

DISCIPLEMAKERS

VOLUME 1 • RELATING TO GOD



LEADER'S MANUAL

LARGE GROUP LESSONS



Gospel Light

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K.I.D.S. Church DiscipleMakers

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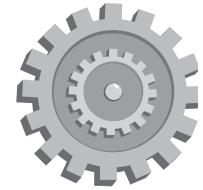
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Dear Children's Ministry Leader,

Gospel Light is proud to welcome you to the latest K.I.D.S. Church product—DiscipleMakers! This Large Group/Small Group solution for your children's ministry molds 6-12 year olds into powerful disciples for Christ! Glorifying God, showing the love of Jesus, and being led through the Holy Spirit is what K.I.D.S. Church—Kids In Divine Service—is all about!

Each captivating volume of DiscipleMakers comes complete with large group and small group lesson manuals, a DVD of Bible video segments and praise and worship songs, and resource CD-ROMs loaded with everything you need to make your K.I.D.S. Church easy to lead and fun for kids!



Section 1 of this manual will walk you through every part of the DiscipleMakers program. You'll learn the program components, see what leading a lesson looks like step-by-step, and discover helpful training and leader tips to make your lessons come alive for the kids!

Section 2 contains the 13 large-group lessons. Central to becoming disciples for Jesus is experiencing a vibrant relationship with God. The theme for DiscipleMakers Volume 1 is Relating to God. Vital to this relationship is prayer. In Unit 1 kids will experience the Lord's prayer as they explore the lives of Samuel, Saul, and David. In Unit 2, children will discover that knowing the Bible is key to developing a relationship with God. Lessons from the life of Moses will help kids see the importance of living God's Word daily.

Another essential way children connect to God is through worship. Unit 3 takes boys and girls on a journey into the lives of people who chose to worship God in both the Old and New Testaments. They will discover worshiping God is an attitude that they can choose in good times and bad.

We're excited you've chosen DiscipleMakers to guide your great kids into being Christ's disciples in our world today. We would love to hear from you. Check the K.I.D.S. Church website often for the latest information about K.I.D.S. Church DiscipleMakers from Gospel Light, bringing you God's Word for a Kid's World.



God's blessing on your K.I.D.S.!

Jim Hawley
Managing Editor
K.I.D.S. Church

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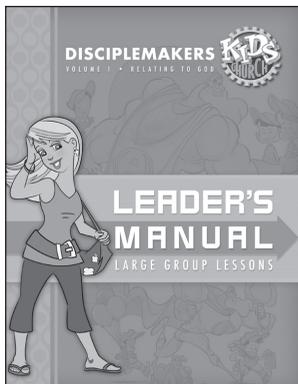
**Section
One
Director's Guide**

Part 1 DiscipleMakers Component Overview

Welcome

K.I.D.S. Church DiscipleMakers is a fast-paced program for kids ages 6–12. Rather than separating them—as graded Sunday School programs do—DiscipleMakers lets you bring elementary-aged kids together for high-energy ministry. Kids begin in a large-group meeting time before dividing into three age-appropriate groups for small-group lesson time. You'll find 60 to 120 minutes of powerful activities in each DiscipleMakers lesson. You will need to choose the lesson segments you want to use, depending on the length of your meeting times. Take time now to read through this introduction and the lessons to determine what's best for your group.

Leader's Manual: Large-Group Lessons



The *Leader's Manual* contains 12 lessons in three units, which are three to five lessons each. Lesson 13 is a game-day review. Each lesson includes:

- **Everything You Need**—gives a list of supplies needed for each activity. See page 13 for a list of basic supplies that would be helpful to have on hand in your meeting area.
- **Lesson Overview**—gives you and your helpers direction and focus for teaching the lesson. The overview shares the “heartbeat” of the lesson by explaining the lesson Power Point.
- **Power Point**—the central theme that you are communicating to the children. Every part of the lesson is designed to illustrate this point. Refer often to the Power Point as you teach the lesson.

- **Games**—two games help review the previous week's lesson and help kids have fun.
- **Lesson Introduction**—creatively introduces the Power Point to the kids. Often this will include a skit or object lesson.

- **Scripture Memory Verse**—an activity using a lesson-related Scripture verse so your kids do more than just memorize. Fun, interactive activities help kids practice the verse, then they are challenged to understand the verse and shown how to live it out.

The verse is presented with a modern translation of the Bible that is easy for kids to understand—the Contemporary English Version (CEV). Memory Verse slides, available on the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM, are available in the CEV and the New King James Version (NKJV), for those who prefer a more traditional translation when memorizing.

- **Bible Lesson**—the basis for the entire lesson. Leaders will help kids become familiar with their Bibles as they teach them to navigate to specific chapters and verses. The lesson is presented in a creative way that ties to the Power Point, using the Word of God.

- **Object Lessons**—activities that support the Bible lesson and Power Point through a visual object or experiment. Object lessons also help kids connect the point of the lesson to their daily lives.

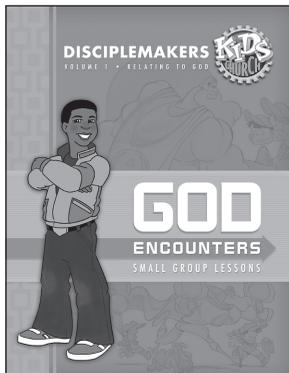
- **Today's Life Story**—the application of the Bible lesson and Power Point, using contemporary characters to dramatize the message. Each story is presented with visuals from the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM (see page 10).

- **Closing Prayer**—reinforces the truths learned in the lesson and thanks God for the kids who participated in the K.I.D.S. Church service.

