



## GETTING READY

### 1. Opener/Closer

#### What You Need:

- Host
- Christmas attire for the Host (same as last week)
- Decorated Christmas tree (still up on stage)
- Two small DECORATED Christmas trees (ones used for Jingle Jam game)
- Lots of Christmas Tree decorations (from Jingle Jam)
- Bungee harness from Jingle Jam game

#### *Music and Sound Effects (SFX):*

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter and exit the room
- Fun Christmas music for the game

#### *Large Group Visuals:*

- Theme Slide
- Compassion Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- Memory Verse Slide

#### What You Do:

- Play game as it was played at Jingle Jam. Two leaders are harnessed and they have 60 seconds to decorate their specific tree with items from large bins.
- See coach/staff for more details.

## 2. Bible Story

### What You Need:

- Storyteller
- Bible
- Three Leaders
- Flashlight
- LED finger lights; two for each grade level (total of 8)
- Zip-top sandwich bags
- Preschool book
- Playground ball
- Reusable grocery bag

### What You Do:

- Place the finger lights in the sandwich bags, so that you have enough lights for two kids from each grade level (total of 8). Put together a bag of extra lights as well, for groups that run out of lights or for kids whose lights might malfunction.
- Figure out how to make your room as dark as possible for the moment you'll be spreading the lights.

### *Large Group Visuals:*

- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide

## 3. Worship

### What You Need:

- Alive
- Never Gonna Stop Singing

# I Will Follow

**Bible Story:** I Will Follow (God Showed His Love) • 1 John 4:9-12

**Bottom Line:** Love others because God loved you first.

**Memory Verse:** “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” *John 3:16 (NirV)*

**Life App:** Compassion—Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need

**Basic Truth:** I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

## **Story: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)**

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

**SFX:** *Play high-energy music as kids enter.*

**CG:** *Theme Slide*

*Host enters in Christmas attire.*

### **Opener**

**HOST:** “Hello, everyone! It’s so good to see you! Tell me: how was Christmas? Was it awesome? Did you have so much fun hanging out with your family, eating fun treats, and opening presents? What was your favorite part?”

Get answers from two or three kids.

“That sounds great! I’m so glad you were able to celebrate and make a big deal of such a special day. (Look at the tree on stage.) I know this place still looks a little Christmassy. (Look at your outfit.) I guess I do, too. But I can’t help it. I just LOVE Christmas! I’m not quite ready for it to end.

“It’s been so fun this month playing Christmas games and talking about compassion.

**CG:** *Compassion Slide*

“Remember, compassion is caring enough to do something about someone else’s need.

“God showed compassion to us when He sent Jesus to be our Savior. We can show compassion to others by doing something about THEIR needs, too. That’s our secret mission . . . (sneaky voice) our Undercover Christmas mission.

“I suppose we probably SHOULD start cleaning up our decorations. That isn’t very much fun . . . (smile) or is it? I bet we can MAKE it fun. Let’s play ‘Ornament Relay’!

**SFX:** *Fun Christmas music*

"I need two leaders, brave enough to step foot on this stage and help UNDECORATE our Christmas trees."

*Choose two leaders.*

(To contestants) "All right, leaders. Go ahead and get strapped into your harness.

*Show the kids where to stand along the tape lines. The boys will stand along one and the girls will stand along the other one. If you have the air pillows, have them stand with one leg on each side of the air pillow chain.*

"Your job is to get these decorations OFF OF THE TREE. The tree that is most empty by the end of 60 seconds is our winner."

*(To audience) "Audience, cheer them on. (To contestants) Contestants—on your marks, get set, go!*

**SFX:** *Bring up music*

**CG:** *60-second Game countdown*

"That was so great! I know that wasn't easy, but both teams did an amazing job. Let's give them a big hand!"

## **Announcements**

*Use this as an example of what to say. Make it your own and help the kids feel welcomed. Then take a moment to share any/all announcements.*

**HOST:** "I'm so excited to be here with all of you today and get a little crazy! If it's your first time here, I want to welcome you and I would love to have a chance to meet you, get a high five and show you around. Here at Mission, we believe that this is a place for you and you belong here no matter who you are or what you believe. Mission is for YOU!

