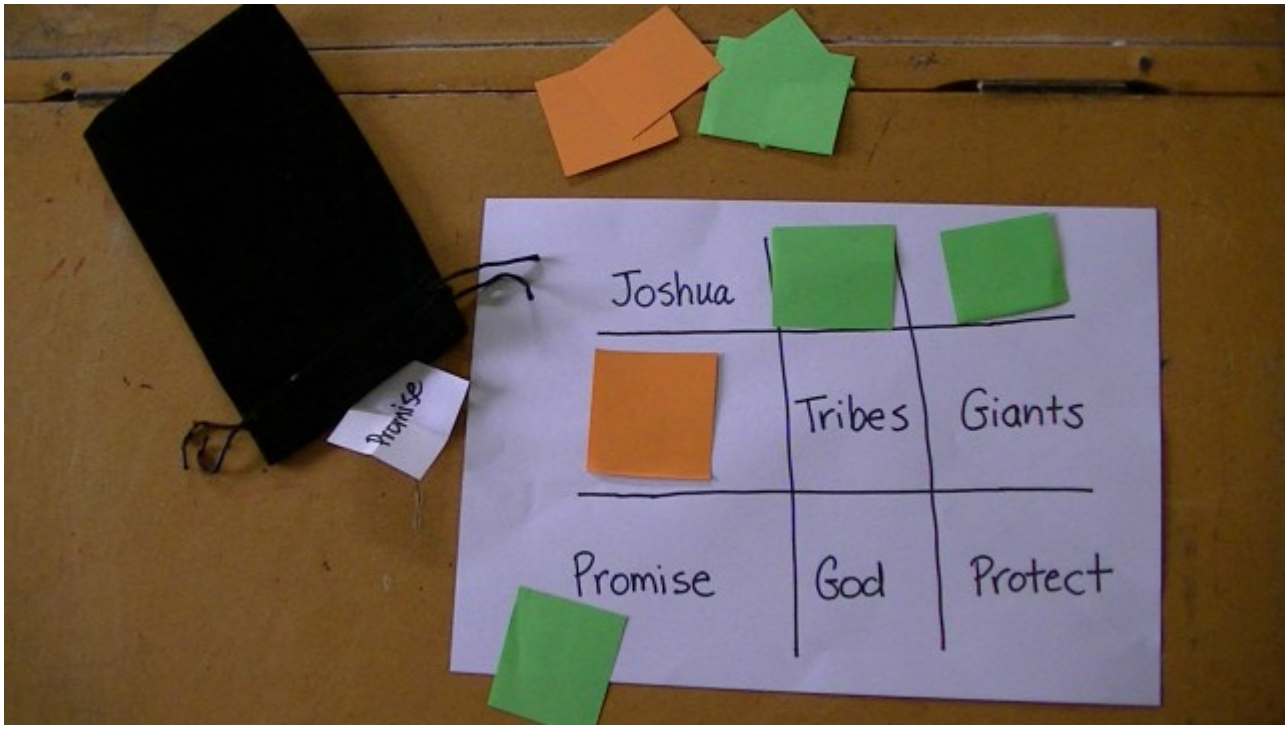
Same Game – Different Name

I thought I'd finish off 2014 by posting a simple game to use as a review in Bible Class.

Well, at least I assumed it would be simple!



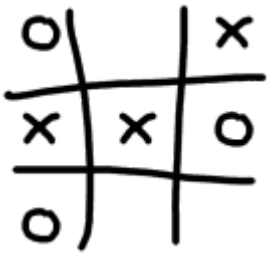
A woman named Debbie (Arizona, USA) emailed me awhile back with the suggestion of adapting an "X and O" game into a review activity for Bible Class. Children list words and ideas and then play a game similar to "tic-tac-toe" or "noughts and crosses". The example in the picture above is from the Bible lesson Conquering the Land and Fighting Giants.

I thought such a simple idea would be easy to explain until I began filming a "how-to" video and writing out instructions. Hopefully, the final result makes sense. Click here to learn how to use the game in your Bible Class.

Same Game-Different Name

It turns out that many of us play the game but we know it by different names. That's why I stuck with the simple title of "X and O Review Game". Here are some of the other names listed by Wikipedia:

- Tick-tack-toe, Tic-tac-toe, Tick-tat-toe, or Tit-tat-toe (USA, Canada)
- Noughts and crosses or Naughts and crosses (United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa)
- Exy-Ozys, Xsie-Osies (verbal name only) (Northern Ireland)
- Xs and Os (Egypt, Republic of Ireland, Canada, Zimbabwe, Romania)
- O-X (Mauritius)



Older Than You Think

I was amazed to find out that In fact, 1st Century Romans played a version of this game that was very similar to what we play today! So this game has been played since the time of Christ.

Same Same but Different

As my Thai friends say, “same-same but different”. God’s Word does not change but it is shared in different languages and and by various methods that fit the culture and understanding of the hearer. You know the needs of the children you are teaching. I’m hoping you are reading the ideas on www.missionbibleclass.org and then adapting them to your own teaching situation and language.

If a simple and inconsequential game of “X and O” can still be played and enjoyed by adults and children century after century then how much more lasting is the Word of God for all people for all time?

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Teaching Alongside the Creator

In the rush to find scissors and glue we should not neglect the natural supplies God has provided as teaching resources.

We do not teach alone. We join the Master Teacher, the Creator, who is already using his creation to draw people to Himself:

> *The heavens declare the glory of God;*
> *the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*
> *Day after day they pour forth speech;*
> *night after night they reveal knowledge.*
> *They have no speech, they use no words;*
> *no sound is heard from them.*
> *Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,*
> *their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4, NIV)*

and…

> *For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. (Romans 1:20, NIV)*

A student I supervise, Cristy, recently encouraged a group of teachers to bring God's teaching resources into our classrooms. Cristy sent a group of teachers outside the building to find and bring back items that teach about God. (She only allowed them 3 minutes!).

Here are the types items these teachers found:

- A leaf to illustrate the waving of the palm leaves when Jesus entered Jerusalem in his Triumphal Entry.
- A rock to teach about the stone being rolled away from Jesus' Tomb in the Burial and Resurrection Story.
- Various types of Soil to illustrate the Parable of the Sower and the Seeds.

We thought this might be more of a challenge when we taught the same workshop in Metro Manila (Philippines). The church building we were in was surrounded by a parking lot devoid of plants and next to a busy street. Still, when Cristy sent the teachers out they quickly adapted and came back with a wonderful collection of both natural and other teaching items including items such as:

- Five stones to teach about David and Goliath.
- Dust to show how God formed Adam from the dust of the earth when God Created People.
- A salt shaker from the kitchen to illustrate that we are to be Salt and Light.
- Coins from someone's purse to help children remember when Judas betrayed Jesus.

Pointing out God's creation when we teach brings a profound richness into what we are sharing. In the years to come children may

forget a picture used for illustration or a worksheet. But, for the rest of their lives they will continue to see leaves and stones and soil. Connecting these things with spiritual lessons now will mean that the lessons will be reinforced over and over.

I can just imagine the future when one of my students, as an elderly person, picking up a stone and telling his or her grandchild about how the stone was rolled away from the tomb.

I want to teach with the Creator!

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