- **Small Group Lesson**—to help personalize learning, children divide into age-appropriate levels for small group lesson time. Leaders use the *God Encounters Small Group Lessons*. See more information about *God Encounters* on page 10.

For detailed guidelines on how to use each of these lesson components in your K.I.D.S. Church service, see Part 3 • How to Lead a DiscipleMakers Service, beginning on page 18.

God Encounters: Small Group Lessons



The *God Encounters Small Group Lessons* manual contains 13 lessons for each age group: Ages 6-7, Ages 8-10, Ages 11-12. The *God Encounters Small Group Lessons* are designed for a 15-40 minute session. Each God Encounters

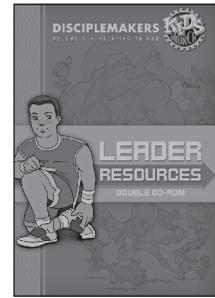
small group lesson uses the same Bible lesson text, Scripture Memory Verse and lesson Power Point as the large group DiscipleMakers lesson. God Encounter lessons have six elements:

- **Lesson Summary**—an introduction section listing the Power Point, Scripture Memory Verse, Bible Lesson Scripture and Overview used in the large-group lesson.
- **Discussion Questions**—a series of Bible lesson review and Power Point application questions.
- **The God Encounter**—a time of reflection and prayer, guiding kids to respond to God and His Spirit. Building relationships with God and one another is the goal of this element.
- **The Jesus Factor**—an activity designed to reveal Jesus throughout the whole Bible, using a Scripture that shows how Jesus connects to the Bible lesson and Power Point.
- **Small Group Activity**—games, crafts or fun activities that give kids reminders of the Power Point and commitments made during the God Encounter prayer time.
- **Take-Home Challenges**—full-color pages printed from the CD-ROM that challenge kids to live out the lesson at home. Each challenge is done in a kid-friendly style that encourages kids and parents to participate.

(Note: See the *God Encounters Small Group Lessons* manual for more details about the God Encounters small group lessons.)

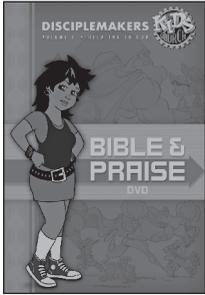
Leader Resources CD-ROM

The *Leader Resources* double CD-ROM contains both large-group and small-group manuals, Today's Life Story illustrations and Scripture Memory Verse artwork, along with K.I.D.S. Church extras (certificates, K.I.D.S. Church Cash, name tags, graphics, Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations and more).



- **Acting God's Word puppet and drama scripts**—Includes both audio files (puppet skit recordings) and data files (printable PDF puppet scripts) for six scripts. Each skit is recorded on a quality audio track with background music and sound effects. Use the recordings as an Acting God's Word puppet skit presentation to introduce select Bible lessons. See page 21 for more information about using puppets and drama.
- **Visual Presentation Helps**—Today's Life Story illustrations, Scripture Memory Verse slides and lesson Power Points are available as PDF files, JPEG graphic files and Microsoft® PowerPoint® files. In addition, printable K.I.D.S. Church extra resources are provided as PDF files.
- **PPT files**—use these files with Microsoft® PowerPoint® to project Today's Life Story illustrations, Scripture Memory Verses, lesson Power Points, announcements and pledges.
- **JPEG files**—JPEG files of all Today's Life Story illustrations, Scripture Memory Verse and lesson Power Points are available to use in a variety of graphic software programs. Use these illustrations to promote your ministry in your church newsletter, bulletin or website.
- **PDF files**—printable K.I.D.S. Church leader resources include Lesson Planners for use by the team members responsible for each segment of the lesson, recognition certificates for a variety of needs and name tags. These resources are easily customizable to save time for your workers. In addition, you can print K.I.D.S. Church Cash to award for games, activities, goal completion, etc.

Bible & Praise DVD



The *Bible & Praise* DVD contains both praise and worship songs and creative video Bible Connection segments.

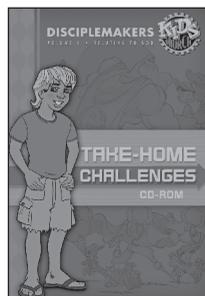
- **Praise Experience**—

A powerful visual presentation of contemporary songs for leading praise and worship. Your kids will be captivated by the colorful lyrics, vivid nature scenes, photographs of kids worshiping and exciting, high-energy video clips.

- **Bible Connection**—Contemporary video segments to be used with select Bible lessons presented in DiscipleMakers. These segments provide kids with a visual presentation related to the Bible lesson. From serious to silly, each video segment carries a powerful spiritual truth. These video clips are 3–5 minutes in length and will add interest and energy to your lessons, helping kids see how God’s Word can be applied to everyday life.

Take-Home Challenges CD-ROM

The *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM contains 12 PDF lessons for each age group: Ages 6-7, Ages 8-10, Ages 11-12. (Note: There is no Take-Home Challenge for Lesson 13, game-day lesson review). These challenges can be e-mailed or printed to give to kids. The



challenges are written so children can read and understand them. They also provide parents/guardians with a brief summary of the day’s lesson, along with a fun activity to help the child apply the lesson at home. Follow-up on these at-home activities is encouraged each week in the small group ministry time.

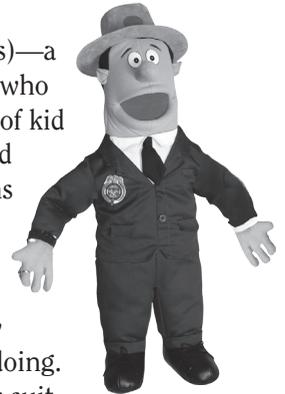
All of the above components are included in each K.I.D.S. Church DiscipleMakers kit. In addition, optional puppet and clothing items are available to help complete your DiscipleMakers experience!

