

Spoons and Prayers

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I am often reminded that mission is FOR children but can also be BY children.

Recently, a mother wanted me to meet her young daughter. When considering what she wanted to be when she grew up, her daughter said she wanted to be a missionary and teach children.

I talked to little Hannah and asked her if she would like to start being a missionary now. I opened my bag and showed Hannah a collection of "prayer sticks" that I happened to have inside. Note: One never knows what a Bible teacher "happens to have in his or her bag"!

Years ago, someone gave me a big box of coffee stirrers (craft sticks or popsicle sticks.) I began using these sticks for prayer activities. Participants in training workshops write the names of the children they teach on these sticks. We collect the sticks and then pass them back out again so the children can be prayed for by name. [Read the full instructions for prayer sticks here.](#)

Amongst my bag of sticks were two plastic spoons. Instead of writing a child's name on a stick, a Bible teacher in Botswana had come up with the idea of drawing the face of each child on a plastic spoon. What a great idea! In Hannah, I knew I had found the perfect

person to pray for these children.

Hannah took the spoons and took the task seriously. A few days later, her mother sent this message to me:

Hi Mary! I wanted to share with you that we have been praying for the sweet girls whose names are on the spoons you gave Hannah! 1 spoon had another name on the back so there are 3 names. Last night, Hannah prayed for Emma, Ret and Martha and then added... "And all the kids whose names are in all those bags, Lord, you know em." I just wanted to share with you and thank you for giving her an insight to mission work!!

Thank you, Hannah. You remind me that children are part of the Mission of God. We do not have to wait until we are "old enough" to love God and bless others. Neither are we ever "too old". This little girl approached the throne of God and confidently asked the King of the Universe to bring blessing into the lives of children on the other side of the world.

How do you think God responded?



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10 Ways to Prepare to Share Christ with Children on a Mission Trip



So, you're going on a Mission Trip. Perhaps the trip is geared toward benevolent or medical work. Or maybe the plan is for adults to gather for bible studies or preaching. Whatever kind of mission trip it is it is highly likely that you will meet children along the way. God will bring these children your way...are you prepared to share Christ with them?

Here are some things you can do before you leave home:

1. Talk to children before you go: You will feel more comfortable talking to the children in a new place if you have had experience talking to children in your own church or family. Talk to the children about the mission trip you will be going on. Ask children in your home congregation to pray for you while you are on your mission trip. Need help learning to talk with children? See [How to Talk to a Child](#).
2. Learn to make a paper cross to tell [the Story of the Cross](#). No scissors needed.
3. Learn Christian songs to sing with children. Kids love actions songs! Try some of these at [Mission Bible Class Songs](#).
4. Learn how to make paper doll chains out of paper. You can use this method to teach children the bible story [Jesus Blesses the Children](#). Or use them to make any Bible characters.
 1. [Craft: Paper Doll Chain version 1](#)
 2. [Craft: Paper Doll Chain version 2](#)
 3. [Craft: Paper Doll Chain version 3](#)
5. Learn how to do string tricks that relate to bible stories. This is a good way to start up a conversation with children and begin talking about God. It is easy to pack a piece of string in your bag. You may think of others but here are two ideas I would suggest:
 1. Jacob's Ladder: Printable instructions as well as a Youtube clip at http://www.momsminivan.com/how_to_do_jacobs_ladder.html
Check out the full bible story lesson at [Jacob Goes to Haran](#).
 2. Use the "Cut Off Your Finger" string trick to talk about how we are tangled in sin but Jesus can take it away. Video instructions at <http://youtu.be/Fjhw563Oc2o>.
6. Learn how to make a balloon heart so that you can use it to talk about God's love. I found the video instructions at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqBZw0x_LP4
7. Learn a magic trick that teaches a Christian message. [Try this website for magic tricks with a message:](#) <http://www.professorwonder.com/magicndx.htm>
8. Practice drawing a few bible stories before you go. You and the children will be able to draw simple stick figures on paper or even in the sand. A simple story for this might be [Jesus Calms the Storm](#).
9. Learn a simple way to teach children how to pray. A number of ideas for this can be found at [Prayer in Bible Class](#). (My personal favourite on that page is the 5 finger prayer).
10. Learn about children before you go. Talk to school teachers, bible class teachers and parents. Ask them what kind of things children like to do for fun. What do they like to do to learn?



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