EASY MAGICAL GOSPEL OBJECT LESSONS FOR CHILDREN

Brad Brown
These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NIV)
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Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

Matthew 19:14 (NIV)
Easy Magical Gospel Object Lessons for Children

PART 1: SHARING THE GOSPEL

Share the “Whole Story”
We live in a largely post-Christian culture, where many people lack even a basic understanding of God and Christian teachings. A generation or two ago, most people had basic foundational knowledge, so a Gospel presentation could be little more than a call to follow Jesus. That is no longer the case. It’s not just that people haven’t responded to Jesus, but often they have no real understanding of who he is or why they need him. So, don’t assume that kids today know which God you are talking about, what sin is, who Jesus is, why bad things happen, what happens after death, and so forth.

An example of the Apostle Paul sharing the Gospel with a group that lacked foundational knowledge can be found in Acts 17:22 ff.

Beware of Jargon
There are a lot of words and phrases that we Christians use that can lead to confusion. Any word or phrase that kids either don’t use in their daily conversations or that mean something different in the context we are using them should be avoided or clearly explained. Even words as simple as “sin” and “faith” need to be explained.

Be Literal
Kids are very literal and have difficulty with abstract concepts and language. Even middle school aged children tend to be very literal. So share the gospel in a clear, literal way. Watch out for abstract or figurative phrases like “ask
Jesus into your heart.” Setting aside the fact that that phrase really isn’t scriptural, it’s just confusing to literal-minded kids.

**Give Them Reasons to Believe**

Kids hear a lot of stories. Why should they believe the ones you are telling them are true? Many kids think that church is where you hear stories, but school is where you learn how the world really works. There are very good reasons to believe in God and to trust the Bible. Kids need to know that.

For example, how do we know the Bible is true? (For that matter, what is the Bible? Where did it come from? How is it different from other books?) How do we know God is real? How do we know what he’s like? How do we know Jesus really is God?

**A Few Quick Thoughts…**

- It’s not about making “bad kids” into “good kids.”
- The role of the law is as a “schoolmaster” that leads us to Christ. (Galatians 3:24) It is important that kids understand why they need Christ.
- Beware of focusing on “techniques” over understanding.
- How do we define “success” in evangelism? It’s not about numbers, it’s about being faithful.

**A Complete Gospel Presentation**

What are the things people need to understand in order to respond to the gospel? Obviously, this is not a simple question. There is some debate between different
denominations about what is required for salvation, and some individuals will need more or less information before they are ready respond.

Below I have listed the basics that I feel are important. You won’t necessarily cover everything in a single presentation—especially if you are working with the same children week after week. However, these represent basic, foundational truths that I believe people should understand in order to be in a position to make an informed decision.

- God is the creator of everything. When God created the world it was perfect.
- We humans turned our back on God, and corrupted God’s perfect creation. It is this rebellion that is the ultimate cause of the suffering and evil in the world.
- All of us are guilty of breaking God’s law.
- There is a price that must be paid when the law is broken. Since we have broken God’s law, it is only fair that we pay this price.
- Jesus is God in human form. He lived a perfect life, and died to pay the price for our sin. He then rose from the dead.
- God knows each of us, and desires for us to be in a relationship with him.
- We each must respond to what God has done for us. We can put our trust in God, or keep living apart from him.
PART 2: MAGICAL OBJECT LESSONS

Three Bead Illustration

Overview

Three beads (or tubes or blocks with holes drilled through them) are threaded onto ropes. The one on one end represents God. The one on the other end represents a person. They are separated by one in the middle, which represents sin. The sin is keeping God and the person separated. When the “sin” is covered with a handkerchief with a cross drawn on it, it falls off the rope. With the sin out of the way, God and the person are able to get together at the cross.

Required

3 “things” to thread onto the rope

They must be at least a couple of inches wide because the middle one has to hide where the ropes meet inside. The hole must be large enough for the two ropes you are using to easily pass through. For a small setting, you could use large wooden beads.