Customized Puppets

Customized puppets are available to enhance the puppet scripts used in some of the lessons. Follow the adventures of Detective Doodad and his gang of four kids who thwart the evil plans of Dr. D. Seaver.

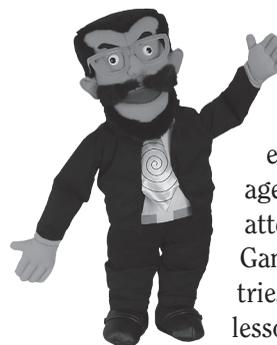
- **Detective Doodad** (26 inches)—a brilliant, yet eccentric detective who is “cool” in the eyes of his team of kid helpers. He has a wacky side, and isn’t perfect, but he always seems to come up with the right answer in an unexpected way.

The kids respect him and know his true genius, but occasionally forget that he knows what he’s doing. Dressed in a fedora hat and navy suit, Detective Doodad foils the evil Dr. D. Seaver with the help of Z-ray sunglasses, a laser pointer, his wrist communicator and more.

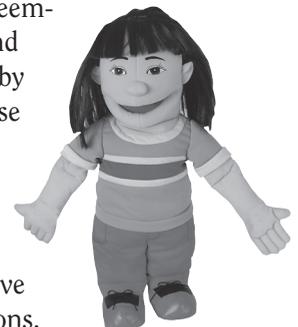


- **Dr. D. Seaver** (26 inches)—Detective

Doodad’s archenemy. He is a master of disguise and often shows up in the puppet skits dressed as a young boy, an elderly woman, a government agent, or other character who attempts to deceive the Doodad Gang into believing lies. He often tries to twist the Power Point of the lesson, to no avail.



- **Mindi Lee** (20 inches)—seemingly shy, Mindi hangs around with Keona. Don’t be fooled by Mindi Lee’s quietness, because when she needs to, she will fight for what is right. She brings a lot of her Asian customs to the group as she teaches the kids to be sensitive to other cultures and traditions.





• **Tony** (22 inches)—a natural leader who tends to jump in with both feet. He is smart, enjoys attention and is continually calling the other kids to action. He likes to analyze everything and is often two steps ahead of the group.

• **Keona** (22 inches)—a sensible and intelligent girl who likes to work things out. Level-headed and independent, she’s the “brains” of the operation. Polite, but not always quiet, Keona steps up to the plate when needed.



• **Henry (20 inches)**—looks tough, but is gentle. Give him a computer and he’ll find your answer in no time. He is loyal to the cause, and especially to Detective Doodad.

Logo Golf Shirts



Sharp, purple golf shirts embroidered with the K.I.D.S. Church logo are available for you and your leaders. All K.I.D.S. Church golf shirts are 50 percent cotton and 50 percent polyester (pre-shrunk) and come in Adult S, M, L, XL, 2XL, and 3XL sizes.

Contact Us

We’re here to serve you! For specific needs or K.I.D.S. Church testimonies, contact your personal ministry consultant by phone at 1-800-4-GOSPEL (1-800-446-7735) or online at www.gospellight.com.

Logo T-shirts



We encourage you and your K.I.D.S. Church helpers to wear K.I.D.S. Church T-shirts or golf shirts as a great means of identification.

The use of leaders’ T-shirts will also give your ministry a high visibility with adults before and after the service. All K.I.D.S. Church T-shirts

are 100 percent cotton (pre-shrunk) with a full-color K.I.D.S. Church logo, and come in Youth S, M, and L sizes and Adult S, M, L, XL, 2XL, and 3XL sizes.

Part 2

How to organize and set up your DiscipleMakers program

Room Setup / Decorating Ideas

First impressions are important. What will be the children's first impression of your ministry? How does your room or setting look? Is it colorful? Is it clean? Did you put time into making it look good? The kids should know that your ministry is exciting as soon as they walk through the door.

Refer to the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM for a suggested room setup diagram. We recommend seating the kids in chairs rather than on the floor. Dividing the seats with a center aisle automatically creates two teams (some prefer to separate boys and girls, while others encourage co-ed teams). Use the teams for games or friendly competition while singing, giving or quiet time.

Decorate your room or auditorium in a way that reflects the unit theme using bright colors. Consider building a special set for the presentation of each unit. One easy way to transform the look of your K.I.D.S. Church room is to create a backdrop. For backdrop images you could choose the Today's Life Story art from the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM. Project the artwork onto foam board, lightweight plywood, muslin, canvas or large bed sheets. There are two easy ways to project the artwork:

1. Print the artwork from the CD-ROM onto a transparency. Project the transparency onto the surface you wish to paint or decorate.
2. Insert the artwork from the CD-ROM into Microsoft® PowerPoint®. Project it from your computer and projection equipment onto the surface you wish to paint or decorate.

As the backdrop is projected, outline the artwork using a black marker. Then, use acrylic paints to paint the surface.

Add music to the décor to create an exciting environment for kids. Have upbeat praise and worship music playing when the kids arrive. When it comes to décor and music, aim for what would please an 11-year-old. Older children will attract the younger, but it rarely works the other way around.

Suggested Service Format & Times

Refer to the reproducible Suggested Schedule that offers a suggested order of service. This planner is provided on the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM to print and copy as needed. The planner provides suggested 60-minute, 90-minute and 120-minute schedules.

Equipment & Supplies Needed

Refer to the reproducible Room Setup illustration on the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM to see a typical K.I.D.S. Church setup. Print and copy as needed to help your ministry team create an awesome K.I.D.S. Church setting!

