



WEEK  
**ONE**  
MAY 2023



**PRELUDE      SOCIAL      STORY      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME**

25 MINUTES

## COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

*Prior to this section, during a break or during worship, pull several kids aside, give them seven glow sticks each, and tell them they'll be helping with the story and not to take them out until they're signaled with a thumbs-up.*

*When they see the signal, they must take two glow sticks, crack and shake one, and hand both (one lit and one not) to a random person in the room. They have seven glow sticks, so they can do this three times and still have a glow stick for themselves.*

### INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Welcome back, everyone, and to those who are here for the first time, we're so glad you're here, too! Every single one of you is in the right place, for sure! Let's get started with a question right off the bat. Find someone next to you and discuss this for a moment. What comes to mind when I say the word . . . 'love'?"

*Pause for a brief discussion between partners.*

"Okay, let's hear from a few of you. What comes to mind when you think about the word love? Anyone want to volunteer a thought or three?"

*Take a few answers from the group. Comment on them and affirm their ideas.*

### TENSION

**COMMUNICATOR:** "One of the main themes throughout the whole Bible is love—ideas like God is love, love your neighbor, love God, love life, love never fails. And that's just getting started. But I wonder—do you have to love everyone? Like, everyone? Sometimes I really wonder, is that what God is really asking us to do? Because if so, I've got some legit questions.

"What about the people who cut you off in traffic? The people who rudely bump into you like they don't care about your personal space? The people who put their feet up on the back of your chair in school? Or the people who are just hard to get along with sometimes?"

"Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of people on this planet who I'm sure are fine, but aren't there some who you would just rather avoid? Do we really have to love everyone? Here's the thing. I know that most of us would answer, of course, God wants us to love everyone! But the truth is, we don't always live like that, do we?"

"That's why questions like this are so important. They allow us to push at a part of life we tend to take for granted. When we start asking questions like this, one of the first places we should check out is the Bible. In the Bible, there are all sorts of wisdom from people who experienced God in their lives and were inspired to write down what they learned. And now, thousands of years later, we can have a relationship with God and discover the best way to live just by checking out what they wrote down. Let's head to a story that deals with sharing God's love and, more importantly . . . with whom."



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**TRUTH**

*Dim the lights, move over to the candle, and light it. NOTE: if you are unable to have an open flame in your environment, use a flashlight instead. Just turn the flashlight on and off instead of extinguishing and relighting the candle.*

“When Jesus was here, on earth, He made friends—and enemies—along the way. The disciples had no idea the rollercoaster of emotions they’d be on following, talking, and learning from Jesus. Healings, casting out demons, miracles, walking on water, blind seeing, deaf hearing . . . it was quite the ride!

“Then Jesus was arrested, tried, sentenced to death, and crucified. When He was killed, His disciples, friends, and family were wrecked. To them, He was gone. His life over. Even though Jesus promised many things, this looked pretty final.

*Blow out the candle and wait a brief moment, letting the smoke rise. See What You Do below in Getting Ready*

“Then, another miracle—this one the greatest of them all.

*Take the lighter and light the SMOKE above the candle—the flame should catch the smoke on fire, make its way down, and relight the candle.*

“Jesus defeated death! He came back, appeared to the disciples, and they saw Him with their own eyes! Imagine that for a second—you watch someone die, then three days later you see that person alive again. I don’t know about you, but I’d probably freak out a bit!

“This meant that everything, everything that Jesus said was true. All of it. The disciples, those men who followed Jesus and heard what Jesus said, were finally starting to understand that they were part of something even more amazing than they first thought.

“The disciples must have been chomping at the bit to find out what Jesus wanted them to do next and when they needed to start. Jesus didn’t waste any time. He told them to meet Him on a mountainside in Galilee.

*Open the Bible to Matthew 28:16-17 (NIRV) and read.*

*“Then the 11 disciples went to Galilee. They went to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him. But some still had their doubts.”*

Still, after all of this, after there was a literal dead guy reborn in front of their eyes, still some doubted. Seriously, these disciples . . . like, come on! He’s right there, what’s wrong with you?!

*Take the candle and take a seat into the middle of the Large Group.*

“Jesus didn’t bother with addressing their disbelief. Instead, He was about to give them a huge job. The biggest job of their lives.

*Open the Bible to Matthew 28:18-20 (NIRV) and read.*



PLAY WITH  
CONFIDENCE

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LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

PRELUDE

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HOME

25 MINUTES

*Speak to the kids as if they're around a campfire and you're telling them a story.*

*"Then Jesus came to them. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end."*

"I can imagine some of the disciples looking around at one another. Did Jesus just say ALL nations? Did He say . . . everyone? Like, in the whole world? What about the mean people? What about the people who hate us? We're 11 guys, and some of us are kind of old. How will we do that?"