For a larger setting, you can get white plastic PVC pipe couplings in your local hardware store. These are basically just short tubes. They are available in several sizes, and are quite inexpensive. Instead, you could get a piece of PVC pipe and cut it into segments any length you wish. PVC connectors or pipes can be spray painted or
covered with colored duct tape to “pretty them up” and make it easier for kids to remember which is which.

In a pinch, even toilet paper tubes would work, though you’d want to decorate them.

2 pieces of rope or string, three to four feet long
They may need to be longer or shorter, depending on the size of the objects you are threading onto it. It should be thick enough to be easily seen by the group. Shoelaces are good for smaller settings. For larger crowds, soft rope, such as sash cord, works well.

Thread
It should be easy to break, though stronger thread will be required if your three objects are heavier.

Handkerchief with a cross on it (Optional)
I just used a Sharpie marker to draw and color in a cross on a cheap white handkerchief.

Preparation
Take the two pieces of rope and tie them together in the middle with a piece of thread.
Tie the “sin” tube onto the ropes, as described below. With practice, it is possible to secretly do this in front of the kids during the presentation. However, I recommend keeping it simple, and doing this part ahead of time.

Fold each rope in half, so they just meet up where they are tied together. Slide the “sin” tube over both ropes, hiding where they meet in the middle.

Take one end of the left rope and one end of the right rope, and tie them over the tube in an overhand knot, like the first knot you use when tying your shoes. (In the illustration below, different colors are used for each rope for clarity. Don’t really use different colored ropes!)

Now it should look like the tube is tied onto the ropes, but if you pull the ends, the thread will break and the tube will fall off.
**Presentation**

Introduce the “God” and “person” tubes. Explain who God is, and that he desires to have a friendship with us, but there is a problem.

Introduce the other tubes. Thread the “God” tube over both ropes on one side, and the “person” tube over the ropes on the other side.

Invite two helpers to come up and hold the ends of the rope. One will stand on your right, holding the right ends, and the other on the left, holding the other ends. (Be sure you choose people who will follow you instructions, and not pull and break the thread too soon.) Explain how our sin separates us from God.

Introduce the cross handkerchief. Explain what Jesus did for us on the cross, and cover the “sin” tube with the cross. Reach under the handkerchief and break the thread, removing the Sin tube. (It is not necessary to use the handkerchief in this illustration. You can simply have the volunteers pull the ropes and the “sin” tube will fall off. I just like having a visual representation of the cross to reinforce the concept that it is the work of Christ that takes care of our sin.)

Show that now that the sin is no longer in the way, God and the person can get together.
Choices

Overview
Six envelopes are displayed. They contain different things people think are important in life. An audience member chooses one. The others are opened, showing various things people try. Finally the chosen envelope is opened, revealing the audience member made a good choice. It contains a picture of a cross, representing what should be most important in our lives, knowing and serving Jesus.

Required

6 envelopes
If you have a large crowd, use large manila envelopes. For smaller groups, you can use smaller envelopes. Subtly number the envelopes from one to six using small numbers on the top corner of the back. This will enable you can keep them in the order you want. There should not be numbers that are visible to the audience.

6 pictures
You’ll need six different pictures. Depending on your presentation, these can represent things people consider important, ways people try to get to heaven, or things that people try to find meaning in life.

You may wish to put notes or Bible verses on the back of each picture, to aid you in your presentation.

You can easily find free clip art on the web. For example:
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- Smiley Face (Do what makes you happy.)
- Money Bag (Live for money and power.)
- Cross (Jesus)
- Non-Christian religious symbols (Other faiths)
- Church (Going to church)
- Ten Commandments (Being good)

**Preparation**

Put the pictures in the envelopes. Put the cross in the envelope numbered 3.

**Presentation**

Display the envelopes, and explain what they contain. For a small crowd, you can lay them out in a row. For a large crowd, bring up six kids, and have one hold each envelope.