For lesson materials needed refer to the "Everything You Need" section in each lesson. This includes supplies for each lesson activity. We also recommend you keep a supply of these common materials in the K.I.D.S. Church area:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> index cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-it notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paper | <input type="checkbox"/> scissors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clear tape | <input type="checkbox"/> glue sticks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> colored markers | <input type="checkbox"/> card stock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> masking tape | <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rulers | <input type="checkbox"/> butcher paper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pencils | <input type="checkbox"/> white board and markers |

Create a master list of items needed for each unit. At a team meeting, assign who will bring these items. Organize and store the items ahead of time. It's easier to plan ahead than to find yourself without a needed prop on the day of the lesson.

There are two choices for displaying the Scripture Memory Verse, lesson Power Point, Today's Life Story and other visuals used in DiscipleMakers:

1. Print the PDF files from the CD-ROM onto a transparency. Using an overhead projector, project the transparency onto a screen or white surface.
2. Prepared slides are provided on the CD-ROM for use with Microsoft® PowerPoint®. Project them from your computer and projection equipment onto a screen or white surface.

For additional information about using the CD-ROM, see the READ ME file on the CD-ROM.

The *Leader's Manual* and *God Encounters* are reproducible (see page 2 for requirements), so you may copy or print lessons for both large group and small group leaders and helpers. These PDF files are easily emailed to your ministry team to make sure everyone has what they need for ministry with the kids.

Incentives

Children respond to incentives for obeying rules or completing take-home activities. Here are some ministry-tested ideas to help motivate your kids with positive reinforcement:

- **Promotions:** Offering a "promotion" is a great way to generate participation. Promotions can be giveaways to all the children—such as Bibles or small toys—but they don't always need to be. The promotion might be a large prize for the winner of a particular contest. Variety is very important—never use the same items over and over.
- **Prizes/Treats:** Offer prizes or small, edible treats each week. Award one treat to every child who follows the rules or brought back the previous week's (completed!) Take-Home Challenge. Set up a prize table in the back of your room and allow children to pick out their prizes at the appropriate times.
- **Point System:** Develop a point system for the entire group. Points can be earned for the team that wins a game, for the team with complete participation during praise, or the team being the quietest during the lesson. Each child who followed the rules or brought back his or her completed

Take-Home Challenge gets a designated number of points for the group. Ask the children to set a goal for how many points they need to earn to receive a reward and include their suggestions on what the reward should be. Take kids shopping with you to help select prizes—it will add to their excitement and ownership in ministry!

- **K.I.D.S. Church Cash:** Create a "K.I.D.S. Church Store" and allow children to earn K.I.D.S. Church Cash as a reward for good behavior, scripture memorization, etc. (K.I.D.S. Church Cash is provided on the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM.) Kids can save their cash for larger, "more expensive" items, or turn them in each week for smaller items.

Discipline Strategies

Below is a list of seven common techniques used in large group ministry settings to help prevent behavior problems.

1. Prepare. The best way to avoid discipline problems is to have a program that kids want to be involved in. If they don't want to be there, they will act up and misbehave just so they can leave. Your plan needs to be fast-paced and run with the speed and precision of a TV show. That takes preparation. Think ahead and decide who on your leadership team can handle the various lesson segments.

2. Build relationships. All inappropriate behavior has a root cause. Too often, we deal with the symptoms and not the cause. A child could have a problem caused by situations at home that manifests itself at church. In these cases, you won't know what the child is going through unless you know his situation. The best way to uncover the real source of the problem is to develop good relationships with the families in your ministry. As you develop a relationship with the kids and their families, you can work together with the parents to modify the child's behavior.

There are many ways to build relationships with the parents or family members of your children. These include home groups, outreaches, phone calls, notes or e-mail, and special events and activities for the whole family. Meeting and sharing with your kids outside of K.I.D.S. Church is vital. You

and your team can attend kid's sporting events or school programs. Consider regular or as-needed home visitation. These visits can help you understand a child and deal more effectively with problems by enlisting the parents' help.

3. Train and equip helpers. An untrained team can create distractions, while well-equipped helpers are your greatest assets. No one should stay on the sidelines—involve everyone. Help everyone know what their job is while the leader is ministering. The speaker should not have to try to keep order. The helpers' job is just as important as the speaker's job—they work hand in hand to keep the kids focused. Helpers can handle problems with the following techniques:

A. Start with eye contact, then proximity. If a child who is acting up sees a helper looking at him or her, or that helper moves closer, the problem behavior will often stop.

B. Voice contact is the next step. Helpers need to quietly remind the child to show respect during the lesson time and repeat the consequences the child will face for breaking the rules.

C. If a child does not respond to these measures, he needs to be removed from the group. Consider having a special chair in the back of your room where a child can talk and pray with a helper until he is ready to return to the group. Help kids know that when they go to that chair, they can get a new start before returning to their seat by asking God for forgiveness and for His help to do well for the rest of the service.

D. If the child still does not respond, take the child to his parents.

The key is to equip helpers to handle these situations without interrupting the leader. Establish a procedure for how you will handle disruptive children, including a way to involve parents, if necessary. Use positive language when disciplining children. For example, rather than calling it a "time-out" chair, which can have negative connotations, call it a "new start" chair, where kids can pray or just sit quietly. When ready, invite children to return to the group. Avoid having kids sit out for more than a few minutes.

Reinforce that you want them to be a part of the group again as soon as possible.

Helpers can learn to spot problems before they become problems. Great helpers are alert and aware of kids' actions—able to see the potential for a problem before it turns into one. For example, some children are great, until they sit with certain other children. Your team should know what child combinations are disruptive. The kids should be given one chance to sit together, but if they cannot behave, they need to be separated.

