

CALLING ALL CHIEFS: Of the many skills that a young man will strive to acquire in his experience as a Lifebuilder Boy, Personal Evangelism should be considered the most unselfish. For through the knowledge he will obtain, he prepares himself to be a “lamp unto (another’s) feet, a light unto (another’s) path” (compare Psa 119:11) This he does to help guide to the Lord his family members, friends, and anyone into whose path the Lord may lead him. Proverbs 11:30 declares that “...he that winneth souls is wise.” But that ‘wisdom’ must begin with acquiring the skill to do so!

In this series, you and your young men take a journey together through the Lord’s Word, to understand more clearly your own first experience in the Lord, when He delivered you as Savior and began leading you as Shepherd. Because of the personal nature of this study, you as leader must always be alert to any evidence that one or more of your boys are discovering that they, themselves, have not yet taken their own ‘step of faith.’

This is particularly a concern with your youngest charges, though no boy of any age should be overlooked. It is an unfortunate consequence of some church youth programs that boys ‘sort of fit in’ with the rest, attending frequently, enjoying the benefits of the robust activity and special attention that comes with it. Yet, until every young man makes his own confession and commitment he is unprepared to meet the Lord. In a single word, he is lost!!

No matter how valuable a boy might be to your plans, no matter how talented or admired by others, even if he serves elsewhere in your church, boys without Christ need Christ! Now!! Don’t ‘put off’ approaching them about that need because of concern they might feel ‘put off’. Prayerfully, as they have the fortune of studying with you through this series, most likely they’ll come to realization of their need on their own. But you (as one who cares for them) should watch for the right opportunity to offer an invitation. Every weekly meeting (and, really, all of your events) should end in prayer. This will be the usual time when spiritual needs are met. But don’t hesitate to offer prayer promptly (during your ‘Frame It In’ session) if the Holy Spirit helps you recognize clearly that a boy has just become ‘ready’!

One final note: don’t let your boys get behind in memory verse requirements and any other responsibilities required in their lessons. Care is taken to make their work manageable, but it will become burdensome once they fall behind! Most certainly do not compromise the importance of the award they are to receive by allowing some boys (or perhaps all) to ‘cut corners’ and not meet fully all that is expected. You want your boys to wear honorably their badge. But, most importantly, you want them to be “...fruitful in every good work...increasing in the knowledge of God” (see all of Col 1:9,10)

-----APPRENTICE LESSON NOTES -----

Crew chief, your task is to introduce the experience of salvation to young boys who may never have made their own personal choice to open their heart and invite Jesus in. Some of the boys at this level may not yet have come under the conviction of sin (something the Holy Spirit does on His own timing – not something you ‘try to do’.) There are plenty of opinions about when or at what age a boy is ‘accountable’ (morally responsible for his actions) and should therefore repent and receive Christ. It is the position of this course that every boy is ‘ready’ when God says so. That may come earlier than you may expect or later than you would like. But, through your prayerfulness, when that time does come you will know it as well as he. Just teach the lessons with enthusiasm and sincerity, remembering your own encounter with Christ. When time allows, share from your own experiences. In your faithfulness wonderful things will come to pass.

Each lesson should be presented fully in one night. It will always be best if you ‘rehearse’ by reading through (out loud) at a casual pace to get a sense of how long that requires, and thereby know how much time would be available for questions and feedback. Remember, you are allotted 25 minutes for this part of your meeting but that time will pass quickly if you dwell too long on any one portion. But do recognize when one or more of the boys have taken interest in something that may reveal a ‘crying out’ in their hearts. Do your best to ‘teach them’, not just your lesson! It is very important that memory verses or other requirements from last week’s lesson be done first (but be quick – the new lesson needs plenty of time, too!)

Read the following Lesson Notes before each session. Add ‘reminders’ to your printed pages. (Also, share the lesson pictures with your boys if they are not being given their own copies.)

LESSON 1: Open your session by reading the scripture text (Genesis 3:1-6) Read slowly and try to add some ‘drama’ to your voice! Now read the first paragraph then ask, “Any of you guys let your own room get that bad? Ok – c’mon – just how long did that take?”