Choose someone from the audience, and ask them to “quickly shout out a number between one and six.” Most often, people will choose either three or four which is ideal. However, no matter what they choose, you will give them the cross.

Below are the counting procedures that ensure the third envelope is chosen. They assume envelope one is on the left.

**Three**

Count from the left, ending up on the cross.

**Four**

Simply count from the right, ending up on the cross.

For all other numbers, you will spell the number they choose, indicating one envelope for each letter.
One, Two, or Six
Start from the left, saying one letter for each envelope.
For one, for example, you’d say “O” for the first envelope, “N” for the second, and “E” for the third.

Five
Start from the right, saying one letter for each envelope.
You’d spell F-I-V-E, ending up on the cross.

Go through each of the envelopes that weren’t chosen, explaining their significance. Finally open the chosen envelope, showing the cross.

Quicker Variation
You can do a quicker version, using only three envelopes. Below are the procedures for ensure the cross is chosen.

Ask a volunteer to pick up two of the envelopes.

If they left the cross envelope behind, you’re done. Say “You choose to leave this envelope behind. Let’s look at the two you didn’t choose.”

If the cross was one of the envelopes he took, say “Hand me one of the two envelopes you choose.”

If he hands you the cross, say, “So this (the one just handed to you) is the one you chose. Let’s look at the two you didn’t choose.”

Otherwise, say, “That leaves you with one envelope. Let’s look at the two you didn’t choose.”
The Cross

Overview
A glass of water is used to represent the presenter’s life. Iodine is added to the water, illustrating a life stained by sin. A cross is put in the glass, and the water becomes clear, illustrating how Jesus takes care of our sin.

Required

A Glass
I prefer using a long stemmed glass, but any clear glass works.

A bottle or other container of water

Iodine
You can get a bottle in most drug stores

Hypo Clearing Agent
This is a white powder used in developing photographs. It is available online for about $6 for a bag that has enough for hundreds of presentations. You may be able to get it locally at a photography supply store.

A Cross
You can simply glue some square dowels or craft sticks together. Attach something at the back of the cross near the bottom to hold a very small amount of hypo clearing agent. A 16th of teaspoon is plenty. I cut a one-inch piece off of a drinking straw and stapled and glued it to the
Easy Magical Gospel Object Lessons for Children

back of the cross. I stapled the bottom of the straw so it was pinched closed at the bottom and open at the top.

Preparation
Put a small amount of hypo clearing agent in the back of the cross.

Presentation
I fill up the glass, talking about how I thought I was a good person. I add iodine, talking about the reality of how my life was stained by sin. I add more clean water, talking about how I tried to make up for my sin with good works. Finally, I talk about deciding to invite God into my messed up life. I put the cross into the glass, and stir a little. The water becomes clear.

Alternate Presentations
You can simply use three glasses. One is labeled “Me” and contains just water. The second, labeled “sin” contains water with iodine. The third, labeled “Jesus” containing hypo clearing agent dissolved in water.

Pour some “sin” into the “me” glass. Finally, pour some water from the “Jesus” glass into the “me” glass, and it will become clear.

Another option is to have a larger bowl containing hypo clearing solution in water. Take a handkerchief and stain it with iodine. The handkerchief represents a sin stained life. The bowl represents Jesus. Put the handkerchief in the water, and the stains will disappear.
Torn and Restored Paper

Overview
A strip of paper is torn apart, representing a life destroyed by sin. It is restored, illustrating how God can restore a broken life.

Required

Two strips of paper
I cut an 8.5x11 sheet unto four equal 11-inch long strips, and use two of those.

Glue (or tape, if you’re in a hurry)

Preparation
Using a small drop of glue placed about 1 inch from the end of one of the strips, glue the two strips back-to-back.

After the glue dries, fold one of the strips into a small packet, so it can be easily concealed behind the other strip. First, fold the strip in half, and then in half again. Finally, fold it in from all four sides, to keep it from showing when the strip is shown from the front.)