Your team should also be aware of any special needs the children may have. Children with mental or emotional disabilities may need extra attention to avoid disrupting your meetings. Parents can provide insight into the most successful ways to attend to their children's needs. Communicate regularly with the parents of these kids and be sensitive to know when help is needed and when independence will allow an opportunity for growth. Treat children with special needs with respect and courtesy and find ways include them at all times.

4. Clearly define your expectations and rules.

Communicate the rules and requirements to the kids up front and repeat them often! Keep rules simple. Phrase your rules in positive language, so that frequently stating them does not bring a negative feeling to your time together. Instead of "No talking unless you've been given permission," say, "We wait until we are called on before speaking." Be loving; be consistent; be firm. (Refer to the "Session Rules" heading on page 18.)

5. Use encouragement. Be positive! As the leader of a dynamic group of kids, you can be excited, even about the rules. Focus on the "Dos" more than the "Don'ts" and you will bring the best out of your kids. Reinforce good behavior with a reward. Give the children encouragement, praise or a prize if they behave.

A simple way is to have a weekly promotion, such as prizes given to the quietest kids. Make the prize something exciting for children who already attend and exciting enough to draw first-time visitors back again.

An idea for awarding prizes for quietness is to set up a "Quiet Seat System" with a team of "Quiet Seat Watchers." These watchers are responsible for

giving prizes to kids displaying proper behavior. The Quiet Seat Watchers should be instructed on what to look for and how to distribute the prizes.

6. Use correction. Reinforce good behavior by correcting children who misbehave. It is always preferable to use encouragement rather than correction. But there are times when correction is necessary, especially in large groups of children.

The same systems used for encouragement can also be used for correction by adding a twist—a penalty, such as a loss of the promotion or prize, if behavior is unacceptable. In smaller groups, correction can be done on an individual basis.

7. Keep your word! It's very important to follow through with all types of discipline. Kids can spot empty threats and promises fast! Rewards and consequences must be carried out as promised.

Recruiting Your Ministry Team

What can you do to attract helpers? Remember that people like to be a part of a success. Make sure that your ministry is promoted as being successful. In other words, “brag” on the highlights and miracles that you see, not on the problems and disappointments that you face. Encourage your helpers to do the same. Your current helpers are the biggest advertisement you have for attracting future helpers. Inspire them to share the good things in their ministry—and take every advantage you have to publicly praise them.

Keep your pastor familiar with your kids' ministry. Invite him to speak to the children on a regular basis. Present your pastor with awards and special presentations in the K.I.D.S. Church room. The more familiar your pastor is with the ministry, the more promotion your ministry will receive.

Consider a special service where you do your regular K.I.D.S. Church program with the adults. Let them see firsthand what a KIDS Church service is like. They will be much more willing to volunteer if they are familiar with the program.

Involve children in recruiting your ministry team. Invite them to help you make announcements, and

include their pictures and testimonies in materials used for recruiting. Consider a video presentation with music that highlights areas to serve in children's ministry, and includes children from your church sharing about their leaders and what they've learned in K.I.D.S. Church.

Find ways to appreciate the members of your ministry team on an on-going basis. Hearing your words of appreciation is a great place to start. Phone calls, notes and thoughtful gifts and treats tell them you are thinking of them and value their contribution to the ministry. Plan appreciation luncheons or dinners to honor them as a group.

Recognize your volunteers in front of the congregation. Include encouraging testimonies and praise reports in your weekly bulletin about how things are going in K.I.D.S. Church. When asking for volunteers in the church bulletin or announcement time in the adult service, don't use pleas that make you seem desperate and needy. If you positively promote K.I.D.S. Church, people will want to be involved!

Be sensitive to how much time volunteers feel they can commit and what the length of their commitment will be. Offer rotating schedules if needed (helpers rotate which weeks they serve, rather than serving every week). False expectations on your part can lead to frustration and resentment. Pray, share your vision, and inspire commitment to the ministry by your own joy and commitment. Then let the Holy Spirit speak to people about making their own commitment.

Even when your expectations are realistic, they can still frustrate your volunteers if they are not clearly communicated. Develop written job descriptions for each position on your leadership team. Outline specific responsibilities and time requirements. List any and all extra meetings they will be required to attend.

Offer flexibility and understanding when determining how and when they will participate. But once you've agreed on their level of participation, don't apologize for expecting them to show up at the agreed time, prepared to handle their portion of the ministry.

Training Techniques

Offer volunteer training classes. You may want to consider monthly or quarterly meetings to cover communication of vision and curriculum training, as well as church policies and procedures for safety and discipline issues.

Hands-on experience is a great way to train. “Break in” new help by letting them observe the program for a week or two. Then let them start out slowly. Perhaps they can begin as door monitors or “Quiet Seat Watchers.” Don’t rush a person onto the platform before he or she is ready.

When a helper is ready to begin platform ministry, again start them with something simple—setting up the games, helping with a puppet skit or live drama, etc. Work them into a speaking role as God leads.

Take time to talk with new team members individually about how they are doing. Affirm them in the areas they did well and instruct on how they can improve. Everyone makes little mistakes or blunders, and when they are noticed and commented on by someone else, they can be fixed before they turn into bad teaching habits.

Everyone needs encouragement in what they are doing! A few minutes of one-on-one time with a volunteer before or after a service, or perhaps a phone call or an occasional visit over a cup of coffee, can be more effective and time-efficient than planning and hosting frequent training meetings.

Seven Things Every K.I.D.S. Church Leader Should Know

1. Focus on what the kids are getting out of the presentation, not how you present it. In education, there’s an expression that “you haven’t taught until the student has learned.” That principle applies to children’s ministry as well. It’s not about how well you presented the material; it’s about what your kids were able to understand and apply to their lives.