Read next paragraph. Say something like, “When we sin it is nobody’s fault but our own!” [If a boy responds with a kind of excuse (such as “everybody does it” or “they would make fun of me if I don’t”) be prepared to tell them that that is not excusable and one day, before God, it will be just you and there will be no one to blame but yourself.]

In the third paragraph be sure to read to the boys Genesis 3:23-24. (Don’t try to ‘save time’ by not reading the scriptures in these lessons. They will fit well your time period.) Again, stress the fact that sin is a choice that we make – because God is holy he has no choice but to punish us.

After carefully reading the final paragraph, have the boys read & say with you again Romans 3:23 (found in center of page.) Tell them they need to learn it for next week and be able to say it from memory [if some boys already know it then ask them to learn Romans 3:10 instead.] Also, explain the instructions at bottom concerning the picture to be colored before next week.

LESSON 2: Ask the opening question and allow for a few responses. Then read the rest of the first paragraph, afterward asking, “Why would anyone want to be bad all the time?” After a few more responses, then offer this: “Maybe they can’t really help it – they’ve got to!” Now read the second paragraph that explains your statement. [Note: the Jeremiah verse is already given on the handout sheet so it doesn’t have to be read again in their Bible]

After you read also the third paragraph ask your boys, “Did you ever have a favorite t-shirt or pair of pants that you really liked but it got so torn or so dirty that your mother just had to throw it away? Remember how it felt? You didn’t like it – but it had to be done! Well, God has to feel that way, too.” [Suggestion: don’t just read these words above. Take them to heart and say something close from memory]

Read the fourth paragraph then ask if any boy knows on what special day that was when the Holy Spirit was poured out. [answer: Pentecost] Now finish the last part and ask, “When it says, ‘call’ what does it mean?” Be sure to explain that ‘prayer’ is a conversation with God, not just ‘talking’ at him or to him. You want to be silent, also, and feel Him responding to you! [Use your own wisdom here, but you may choose to invite the boys to pray together with you (as you see in the drawing) and you will ‘let them hear’ a prayer ‘like’ the one you prayed when you gave your heart to the Lord! This can be a very special moment for all of you. Be sure to keep an eye ‘open’ at times to notice how the boys are responding.] Don’t forget to test boys on last week’s memory verse and give them the new one.

LESSON 3: Ask the boys to look at the picture and say who they think that man was (or, what do you think he is doing?) Now read the first paragraph then ask, “When somebody is in trouble and has to stand before a judge, what do you think it feels like?” [and couple answers will do.]

Now read the next two lines, then open your Bible and read from John 5:22,23. [If any boys have their Bibles give them time to locate the verse and follow you or you may choose to have them read aloud with you.] Read the rest of the paragraph but be sure (when you get to the words “...is gonna cut you down” say the words loud and slow, maybe making a ‘chopping’ motion with your hand. Be dramatic – get their attention!) Ask the boys what kind of man is that with the ax pictured here? Does he ‘care’ about the trees? Maybe. But he does have a job to do!

Ask your boys who the next guy (on the stand with binoculars) is – what is he doing? At the end of this paragraph read the scripture in Acts 1:8. Ask your boys if “everywhere” is just ‘other parts of the world’ or does it also include right here, in your home, in your school, on your street? Now admit that this can be a real ‘challenge’ but also that they would do it with Jesus at their side. That’s why the Holy Spirit was going to come. Tell the boys that in Matthew the last thing Jesus told his disciples is “I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” (have the verse in Mat 28:20 bookmarked and ready to read.)

Now read the last part of the lesson. The picture here is to be colored (if boys have their own copies. Be sure to have crayons or coloring pencils ready, or they can do them at home.) Boys should be able to recite fairly smoothly their two previous memory verses. Their new memory verse (Luke 3:4) is only the words "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Don't forget to have the boys identify who the characters are in the picture by writing names on it.

Lesson 4: There are more words in this lesson so be steady in your reading. Read the first paragraph down to where it says "Read right now Luke 15:7". If boys have their Bibles and one of the older ones are willing, have them read this to all. Then read to the end of the third paragraph but put a lot of emphasis (feeling) into it! "**WOW**...he did that for **ME** and **YOU!**"

Ask the boys, "What is this talking about? What did Jesus do?" [you may respond to answers if there is time] Read final two paragraphs together, but again put feeling into it – especially the last sentence (this is an 'invitation' from the Lord – be prayerful as you say it!)

