



**Operatives
Objectives
Leaders Guide**

Operatives Objectives Leaders Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to Operative Objectives! You have the great privilege and awesome responsibility of sharing the gospel with children.

Each day there is a short Ace Warburton story to tell (about 5 min) and then the Bible story. The Ace stories are designed as a hook for the kids. The purpose of a hook is to grab kids' attention and focus it on the main theme.

Week at a Glance

Theme Verse – Here is a saying that you can trust. It should be accepted completely. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Timothy 1:15 NIrV

	Training Focus	Daily Theme
Day One	Spy Identity	Jesus is both God and human
Day Two	Disguises	Jesus came to take our sins away
Day Three	Trailing and Surveillance	God sent Jesus because He loves us
Day Four	Secret Messages	The gift of salvation is offered to anyone who puts their faith in Jesus
Day Five	Gadgets	The Holy Spirit helps us grow to be more like Jesus

Tips for Sharing the Gospel with Kids

Sharing the gospel with kids is a huge privilege!! It is also a heavy responsibility. Here are some tips for sharing the gospel with kids.

1. Back up what you say with Scripture.

Kids need to know that you are telling them what the Bible says and not just what you think about the gospel. For every key point that you share with kids, back it up with Scripture. When you tell kids that God is holy, read from the Bible that God is holy. When you tell kids that we are sinners, read from the Bible where it says that all have sinned.

2. Use a Bible and have kids use their Bibles.

This tip goes hand in hand with tip #1. Use a Bible when you share the gospel with kids. Hold it, open it, and read from it. The Bible is God's Word and therefore wholly trustworthy and true. So use it! Encourage kids to use

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their own Bibles as well. It's okay if different translations are used. Get the kids into their Bibles, checking that what you are saying is what the Bible says. Have Bibles available to give away to children who don't have one.

3. Pray.

Pray before you present the gospel to kids. Pray that God would soften their hearts and prepare them to accept the truth of the gospel. Pray as you present the gospel. Pray that you would speak only truth and pray that the kids listening will accept it. Pray after you present the gospel. Pray that the truth of God's Word would sink deep into the hearts of the children who heard it. Pray for transformation. Pray for lives to be saved.

4. Highlight the key points.

There are some heavy theological truths in the gospel message. It can become too easy to get bogged down in explanations. Highlight the key point you want the kids to learn. This will help you not to get distracted.

5. Kids, especially young ones, are literal.

Be careful with the words and phrases you use when sharing the gospel with kids. Kids, especially young ones will take what you say literally. If you tell kids they can ask Jesus into their heart, the young ones will literally think Jesus is somehow entering their actual hearts. I remember a parent once telling me about her daughter who was about 3 or 4. She came in the room crying and very upset. Her mom asked her what happened and the daughter replied that she fell down on her chest. It didn't seem that she was hurt too badly, so her Mom asked her why she was so upset. The girl replied, "I think I may have hurt Jesus!" Older kids may not think so literally anymore, but such phrasing can distract them. They may lose focus and start thinking about how it might actually work to have Jesus come into their hearts. Use words and phrases that make sense to kids. Teach them Biblical words and theological words, but explain them well.

6. Give them time.

Kids may need to hear the gospel many times before they are ready to give their lives to Jesus. That's okay. As they grow they can better understand the truths of the gospel. Also, kids need time to realize that the gospel message is personal. Kids are in a stage of constant learning. The truth of the gospel is information for them to learn and absorb. It may take them some time to realize that our holy Creator-King loves them; that they have sinned and are in desperate need of saving; that Jesus came to save them; that by dying on the cross, He took the punishment for their sins. Don't rush kids. Give them time.

7. Don't get caught up in the numbers game.

It can be too easy to get caught up in how many kids are being saved. Don't let this distract you. Remember, God is the one who saves. God will do His work. Each child is special and there is cause for rejoicing for each one who chooses to follow Jesus. Celebrate each child saved and give God the glory!

Tips for Telling a Great Story

1. Know your story well.

Know your story well enough that you are telling it, not reading it. When you really know the story you are free to make eye contact with the kids, to add details without getting lost, and to handle questions and interruptions without getting mixed up.

This doesn't mean you have to memorize the story. Just be familiar with the characters and the plot and the key theme.

