

how to give a kids talk



1. welcomes
2. Bible: Luke 18.15-17
3. Bad reasons to have kids talks in church
4. Good reasons to have kids talk in church
5. Key ingredients of the “perfect” kids talk!

6. Some suggested B's¹

Be confident (in God!)

Be faithful

(2Timothy 3.16-17)

Be a faithful teacher of God's word. It doesn't need to be embellished. It is the sword of the spirit. It's the word of life. It's exactly what the kids most need to hear.

Be Christian

Good news not good behaviour

Avoid moralising

Remember that God (Father, Son & Spirit) is the hero of the Bible

Some helpful questions to ask of a passage²:-

What is God doing?

How does God do the same for us-only better- in Jesus?

How does believing this good news change how we live?

eg. Baby Moses

What is God doing?

Arranging events to protect baby Moses and give the Israelites a leader who will rescue them from Egypt.

How does God do the same for us-only better- in Jesus?

He has provided leader and saviour who rescue us from sin & death.

How does believing this good news change how we live?

Even when it's hard to see, we can trust that God is working out his plan to complete our salvation.

What does the Bible passage teach us about who God is?

How is this aspect of God revealed-most fully- in Jesus?

How does believing this good news change how we live?

What problem/tension is left unsettled in this passage?

How is this solved in Jesus?

How does believing this good news change how we live?

Be clear

You need to understand your bible passage so that you can express it in one simple statement, or one Big Idea. Try to do too much in your talk and you will achieve less. Remember an individual talk is part of a weekly diet of bible teaching.

ONE TALK = ONE POINT

Your language should also be clear. Look at children's books. There are no big words. There are no unnecessary words. In fact, each word is carefully chosen. Words AND pictures tell the story, so you do not need to state every detail. Use short sentences. Break your information into chunks. Repetition keeps children's attention and helps children to learn.

¹ Taken from "The Ministry Papers"

² Taken from *ShowThem Jesus* by Jack Klumpenhouwer New Growth Press ©2014

Be enthusiastic

Not boring... Excited and passionate. Don't be someone other than yourself but do be a slightly "larger" version of yourself. Your excitement will be infectious.

Be visual

Use visual props et cetera as much as you can. They can be objects or drawings or whatever. NB: save your best visual for your key idea. (Too many talks drop their visuals at the key moment of the key idea which means that you risk losing the kids attention at the critical moment.)

Be concrete

The Bible is full of abstract concepts. Children are concrete thinkers. The big challenge of a children's talk therefore, is to take an abstract concept such as forgiveness or grace and teach it to concrete thinkers. For this reason, stories are better than object talks because they take an abstract concept and put it into the context of relationships. Therefore, where possible you should tell stories.

Be creative

All people have limited attention spans. Children generally have even shorter attention spans. We need to present talks in an engaging manner to stimulate children's senses. A great way to do this is by encouraging involvement. You should also use a variety of different styles to present your talks so that they do not become boring or predictable.

Some creative ideas:-

drama song puppet drawing a Bible story from a children's Bible story interviews a Bible character memory verse...

Bad kids talks

Here's a list of things to avoid in your kids talk.

- moralising: turning the Bible is a list of do's and don'ts
- confusing & complicated: too many points and too little clarity
- pointless: possibly with high entertainment value but nothing more
- long & boring: everyone knows what this means
- predictable: the same old, same old, same old, same old...
- incomplete: exciting talk... right up until the bit about Jesus!

some general tips

• in a church context the talk will be given to a broad range of age-groups. Aim for a talk that five year olds will understand.

- organise your props and/or actors well beforehand so there's plenty of time for a practice before the service.
- always practise using the sound equipment (microphones etc) to be sure that everything can be heard.

Communicate with the sound person any special requirements (i.e. which microphones will be used)

• make sure you practise your script at home. This will help your delivery on the day. Time yourself to see if your length is appropriate (3-5 minutes). You might be surprised that your talk was longer than you thought.

• know how you're going to start and finish. This includes how you will direct the children to and from the front, and whether you need to announce what's happening next (e.g. a kids' song). Give priority to your conclusion, so that it leaves a lasting impression.

- if children are distracting, stop and get the children refocussed. Otherwise, your talk may not be heard.

finishing well...

Many children's talks fail at their conclusion. The talk up to that point was vivid and engaging but unfortunately the ending is rambling and unclear. If the children don't grasp what it was all about, then the talk was a waste of time. For this reason, make sure you know how you will finish by scripting a clear statement of conclusion. This can be anything between one and five sentences. Your ability to do this will depend on how well you have understood your passage and been able to reduce it to one big idea.

It is a good idea to memorise the conclusion as it is essential to finish strongly.

7. a workshop

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”

(Romans 8:14 NIV11)