If enough time remains, have boys write in the three lines on the sheep three 'temptations' (weaknesses of theirs) that they are concerned about [remember: these are young boys – they may not be able to think of any, or will come up with some surprising ones! The exercise is just to get them to think 'inward'. Have them recite the three memory verses as a group to save time but try to observe if any are having difficulty. Assign their 4th one, Luke 15:10 [note: it is not the exact same verse as read earlier.] Remind the boys that the last 'assignment' on the sheet is to read Psalms 23 to a parent or adult one during the week and they should sign the bottom of the lesson page when they do. [note: this exercise is for the benefit of the boy but also for the adult involved. It will also help the boy feel more comfortable including someone else in their evangelism lessons!]

Lesson 5: Have your boys look at the picture of a lone man on a lonely road. [This is the Prodigal Son returning home, but don't tell them that yet.] Ask the boys, "What do you think is on this man's mind? Is he sad? Is he lonely? Maybe he feels badly about something. What do you think?" [If a boy has already looked ahead and says 'this is the prodigal' ask what is going on here.] Now read through, slowly and with expression, the first three paragraphs.

Ask your crew, "What do you think: is he sorry for what he did wrong or just hungry and will just say whatever he has to? Would that work with God? Why not?"

Now read the final two paragraphs. Crew Chief, this is one of the most 'emotional' presentations of a lost soul coming home to a loving father! Use your own words to build on this lesson and make it personal to your boys! When you have prayer this time, 'rehearse' some of this story as a 'thank you' to the Lord that He will so this for any of his 'lost sons' if they'll just come back to Him.

Review the memory verses (there is not a new one for this week.) Maybe have paper ready for older boys (especially 4th graders) to try writing them down. Have the boys ask someone at home to read the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) to them. This, again, may serve a dual purpose to bless both. Boys are also welcome to color the two images on their own sheets.

Lesson 6: Ask your crew to 'explain' the picture at top-left. [They should notice the nail print on Jesus' left hand but wait first before mentioning it] Read the first paragraph of the lesson then ask one boy to explain, "Why did John call Jesus a 'lamb'?"

Read the second paragraph slowly with emotion. This is a powerful statement and it is hoped that it will once again stir any boy's heart that has not yet opened up to Jesus. It is your choice if you want to add any descriptive details to what it was like for Jesus to be beaten, carry a heavy cross through Jerusalem's streets, and then be nailed to the cross on top of a hill. But most important is to explain that His greatest suffering was from having to carry our sins ("If you think it hurts to carry your own, think of how it hurts to have everybody's in the whole world!") This is the best time for prayer (here, rather than at the closing.)

It would be best if you have a printed lesson and a pen or pencil for each boy so he can do this next exercise. Have the boys fill in the missing words for their memory verses listed here. Youngest boys may have trouble spelling but that's not important now. The lesson says to also write next to each one where it is found in the Bible. Likely only the oldest boys are prepared to do that. Of course you can help where ever it seems best.

Read the last paragraph. The final memory verse is Romans 6:23 which many boys may already know. If so, challenge them to learn John 15:13 instead [from earlier in the lesson.] Again, as you read to the end, place emphasis into your words – make these scriptures 'stick'!

Remind the boys of the requirements to earn their patch [see in the box at bottom of lesson.] Because your boys' ages span through a range of learning experiences you need to show some patience with the younger ones as they try to 'keep up' with their older 'crew mates'. Next week's meeting will bear fruit if you have given your boys your best.

7th - Final Session: If there have been no interruptions this will be your seventh week in this series and now you can unwind a little with the boys. Each one needs to be able to recite to you their memory verses (much better if done alone.) Use what time remains to 'act out' a 'sharing Jesus' situation. Let one boy be the Christian and another as one who needs the Lord. The other boys may be invited to recommend scriptures to be used. Most importantly, boys should show kindly compassion for those who are confused and lost. Your own attitude during this exercise will help considerably. Be a role model. Remind your boys that there is nothing else in life that lasts forever – only what is done for Christ!!

Chief, congratulations for guiding your boys closer to Jesus and giving them a chance to rescue the perishing! Encourage them to share with family and friends. Let your closing prayer inspire them in doing so.