



younglife
club talk tool kit

10 Club Talk Planning Quick Reminders:

1. God is helping you share the most important information in the universe.
2. The most valuable thing you can do when planning a Club Talk is praying for it.
3. If you are starting to plan first with a fun story or illustration, start over.
4. Practice saying your entire Club Talk out loud.
5. Nobody has ever thought a Club Talk should have been a little longer.
6. Engage the room and tell them the truth.
7. God is excited for you.
8. Be the speaker God made you specifically to be.
9. Speak in a language your audience will understand.
10. When you start your talk, angels in the room hold their breath.

Young Life Club Talk Outline Planner

Date:

Circle Club Talk Type: Intro Person Need Sin Cross Resurrection Appropriation

One Sentence Thesis Statement:

Common Misconceptions Regarding Thesis Statement:

Scripture:

One Sentence Application:

Restate Application as a Question:

Introduction Story and/or Illustration:

Possible Extra Illustration:

Transitions / Explanations:

- a. How does your introduction highlight your thesis?
- b. How does the scripture highlight your thesis?
- c. How does the possible extra illustration fit your thesis?

Points to Highlight in Prayer:

*Once you have the pieces of your Young Life Club talk, here is a common talk structure outline:
Introduction, Introduction Explanation, Scripture, Scripture Explanation, Thesis Statement, Possible Extra Illustration, Application, Restate Application as Question, Prayer.*

Young Life Club Talk Outline Planner (example)

Date: 1/21/15

Circle Club Talk Type: Intro Person Need Sin Cross Resurrection Appropriation

One Sentence Thesis Statement: *Jesus wants to help heal your brokenness.*

Common Misconceptions Regarding Thesis Statement: *I'm too messed up for God to care about me.*

Scripture: *Mark 1: 21-37*

One Sentence Application: *Talk to God about your brokenness.*

Restate Application as a Question: *Do you think God would want to talk to you about what has been hurting you?*

Introduction Story and/or Illustration: *Trying to get over my bad high school break-up.*

Possible Extra Illustration: *Break a watch with a hammer. Shake the pieces in a bag. Explain that no matter how much shaking will bring back a working watch. Later, with slight of hand, pull out a new fixed watch.*

Transitions / Explanations:

- a. How does your introduction highlight your thesis? *I wanted somebody to help heal the brokenness I felt through my heartbreak.*
- b. How does the scripture highlight your thesis? *Jesus healed people who looked for Him.*
- c. How does the possible extra illustration fit your thesis? *Jesus can heal where healing might seem impossible.*

Points to Highlight in Prayer: *Thank you for loving us / wanting to help us. Help us have faith that You are listening to us if we bring our brokenness to You. Help us feel your healing hand in our lives.*

Once you have the pieces of your Young Life Club talk, here is a common talk structure outline: Introduction, Introduction Explanation, Scripture, Scripture Explanation, Thesis Statement, Possible Extra Illustration, Application, Restate Application as Question, Prayer.

Typical YL Club Talk Message Semester Sequence Outline

Week	Type	Misconceptions of the Target Kid	Scripture Passage	Talk Intro
1	Intro	God, Jesus, and Religion have absolutely nothing to offer me	Jn 1:43-46 Come and see.	Story about first impressions, mistaken identity
2	Intro	You can't possibly know how God thinks or what he's like	Col 1:15 If you want to understand who God is, look at Christ	Funny stuff about speakers father that's true of them, too
3	Person	Jesus probably never existed. He's probably a legend	1 Jn 1 "which we have seen, touched", may take apologetic turn	Childhood story about belief in boogie man, Santa, etc.
4	Person	Jesus is an effeminate, cowardly wimp	Jn 2 Christ courageously clears temple	Story about someone who speaker thought was a wimp but was not
5	Person	JC is a self-righteous religious zealot, hates the non-religious	Jn 8 Jesus had opportunity to kill adulteress, had compassion	Story of getting caught red-handed... "What if JC caught me?"
6	Person	JC was at best a dynamic teacher. Not God, just a man	Mk 6 Feeds 5000, walks on water (may take apologetic turn)	Story of a seemingly impossible event that truly occurred
7	Need	If JC is such a big deal, he'd never care about me, a nobody	Mt 8:1-3 Jesus heals the desperate leper, how are we desperate, need Jesus	Story of a geek from your childhood, how would J treat him
8	Need	I'm basically a good person. Some people are bad, not me	Ro 3:23, Ex 20 All have sinned, examination of 10 Commandments	Read newspaper headlines, why is world screwed up? Our fault
9	Sin	Everyone is basically good. Almost everyone goes to heaven	Ro 3:23, 6:23, Is 59:1-2 The wages of sin is death	Warning of harshness of tonight's talk. Close with "solution next week"
10	Cross	I know Jesus was killed but I don't think it's that significant	Ro 6:23, Is 53:6, Ro 5:8 Explanation of Jesus Christ dying for sins	Story of hopeless situation when you had to depend on outside help
11	Cross	I've seen Easter movies-- JC's death wasn't so painful	Mk 15 Blow by blow description of crucifixion. He died for you	(Usually a two-minute recap is all there's time for before you share the Passion)
12	Appropriation	JC died for us so everyone's sins are forgiven. Everyone's ok	Lk 22 One thief receives JC, one doesn't. We too must choose	Story of decision needing to be made
13	Appropriation / Resurrection	This seems complicated. What is the response God wants?	Ro 10:9-10 In your heart you believe and are justified, mouth confess and saved	Story of getting a gift. It must be opened & received to be owned
14	Testimony	This stuff is for senior citizens and religious kids. No one I know	Two campaigner kids give testimonies at club	Speaker emcees students

Young Life Club Talk Scripture Index

Possible Scripture for Introduction Young Life Talks

Colossians 1 – If you want to check out God, check out Jesus

John 10:10 – Life to the Fullest

Mark 8:27-30, Matthew 16:13-16, Luke 9:18-20 – Peter, Who do you say I am?

John 1:14 – The Incarnation – God Here with Us (also see birth narratives)

John 1:35-39 – Come and See

John 1:43-51 – What Good Can Come from Nazareth? (Bad first impressions of Jesus)

Luke 19:1-10 – Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Possible Scripture for Person of Christ Young Life Talks

Luke 2:41-52 - Jesus as a boy in the temple

Matthew 9:9-13 - Jesus Calls Matthew

John 10:24-39 – An attempt to stone Jesus

Matthew 13:53-57, Matthew 4:2, John 11:33-35 - Jesus Completely Human

Mark 4:35-41, Matthew 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25 – Jesus Calms the Storm

Mark 6:30-44, Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 9:10, John 6:5-13 – Jesus Feeds 5000

Mark 6:45-51, Matthew 14:22-32, John 6:15-21 – Jesus Walks on Water

Matthew 15, Mark 8 – Jesus Feeds 4,000

Matthew 21, Mark 11:15-19, Luke 19, John 2 – Jesus Clears Temples

Luke 7:11-15 – Jesus Raises Widows Son

Luke 19:1-10 – Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

1 John 1 - “We have heard, seen, touched” Jesus was Not a Myth

Luke 19 - Befriends Zacchaeus

John 2 - Water to Wine

John 11 - Lazarus raised, Jesus wept

Possible Scripture for Need Young Life Talks

Mark 1:40-45, Matthew 8:2-4, Luke 5:12-14 – Man with Leprosy

John 7:53-8:11 – Woman caught in Adultery

Mark 3:1-6 – Man with Shriveled Hand

Mark 5:25-34 – Bleeding Woman

Mark 7:31-37, Matthew 15:29-31 – Healing of Deaf and Mute Man

Mark 8:22-26 – Healing of Blind Man at Bethsaida

Mark 10:46-52, Matthew 20:29-34, Luke 18:35-43 – Blind Bartimaeus

Luke 7 - Raises widow’s son at Nain

Matthew 8, Luke 7 - Centurion’s servant healed

Matthew 16, Mark 8 - Heals blind man
Matthew 9 - Heals two blind men
Mark 7 - Heals deaf mute
Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5 - Heals paralytic
John 4 - Heals the official's son
Matthew 17, Mark 9, Luke 9 - Heals epileptic
Luke 13 - Heals crippled woman
Matthew 8, Mark 1, Luke 5 - Heals leper
Luke 17 - Heals ten lepers
Matthew 9, Mark 5, Luke 8 - Heals Jairus' daughter, hemorrhaging woman
John 5 - Heals lame man at pool. If only (blank), then life would be great
Jeremiah 2:13, John 4 - We've forsaken spring of living water/woman at well
Luke 22:14-23 - The Last Supper

