

KIDS CURRICULUM

RED LETTER

CHALLENGE

A 40 DAY LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE

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To Children's Ministry Director:

There are so many variations that you'll find in kid's ministry: location, space, ages, and length of time are just some of the many different ways that make a Sunday morning experience unique for each church.

We didn't want to create a kid's ministry that would fit only one style or type of kid's Sunday program. So we created the flexible model option so that you are able to pick and choose what types of activities would work for your ministry.

We encourage you to use the following format:

Warm-up, Observation, Interpretation, Application

What this will allow you to do is have a skeleton to work with. If you already have a flow you use that the kids are familiar and comfortable with, feel free to modify what we have provided to keep the model that works for you.

Please also keep in mind that this program is geared towards a large age span: from kindergarten through 5th grade. Teachers will need to consider their age group as they are choosing their activities and modify content as needed.

The first half of the program is the same every week. There will be a warm-up activity as well as a scripted lesson that can be used in a variety of ways: but the content will not change.

Warm-up (Learning readiness)

Observation (What happened? What does it say?) This is the script or teaching time every week. This is where kids will be hearing and watching the main teaching of the day. Feel free to use actors, puppets, or even an older kid volunteer to do this teaching time.

The second half of the program is where options will be provided. Every lesson will have six different activities to choose from. We would love for you to read through them and pick and choose the activities that will best suite you. These activities will be one or both of the following:

Interpretation (What does it mean?)

Application (What does it mean to me?)

A weekly handout will be provided for parents: this handout will cover what we did that week and also any announcement about the future week and challenges for them to do during the week.

One idea you may want to do is to keep a "Challenge Chart" in the front throughout the 40 days. Get some red dot stickers and every time someone completes a challenge that week they can put a red sticker up. See how many red stickers you can get, maybe try to increase it every week! This is for fun and to create a measureable and visual way for kids to see the challenge in action!



Watch for the red dot lesson! These are the recommended activity for the day.

WEEK 1

INTRODUCTION TO RED LETTER CHALLENGER

Theme

Introducing the five principles of RLC: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, Going

Memory Verse

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. Matthew 7:24

Bible Verses

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." Matthew 7:24-27

Big Idea

Why are the red letters of Jesus important?

Goals

- ➡ Memorizing BFSGG.
- ➡ Learn what the 5 principles are.
- ➡ Describe how to use the RLC Kids workbook.
- ➡ Teach what the RED LETTERS is from.

WARM-UP

The Mirror Game (Mirroring Jesus, mirroring activity)

What you need

Nothing

What you do

Pair up the kids two by two and have them line up. Assign one side as A and the other as B. Tell the A that they are looking in the mirror. You can pick a scenario like you are getting ready at bedtime or you are dressing up to go out. Have them switch after a minute or so.

Start again with As but this time tell them that they are talking to themselves in the mirror as Bs follow. Again let them switch and then try it with no leader and no follower. Then tell them that neither is the leader or follower.

What you say

Remember to move VERY slowly. B is the mirror and must follow A so closely that someone watching would not be able to tell who is leading and who is following. Remember to mirror not only their arms and body but also watch their faces!

Optional

Have a pair come up to the front of the room and see if the group can guess who the leader is and who the follower is. If they follow each other well enough, it may be tough to tell!

OBSERVATION

In this skit Red will be introduced as well as the five themes or words of the Red Letter Challenge.

Prep

Supplies: Bible

For the next six weeks you will need an extra volunteer or teacher who will play 'Red', our Red Letter Challenge character. He will be a part of the observation every week. There are many ways to have Red as part of your program: he can be another actor who is dressed in Red, he can be a dog or a bear with a red bandanna on or a red t-shirt on, he can be a stuffed animal or a puppet who will be Red. Make sure there is some way to distinguish the color on him: clothing, face paint, hat, or a bandanna.

Feel free to insert the name of whoever will be acting as Teacher for the week: so instead of always saying 'Teacher', you can say "Mr. Jim".

Optional

Make 5 large letters B, F, S, G and G and use them like letters at pep rally. This will create a visual and help them memorize the words faster!

Teacher: Hey guys! Welcome! We are excited to have you here!

Red is copying everything that Teacher is saying. Finally, Teacher stops.

Teacher: Um, Red? Red? Right now we are here and going to tell the kids something really awesome...wanna help?

Red keeps copying.

Teacher stops and gets frustrated.