2. Be willing to let the Holy Spirit lead and change your plans. He knows your kids better than you do! These materials are provided to give you the best framework for your ministry time, but be

flexible enough to take those “divine detours” that the Holy Spirit will use to breathe life and truth into your kids.

3. Look for ways to involve kids in ministry. Encourage their involvement in every aspect of K.I.D.S. Church—after all, it’s their ministry!

4. Expect the Holy Spirit to move. Your faith will never rise higher than your level of expectation. Don’t settle for kids leaving your services unchanged. Ask God for His vision and plan for your children’s ministry. Make room in your service for God to speak to the kids and for ministry to happen.

5. Challenge kids to apply what they learn in their everyday lives. Allow a time for decision at the end of every service, so kids can respond to the lesson in a personal way. Encourage them to tell someone else what they sense God is speaking to them about the lesson. Offer testimony times and incentives for those who have completed Take-Home Challenges.

6. Be a living example of a worship-filled life. Be real. Display heartfelt expressions during praise and worship times. When sharing with the kids, use stories from your own life. Keep the details age-appropriate, but don’t sugarcoat them—be willing to be transparent and honest about mistakes or bad attitudes you’ve had and how God changed you. Participate in the activities, games and Take-Home Challenges. Let the kids see you living out what you teach.

7. Have lots of energy! You cannot give what you don’t have. Make your own time with God a priority. Allow Him to fill you up and overflow into the lives of the kids. Regardless of your title (or lack of one), if you minister to children, you are a pastor. Kids will receive more from you than the words you say. Keep your spirit in tune with the Holy Spirit and allow Him to flow through you to change the lives of the children in your ministry.

Part 3

How to Lead a DiscipleMakers Service

If you are new to the format of K.I.D.S. Church, it's important that you and your team take time to familiarize yourself with the lesson segments. Consider a training session in which you will conduct a complete K.I.D.S. Church service for your helpers, prior to holding a service for your kids. It will put a vision in front of your team and you'll be better prepared for the first actual service. Teams are designed to allow everyone to contribute to the ministry.

As you read the following instructions, compare them to actual lesson segments so you can better understand how a K.I.D.S. Church service should flow.

K.I.D.S. Church lessons are designed to provide exciting times of fun, praise, and powerful teaching of biblical principles. These lessons teach subjects that are relevant to issues kids deal with every day. Set the tone of excitement even before the first child arrives. Large groups may need to open the doors and start seating kids about 20 minutes before the service starts. Smaller groups may not need as much time. Either way, be ready to go and establish the tone of the service as soon as the children enter, rather than having to regain their attention before you get started.

Play upbeat music while the children are coming in. Show a music video or praise song from the *Bible & Praise* DVD and make sure every child gets a name tag. Customizable name tags are available on your *Leader Resources* CD-ROM. Be present on the platform, and use this time to greet the children and to encourage the helpers. Welcome the children by name and make sure that new children feel welcomed and are introduced to the group. Ask your helpers to greet every child before the service starts.

Fill your chairs from the front to the back. Have helpers direct the children to seats, to establish them as leaders in a non-confrontational way.

Welcome/ Opening the Service

Always start your service on time! Take the first few moments to capture everyone's attention. Begin on a high note that involves the entire group. Play "Simon Says," do a countdown from 10, try a JESUS cheer (Gimme a "J"...) or introduce yourself and ask the kids to shout their names to you (simultaneously!) so you can meet them, too!

This is a great time to recognize visitors. Give each visitor a Visitor's Packet or card. Ask an older child or adult helper to help visitors fill out their cards. Ask them to put the cards in the offering container later in the service. Have all the regulars at K.I.D.S. Church to give a great, big welcoming hand to all the visitors. Take a moment to introduce your entire team of helpers. Be creative and make this a time to really connect with the kids. One idea is to introduce leaders like a football team and have them run into the room. Make up funny nicknames and facts about each leader.

Open your service with prayer. Invite God's presence and blessing on the service, in a manner keeping with a high-energy opening. Shout, bow, place hands on hearts, declare God's worth in unison, or have the kids echo your prayer. Avoid getting into a rut, and be real. This is a perfect opportunity to get one of the kids involved in leading. For children who are new to praying in front of others, whisper words in their ears to repeat, if needed.

Session Rules

Always review the rules at the beginning of each service. It helps visitors and reminds regulars what is expected of them. Don't allow repeated chances to obey rules. Expect the kids to be well-behaved, and they will be.

Post the rules in a highly visible spot. Keep them short and easy to remember. Rules that form an acronym (W.I.N.) can be fun and easy to remember. Here are a few examples:

W.I.N.

We only use righteous rap.
Interruption is uncool.
Never leave your seat.

G.O.D.

Give the speaker your attention.
Only use righteous rap.
Don't be a space invader. (Keep your hands and feet to yourself.)

F.U.N.

Follow the rules.
Understand we're here to have fun.
Never leave your seat.

Game & Lesson Review

Review time is combined with games. Have fun at church and review the previous week's lesson at the same time! Your kids will be motivated to pay attention and will retain what they've learned from week to week. Simple questions are provided in the manual for each game. Invite the kids who answer correctly to come forward to play the game. Here are some quick tips to help you make the most of your game time:

- If you have a smaller group of children, adapt the games to include all your kids.
- Be sensitive to include new children.
- If you have a longer service time, repeat some favorite games from other weeks.
- Use upbeat music during the games to create an exciting environment. Use music as a signal when to start and stop games.
- Encourage strong team involvement with cheering. Get the teams excited before the game.
- Allow the kids to expend excess energy during this time; then they will be better equipped to sit still and listen during the teaching time.
- Remember, kids love wackiness!