Folded packet of paper glued to the back of the second strip.
Presentation

Display the piece of paper, keeping the extra packet hidden at the back. Just hold the paper naturally. As long as you don’t act like you’re hiding something, the kids will have no reason to suspect there’s anything unusual about the paper.

While talking about sin, tear the strip into four pieces, each a couple of inches long. I first tear off about one quarter of the strip, including the secret packet. Then continue to tear the remaining piece twice more. Arrange the pieces so the secret extra strip is at the back, facing you.

Fold the torn pieces together into a packet, about the same size as the hidden packet. In the process of folding up the torn pieces, turn the packet around, so the whole strip is toward the front, and the torn pieces at the back. (There’s no need to be “sneaky” about this. No one will be able to distinguish the folded extra strip from the packet of torn pieces.)

Talk about how God wants to forgive and restore us, if we’ll put our trust in him. Unfold the whole strip, leaving the torn pieces glued to the back.
Airplane

Overview
The presenter folds a paper airplane, asking whether a plane can take us to heaven. The wings are torn off making a rocket. The presenter asks whether a rocket can take us to heaven. Finally, the rocket is unfolded, forming a cross.

Required

A piece of 8.5x11 paper

Preparation
None is required. You can optionally pre-fold the plane and then unfold it. That will allow you to simply follow the creases during the presentation.

Presentation
Hold the paper vertically. Fold the top edge over at a 45-degree angle, so the top is even with the side.

Fold the top corner over to the opposite side.
Fold it in half vertically.

Now you can fold the wings down, making the plane. After showing the plane, put the wings back up into their original position.

Starting at the point, tear the wings off, as shown by the dotted line. Open up the middle crease, revealing a rocket ship.

Finally, unfold the paper completely, revealing the shape of a cross.

You can view a video of the plane presentation here: https://www.BradBrownMagic.com/plane/
“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.”

Matthew 18:12-14 (NIV)
“We had Brad Brown perform at our Vacation Bible School and we couldn’t have asked for a more entertaining, fun, and personable fellow! Brad had awesome tricks that wowed kids and adults alike. Brad was very kind, humble, and a good sport helping to ensure that our VBS was a success. We highly recommend Brad Brown!”

Tonya Goble, VBS Director, Betsy Layne Free Will Baptist Church

“I would recommend Brad for and to anyone who desire to have a well thought out and planned magical event with a Godly-purpose and fun. The kids enjoyed him very much and were very excited to come back each evening! I heard very good feedback from the moms and dads also which is very important! He is very versatile and gifted with the kids.”

Glenn Graf, Children’s Ministries Director, Calvary Community Church

“Brad Brown was incredible. He used his magic and the theme very well together. And the kids absolutely loved him. I think he made the kids think that anything was possible for them. Boys this age have a hard time paying attention and he had them right in the palm of his hands.”

Arleen Lloyd, Program Director, Camp Lael
Fun, Family-friendly Comedy and Magic that Shares the Love of Jesus

Brad Brown is an internationally known Christian magician who combines side-splitting comedy and mind-blowing magic to engage audiences and clearly present Gospel Truth. Based out of Northern Kentucky, he has delighted audiences across the country and around the world, and now you can bring this inspirational fun to your group.

With Brad, your group will laugh, clap and be actively involved in making the magic happen. More importantly, Brad clearly presents the powerful truth of the Gospel in a clear, simple way. Both the program and the message can be tailored to meet the unique needs of your event.

To learn more or schedule an event, visit www.BradBrownMagic.com, or call 1-866-774-7469
These high impact object lessons can be done using inexpensive, readily available materials and require minimal preparation time. They are specifically designed to share the gospel in a way that kids can easily understand.

Brad Brown is an entertainer who partners with churches and Christian organizations across the country and around the world to share the love of Jesus through magic and comedy.