Teacher: I'm a goofball.

Red: I'm a goofball.

Teacher: Ha ha! You said you were a goofball!

Red: Ha ha, you said you were a goofball!

Teacher stops talking and waits. Red also pauses, then tries to get the teacher to talk. Teacher won't.

Red: Well fine! You asked if I wanted to help: I was helping! You said today is all about copying! I'm copying!

Teacher: I didn't mean ME!!! I was talking about copying someone else! This person is incredible! He is exactly the kind of person you would want to copy.

Red: Oh! I know who it is!

Teacher: OK! Tell the kids who it is!

Red: It's Mr. Incredible!

Teacher: Nope, it's not.

Red: Yes it is! I want to copy him soooo bad!

Teacher: I would love to be Mr. Incredible for the day: but this is even better.

Red: Better than Mr. Incredible?!!

Teacher: Yep. Better. Wanna know who it is?

Red: WHO???

Teacher: That person is Jesus! When you copy someone else you have to see how they talk, how they act, what they do, and what they say to do. One way we can see how to copy Jesus would be to look at the Bible.

Red: Really? The Bible tells us how to copy Jesus?

Teacher: In the Bible the words of Jesus are written in a very special way. They are written in red ink when everything else is written in black. So there is no guessing there! Following is not always easy, like we learned in the mirror game. But Jesus calls everyone from the tiniest baby to the oldest grandparent to follow Him.

Red: OK! I'm all in! I want to copy Jesus and all that he does!

Teacher: Following Jesus is the greatest opportunity we will ever have!

Red runs and gets his Bible and opens to Genesis 1:1.

Red: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Wait a minute, I can't do that! That's way too hard! I can't copy Jesus!

Teacher: We don't need to do everything Jesus did, we can't. But Jesus did tell us some things that we can do.

Red: Ok I'm ready! What are they? I'm going to do them right now! Tell me!

Teacher: Are you sure you are ready?

(Build suspense.)

Red: Yeah, yeah, yeah I'm ready.

Teacher: Ok: Here we go. It is (drum roll....) Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going.

Red goes to take a step and stops short.

Red: Wait what? I don't get it! How do I 'being'? Like a bee? Buzz around like a bee?

Red starts acting like a bee.

Teacher: No, no! Not BEE-ing. BEING. Being with Jesus.

Red: Oh boy this is going to be harder than I thought.

Teacher: It will not always be easy to follow Jesus. But it will be worth it! And when we copy Jesus we are showing others who Jesus is! How cool is that?

Red: That's pretty cool...but I still don't really get it. I have already forgotten what those 5 words even are!

Red puts up his hands in despair.

Teacher: Red wait! I think I can help. Boys and girls, will you help me teach Red the 5 words? Really!?! Awesome! Ok, are you ready?

The first word is BEING. Place your hands over each other in the center of your chest.

FORGIVING: Place hands out like a cross.

SERVING: Take a servant stance: Do the TEBOW stance.

GIVING: Sweep arms out with open hands.

GOING: Walk or run in place.

Spend as much time as you need practicing these different motions. Mix them up, try to trick the kids.

Red is slowly catching on: but he still doesn't quite have it yet.

Teacher: You guys did awesome! Red, do you think you know the 5 words now?

Red tries but struggles and gets them mixed up.

Red: I still don't really get how to do all of these.

Teacher: In the next 5 weeks we are going to be taking one word at a time and really learn what they mean and how we can do it! This is what Jesus' life is all about, and when we do these five words, we are copying Jesus. I have a song about how important it is to build our life on a firm foundation of Christ.

Let's sing!

The wise man built his house upon the rock,
The wise man built his house upon the rock,
The wise man built his house upon the rock,
And the rains came tumbling down!

The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
And the house on the rock stood firm.

The foolish man built his house upon the sand,
The foolish man built his house upon the sand,
The foolish man built his house upon the sand,
And the rains came tumbling down!

The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
And the house on the sand went SPLAT!

So build your house on the Lord Jesus Christ,
So build your house on the Lord Jesus Christ,
Build your house on the Lord Jesus Christ
and the Blessings will come down.

The blessings will come down as your prayers go up,
The blessings will come down as your prayers go up,
The blessings will come down as your prayers go up,
So build your house on the Lord!

Red: That was fun! I'm so excited to find out more about doing these red letters.

Teacher: Thanks for learning with us today kids! Bye!