I have just a few announcements for you all today...

*Share any/all announcements.*

Now let's all stand up, get close, give someone a high five and let's sing and worship together!

*Host exits and Worship Leader enters.*

## **Worship**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "Thank you, *[Name of Host]*. Let's get up and get loud as we sing and dance for who God is and what he's done for us!

**Alive**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** “That was amazing! (*Take a moment to say something about the next song*). So let’s give everything we have and worship God together!

*Never Gonna Stop Singing*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *PRAY*

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

*CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide*

### **SETTING UP THE STORY**

**STORYTELLER:** “Hi, everyone! I’m so glad to be here with you today.

“I have to say, I know how [Host’s name] feels. I love Christmas too! I get so excited when it’s time to decorate our house. I love setting up the tree and the lights and our nativity set. But then, after Christmas, when it’s time to put all of those decorations away, I feel kind of sad. I wish we didn’t have to pack away Christmas.

“But you know what? Even though we have to pack up the Christmas decorations, there IS a way we can keep celebrating Christmas all year long. Not with lights and candy canes and gingerbread houses but with the way we ACT. We can keep celebrating Christmas by treating people with compassion—by caring enough to do something about someone else’s need. That’s something we can do every day—not just at Christmas.

*(Hold up Bible.)* “There’s a letter in the Bible that was written by one of Jesus’ closest friends named John. John traveled everywhere with Jesus for almost three years, so they knew each other pretty well. John wrote a letter to followers of Jesus to remind them not to follow false teaching—in other words, not to get tricked into believing things that aren’t true. In the letter, John also reminded them to remember God’s truth in their everyday lives.”

### **WHAT GOD DID FOR US**

**STORYTELLER:** “I’ll give your Leaders a chance to help me read what John had to say. (Hold up the flashlight.) (To a Leader) Here, you can use this to read it. (To audience) Listen carefully to John’s words.”

*Open the Bible to 1 John 4:9 (NirV) and hand it to a Leader to read out loud. Give the Leader a flashlight to shine on the page.*

**LEADER ONE:** “*Here is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only Son into the world. He sent him so we could receive life through him.*”

**STORYTELLER:** “Right! We know God loves us. We know it because He SAYS He loves us. We also know it because He SHOWED His love by sending Jesus.

“Listen to the next verse.”

*Open the Bible to 1 John 4:10 (NirV) and hand it to a Leader to read out loud. Give the Leader a flashlight to shine on the page.*

**LEADER TWO:** *“Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.”*

**STORYTELLER:** “Okay! (To Leader) Thanks, [Leader’s name]. God showed us what love really is. He sent Jesus to give His life to pay for our sins. He knew that we have a sin problem—we do things that are wrong—and that sin problem separates us from Him. So He sent Jesus to take care of that sin problem by dying on the cross. If we believe and put our trust in Jesus, then we can have a relationship with God that will last FOREVER.

“That’s a big deal! When God sent Jesus to show His love for us, it was the greatest act of love and compassion the world has ever known.”

**Follow the leader**

**STORYTELLER:** “This is great news for US because God made the first move. He showed us what compassion really looks like. We just need to make the choice each day to play ‘Follow the Leader’—to show love and compassion to others because God first showed love and compassion to us.

“Here’s what John said about that.”

*Open the Bible to 1 John 4:11 (NirV) and hand it to a Leader to read out loud. Give the Leader a flashlight to shine on the page.*

**LEADER THREE:** *“Dear friends, since God loved us this much, we should also love one another.”*

**STORYTELLER:** “Exactly! When we show compassion to others, we show them what God is like. We show them that God loves them. And you know what? That’s something we can do every day!

**Hold up the preschool book.**

“Maybe your little brother is frustrated because your mom is busy and can’t read a book to him right now. You could show compassion to your brother by reading to him.

**Hold up the reusable grocery bag.**

“Maybe you and your mom just got home from the grocery store. Instead of running inside to play right away, you could offer to help her bring the bags inside.

**Hold up the playground ball.**

“Maybe you’re outside at recess and you see that kid no one wants to play with. He looks lonely and sad. You could show compassion by asking him to play with you.

“God loved us first and showed us how to love and serve others. If we follow His example, we’ll be able

to love others well. We'll be loving people the way HE loves them."