Possible Scripture for Sin Young Life Talks

Romans 3:23 - All have sinned and fall short
Romans 6:23a - Wages of sin is death
Isaiah 53:6 - All like sheep have gone astray
Mark 14:27-31, Matthew 26:31-35 - Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial
Mark 14:66-72, Matthew 26:69-75, Luke 22:56-62, John 18:16-18, 25-27 - Peter's Denial
Exodus 20 - Ten Commandments
Matthew 5:27-28 - Adultery defined by Jesus as lust in your heart
Matthew 5:21-22 - Murder defined by Jesus as hatred in your heart
Romans 3:9-20 - No one is righteous, not even one

Possible Scripture for Cross Young Life Talks

Mark 14-15, Luke 22-23 - Arrest and Crucifixion
Romans 3:23-24 - Redemption through Christ
Romans 6:23a-b - Gift of God is eternal life
2 Cor. 5:21 - God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us
Romans 5:8 - While we were still sinners, Christ died for us
1 Peter 3:18 - Jesus died for our sins once and for all

Possible Scripture for Resurrection Young Life Talks

Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-10, John 19 - Resurrection

Possible Scripture for Appropriation/Commitment Young Life Talks

Mark 8:27-30, Matthew 16:13-16, Luke 9:18-20 - Peter, Who do you say I am?

Luke 7:1-10: Matthew 8:5-13 – Faith of Centurion

Luke 15:11-24 – Lost/Prodigal Son

Luke 23 – Two thieves on crosses. One mocks, one receives

John 14:6-7 – Christ is the only way to God (great for Liar Lunatic Lord)

John 5:24 – Hear and believe and cross over from death to life

Roman 10:9-10 – In your heart you believe and are justified, with your mouth...

Possible Scripture for Relationship/Cost of Discipleship Young Life Talks

Mark 14:3-9 – Woman Anointing Jesus with Perfume

Mark 10:17-22, Matthew 9:16-3, Luke 18:18-30 – Rich Young Man

Luke 9:57-62 – Cost of Following Jesus

Luke 21:14 – Widows Offering

Young Life Club Talk Evaluation Sheet

1. Were the listeners engaged in the talk?
2. Were any names mentioned who were in the audience?
Y N
3. Did the speaker use illustrations that the audience could relate to personally or put themselves in?
Y N
4. Did the audience feel that its presence was not only welcomed but also appreciated?
Y N
5. What was communicated verbally?
6. What was the main point of the talk?
7. Was anything said about the speaker's relationship to God?
8. Was there one main conclusion, and was it well emphasized? What was it?
9. Were the kids left with a challenge? What was it?
10. What was communicated nonverbally? Circle those that apply:
 - a. Excitement
 - b. Enthusiasm
 - c. Concern for the audience
 - d. Sincerity
 - e. Honesty
 - f. Other:
11. Any negative emotions communicated? What were they?
12. How was humor used (Note where it was used and discuss why)?
13. Note any examples of where it may have hurt more than helped.
14. Was it an easy message to discuss afterward, say at McDonald's? If so, what made it that way?
15. How might the talk have been improved upon?

Popular Young Life Club Talk Illustrations

NOTE: This resource is not for sale. It is merely a collaboration of some illustrations used by fellow YL staff as a resource for discussion. The collaborators do not take responsibility for accuracy of facts, theology issues, nor have the collaborators used every idea personally. Use this as a brainstorming tool to spur ideas if it is helpful; however, be gracious as this was merely a labor of love.

Creation Talk Illustrations

The Watch

There are literally hundreds of parts needed to make a watch. All those parts start off as individual pieces but eventually become a watch. This could happen in two ways. The first is that when accidentally thrown in a pile the parts by chance happen to form a functioning watch. The alternative is that a watchmaker came along and put the parts together. The Bible says that God is the watchmaker who put together the universe and us.

Computer Smash

Many outdated computers and monitors that still work are available in "graveyards" from companies. This is most effective when screen shows something running. With a large mallet, smash the screen (have someone unplug as hit it...glass will fly... keep accurate distance), keyboard, etc. Begin to scoop into a bag. Explain that all of the components for the computer are in the bag and that you will shake it and shake it and compress it, etc. for millions of years. You will add just the right amount of light, water, heat, etc. until finally (dump it on floor), it becomes a full working unit again? Obviously it is absurd. Then discuss how much more complex humans are than computers (physically, socially, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually).

Relational Desire

Use a great love song about faithfulness or read an old love letter. Show a picture of an ex-girlfriend/boyfriend from 5th grade. Talk about how crazy we are about relationships. If we are an accident, where did this come from? Squirrels don't get mad at other squirrels when they go to homecoming with their friend's "ex-squirrelfriend". Relationships are really unique to us. Why do they matter so much? We were created for relationship.

Orange Proof

An orange is placed in a bag before the talk. Then a group is shown the bag and asked if they believe that an orange is in it, few believe because they did not see you put the orange in the bag. Then someone is allowed to smell the contents - more believe that it contains an orange. Then the bag is pressed against the object - it is round. Even more people now believe. Finally, the orange is pulled out and shown but still some don't believe. So it is with Jesus, he provides us with evidence through his claims, character,

and resurrection. Although the cumulative evidence is great, one can never prove God beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Wind Proof

God is like the wind. The wind is real, but you can't see it. And God is real, even though you can't see Him. But like the wind, you can see what God does. Just as you see leaves blown by the wind and trees bending in the wind, you can look at people and see the way God moves people. God is at work in the world. We can't see God, but we can see the results of God working in the lives of people. And that's one of the ways we know God is real.

See It, Touch It, Proof

Here's a conversation between a Quaker and Atheist...

Atheist: Did you ever see, touch, taste, hear, or smell God?

Quaker: No

Atheist: How then can you be sure that there is a God?

Quaker: Friend, have you ever seen, touched, tasted, heard, or smelled your brains?

Atheist: No

Quaker: Do you believe that you have any brains?

Same line of thinking can be done with overhead at club. Grab overhead chord...who has seen, touched, etc. the electricity in this chord? Who believes it is there? How do we know? We examine the light. The light proves its existence. Looking for proof of God in creation is like scratching the paint off a painting to find the artist. He isn't in the paint. He created the picture.

Mice

A family of mice lived in a piano and was impressed by the Unseen Player who made music. Then one day a daring mouse climbed up part of the piano and discovered that wires were the secret to how music was made. Another mouse returned from an expedition and discovered that hammers were the true secret. Now only the most conservative mice could believe in the Unseen Player. Meanwhile, the Unseen Player continued to play. So it is with God who continues to love and take care of us.

Person Of Christ Talk Illustrations

Magic Trick

Any magic shop can show you how to make a handkerchief disappear with a thumb tip. Practice and do it in front of club. (Tell them you know some kids will see how it works right away, but to not to scream out how the trick works. Just see how long it takes others). Show them how absurd the tip really looks. We assume that we knew all the pieces involved (they will think up sleeve, then roll up sleeve and do again), but we must take closer look.

Pictures of Christ

Show images of Christ that kids may and may not recognize. (i.e. - Jesus with sheep, knocking at door, playing soccer, etc. Just do a Google Image search for "Jesus") Talk about the funny images kids have of what he was like. Jesus did not just "glow a lot, hang out with sheep, and rule little kids in soccer with a big cross on his back". Why would we talk about him 2,000 years later?

Test for Greatness

Any thoughts for who is the greatest athlete, singer, actor, etc. What is the test for greatness? Here are 4 good ones for Christ. 1. Will they date time after you? (they did Him) 2. How many copies would your biography sell? (Christ's is #1 all time) 3. How about monuments (Washington, etc.)? (There is a church on every corner) 4. Or the big one, how many people would give their life for you? (More have for this man than any other man).

Images of God

Role-play as a kid taking a test and asking God for help. Come out dressed as different images of God. Police God - won't help because of what you did last weekend. Fireman God - Just happy to be there and help when called. Old God - Clueless...can't even hear correctly. Deceiver God - wheel and deal but just happy to play with you like a little pawn.