INTERPRETATION / APPLICATION

Activity 1: Telling a Story (comic strip).

Ages: 3rd - 5th grade

What you need

Paper, markers, pencils or crayons

What you do

What you do: Invite the kids to draw three or five squares and tell a story of how they can show Jesus to others in those squares. Share with the group what they drew.

What you say

What story do our lives tell? When someone looks at your life they can see a story. We can show people who Jesus is by the stories that our lives tell.

Activity 2: Build on a Firm Foundation

Ages: K - 3rd grade

What you need

Building blocks, different kinds of bases to build on: a blanket, a firm surface, a pillow, something bumpy, something slanted.

Optional: Find a kid's book that tells the story of Matthew 7:24-27: the two men who built on a rock and sand.

What you do

Have the kids get into small groups of 3-4. Give them the blocks and the different surfaces. Have them try and build on the bumpy or soft surfaces first. See how high they can get. Then see how it compares to the hard and firm surface.

What you say

The Red Letter Challenge is important because Jesus says that if we take His words and put them into practice that we will be like a man who built his house on a rock. Let's read the story together and learn how important it is to put Jesus' words into practice.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” Matthew 7:24-27

It was easier to build on a firm surface than a soft surface. Jesus is our solid foundation, and when we build our lives on Him our hope and faith will stay strong on Him.

Activity 3: Aim at the Right Target

Ages: 3rd - 5th grade

What you need

Nerf guns and five different targets.

What you do

Have the children take turns hitting the targets taped to the wall with their Nerf guns. The catch is that they don't know what target they are supposed to be aiming at, you will switch it every time. Then tell them exactly which target to aim for. Explain how much easier it is to shoot when you know what you are aiming for.

What you say

In the 2004 Athens Olympics there was a sharpshooter named Matthew Emmons. Matthew Emmons was far and away the best shooter in the world. Some said he is the best shooter that's ever lived. That year the question was not who is going to win the gold, but who would take the silver and the bronze. Everyone knew Matt Emmons was going to take home the gold.

Rifle shooters are trained to fire between heartbeats. They try to slow their heartbeat down as much as possible and fire in between those beats per minute. Medals are literally won by millimeters. Going into his final shot, Emmons was in first place by a mile and all he needed to do to win the gold was hit the target, which for many of us in this room wouldn't be a problem, for the greatest shooter in the world, piece of cake! It's a sport where top competitors are expected to be so accurate that we have a hard time believing they could actually miss.

With one bullet left to shoot, Matt Emmons needed a score of 7.2 to win his second gold medal of the Olympic Games. On his first nine shots in the finals, Emmons' lowest score was a 9.3. He took careful aim, fired, and sure enough, bull's eye for the American. He did it. Except for one small fact. He actually shot at the wrong target, one lane over, which is known as a crossfire, and got a score of 0. This was his reaction:

Afterwards in a press conference, he said he felt great going into his last shot. He said he was more concerned with calming himself down rather than looking at his target. The last time he had cross-fired he said was 6 or 7 years ago. He went from 1st to 8th and didn't even get a medal.

Matthew Emmons was literally the greatest shooter in the world but if you don't know what you are shooting for it doesn't matter. If you shoot at or focus on the wrong thing, you'll never hit what you need to hit.

That's like us! We may try and work really hard at something, but if we are working towards the wrong thing, no matter how perfect we did we are still totally off. Jesus is the target we all need to be aiming for!

Activity 4: Test Yourself!

Ages: 4th - 5th grade

What you need

A printed sheet with the five words (BEING, FORGIVING, SERVING, GIVING, and GOING) on it and the numbers 1-10

What you do

Allow each kid to get a paper with the five words on them. Now that you have explained to them what each one is: give them a chance to assess themselves to see how are doing in each category. What would they like to work on? Is there one that they think they might be better at? Is there one they are still not sure about?

Optional: Find a kid's book that tells the story of Matthew 7:24-27: the two men who built on a rock and sand.

What you say

We are going to talk about the five principles below. After we have figured out what they mean, let's test ourselves and see how we are going in that area.

