

The Important Question

These Children's Materials are inspired by John Wesley's sermon. The intention is for both adults and children to be studying similar Bible materials at the same time, to facilitate family discussion. These suggested materials are therefore meant to help plan the children's programme of inter-generational connect groups.

You can use these materials to plan a children's programme of 50-60 mins (excluding worship, prayer etc). The basic components are as follows –

Bible Story/ Stories

Discussion

Activities/ Games

It is important for all facilitators to pray and prepare before the 'lesson' proper. The 'lesson' is only the beginning. May you continue to walk with the children, especially your own, over these materials after the 'lesson'.

SUMMARY

For the children to understand what it means to get everything they want but end up losing themselves.

GOALS FOR CHILDREN

1. Think of giving up everything they want to God, and to have God as well as His presence with them.
2. Learn delayed gratification (to wait).
3. Learn to love God and others (7-12yo).

The Important Question

A. Bible Story

Use the children's personal Bible to share the Bible verse. Matthew 16:24-26

Then Jesus said to his followers, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must say 'no' to the things he wants. He must be willing even to die on a cross, and he must follow me. Whoever wants to save his life will give up true life. And whoever gives up his life for me will have true life. **It is worth nothing for a man to have the whole world if he loses his soul. He could never pay enough to buy back his soul.**" (International Children's Bible)

Then Jesus went to work on his disciples. "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. **What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?**" (The Message)

- It is suggested to use the International Children's Bible for 4-6yo and The Message for 7-12yo.
- Get the children, especially the primary school children (7-12yo), to commit **Matthew 16:26** to memory, using one of the versions suggested above.

B. Discussion

Suggested Discussion Questions	4-6yo	7-9yo	10-12yo
What are the things that you want?	√	√	√
What does it mean to have the whole world or get everything you want?		√	√
What does it mean to lose your soul or lose yourself?		√	√

- For 4-6yo, world/ "everything you want" can be built on the answers given to the question 'What are the things that you want?' and can be further expanded to include toys, books, gifts, time to watch youtube etc.
- For 7-9yo, world/ "everything you want" can be built on the answers given to the question "What are the things that you want?" and can be further expanded to include handphones, good grades, freedom, more time on youtube, more time on games and the secondary school of choice etc.
- Losing your soul or losing yourself can be explained as losing the love of God, joy in the Holy Spirit, peace of God, inheritance of God's kingdom that was prepared for those who believe in Him. Inheritance of God's kingdom is to be with God forever.
- End with the question, do you want to have everything you want but lose yourself or have yourself but lose everything you want? Allow the children to ponder the question; a response is not required.

C. Activities/ Games

Materials Needed

- Colouring and writing materials including crayons, marker, pencils, pens and paper
- Appendix 1.1 (Picture of circles) and 1.2 (Worksheet on loving God and loving others)

Before the start of the activity, ask the children if they have thought through the question asked above: Do you want to everything you want but lose yourself vs do you want to have yourself but lose everything you want? If you answer 'yes', proceed to the activity. If some answer 'no', explain with sympathy that it is not easy to give up things they want; then go ahead with the activity. After the activity, ask again if they have thought through the question.

For 4-6yo

- Draw a cross that occupy the whole piece of A4 paper and give one to each child to colour using crayons or markers.
- Ask the children to use light colours to colour the cross so that later when drawing or writing on the coloured cross, drawings and writings can be seen.
- After colouring is done, get the children to draw or write on the cross things that they want. *For the younger children, adult's help may be needed to draw and write the things they want.*
- Explain as they write or draw the things they want on the cross that it is as if they are giving the things to God. In return, they will experience love, joy and peace of God.