### **SHINE YOUR LIGHT**

***Pick up the flashlight again. Point it straight up and turn it on.***

**STORYTELLER:** "It's kind of like shining a light. Jesus actually called himself the light of the world. That doesn't mean He was glowing, of course. It means He was like a light in a dark world—full of goodness, love, and compassion. He showed us the way. Now we can follow His example.

"Let me show you what I mean. Your Leader is about to hand out these lights. All of you will get one, but don't turn it on yet! I'll tell you when you can.

***Invite 2 kids from each grade level to come on stage and help with the demonstration.***

***Place one light on each kids' finger.***

"Okay, does everyone have a light? Raise your hand if you don't.

"All right. Make sure your light is turned off for now. I'll start by turning on my light. Then I'll tap someone on the shoulder and they'll turn on THEIR light. Then they'll tap someone on the shoulder and they'll turn on THEIR light. You won't turn on your light until someone taps you on the shoulder.

"Let's try it.

**LIGHTS: Off**

**CG: Black screen**

"Remember, God chose to show compassion to us.

***Tap a Leader on the shoulder.***

"When we decide to follow His example and show compassion to others, an amazing thing happens.

***Leader taps someone else on the shoulder, and so on. Soon, the whole room will be lit up. (Have extra lights ready to hand to kids in case their light malfunctions.)***

"The whole room starts to light up. The whole WORLD starts to light up. When we show compassion, other people want to show compassion, too. Soon, everyone gets to experience God's love because we've chosen to love them. We've chosen to shine the light of compassion that God first showed to us."

### **WRAPPING UP THE STORY**

**STORYTELLER:** "Here's what we need to remember.

**CG: Bottom Line Slide**

***[Bottom Line] "Love others because God loved you first.***

"God made the first move! He showed us what real love is by sending us Jesus. He did something

about our greatest need. He made it possible for us to have a relationship with Him forever. We can choose to follow His example and do something about the needs of the people around us—not just at Christmas but all year long!

“Remember, *[Bottom Line]* love others because God loved you first. Do you think we need God’s help to do that? *(Pause for response.)* Absolutely. Let’s pray and talk to God right now, and then we’ll use those fun glow lights to sing some glow-in-the-dark worship songs. Does that sound like fun? *(Pause for response.)* Awesome. Let’s pray.”

**CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide**

**Pray**

**STORYTELLER:** “God, thank You for loving us first. You showed us great love and compassion when you gave us Your Son, Jesus. Now, we can choose to show love and compassion to the people we see every day. Please help us to do that. Help us to see others’ needs, and please give us the courage to do something to help. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name, amen.

**Closer**

**HOST:** “Wow—that was SO great! I love seeing those lights shining out there. That’s what we get to do when we show compassion. We shine God’s light for the whole world to see!

*(Talking as you’re undecorating)* “And you know what? It’s so good to know that Christmas doesn’t really have to end. Even if we put all the ornaments and decorations away, we can still keep our Undercover Christmas mission going all year long. We can keep showing compassion and loving others. Why? Because we know that God first loved us.

**Set the box down and address the kids directly.**

“Here’s the challenge for you and me.

**CG: Bottom Line Slide**

***[Bottom Line]* “Love others because God loved you first.**

“God showed us just how much He loves us when He sent us Jesus. He sent His Son to give His life to pay for our sins. We should make others our mission, because God made us HIS mission. He made the first move. He gave us the best example of compassion. We just need to follow His lead.

“We can choose to love people—not because they love US but because we’ve experienced God’s love for ourselves. His love makes us want to love others. And that isn’t just something that happens at Christmas. We can show compassion no matter what season it is.

“We can do that in lots of ways. We can put others first. We can say encouraging words. We can listen to someone who’s having a bad day. We can *[Basic Truth]* treat others the way we want to be treated. We can care enough to do something about someone’s need—to show God’s love with our actions as well as our words.



“Do you think we can keep the compassion going in 2019? (*Pause for response.*) I do, too! Have fun in Small Group!”

***Dismiss kids to their small groups.***

**SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.**

**CG: Theme Slide**

**Optional CG (Media Package): Theme Loop Video**