The targets that Jesus followers are called to shoot for:

- 1 **Being:** So many times Jesus talks about the importance of spending time and just being with Him. Before he invites us to do things for Him, through Him, in His name, he invites us into a relationship. Our relationship with Him will determine how effective we are at actually doing the things he asks.
- 2 **Forgiving:** Jesus is all about 'dat grace. So many of us struggle with receiving God's forgiveness, forgiving ourselves, or forgiving others. To truly represent Jesus in this world, we have a great understand of God's grace in our lives and extend that grace to others.
- 3 **Serving:** After spending time being with Him, and receiving His forgiveness, now we are so motivated. After all that He's done for me, I want to serve Him. I want to get out into the community, help those in need, love my neighbors, etc.
- 4 **Giving:** Jesus talked about the Kingdom of heaven more than anything else. A close second was money. I've found through the words of Jesus it's impossible to be a stingy Christian. Jesus followers are generous.
- 5 **Going:** It's no coincidence that many of Jesus' last words in each of the Gospels and even the last command He says in the book of Acts centers on the fact that we as Jesus followers must not just be His hands and feet in the community, but also His mouthpiece. We are to go out there and tell the Good News that this same Jesus that has died on the cross for my sins and forgiven what I've done has done the same for everyone.

What we are going to do today is see how well we think we are doing so far in each category.

Activity 4: Pretzel Letters

Ages: all ages

What you need

Pretzel sticks, paper towels (provide gluten-free pretzels for any kids with allergies)

What you do

Give each child a paper towel and a baggie of pretzel sticks and have them use the pretzels to try and form the shapes of the letters: BFSGG (Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going).

Optional: For younger children print out pages of the letters BFSGG (one for each kid).

What to do

Today in snack time we are going to review the five letters of our Red Letter Challenge: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going. Use your pretzel sticks to make or trace the five letters.

Activity 6: Extra! Extra!

Ages: 1st - 5th grade

What you need

Nothing

What you do

Read the fake news article below aloud with the words: being, forgiving, serving, giving, and going. Have the kids stand up when they hear the words!

Optional: For older kids, have them write and act out their own article using the five words. They don't have to use the words in order, and encourage outrageous and goofy!

What you say

Listen to news article I'm going to read. I want you to stand up when you hear the words BEING, FORGIVING, SERVING, GIVING, and GOING.

There once was a human being named Aidan. He had to forgive a girl named Lola who broke his favorite pencil. He served her snack first to show they were still friends. She showed kindness by giving him some of her fruit snacks. By the time they were going out to recess they were back to friends again!

PRAYER

Dear Jesus,

We invite you into this Challenge. Be our light and show us what it means to put your words into practice. Thank you for dying on the cross so that my sins are forgiven. You are the perfect example of love in our lives. Thank you for giving us the Bible and your words so we can follow after you. We love you Jesus, Amen

WEEK 1

INTRODUCTION TO RED LETTER CHALLENGER

KIDS TAKE HOME SHEET

Theme

Introducing the Five Themes of the Red Letter Challenge: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, Going

Memory Verse

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. Matthew 7:24

Bible Verses


"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." Matthew 7:24-27

Big Idea

Why are the red letters of Jesus important?

Dear Parents:

In the Red Letter Challenge, we are committing to putting the words of Jesus into practice for the next five weeks. Those five weeks are divided into five themes: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going. Each week we will have different ideas and ways that your child(ren) can try to put Jesus' words into practice.

- 1 **Being:** So many times Jesus talks about the importance of spending time and just being with Him. Before he invites us to do things for Him, through Him, in His name, he invites us into a relationship. Our relationship with Him will determine how effective we are at actually doing the things He asks.
 - 2 **Forgiving:** Jesus is all about 'dat grace. So many of us struggle with receiving God's forgiveness, forgiving ourselves, or forgiving others. To truly represent Jesus in this world, we have a great understand of God's grace in our lives and extend that grace to others.
 - 3 **Serving:** After spending time being with Him, and receiving His forgiveness, now we are so motivated. After all that He's done for me, I want to serve Him. I want to get out into the community, help those in need, love my neighbors, etc.
 - 4 **Giving:** Jesus talked about the Kingdom of heaven more than anything else. A close second was money. I've found through the words of Jesus it's impossible to be a stingy Christian. Jesus followers are generous.
 - 5 **Going:** It's no coincidence that many of Jesus' last words in each of the Gospels and even the last command He says in the book of Acts centers on the fact that we as Jesus followers must not just be His hands and feet in the community, but also His mouthpiece. We are to go out there and tell the Good News that this same Jesus that has died on the cross for my sins and forgiven what I've done has done the same for everyone.
-  Keep an eye out for these weekly handouts and help your child accomplish one, some or all the challenges.