Praise & Worship

One of the primary purposes in coming together with the kids is to encourage their participation in praise and worship. Play songs that are fast and that require active participation. This is a great time to let children use up some of the extra energy they have. Repeat songs that appeal to your group's style and be open to introducing new songs as well.

Plan to have praise and worship at the beginning of your service, but be sensitive and experiment with other times as the Holy Spirit leads you. You may want to begin with faster praise songs that lead into worship, or you may want to split into two sections, one for praise and another for worship. Some children may find it difficult to make a quick transition from the fast action songs to the slower worship songs. Worship songs are ideal for the conclusion and prayer time at the end of the lesson. Another idea that works well is to conduct an object lesson between the fast and slow songs.

Teach the kids how to worship God. Don't just turn on the music and expect your kids to immediately worship. Lead them to do hand motions, express God's worth, and teach them ways the Bible says we can worship God (lifting of hands, clapping, singing, shouting, kneeling, bowing, dancing, etc.). Instruct as you go. Teach them the difference between screaming and shouting. Most of all, teach them about honoring God's presence. There is a time to be wild and crazy, but there is also a time to be respectful and reverent.

It is important to have all of the children participate. Encourage, but don't force them to get involved. If things don't seem to be going the right direction, don't hesitate to stop and focus for a few moments on the wonderful things God has given. This is a great time to ask for a few short praise reports. Then begin praising God for the great things He has done.

Always display the song lyrics so that everyone can easily participate and feel like they are a part of the service. All songs on the *Bible & Praise* DVD include lyrics on screen.

It's ideal to have a live praise and worship band. If you use the recorded music provided in DiscipleMakers, recruit a group of kids to serve

as the Praise and Worship Team to lead singing. Invite eager kids to come forward and assist with hand motions or dancing on a weekly basis.

Announcements & Offering

Several Microsoft® PowerPoint® slides for K.I.D.S. Church announcements can be found on the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM. Save it to your computer's hard drive and use PowerPoint® to edit and display your newly-customized announcements. The following is a suggested list of weekly announcements:

- Invite a helper to read the names of children who have birthdays this week. You may want to ask them to come forward and then sing "Happy Birthday" to them.
- Promote the lesson theme for next week.
- Remind kids to bring their Bibles each week.
- Invite a K.I.D.S. Church child helper to announce the schedule and any special events.
- Prepare the kids for teaching time by reviewing the rules.

During your announcement time, ask for testimonies from kids who have completed the previous week's Take-Home Challenge. Choose at least one child from each Take-Home Challenge age group (6–7, 8–10 and 11–12) to share what they experienced when applying the lesson at home.

Giving is an important part of any adult service. It is equally important to teach children the principles of giving to the Lord—not just money, but also time, talents and abilities. Designate several boys and girls to act as ushers and collect the offering. While collecting the offering, explain to kids what the offering is used for (special projects, missionaries your church supports, etc.).

Lesson Introduction

The lesson introduction sets the pace for what is to follow. Make it an "attention-getter" that captures the kids' interest. Make it interactive to creatively involve the kids. Whether it is a skit, a question or a simple object lesson, the purpose of the introduction is to draw special attention to the time of teaching. It is an invitation for the children to become excited about the message.

It is essential that you don't try to communicate too many different concepts. Be direct—get straight to the lesson Power Point during your introduction. Everything else created for your lesson is designed to help you reinforce the main focus, the lesson Power Point, in as many applicable, understandable ways as possible.

Scripture Memory

Each lesson includes a Scripture Memory Verse and a creative approach to teaching it. DiscipleMakers accomplishes three things through this activity:

- **Practice It!** Kids verbally practice saying the verse in a creative way to ensure memorization. This could be a song, a rap, a game to put the words in order, etc.
- **Understand It!** Kids hear an explanation about the meaning of the verse and how it relates to the lesson Power Point. Words and ideas of the verse are broken down to the kids' level.
- **Live It!** Kids are given the challenge and opportunity to personalize the verse through declaration, or to apply it to their lives during the week.

Always show the Scripture Memory Verse visually, whether on transparencies or in the PowerPoint® available on the *Leader Resources* CD-ROM. If the Scripture Memory Verse is going to be taught as a game, song or something funny, do the "Practice It!" part earlier in your service, so as not to interrupt the flow once you've reached the quieter portions of your service. It's good to have a Scripture Memory Verse review at the end of each unit.

Bible Lesson

The Bible Lesson has two parts—a visual element introduction, and a Bible story segment. The visual element is presented in one of two ways, depending on the lesson:

- **Bible Connection DVD video clip**—Brief (3-5 minute) clips that illustrate the Bible story and Power Point. The videos are designed to connect to a kid's world using funny, fantastic or serious situations, and tying them to the lesson. Kids will see how God's Word can apply in everyday life.
- **Acting God's Word Puppet and Drama**—Skits to introduce the Bible story. Creative characters add a special dimension to the puppet and drama presentations. The scripts can be used in puppet ministry and are also adaptable for live drama teams. If you use the audio skits, you will not need to rehearse voices, but you will want to rehearse the puppet show with the soundtrack at least once. Consider using older kids to participate on your puppet team or to play parts in live dramas. Plan their costumes and appearances for a more effective presentation. In order to present this portion of the service effectively, it's important to know the material and practice all skits and dramas.