Optical Illusions

Print the following sentence in different sizes, cut and put into container to be pulled from. "In the frustration of the failure of my brakes, I kicked the fender of my car, fracturing my foot." Tell the club that you are using the sentences to break them into groups. Upon your signal, they are to open the paper and count the number of "f" 's in the sentence. You count out loud to 15 and stop them, have them close paper. Ask how many had 5, 6, 7, 8, ? Then let them know they all were looking at the same sentence. First impressions are often wrong.

Authority

The captain on the bridge of a large naval vessel saw a light ahead on a collision course. He signaled, "Alter your course ten degrees south." A reply came back, "Alter your course ten degrees north." The captain then signaled, "Alter your course ten degrees south. I am a captain." The reply: "Alter your course ten degrees north. I am a seaman third-class." The furious captain signaled, "Alter your course ten degrees south. I am a battleship." The reply: "Alter your course ten degrees north. I am a lighthouse."

Observe Closely

A small bottle containing urine sat upon the desk of Sir William Osier, the eminent professor of medicine at Oxford University. Sitting before him was a class full of young, wide-eyed medical students, listening to his lecture on the importance of observing details. To emphasize his point, he announced: "This bottle contains a sample for

analysis. It's often possible by tasting it to determine the disease from which the patient suffers." He then dipped a finger into the fluid and brought it into his mouth. He continued speaking: "Now I am going to pass the bottle around. Each of you please do exactly as I did. Perhaps we can learn the importance of this technique and diagnose the case." The bottle made its way from row to row, each student gingerly poking his finger in and bravely sampling the contents with a frown. Dr. Osier then retrieved the bottle and startled his students by saying, "Gentlemen, now you will understand what I mean when I speak about details. Had you been observant, you would have seen that I put my index finger in the bottle but my middle finger into my mouth."

Clown First Impressions

The philosopher Soren Kierkegaard once told a story about a circus that caught fire. The flames from the circus fire spread to the fields surrounding the circus grounds and began to burn toward the village below. The circus master convinced that the village would be destroyed and the people killed unless they were warned asked if there was anybody who could go to the village and warn the people. The clown, dressed in full costume, jumped on a bicycle and sped down the hill to the village below. "Run for your lives! Run for your lives! A fire is coming and the village is going to burn!" he shouted as he rode up and down the streets of the village." The village is going to burn! Run for your lives!" Curious villagers came out from their houses and shops and stood along the sidewalks. They shouted back to the clown, laughing and applauding his performance. The more desperately the clown shouted, the more the villagers cheered. The village burned and the loss of life was great because no one took the clown seriously. After all, he was just a clown.

Logic Student

In a beginning logic course at a major university, the professor made an unusual offer to his students who were preparing for their final exam. He told them, "You can bring to class on the day of the exam as much information as you can fit onto one piece of notebook paper." So every student sharpened his or her pencils and worked all week trying to cram as many facts as possible onto an 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet of notebook paper. But one student walked into the class, put a piece of notebook paper on the floor, and had an advanced logic student stand on the paper. The advanced logic student told him everything he needed to know. As a result, he was the only student in the class to receive an A.

Stolen Car

The police issued an all points bulletin to find a missing car and the person who had stolen it. The owner of the car had informed the police that on the front seat of the car was a box of crackers laced with a deadly poison that the owners had planned to use as rat bait. So the police were desperately trying to find the thief, not to punish him, but to save his life. They were afraid he would eat one of the crackers and die. In the same way God pursues us not because he wants to punish us but because he wants to save us.

So How'd You Break Your Arm?

A friend just got back from a holiday ski trip to Utah with the kind of story that worms the heart. Conditions were perfect. 12 below, no feeling in the toes, basic numbness all over, "tell me when we are having fun" kind of day. One of the women in the group complained to her husband that she was in dire need of a restroom. He told her not to worry, that he was sure there was relief waiting at the top of the lift in the form of a powder room for female skiers in distress. He was wrong, of course, and the pain did not go away. If you've ever had nature hit its panic button in you, then you know that a temperature of 12 below zero doesn't help matters. So, with time running out, the woman weighed her options. Her husband, picking up on the intensity of the pain, suggested that since she was wearing an all-white ski outfit, she should go off in the woods. No one would even notice, he assured her. The white will provide more than adequate camouflage. So she headed for the tree line, began disrobing and proceeded to do her thing. If you've ever parked on the side of a slope, then you know there is a right way and a wrong way to set up your skis so you don't move. Yup, you got it. She had them positioned in the wrong way. Steep slopes are not forgiving, even during embarrassing moments. Without warning, the woman found herself skiing backward, out-of-control, creating an unusual vista for the other skiers. The woman skied, if you define that verb loosely, back under the lift and finally collided violently with a pylon. The bad news was that she broke her arm and was unable to pull up her ski pants. At long last her husband arrived, put an end to her nudie show, then went to the base of the mountain and summoned the ski patrol, who transported her to a hospital. In the emergency room she was regrouping when a man with an obviously broken leg was put in the bed next to hers. "So how'd you break your leg", she asked, making small talk. "It was the craziest thing you ever saw," he said. "I was riding up this ski lift, and suddenly I couldn't believe my eyes. There was this crazy woman skiing backward out-of-control down the mountain with her bare bottom out of her clothes and pants down around her knees." "I leaned over to get a better look and I guess I didn't realize how far I'd moved. I fell out of the lift." "So how'd you break your arm?"

Do You Know Who I Am?

The story goes of an unorganized college student who was up all night cramming for a final exam worth his whole grade. The class before, he professor had explained that there was going to be 1 and 1/2 hour for the exam at the beginning of the class, and 1/2 hour of final lecture at the end. Due to the student's exhaustion, he overslept and sprinted to the class 1 hour late and began frantically working. At the 1 and 1/2 hour mark, the teacher strongly told the class to turn in their papers or receive an automatic "F". Frazzled with a 1/2 done test, the student chose to keep working until the end of the class. As the class dismissed and walked by the front of the room, the student gingerly reached out to put his test on the massive pile of tests already there. Catching this culprit out of the corner of her eye, the professor laid in, "Hold it right there young man, you did not do as you were instructed like the other 250 people in this class, and you will receive an F!" Puffing up his chest the student shouted back, "Hold on a

minute, lady! Do you have any idea who I am? Do you have any idea who you are speaking to right now!" "No, I don't", she snottily retorted. "Good!" said the student. Then he lifted up 1/2 the stack of tests, slid his paper in, slammed down the rest on top, and ran out of the class.

Bottle example Incarnation

A man was shown a red glass bottle and asked what he thought was in the bottle. He replied in succession, "Wine? Brandy? Whiskey?" When told it was full of milk, he could not believe it until he saw the milk poured out. What he hadn't known, of course, was that the bottle was made of red glass, and its redness hid the color of the milk it contained. So it was with the Jesus' humanity. Men saw him tired, hungry, suffering, weeping, and thought he was only man. He was made in the likeness of men, yet he ever is God over all.

Exam Fraud

This story goes of 2 Duke chemistry students who really intended to study for their Chemistry final; however, they stayed out all weekend at a neighboring campus and were not ready for the Monday morning exam. As the morning hours came, they decided that if they took the test, they would definitely fail, so they skipped the exam and showed up frantically at the professor's office the next afternoon. Dashing into his office, they told a dastardly story of how they were trying to get back for the exam, had a flat tire, no spare, and were stranded on a distant country road. They begged to take the exam. The professor agreed, put them in separate rooms and handed them a test booklet each. They both begin with the first question worth 10 points, quite easy they thought, after studying. But they were shocked when they turned the page to the second question of the test: "For 90 points, which tire?"

Dog Incarnation

Dogs are man's best friends, so let's assume that the dogs in your town have developed a problem that has them in deep distress and that only you can provide the help they need. If it would help all the dogs to become more like men, would you be willing to become a dog? Would you put down your human nature and choose instead of intimate communion with your friends - the poor substitute of looking into your friend's faces and wagging your tail, unable to smile or speak? When Christ became a man through the incarnation, he voluntarily limited what to him was the most precious thing in the world: unhindered communion with the father.

