look at me! I belong here!"

Many teachers choose to ignore this behaviour. But a better choice is to create a connection between the teacher & child. As the program continues, simply walk toward the whispering pair. Touch the kicking child's shoulder. Catch their eye and raise your eyebrow or quickly point a finger. Make no big deal, but ensure the child knows that you are watching them.

Don't respond by embarrassing or humiliating the child in front of their peers. Degrading or sarcastic comments should never be used by the teacher. "Someday I won't have to be here!", thinks the child. And most won't be there when their parents no longer force church attendance. They'll stay home, make excuses or even leave the faith.

Here are a few tips. First, reduce the rows. The more rows, the more problems. The further back a child sits, the more he needs to announce his presence. Try and keep to a three-row maximum. If you must have more than three rows, scatter adult help among the back rows. Also keep classes small; eight to 12 children is best. The larger the group, the more potential for problems. Splitting older children into same-sex classes may also help.

Second, make your class a safe place — a sanctuary free of insult and emotional stress. Address children by their names and with respect. Affirm their positive actions and kind words.

### 2. Kids misbehave out of boredom.

Predictability creates boredom which in turn invites misbehaviour. Someone (usually the class clown) has to make it interesting. If the teacher can't be creative, the class will.

The attention span of a child parallels his age. Four years old? Four minutes. Ten years old? Ten minutes attention span. Your program should be made up of a variety of short events.

Preparation is also a key factor. The less prepared you are, the more problems you'll have. Have everything ... (*continue*)



(continued from page 1)

... ready before class and close at hand ... but out of sight.



Avoid overusing similar learning activities. If possible, don't repeat the same activity more than once a month. 'But don't kids like routine?' Absolutely. But remember, *variety is the spice of life*.

Minimize the 'bribes', where you use prizes and gimmicks to make children behave or do "spiritual" things. Rewards have their place, but they must be used sparingly otherwise they lose their effect. You (not the children) must determine their use. Put them away once the program is over. Positive affirmations are far more effective.

### 3. Kids misbehave from mistaken beliefs.

"You're a troublemaker and always will be!" one teacher says. "I've heard about you." "Would you be quiet? All you do is talk!"

Did you catch the expectations? What you believe and say about children is what you'll get. If you expect misbehaviour, you'll receive it. If you tend to say negative things to children, you communicate a standard to live down to — and they will. If you only address what they can't do, you'll never witness what they can do!

So flip those assumptions. Transform negatives into positives. If you expect children to succeed, they will. Barbara Coloroso in her parenting book *Kids Are Worth It!* shares six messages every child needs to hear: "I believe in you. I trust you. I know you can handle this. You are listened to. You are cared for. You are very important to me."

Be positive and affirming in your words to children. "Roger, you're a good artist!" "Ella, I liked the way you were kind to that new girl." "Joel, that was a very thoughtful answer."



Children behave according to what they believe others expect of them. Affirmations of praise and encouragement inspire children, while discouraging comments of rebuke and sarcasm compel them to misbehave.

It's the difference between proactive and reactive discipline. Proactive discipline sets the stage for proper behaviour. It delivers guidelines of conduct in positive ways. It encourages children to choose right actions. It creates an affirming environment where kids belong and have power to make choices.

Unfortunately some teachers use reactive discipline techniques — embarrassment, isolation, shaming, bribes/gimmicks, or even physical force — to produce accepted behaviour.

Of course both disciplinary styles may work, but only one keeps the child's dignity intact. Only one resolves every child's need to belong. Only one rewards right behaviour by encouragement. And only one inspires children to better behaviour. Understanding the difference is 90 percent of the cure. The other 10 percent is doing it.

*Adapted from an article by Rick Chromey*



### Two Headed Monster Game:

Choose 3 pairs of kids to come out the front, place a blown up balloon between each of the pairs foreheads (or shoulders) and then they run to and from a particular point. They are not allowed to hold the balloon with their hands. If the balloon falls, that pair must go back to the point where it dropped and continue from there.

### Balloon Head Bounce:

A good introductory game while kids are arriving. One at a time get a child up the front to see how many times they can bounce a balloon on their head without it falling to the ground. Time limit is 30 seconds. No hands allowed.

## Kids and the Bible

After 12 years of church/Sunday School, the odds are that many of your kids will have attained a great deal of knowledge about the Bible. But random bits of Biblical knowledge is not sufficient in bringing transformation in a person's life. As teachers we need to help children appreciate that the Bible will be a real benefit to them in everyday life. Here are some thoughts ...



### It's God's Word

Not only is the Bible trustworthy as a historical document, it is also God's written revelation to humans. God used around 40 different people to write down information that reveals God's message, God's heart and God's character. The way that we talk about and respect the Bible in front of the children will help them appreciate and love this book, and more importantly the God of this book.

### It tells a big story

I love that there are so many children's curriculum options that walk through the entire range of Scripture. This is vital because it's easy to view the Bible as just a collection of largely disconnected stories and moral lessons. As we introduce our kids to God's Word, it's important to give them an idea of how the stories they are learning are part of God's overall plan of redemption and restoration. Remind your students that, no matter where you are studying, you can see the continual unfolding of God's redemptive plan!

### It's a living book

There are a lot of powerful books in the world, books that have the power to change lives. However, the Bible stands apart from all of them, because it's not a book that has power in isolation. What makes Scripture powerful is the fact that God's Spirit actively illuminates it to us. God uses his word and His Spirit to speak to us exactly where we're at (Hebrews 4:12, 1 Thess. 2:13). This is vital for kids to grasp because our goal should be to see them not only know Scripture, but to be practiced in hearing the Spirit of God speak through it.

**The Bible was not given for our information but for our transformation.**

*DL Moody*

To finish it off, we all want our kids to leave our programs with a love for the Bible and especially for the God of the Bible. The best thing we can do as children's ministers is make sure we provide a solid foundation for understanding what Scripture is, and what makes it unique. That way the knowledge that our kids acquire in children's ministry and beyond has a healthy foundation to be built upon.