After the visual element, the Bible story is presented in a creative way. Show kids where the story is found in the Bible. Kids are encouraged to bring and use their Bibles in K.I.D.S. Church. Have extras on hand for those who need a Bible. Communicate the importance of being familiar with the Bibles by teaching the lesson from your own personal Bible (place lesson notes inside the pages of your Bible as needed). Look up specific chapters and verses as you teach the lesson and read straight from your Bible, or invite kids to read portions of the text. Encourage new and non-readers in your group to sit next to older kids so they can easily follow along.

Remember that you are not teaching lessons; you are teaching people! Make the Bible lesson come alive! Your goal is to help the kids learn that the Word of God really does apply to their lives and that it makes sense. Variety is important. Try presenting the lesson with shadow plays, interviews, mimes, etc. A fun way to do the skit is to invite some kids

to play the actors. As you tell the lesson, the kids will mimic the character's words after you say them. In fact, this approach is so much fun, you may want to do it over and over!

Here are some additional ways to present the Bible lesson:

- As the leader reads the Bible passage, the kids look up the passage in their Bibles and read along.
- The leader reads some of the passage, but invites volunteers to read specific verses.
- Each child reads a different verse from the passage.

You decide what is best for your group, but be sure to keep the creativity flowing and mix it up!

Object Lessons

Object lessons are great because they take abstract spiritual truths and make them concrete and visual. Kids at this age learn best with concrete rather than abstract concepts. Whenever possible, use a visual while you are speaking. The purpose of an object lesson is to support and illustrate the Bible lesson and the lesson Power Point. The props are chosen to give this lesson segment a strong visual dimension, and they should be in place well before the service. Use common, household objects that kids will be familiar with. The person teaching the object lesson should rehearse so that the presentation is effective. The message must come from their head and heart, so should not be read from the curriculum. These object lessons will help you effectively illustrate truth from God's Word.

Today's Life Story

The Bible lesson segment gives the scriptural foundation; the object lesson segment supports the Word; the Today's Life Story segment provides the practical application. The key is to verbalize the application as you tell or present the story. As the action unfolds, draw the kids into the story and tell them how it relates to their world. This is a critical point: Do not tell the story, then make the application. Make the application as you tell the story.

There is no need for additional teaching after the story—the point has been made!

It is best to deliver the Today's Life Story from your heart, rather than read it. If you take time to prepare simple notes, you'll be able to relate the story line effectively and hold the kids' interest. Use the illustrations, either on transparencies or with PowerPoint® (see *Leader Resources* CD-ROM on page 10). Raise and lower your voice, get excited, show emotion, whisper and use different voices for the characters. All of these things will help hold the interest of the kids and get them involved in the story. You may even want to have several volunteers work together to tell the story; invite some to do the voices while others provide sound effects. Bring your message to a climax and then bring the kids to a point of decision during your closing prayer and ministry time.

Here are a few ideas to help you effectively deliver Today's Life Stories:

- Review the story several times and make notes on the main points. Indented paragraphs (indicated by ► symbol) tell the story portion of the Today's Life Story.
- Non-indented paragraphs give suggested life application statements that tie the story to the Power Point.
- Be a “story-teller” rather than a “story-reader.” Tell it with passion and be animated!
- Experiment with the use of background music as you tell the story. Try instrumental movie soundtracks or a keyboard player who follows you with appropriate sound effects as you tell the story.

Closing Prayer

Kids have heard the lesson; now it is time for them to respond to what has been taught. Don't rush this important time of ministry. Allow time for the Holy Spirit to convict and draw kids to decision and commitment. The closing prayers provided in the lessons are only a guide. Pray and plan for this time with your team. Ask and believe that God will work in and through your kids and ministry team during your services.

Always invite the kids to respond to the message in some way. Lead them into a time with God, where they can confess their sins, ask for strength in a given area and listen to the voice of the Lord speaking to them.

It may be that children will want to come forward for prayer. There's something powerful about coming to God in a physical way. Allow time for children to process what they've heard and respond—especially if they are ready to invite Jesus into their lives. Invite children to respond to Jesus as the Holy Spirit leads.

Small Group Lesson

At the conclusion of the large-group lesson, divide children into one of three elementary-age groups: ages 6-7, ages 8-10, ages 11-12. Each age-group leader will guide children through the activities in the *God Encounters Small Group Lessons* manual. For information on leading the small group lesson time, see the *God Encounters Small Group Lessons* manual.

Prayer Ministry Time

If you are not using the small-group lessons, the large-group lesson should conclude with a time of reflection and commitment. You may consider beginning slow instrumental music at the conclusion of the Today's Life Story and continue into the prayer ministry time. Allow time each week for children to experience the presence of the Lord.

Encourage children on your praise and worship team to provide leadership during worship. If you do not have a team, invite children who demonstrate a desire to worship to join together as an impromptu team in front of the group.

You may want to build a time of prayer into your service to address the specific needs of the children. As the time of worship ends, you can:

- Invite kids to come forward for prayer. Enlist helpers to pray with these children.
- Invite kids to raise their hands for prayer and have children around them gently lay hands on

them and pray. This gives kids an opportunity to minister to their friends. It's a good idea to allow time for the kids to share what happens after the prayer is offered. These testimonies will build faith as kids have the chance to verbalize how God is speaking to them or ministering to them in a particular way.

- Train volunteers to become prayer partners or be part of a kids' prayer team.
- Form small prayer circles with an adult helper joining each group.

The Main Event! Volume Review

The last lesson in each volume is a game day review, "The Main Event!" This special lesson modifies the regular large and small-group activities. This review lesson combines three rounds of questions about the *Relating to God* Units—Prayer, The Word, Worship—along with fun, active games. At the end of Unit 3, Worship, kids will be given questions from the three units about they have learned (see pages 157-159), and be encouraged to review them for the big game day! (See Lesson 13 • The Main Event!, beginning on page 153).