"But Jesus didn't offer any solutions—just the command to go to everyone, everywhere, and spread the Good News. But Jesus also knew that they would need help. So later, at a meal, Jesus spoke more about how they'd accomplish this monumental task.

*Open the Bible to Acts 1:4-5 (NirV) and read.*

*"One day Jesus was eating with them. He gave them a command. "Do not leave Jerusalem," he said. "Wait for the gift my Father promised. You have heard me talk about it. John baptized with water. But in a few days you will be baptized . . .*

*Take out a glow stick, crack it and shake it, making it glow.*

*" . . . with the Holy Spirit."*

*Look at the glow stick for a moment, then continue.*

"Now if the disciples had no clue how they were going to accomplish this huge task, now they were really confused. Baptism they knew—like Jesus' cousin John the Baptist who baptized all sorts of people in the river. They knew that baptism usually happened with water . . . and that it symbolized washing yourself clean from an old way of life and stepping into a new way of living. What was this new baptism with the Holy Spirit? What kind of renewal, or change, would this be?"

*Stand and move back to the front of the Large Group.*

"Again, Jesus didn't offer many details. He just left them with this:

*Open the Bible to Acts 1:7-8 (NirV) and read.*

*"You should not be concerned about times or dates. The Father has set them by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will tell people about me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria. And you will even tell other people about me from one end of the earth to the other."*

"In other words, Jesus told them again that they'd be the ones to tell everyone, everywhere, about Jesus, His Kingdom, and the Good News of salvation. Then, right before their eyes, Jesus rose up off the ground, into the sky, and disappeared behind a cloud.



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*Blow out the candle. Now the only light is the glow stick.*

“The disciples were probably standing there with their mouths open, wondering if what they just saw was actually real. It was like that a lot with Jesus I’m sure.

“As the disciples watched Jesus go up into the sky, two men just appeared next to them.

*Open the Bible to Acts 1:10-11 (NirV) and read.*

“‘Suddenly two men dressed in white clothing stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking at the sky? Jesus has been taken away from you into heaven. But he will come back in the same way you saw him go.”’

“Dumfounded, shocked, and yet amazed, the disciples returned to Jerusalem, still wondering how to spread Jesus’ message to everyone.

*Give a thumbs-up to signal the pre-selected kids.*

“Remember Jesus said He’d send a helper? That’s the Holy Spirit—who we’ll talk about in more detail next time—but ultimately Jesus just wanted the disciples to talk about Him to everyone they met. And then those people would tell others, and those others would tell others . . . and soon everyone would know about the amazing power of Jesus.

*The pre-selected kids should be handing out glow sticks. If they’re not, encourage them to do so and remind them to crack one and hand two, one glowing and one not, to random people in the Large Group. Direct them to hand out two glow sticks three times, so they hand out all six of their glow sticks.*

“Those of you who got two glow sticks, one lit and one not . . . now it’s your job to crack the unlit one, shake it, and find someone in the room to give it to.”

**APPLICATION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Jesus told His followers—which includes US—to make disciples wherever we go. That just means we tell people about Jesus AND try to live like He lived . . . loving God and loving others in everything we do. Live with confidence the way Jesus taught us to live. Others will see the way you act and might want to know more about Jesus.

**SLIDE: GOD’S BIG STORY TIMELINE**

**SLIDE: WEEK 1 TIMELINE IMAGE**

*If you’re making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today’s timeline image on the clothesline.*

*Hand out your own glow sticks, some cracked and glowing, some not, encouraging everyone to hand them out, until every person in the whole Large Group has a lit glow stick.*



PLAY WITH  
CONFIDENCE

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LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

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“And here’s the great thing, everyone. Even with those who are hard to love . . . the best way to share God’s love with those people is to take time to love them with how you interact with them, speak to them, and help them. When you do that, you can always invite them to church or talk about Jesus with them, too.”

## LANDING

**COMMUNICATOR:** “As you head to your Small Groups, think about this question:

### SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

**“How can you share God’s love?”** What are some ways, even small ones, you can show God off to others? Think about situations where you could show a bit of patience, or kindness, or love, or maybe times when you could choose goodness instead of adding to the problem. How can you act, what things could you say, or what things could you do to show God’s love? You’ll talk about this more with your Small Groups, but right now, let’s pray and ask God to help us see how we can share Jesus’ love with the world. Let’s pray.”

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.*

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**