Apple Incarnation

If you look at two apples from a distance (one real and one fake), it is extremely difficult to identify the real one. The best way to differentiate them is to find out what is inside. So it is with Jesus, the outside appears human but the inside provides evidence of his divinity.

Water into Wine

Use two wine glasses. Place very little purple cool aid dust in bottom of one (it will be right on stem of glass as you hold it). As you pour water in one...water. As you pour in other...purple.

Need Talk Illustrations

Video idea for need for redemption

Show a quick video clip or two of classic scenes of memorable movies that highlight redemption. (i.e. - Rudy when finally plays, Rocky winning, Jerry McGuire ...you complete me, Braveheart...would you trade all those days for this one chance for freedom, etc.) What has Hollywood figured out? We love redemption (define: something that was wrong has now been made right). Think of all the real classics. We love redemption because we were created to be redeemed!

Smartest Man in World

One fine day four people were flying in a small, four-passenger plane: a pilot, a minister, and two teenagers, one being the "Smartest Teenager in the World." As they were flying along, the pilot turned to the three passengers and said, "I've got some bad news, and I've got some worse news. The bad news is, we're out of gas. The plane's going down and we're gonna crash. The worse news is, I only have three parachutes on board. This meant, of course, that someone would have to go down with the plane. The pilot continued. "I have a wife and three children at home. I have many responsibilities. I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to take one of the parachutes." With that, he grabbed one of the chutes and jumped out of the plane. The Smartest Teenager in the World was next to speak. "I'm the Smartest Teenager in the World," he said. "I might be the one who comes up with a cure for cancer or AIDS or solves the world's economic problems. Everyone is counting on me!" The Smartest Teenager in the World grabbed the second parachute and jumped. The minister then spoke up and said, "Son, you take the last parachute. I've made my peace with God, and I'm willing to go down with the plane. Now take the last parachute and go." "Relax, reverend," said the other teenager. "The Smartest Teenager in the World just jumped out of the plane with my knapsack."

Missed First Base

The greatest year in baseball history had to be 1924. The World Series that year between the old Washington Senators and the New York Yankees was considered a classic. The series was tied at three games apiece, with the final, seventh game played in Washington. In the ninth inning of the seventh game, the score was tied, two to two. New York came to bat. Three batters up and three batters down. The Washington fans started screaming. Washington could win the game with a run in the bottom of the ninth. The first two Washington batters were unable to reach base. With two outs, up to the plate stepped a batter by the name of Gauseland. The fans felt their hopes

die because Gauseland was not that good a hitter. The pitcher threw two strikes, then two balls. When the pitcher threw his fifth pitch, Gauseland stepped into the pitch. By the crack of the bat you knew the ball was going somewhere way out in left center field. The center fielder went back. The other fielders also ran toward the fence, hoping the ball would not go over the fence for a home run. The ball hit the top of the fence six inches from the top. It caromed off the fence, and one of the fielders chased it down. Gauseland, meanwhile, was between second and third bases. The third base coach thought this might be the only chance to win, so he waved Gauseland home. The throw from the outfield was taken first by the shortstop, and then relayed to home plate. Gauseland slid into home just as the catcher pegged him with a perfect throw from the shortstop. Everyone could see that Gauseland had beat the throw. Still, the umpire yelled, "You're OUT!" The fans went crazy. They threw pop bottles and yelled obscenities when the plate umpire conferred with the other men in black. Then the men on the field signaled for silence. Everybody got quiet. The fans thought they would reverse the call, but the umpire shouted, "The runner is not out because he didn't beat the ball to the plate. He is out because he didn't touch first base!" It was true. Gauseland was running so hard that he simply failed to touch first. He was out.

Parade or Circus

God wants us to have life to the fullest. A little boy who had never seen the circus asked his father if he could go to town where the circus was. His dad gave him the dollar for the admission. One dollar was more money than the little boy had ever possessed at one time in his life. The boy began to walk toward town and on the outskirts of town he saw a parade with caged animals, a band, and acrobats. After everything had passed by where he was standing, he saw a clown. As the clown passed by, the little boy reached into his pocket and took out the precious dollar bill. Handing the clown the money, the boy turned and went home. What had happened? The boy thought he had seen the circus when he had only seen the parade.

Train Disaster

One of the worst train disasters was in the El Toro Tunnel in Spain where 500 people died in 1944. This was one of those long passenger trains with an engine on both sides. When the train went into the tunnel the front engine stalled. When the front engine stopped, the engineer on the back engine started up his engine to back the train out of the tunnel. At the same time, the front engineer managed to get the front engine started again. Because neither engineer had any way of communicating with the other, they continued to pull in both directions for several minutes. Hundreds of passengers died of carbon monoxide poisoning because the train could not make up its mind which way to go. The train of life can have too many engineers as well. Jesus said that "no one can serve two masters" in Matthew 6:24. Jesus needs to be directing our life.

Listening to the Crowd

An ancient story is told about a father and his son who were walking along a road one-day with their donkey. Soon they met a man who told them how foolish they were to

walk when they had a donkey that could be ridden. So the father and son hopped on. They hadn't gone very far when another man criticized them for both riding on the donkey. They were too heavy for it, he contended, and were being inhumane. So the boy got off. It wasn't long before a third traveler accused the father of being inconsiderate because he made his son walk while he rode. So the two switched places. Soon they met another person who charged that the son was not being thoughtful of his father, who was so much older than he. When last seen, the two were trudging down the road carrying the donkey.

Cathedral Vision

Christopher Wren, who designed St. Paul's Cathedral in London (one of the world's most beautiful buildings), wrote about the reactions of construction workers who were asked what they were doing. Those workers who were bored and tired responded by saying, "I'm laying bricks" or "I'm carrying stones." But one worker, who was mixing cement, seemed cheerful and enthusiastic about his work. Asked what he was doing, he replied, "I'm building a magnificent cathedral."

Who Are You Following

President Calvin Coolidge once invited friends from his hometown to dine at the White House. Worried about their table manners, the guests decided to do everything that Coolidge did. This strategy succeeded, until coffee was served. The president poured his coffee into the saucer. The guests did the same. Coolidge added sugar and cream. His guests did, too. Then Coolidge bent over and put his saucer on the floor for the cat.

Greyhound Racing

Greyhound racing, a popular betting sport in some parts of the country, attracts crowds who enjoy watching incredibly sleek and beautiful dogs run as fast as they can around a track. Unlike racehorses, greyhounds run without the assistance of a jockey. To keep the dogs running in the right direction, they are trained to chase a mechanical rabbit made of fur as it zips along the track in front of them. A man in the press box electronically controls the speed of the rabbit, keeping the rabbit just out in front of the dogs. The dogs never catch up to it. At a Florida track some year's back, a big race was about to begin. The dogs crouched in their cages, ready to go, while betting spectators finished placing their wagers. At the proper moment, the gun went off. The man in the press box pushed his lever, starting the rabbit down the first stretch, while the cage doors flew open, releasing the dogs to take off after the little rabbit. As the rabbit made the first turn, however, an electrical short in the system caused the rabbit to come to a complete stop, to explode, and to go up in flames. Poof! All that was left was a bit of black stuff hanging on the end of a wire. Their rabbit gone, the bewildered dogs didn't know how to act. According to news reports, several dogs simply stopped running and laid down on the track, their tongues hanging out. Two dogs, still frenzied with the chase, ran into a wall, breaking several ribs. Another dog began chasing his tail, while the rest howled at the people in the stands. Not one dog finished the race.

Monkey Trapping

Native hunters in the jungles of Africa have a clever way of trapping monkeys. They slice a coconut into two pieces; hollow it out, and in one half of the shell cut a hole just big enough for a monkey's hand to pass through. Then they place an orange in the other coconut half before fastening together the two halves of the coconut shell. Finally, they secure the coconut to a tree with a rope, retreat into the jungle and wait. Sooner or later, an unsuspecting monkey swings by, smells the delicious orange, and discovers its location inside the coconut. The monkey then slips his hand through the small hole, grasps the orange, and tries to pull it through the hole. Of course, the orange won't come out; it's too big for the hole. To no avail the persistent monkey continues to pull and pull, never realizing the danger he is in. While the monkey struggles with the orange, the hunters simply stroll in and capture the monkey by throwing a net over him. As long as the monkey keeps his fist wrapped around the orange, the monkey is trapped.