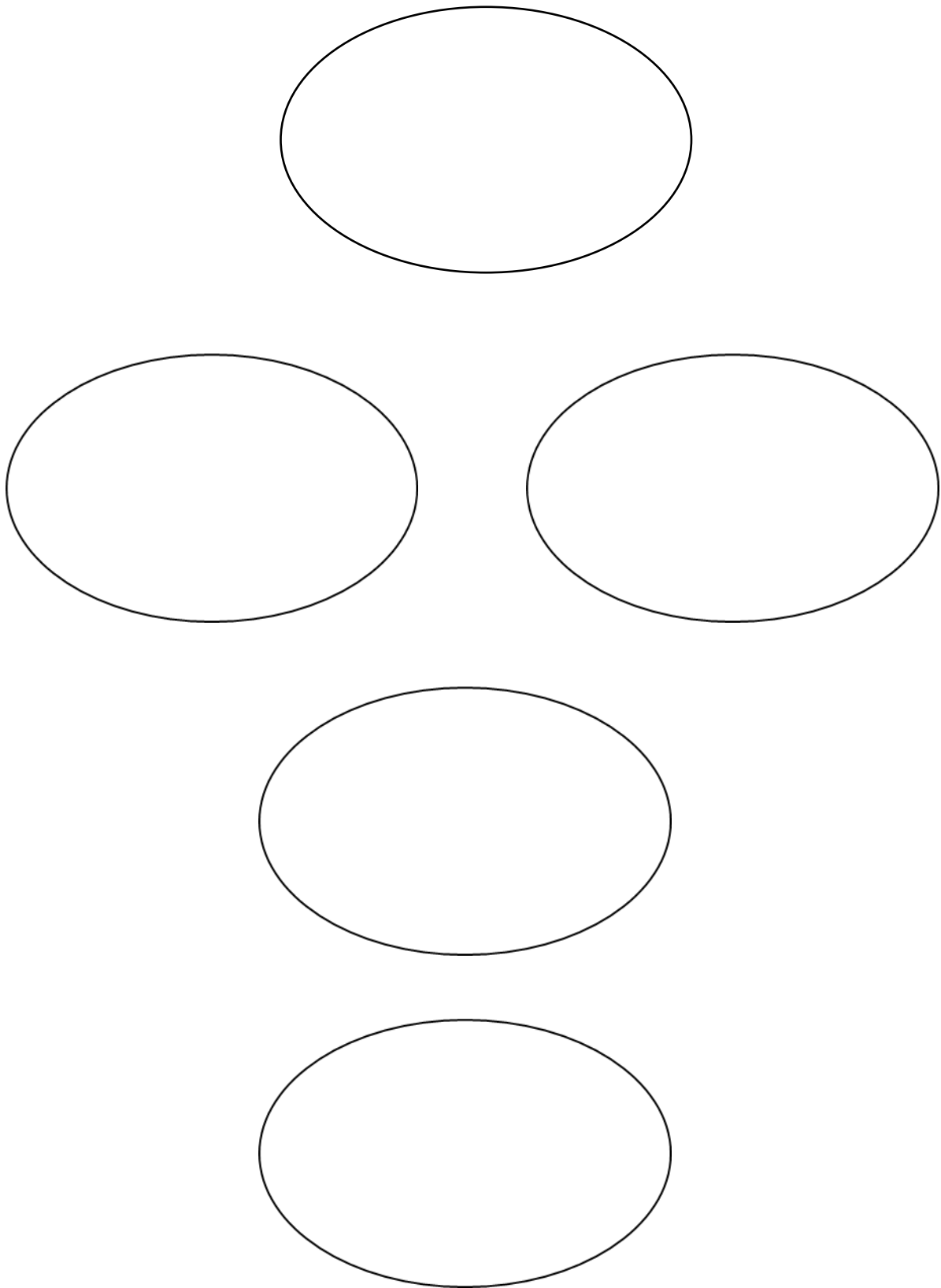
For 7-12yo

- Write or draw the things that they want in the circles on appendix 1.1.
- After completion, draw a big cross on top of the circles.
- Explain to the children that it is as if they are giving the things that they want to God in exchange for their soul or themselves. This means they may not have the things they want but they will have the love of God, the joy of Holy Spirit, the peace of God and be with God forever.
- Ask the children, especially those who have said 'no' or who have been hesitant to say 'yes' when asked about having themselves and giving up everything they want, how they feel after the activity.
- Affirm any emotions that the children feel, especially if it is difficult. If appropriate, take the opportunity to share a personal experience about giving something to God that you wanted. Try to use simple age-appropriate language especially when sharing with younger children 4-6yo.
- Challenge the children to choose to give to God this week one thing that they want. For 4-6yo, it can be done for a day, for 7-9yo it can be for 3 days and for 10-12yo it can be for a week. Use the time as a guide according to the maturity of the children. Get each child to tell his or her parents what he or she wants to give to God this week, and the time frame that he or she is giving it to God for. The parents can in turn keep a check on the child, encourage and affirm the child when it is done. This is for the children to practise delayed gratification (to wait) which helps in their spiritual growth.
- Pray that God will help each child to give things he or she wants to God so that he or she may have God and His presence with him or her.

Extra activity sheet for 7-12yo

- Appendix 1.2 may be used for older children to further understand- beside giving God what they want in exchange for their soul or themselves- what it means to love God and love others.
- *For 7-8yo, help may be needed to complete the worksheet.*
- Pray that God will help each child to love Him and love others around him or her.

Appendix 1.1 Picture of circles



Appendix 1.2 Worksheet on loving God and loving others

What actions show that you love God? Write or draw 3 things.

1.

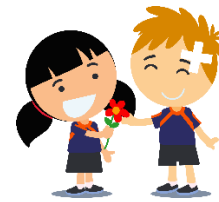
2.

3.

How can you show love to others? Circle the loving actions. Write or draw 2 ways of showing love to others.



Helping an elderly



Caring for an injured friend



Bullying a friend

<http://www.clker.com/cliparts/4/d/0/9/1516507551944315051free-clipart-children-helping-each-other.med.png>https://www.kindpng.com/imgv/iiTIRT_kindness-clipart-kind-student-children-showing-kindness-clip/<https://pngtree.com/element/download?id=NTQ3NzQzNw==&type=1&time=1684894703&token=ZmMzYjIzNTk4ODRIYjIzYWM5ZjY3MWFmZGQxNWEyZjk=>

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