Rubber Band/Glove

By itself a rubber band can't do much. However, if someone pulls out all the slack it gets very tight. Then, in human hands, the rubber band can do many things. By ourselves we can't do much, but with God tugging at us we become useful. Likewise, a glove by itself can't do much. However, with a hand in it, it can help pick up things and keep the hand warm. Our lives are like a glove. We are only useful if God is within us just like the glove becomes useful when the hand is in it.

Need

This is the same concept as above. Use a bucket with a hole in it or different colored M&M's to talk about the concept of "Filling Up".

Live Stats

Trying to show we are broken. Check recent stats. Walk out into the room and show that statistically this side of the room has parents who once said, "I do" and now don't. Walk to different slice. Statistically, all of the females here will be abused or raped in their lifetime, etc. (Careful...this should be thoughtfully prayed through).

Sin Talk Illustrations

Scene from The Matrix

There is a powerful scene in the 2000 movie 'The Matrix' where the character Neo meets Morpheus and they discuss the "truth". Neo speaks of not wanting to know the truth before because he wanted control of his life. Morpheus challenges him there is no turning back and offers him a blue pill and a red pill. One turns him back to his previous life where he pretends the truth doesn't exist, the other opens him up to the truth.

Surgeon

A surgeon who selects a scalpel in the operating room rejects a scalpel with a minute spot of defilement on it as readily as one that was severely defiled, because even the smallest spot means the scalpel is defiled and cannot be used in surgery. The degree of defilement is inconsequential. The fact of defilement is what matters to the surgeon. A thing is sterile or defiled, clean or unclean. A person is holy or unholy. God is not concerned with degrees, only with the absolute.

Drowning

A group of believers was meeting by a river when one of their groups fell into the water. It was obvious that the poor fellow couldn't swim, as he thrashed about wildly. One of the believers was a strong swimmer and was called on to jump in and save the man before he drowned. But though able to save the drowning man, he just watched until the wild struggles subsided. Then he dove in and pulled the man to safety. When the rescue was over, the rescuer explained his slowness to act. "If I had jumped in immediately, he would have been strong enough to drown us both. Only by waiting until he was too exhausted to try to save himself, could I save him." It seems to be all too easy for us to be like that drowning man. Our self-efforts can actually prevent us from being saved! Unfortunately, some people must reach the point of being too exhausted to continue trying to save themselves (by dealing with their own sin) before they become willing to trust in Jesus and accept his gift of salvation.

Leap the Furthest

Two men were trying to escape from an erupting volcano. As the molten rock gushed out of the crater, they fled. All went well until they came to a stream of hot, smoking lava about thirty feet across. Sizing up their situation, they realized that their only hope was to get over the wide barrier. One of the men was old; the other was healthy and young. With a running start, they each tried to leap to safety. The first man went only a few feet through the air before falling into the bubbling mass. The younger, with his greater strength and skill, catapulted himself much farther. Though he almost made it, he still missed the mark. It did not matter that he out-distanced his companion, for he, too, perished in the burning lava. Sin is falling short of a standard or missing the mark. Though some may fall short of the standard by far more than others, all fall short nonetheless.

RR Track Switch

In St. Louis, there is a railroad switchyard. One particular switch begins with just the thinnest piece of steel to direct a train away from one main track to another. If you were to follow those two tracks, however, you would find that one ends in San Francisco, the other in New York. Sin is just like that. Just a small deviation from God's standards can place us far afield from our intended destination.

Poster Board

A new piece of poster board looks nice and represents our life. Each time we do something wrong it is like putting a tack in the poster board. Each tack mars the poster board and makes it less useful. This is like sin, which mars our life. However, God can and will remove sins from our lives just as easily as we can pull the tacks from the poster board. After the tacks are pulled from the poster board it is clean again. Close examination, however, shows that although the tacks are gone holes remain. So it is with sin, Jesus can forgive our sins but the consequences of it are not removed.

Marked Man

A young man was employed part time as a helper at the post office. A few days later some money was missing from the cash drawer. This happened several more times. One day after some more money was missed, a postal inspector appeared to investigate. He asked all the employees to line up side by side and to show their hands before a special light. The inspector explained that the day before some of their money had been treated with invisible chemicals. Whoever touched the money or took it would have a stain on his hands, which could not be washed off. Everyone gasped when the young man extended his hands and an unmistakable color appeared. So it is with sin. With God, no sin is ever secret.

Sin vs. sins

"Sin" (with a big S) is like cancer -it is a condition and "sins" (little s) are the symptoms. If we asked a man with a small spot of skin cancer if he had cancer, he would respond yes. Likewise, a woman with lung cancer would also reply affirmatively that she had cancer. It doesn't matter how much or what kind of cancer a person has, they still have cancer. So it is with little s "sins," whether you have committed one or a thousand you are in a condition of "Sin".

Grades

God requires perfection. Because of that, the only passing grade on his test is 100%. God doesn't grade on a curve. Whether you score 99% or 50%, both are failing grades.

Eagle Diving

National Geographic aired a special one night about how eagles catch fish in lakes. They fly high above the water but their eyesight is so good they can spot fish in the water below. When they see one they fold back their wings and aim directly for the water, going as fast as 130 mph. When they reach the water they spread their wings, reach out their talons, grab the fish, and begin flying back to the shore. On this TV special, they showed film of a very unusual occurrence. An eagle made a dive for a fish and grabbed it in its talons. But the fish was much larger than the eagle realized. As it began to fly to the shore you could see the strain on the eagle's face. It was not going to make it to the shore with this huge fish. It then tried to drop the fish, to let go of it. But the talons

of the eagle had dug into the flesh of the fish so deeply that it could not pull them out. It struggled but to no avail. Slowly the eagle descended into the lake and drowned, unable to let loose of its catch.

Train

People have a tendency to think of themselves as being better or worse than other people. One might think of life as being like a train ride. The best people are rewarded by riding in the caboose, while the worst people ride in the cars up front. The Bible says that "all have sinned" and that "the wages of sin is death". The problem of sin can be seen by looking out of the train and down the tracks. The bridge is missing over the next gorge. Therefore it doesn't matter where you are on the train, everyone is headed toward the same disaster.

Gravity

Just like there are physical laws there are spiritual laws. Gravity is a physical law. Suppose you went to the top of a building with a group of people and they voted to suspend the law of gravity. Would you be willing to jump off the building? Ignoring a physical law like gravity can result in serious harm. Likewise, ignoring the spiritual law that sin separates us from God does not eliminate its consequences.

Wolves and Knives

Many things seem safe and delicious at first but don't satisfy and ultimately lead to death. While you can get away with sin for a while it will eventually end in destruction. Eskimos hunters coat a knife blade with animal blood and allow it to freeze. They use so many layers of frozen blood that the knife cannot be seen. With the knife blade sticking up out of the ground, a wolf will begin licking the blood. He will lick faster and faster until the knife-edge cuts him but he is so hungry that he will continue to lick his own warm blood until he dies.

X-Ray Disaster

Little steel balls from an antique x-ray machine spilled on a highway. Children found these shiny balls and began to play marbles with them. After several months, many children suffered from severe radiation poisoning. The pretty balls turned out to be both delightful and deadly. Sin is like those pretty little balls.

Sandbox

A little boy found a large rock in his sandbox but wasn't able to get it out. His father asked him "Son, why didn't you use all the strength that you had available?" The boy replied "But I did, Daddy." "No, son," corrected the father kindly. "You didn't use all the strength you had. You didn't ask me." With that the father reached down and picked up the rock. God is able to take away our immovable rock of sin.

Chemicals

Ask chemistry teacher at school for polypropylene (it is an acid/base indicator like litmus paper - be careful not to spill on skin...also a laxative!). Use an acid (bleach) and a base (white vinegar). The indicator will color the acid but not the base. Then if you pour the base into the acid (as long as there is more base) it will clear the acid container again.

A Child's View of Sin

Here are some great quotes from children regarding their thoughts on sin. David Shepard (age 8) - "Sin is doing something real bad like sticking my gum on the table or under a chair." Rhonda Marshall (age 7) - "Well, kicking your brother is a little mistake, but kicking a dog is a sin." Rusty Maszy (age 7) - "Sin is flooding the bathroom and painting pictures with the toothpaste and dumping powder all over." Tonya Entrekin (age 6) - "A sin is what gets you into more trouble than you know what to do with." Beth Kummerlen (age 6) - "A sin is what you do before your mother spanks you." Mike Miller (age 7) - "A sin is a really bad mistake. When you make a little mistake, your parents punish you. But when you make a sin, God punishes you. And I bet He can really spank." Erik Vincent (age 7) - "A sin is the very worst thing you can think of, like when I put a fork between my teeth and turn it around and make my mother scream." Lesley Wilson (age 6) - "Well, a sin is a bad mistake. Like when I pick a fight with my brother. He's older and bigger than me, so if I pick a fight with him, that's a sin, 'cause I've mad a bad mistake." Molly Weldon (age 9) - "A sin is when you disrespect the law of God. There are big sins and little sins. Like when you beat up on your sisters...that's a middle-sized one." David Galbreath (age 6) - "Well, there's these two kids down our street, Steven and Nathan, and they're bullies and they're bad all the time. If you want to know about sin, you ought to ask them."

Cross Talk Illustrations

Bee Sting

A vacationing family drives along in their car, windows rolled down, enjoying the warm breeze of the sunny day. All of a sudden, a big black bee darts in the window and starts buzzing around inside the car. A little girl, highly allergic to bee stings, cringes in the backseat. If she is stung, she could die within an hour. "Oh, Daddy," she squeals in terror. "It's a bee! It's going to sting me!" The father pulls the car over to a stop, and reaches back to try to catch the bee buzzing around toward him. The bee bumps against the front windshield where the father traps it in his fist. Holding it in his closed hand, the father waits for the inevitable sting. The bee stings the father's hand and in pain, the father lets go of the bee. The bee is loose in the car again. The little girl again panics, "Daddy, it's going to sting me!" The father gently says, "No, it's okay, he's not going to sting you now. Look at my hand." The bee's stinger is there in his hand.

Railroad Son

Back in the days of the Great Depression a Missouri man named John Griffith was the controller of a great railroad drawbridge across the Mississippi River. One day in the summer of 1937 he decided to take his 8-year-old son, Greg, with him to work. At noon, John Griffith put the bridge up to allow ships to pass and sat on the observation deck with his son to eat lunch. Time passed quickly. Suddenly, he was startled by the shrieking of a train whistle in the distance. He quickly looked at his watch and noticed it was 1:07 - the Memphis Express, with four hundred passengers on board, was roaring toward the raised bridge! He leaped from the observation deck and ran back to the control tower. Just before throwing the master lever he glanced down for any ships below. There a sight caught his eye that caused his heart to leap into his throat. Greg had slipped from the observation deck and had fallen into the massive gears that operate the bridge. His left leg was caught in the cogs of the two main gears! Desperately John's mind whirled to devise a rescue plan. But as soon as he thought of a possibility he knew there was no way it could be done. Again, with alarming closeness, the train whistle shrieked in the air. He could hear the clicking of the locomotive wheels over the tracks. That was his son down there - yet there were four hundred passengers on the train. John knew what he had to do, so he buried his head in his left arm and pushed the master switch forward. That great massive bridge lowered into place just as the Memphis Express began to roar across the river. When John Griffith lifted his head with his face smeared with tears, he looked into the passing windows of the train. There were businessmen casually reading their afternoon papers, finely dressed ladies in the dining car sipping coffee, and children pushing long spoons into their dishes of ice cream. No one looked at the control house, and no one looked at the gear box. With wrenching agony, John Griffith cried out at the steel train: "I sacrificed my son for you people! Don't you care?" The train rushed by, but nobody heard the father's words, which recalled Lamentations 1:12: "Is it nothing to you, all who pass by?"

Lincoln's Son

During the Civil War, a young soldier in the Union Army lost his older brother and his father in the battle of Gettysburg. The soldier decided to go to Washington D.C. to see President Lincoln to ask for an exemption from military service so that he could go back and help his sister and mother with the spring planting on the farm. When he arrived in Washington, after having received a furlough from the military to go and plead his case, he went to the White House, approached the front gate and asked to see the president. The guard on duty told him, "You can't see the president, young man! Don't you know there's a war going on? The president is a very busy man! Now go away, son! Get back out there on the battle lines where you belong!" So the young soldier left, very disheartened, and was sitting on a little park bench not far from the White House when a little boy came up to him. The lad said, "Soldier, you took unhappy. What's wrong?" The soldier looked at the little boy and began to spill his heart to him. He told of his father and his brother being killed in the war, and of the desperate situation at home. He explained that his mother and sister had no one to help him or her with the farm. The little boy listened and said, "I can help you, soldier." He took the soldier by the hand

and led him back to the front gate of the White House. Apparently, the guard didn't notice them, because they weren't stopped. They walked straight to the front door of the White House and walked right in. After they got inside, they walked right past generals and high-ranking officials, and no one said a word. The soldier couldn't understand this. Why didn't anyone try to stop them? Finally, they reached the Oval Office-where the president was working-and the little boy didn't even knock on the door. He just walked right in and led the soldier in with him. There behind the desk was Abraham Lincoln and his Secretary of State, looking over battle plans that were laid out on his desk. The president looked at the boy and then at the soldier and said, "Good afternoon, Todd. Can you introduce me to your friend?" And Todd Lincoln, the son of the president, said, "Daddy, this soldier needs to talk to you." The soldier pled his case before Mr. Lincoln, and right then and there he received the exemption that he desired.

Slave Owner

A miner who had struck it rich passed by an auction for a black slave girl. He bought the slave girl for an amount that exceeded the worth of any slave. The girl walked toward the miner and spit on his face saying, "I hate you." The miner then went into the courthouse and spent another exorbitant sum for a piece of paper. Again the young girl said, "I hate you." "Here are your manumission papers. You are free," he said. The girl looked at the papers and said, "you just bought me and now you're setting me free?" The miner said, "I bought you to set you free." Clutching his muddy boots, the girl looked up at the miner and said, "All I want to do is to serve you because you bought me to set me free." This is the same response that Jesus who died on the cross hopes to receive from us.

Russian Revolution

During the Russian revolution, the Russian ruler decreed that anyone caught stealing food would be whipped to within an inch of death. Soon after, the ruler's mother was caught stealing food. When the ruler finds out that his mother is about to be whipped, he takes her place.

Stolen Bread

A man was caught and taken to court because he had stolen a loaf of bread. When the judge investigated, he found out that the man had no job, and his family was hungry. He had tried unsuccessfully to get work and finally, to feed his family, he had stolen a loaf of bread. Although recognizing the extenuating circumstances, the judge said, "I'm sorry, but the law can make no exceptions. You stole, and therefore I have to punish you. I order you to pay a fine of ten dollars." He then continued, "But I want to pay the fine myself." He reached into his pocket, pulled out a ten-dollar bill, and handed it to the man. As soon as the man took the money, the judge said, "Now I also want to remit the fine." That is, the man could keep the money. "Furthermore, I am going to instruct the bailiff to pass around a hat to everyone in this courtroom, and I am fining everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a city where a man has to steal in order to have bread to eat." The money was collected and given to the defendant. This

is an excellent example of justice being meted out in full and paid in full - while mercy and grace were also enacted in full measure.

Twice Bought

There was a young boy who lived in a New England seaport and loved to watch the boats come in from their daily catch. One day he decided to build a little sailboat all of his own. He worked for weeks, making sure each detail was just right. Finally the big day arrived. He went down to the wharf and proudly put his boat into the water. As he triumphantly observed his new sailboat, he noticed that the wind had suddenly changed, and the tiny boat was being swept out of sight. The little boy was heartbroken. Every day for a month, he went back to see if his boat had been washed up on shore. Finally, one day in the market he saw his boat in a store window. He excitedly ran into the store and told the proprietress that it was his boat. The woman only responded by saying that the boat would cost him two dollars. After pleading with her to no avail, the boy finally pulled out the money and gave it to the storeowner. As the boy was leaving the store, he said, "Little boat, you are twice mine. You are mine because I made you, and now you are mine because I bought you."

When Do I Die?

A family was involved in a serious car accident. Mike was the younger of two brothers and needed a blood transfusion to live. Danny who was 8 years old and the older brother agreed to give blood to his younger brother. As the blood was being drawn from Danny he asked, "When do I die?" Danny thought he was giving all his blood to save the life of his brother. He thought he would die after the transfusion was over yet he still agreed to help his little brother. Christ did the same thing for each of us when he gave his life for us on the cross.

Cleaning

There is only one way to completely clean a dirty plate; you need to use a clean cloth. Both cloths that appear dirty and cloths that seem clean but are actually dirty will not work. A cloth must be clean itself before it can clean something else. Because Jesus was perfect, without sin, He is able to clean us.

Blood of an Overcomer

Louis Pasteur's coworker in the demonstration of what used to be called the germ theory was Dr. Felix Ruh, a Jewish doctor in Paris. The physician's granddaughter had died of black diphtheria, and Dr. Ruh, vowing he would find out what had killed his granddaughter, locked himself in his laboratory for days. He emerged with a fierce determination to prove, with his colleague Louis Pasteur, that the germ theory was more than a theory. The medical association had disapproved of Pasteur and had succeeded in getting him exiled, but he did not go far from Paris. He hid in the forest and erected a laboratory in which to continue his forbidden research. Twenty beautiful horses were led out into the forest to the improvised laboratory. Scientists, doctors,

and nurses came to watch the experiment. Ruh opened a steel vault and took out, a large pail filled with black diphtheria germs, which he had cultured carefully for months. There were enough germs in that pail to kill everyone in France. The scientist went to each horse and swabbed its nostrils, tongue, throat, and eyes with the deadly germs. Every horse except one developed a terrific fever and died. Most of the doctors and scientists wearied of the experiment and did not remain for what they thought would be the death of the remaining horse. For several more days this final horse lingered, lying pathetically on the ground. While Ruh, Pasteur, and several others were sleeping on cots in the stables, the orderly on duty had been instructed to awaken the scientists should there be any change in the animal's temperature during the night. About two A.M. the temperature showed a half-degree decrease, and the orderly awakened Dr. Ruh. By morning the thermometer had dropped more degrees. By night the fever was entirely gone, and the horse was able to stand, eat, and drink. Then Dr. Ruh took a sledgehammer and struck that beautiful horse a deathblow between the eyes. The scientist drew all the blood from the veins of this animal that had developed the black diphtheria but had overcome it. The scientists drove as fast as they could to the municipal hospital in Paris. They forced their way past the superintendent and the guards and went into the ward where three hundred babies lay, segregated to die from black diphtheria. With the blood of the horse, they forcibly inoculated every one of the babies. All but three lived and recovered completely. The blood of an overcomer saved them.

Footprints

Sin is like the footprints left on the wet sand of a beach. If we get on all fours to erase our tracks, we only make more marks. Jesus' forgiveness is like the high tide, which after coming in, erases all tracks.

Seagulls

Imagine this scene: You are on the Florida coast. The sun is setting like a gigantic orange ball. It's the cool evening on a vacant, isolated stretch of beach. The water is lapping at the shore. The breeze is blowing slightly. There are one or two joggers and a couple of fishermen. Most people have gone home for the day. You took up and you see an old man with curved shoulders, bushy eyebrows, and bony features hobbling down the beach carrying a bucket. He carries the bucket up to the pier, a dock that goes out into the water. He stands on the dock and you notice he is looking up into the sky and all of a sudden you see a mass of dancing dots. You soon recognize that they are seagulls. They are coming out of nowhere. The man takes out of his bucket handfuls of shrimp and begins to throw them on the dock. The seagulls come and land all around him. Some land on his shoulders, some land on his hat, and they eat the shrimp. Long after the shrimp are gone his feathered friends linger, just the old man and the birds. What is going on here? Why is this man feeding seagulls? What could compel him to do this-as he does week after week? The man in that scene was Eddie Rickenbacher, a famous World War 2 pilot. His plane, The Flying Fortress, went down in 1942 and no one thought he would be rescued. Perhaps you have read or heard how

he and his eight passengers escaped death by climbing into two rafts for thirty days. They fought thirst, the sun, and sharks. Some of the sharks were nine feet long. The boats were only eight feet long. But what nearly killed them was starvation. Their rations were gone within eight days and they didn't have anything left. Rickenbacher wrote that even on those rafts, every day they would have a daily afternoon devotional and prayer time. One day after the devotional, Rickenbacher leaned back and put his hat over his eyes and tried to get some sleep. Within a few moments he felt something on his head. He knew in an instant that it was a seagull, which had perched on his raft. But he knew that they were hundreds of miles out to sea. Where did this seagull come from? He was also certain that if he didn't get that seagull he would die. Soon all the others on the two boats noticed the seagull. No one spoke, no one moved. Rickenbacher quickly grabbed the seagull and with thanksgiving, they ate the flesh of the bird. They used the intestines for fish bait and survived. Rickenbacher never forgot that visitor who came from a foreign place. That sacrificial guest. Every week, he went out on the pier with a bucket of shrimp and said thank you, thank you, thank you.

Fence

World War II soldiers approached a church with a graveyard to bury a fallen friend. "Was he a Catholic?" the priest inquired. "No he was not," the soldiers replied. "I'm sorry then," said the priest, "but you can bury him just outside the graveyard on the other side of the fence." After the war ended the soldiers came back to the church but couldn't find their friend's grave. "Did you move the grave?" the soldiers asked the priest. "No," said the priest, "I moved the fence." God does the same thing by allowing those who trust him to be in heaven even though they don't deserve that.

Electric Chair Example

Describe story of someone who was found guilty and was going to the electric chair. Describe all the pieces of being hooked up to the chair. (Their thoughts, feelings - keep in mind they are guilty). Then an outsider tells the person in the chair that they can free them but the person must do exactly as they say. The guilty party agrees. They are freed. Then the free, innocent party sits in the chair and tells the guilty person to strap them in the chair and throw the switch.

Appropriation / Resurrection Talk Illustrations

Money Example (Receive the Gift)

Hold up a \$5 bill and ask if anyone wants it (Most will raise their hands but not move). Continue to ask and hold it out until someone comes and takes it. A gift must be received.

Money Example (Value)

Also, may hold up a \$50 or \$100 bill. Ask if anyone wants it. Ask why (it's worth \$100). Crumple it up. Who wants it now? Why (Because it's still worth \$100)? Spit on it.

Grind it into ground. Why (It's still worth \$100)? You may feel like damaged goods yourself but your value is still the same to God through Christ.

Marriage Example

Ask crowd to ask you "____, are you married" when you point at one of them. As they ask you the question. You give the following answers. "Well I like weddings, I go to them a lot". "My parents are married". "I think marriage is a very good thing."

"Sometimes I feel married, but not now, I'm having fun, maybe I'll be more married when I'm old, etc." "Yes or No" are the only two answers that make sense. It is the same for whether you are a Christian or not.

Hen and Pig

A hen and a pig approached a church and read the advertised sermon topic: "What can we do to help the poor?" Immediately the hen suggested they feed them bacon and eggs. The pig thought for a moment and said, "There is only one thing wrong with feeding bacon and eggs to the poor. For you it requires only a contribution, but for me it requires total commitment!"

Alexander the Great

A few centuries ago, Alexander the Great conquered almost the entire known world with his military strength, cleverness, and diplomacy. One day, Alexander and a small company of soldiers approached a strongly defended walled city. Alexander, standing outside the walls, raised his voice, demanding to see the king. The king, approaching the battlements above the invading army agreed to hear Alexander's demands. "Surrender to me immediately," commanded Alexander. The king laughed. "Why should I surrender to you?" he called down. "We have you far outnumbered. You are no threat to us!" Alexander was ready to answer the challenge. "Allow me to demonstrate why you should surrender," he replied. Alexander ordered his men to line up single file and start marching. He marched them straight toward a sheer cliff that dropped hundreds of feet to rocks below. The king and his soldiers watched in shocked disbelief, as one by one, Alexander's soldiers marched without hesitation right off the cliff to their deaths. After ten soldiers had died, Alexander ordered the rest of his men to stop and return to his side. The king and his soldiers surrendered on the spot to Alexander the Great.

Let Light Shine

Hudson Taylor told of a Chinese pastor who always instructed new converts to witness as soon as possible. Once, upon meeting a young convert, the pastor inquired, "Brother, how long have you been saved?" The man answered that he had been saved for about three months. "And how many have you won to the Savior?" "Oh, I'm only a learner," the convert responded. Shaking his head in disapproval, the pastor said, "Young man, the Lord doesn't expect you to be a full-fledged preacher, but he does

expect you to be a faithful witness. Tell me, when does a candle begin to shine - when it's already half burned up?" "No, as soon as it's lit," came the reply. "That's right, so let your light shine right away."

Waterloo Message

General Wellington commanded the victorious forces at the great battle of Waterloo that effectively ended the Napoleonic Wars. The story has been told that when the battle was over, Wellington sent the great news of his victory to England. A series of stations, one within sight of the next, had been established to send code messages between England and the continent. The message sent was "Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo." Meanwhile a fog set in and interrupted the message sending. As a result, people only heard "Wellington defeated - ". Later, the fog cleared and the full message continued, which was quite different from the outcome that the people originally thought had happened! The same is true today. When many look at what happened on Good Friday, the death of Christ, they see only defeat. Yet, on Easter, at the Resurrection, God's message was completed. The resurrection spelled victory.

Smoke Signal

The only survivor of a shipwreck prayed each day for God to rescue him. He eventually built a small hut only to arrive back after fishing to find his hut in flames. "God how could you do this to me!" he cried. Early the next day he was awakened by the sound of a ship approaching the island to rescue him. "How did you know I was here?" the man asked his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal," they replied. What could have been one of the most discouraging moments in history when Jesus died becomes reason for celebration just three days later.

Prime the Pump

During the days of the pioneers there was a man who was crossing the desert. He ran into trouble and was dying of thirst when he spotted a pump near an abandoned shack. He had no water to prime the pump, but he noticed a jug of water near the pump with a note attached. It read: "There is just enough water in this jug to prime the pump, but not if you drink some first. This well has never gone dry, even in the worst of times. Pour the water in the top of the pump and pump the handle quickly. After you have had a drink, refill this jug for the next man who comes along." What would the man dying of thirst do? To follow the instructions and prime the pump without first taking a drink would be an exercise of the kind of belief the Bible speaks of. Biblical belief requires that one stake his life on the truth of the promise. If the man follows the instructions, he takes the chance of pouring out all the water and getting none to drink if the pump fails. So he must trust that the message is right. He must act in belief, without first receiving, and must trust in the truth of the promise.

Chair Example

You can "believe" that a chair can support your weight but you don't have "faith" until you sit in the chair. You might believe that a chair is sturdy by looking at it or finding out the brand name. However, you don't trust or have faith in the chair until you sit in it.

Breathing

Air is colorless and is very light. We can't live without it. Air is a free gift from God that we can use as much as we want. God offers us another free gift that is even more valuable - eternal life. But suppose I don't want that free gift. Suppose I decide to say no to Jesus. What happens? It is like holding my breath. If I refuse God's gift of Jesus, I will die. Jesus Christ is necessary for eternal life, just as air is necessary for living.

Niagara Falls

It was a bright, clear morning. A large crowd had gathered at Niagara Falls to see the famous tightrope walker named Blondin walk over the falls on a tightrope. The world's greatest tightrope walker briefly tested the taut strand that reached across to the opposite bank. The he took his long pole and, balancing himself expertly, started across. The crowd followed every movement tensely. Step by step he moved forward. The people on the shore reacted nervously to every sharp motion of the balancing pole. But their fears and forebodings were unnecessary. The great Blondin not only went across safely, but returned as well - to the great relief and admiration of the spectators. Turning to the audience, he then made a sensational offer. He would cross the falls again, this time with someone on his back. Who was willing to go? No one rushed forward to accept the offer. Picking out a man at random, Blondin asked, "Do you believe that I am able to carry you across?" "Yes sir" came the unhesitating reply. "Well, then, let's go," Blondin urged. "Not on your life!" - and the man withdrew into the crowd. And so it went. One after another expressed confidence in the tightrope walker, but none would agree to let Blondin take him across. Finally, a young fellow moved toward the front of the crowd. Blondin repeated his question: "Do you believe I can carry you across safely?" "Yes, I do." "Are you willing to let me?" "As a matter of fact, I am." The young man climbed onto the expert's back. Blondin stepped onto the rope, paused momentarily, then moved across the falls without difficulty. There were many in that crowd who believed that Blondin could do it. But there was only one who was willing to trust him to do it.

Cliffhanger

A man was walking along a narrow path, not paying much attention to where he was going. Suddenly he slipped over the edge of a cliff. As he fell, he grabbed a branch growing from the side of the cliff. Realizing that he couldn't hang on for long, he called for help.

Man: Is anybody up there?

Voice: Yes, I am here.

Man: Who's that?
Voice: The Lord.
Man: Lord, help me!
Voice: Do you trust me?
Man: I trust you completely, Lord.
Voice: Good. Let go of the branch.
Man: What?
Voice: I said, "Let go of the branch."
Man: Is anybody else up there?

Showering

People don't clean up before taking a shower. Likewise, we don't need to get rid of all sin in our life before we ask Jesus for forgiveness.

Matter of Heart

Standing in a garage doesn't make a person into a car. Being at McDonalds doesn't make you a Big Mac. Likewise, going to church doesn't make someone a Christian.

Don't Know It All

When you buy a car, you don't know everything about the car. Most people can't describe each engine part and its specifications. Nevertheless, people buy cars every day without knowing all the details. So it is with Christ. If you know the gospel, you know enough to make a decision. You don't need to know all the details to make a commitment.

Wedding Analogy

Standing at a church alter doesn't make someone married. Wearing a tuxedo doesn't make a man married. Buying a wedding cake doesn't make a woman married. The only thing that can make someone married is when both say "I DO". Jesus has already said "I DO". Therefore, only one thing remains for us to enter relationship with God (to be a Christian) - we must say "I DO".

Change

Tourists approached a man sitting in front of a building in a famous city. "Excuse me, but were any great men or women born in this village?" The old man thought for a moment and replied, "No. Only great babies." We can't wait until we know all the answers before we accept Jesus into our hearts.

Describing a Kiss

Trying to explain God is like trying to explain a kiss. You can check the dictionary definition: "A caress with the lips; a gentle touch or contact." But does that really capture the essence of what a kiss is? Does that describe what a mother does when she tenderly places her lips on the forehead of her newborn child? Is that what the young lover does when he says goodnight to his girl? Just as words cannot completely

capture all that is involved in what we know by experience and attempt to describe as a "kiss", we also cannot fully comprehend, explain, or define "God". We can, however, know him through reading the Bible and through the person of Jesus.

Blind Men and an Elephant

Six blind men heard about elephants and were each allowed touching one that visited their village. The first man who had felt the animal's side said, "An elephant is like a great thick wall." The second felt the elephant's tusk and compared him "not with a wall but with a spear." The third had touched the ear and said, "It is like a gigantic leaf made of thick wool carpet." "It is like a giant snake," said the fourth that had handled the trunk. The fifth touched the elephant's legs and concluded, "An elephant is round and thick like a tree." The last man rode the elephant and said, "He is like a gigantic moving mountain." God is described many ways in the Bible and each person may experience Him in different ways. It is important not to perceive only one view of God or we may be misled.

Golden Apples

A king and queen are trying to find a suitor for their princess. They cannot find a worthy candidate to marry their daughter. They decide that any man who can come and beat her in a cross-country footrace will win her hand. Men come from all over and none win the race until one man came with a big sack on his back. The king and queen looked in amazement thinking there is no way he could win, much less with a sack on his back. The race began and the princess watched the man take off on the race. After getting a little ahead, he reaches into the sack, pulls out something and throws it on the ground. The princess, with unbelievable curiosity runs to catch up with the man to see what he threw on the ground. With great amazement, she reaches down to find a golden apple on the ground. While admiring the golden apple, she notices she is falling behind in the race. She drops the apple and begins to chase the man, yet as she catches up with him, he drops another golden apple on the ground. She again picks up the golden apple and admires it only to look up and realize she has again fallen behind. This continues to happen until finally the young man crosses the finish line before the distracted princess (Heb. 12:1-2). Often it is easier for us to see the sin that so easily entangles us than it is to notice the golden apples that take our eyes off of Christ. In order to truly run the race set before us, we must continually keep our eyes on the finish line... fully knowing Christ.