2. Build Tension with Pacing.

Pacing is how you move your story forward. It's all about movement – taking your listener from the beginning to the end of the story.

You can speed up or slow down as you tell the story. Speed up a bit if it's an action sequence for example. You are telling a story, so make it interesting. If you have some action or want to speed up the story a bit, stay away from too much detail. Too much extraneous detail slows down the story, losing any of the tension that has been building.

3. Practice.

When I was younger I took piano lessons. I enjoyed playing the piano, but I hated practicing!! Sometimes it felt so tedious. However, I only got better at playing the piano because I practiced.

The same is true here. You will become a better, more confident storyteller if you practice.

Practice the story out loud. Practicing out loud helps give you an idea of the length of the story and the pacing of the story. It also helps you work through words you may stumble over.

If you are using visuals get them ready beforehand. Practice telling the story using the visuals. Practice the order you will use them and where to put them so they are easily accessible as you tell the story. This is important

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because you don't want to be fumbling with visuals when you are in the middle of the story.

4. Be Creative in Use of Props and Visuals.

When I was interning, I worked with a Children's Ministry Pastor who had a unique skill (well, at least it wasn't one I had!) She could tell and draw a story at the same time. She would stand in front of a whiteboard and start telling the story. As she spoke she drew. She kept drawing until the story and her picture were complete. She would use the entire whiteboard. The most amazing thing was that she could maintain interest and attention without actually looking at her class.

This was a unique skill that she possessed and she made good use of it. If you have a particular skill when it comes to storytelling, use it!

Props and/or visuals add another element to your story. They should enhance the experience for kids. If the story is set in an unfamiliar place or uses unfamiliar items a picture will help the kids understand without you having to take time to explain a lot of detail that may distract from your story. For example, if you are telling the story of Philip and the Ethiopian from the books of Acts, have a picture of a chariot. That way the kids can see it and you don't have to take a lot of time explaining what a chariot is.

But don't let the props or visuals be a distraction. Make sure they don't take over your story. They need to be an enhancement, not a distraction.

Props and visuals are an important part of the storytelling process. They add interest, help to maintain attention, and engage another of the child's senses.

5. Inflections and expression

Two of the best tools a storyteller has are their voice and their face. Have you ever heard anyone telling a story in a flat, monotone voice with no expression on their face? Were you interested, engaged, or invested in finding out what happens in the story?

A good storyteller will use inflections and expression to enhance the story. An inflection is a change in the pitch or tone of your voice. Ways to use inflection include whispering, building in pitch, lowering the tone of your voice, and raising the tone of your voice. If it's an exciting part of the story, reflect that in your voice.

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Along with your voice, use expression. Use your face and your hands. Facial expression includes your eyes and your mouth. If something confusing is happening in the story, show it on your face. If the character is sad, use a sad expression.

Use your hands as you tell a story. Add gestures that help kids understand the action of the story or the reaction of a character.

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Day 1 – Spy Identity

Daily Theme – Jesus is both God and Human

Bible Passage - In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became a human being. He made his home with us. John 1:1&14a NIRV

Ace Warburton Story

Materials: make-up compact
Prep: none

Imagine: A secret building, high in the snowy mountains. Most people wouldn't even notice it if they saw it, but if you know where to look and if you can brave the cold air and deep snow, you can get there. Inside, two men stare at a giant map of the world that is spread out over the table. One is pointing and giving instructions in another language to the other, who is typing furiously into his laptop. Their conversation is very detailed and technical.

Nearby, a little old lady pours out coffee for each of the men and slowly shuffles it over to them. The men sip their coffee and speak to the old woman: "This coffee is terrible!" says one of the men. Then they turn their attention back to the map and the computer.

They point at the map and then make more notes on their computer. Sometimes the telephone rings and they speak to whoever is on the other line. Sometimes they consult stacks of textbooks and manuals sitting around the room in giant piles. They work on their map for hours. From time to time a scientist wearing a lab coat comes into the room to speak to them but for the most part, they are left alone... except for the little old lady who putters around the room, sweeping and dusting and humming to herself. The men barely notice her as they work, sometimes sending emails or faxes or taking phone calls. From time to time their conversation is punctuated by evil laughter: "Muahahahahahaha".

Later, the little old lady picks up a tray of cookies and slowly walks back over to the men. "Cookie?" she asks.

The men bite into the cookies and they both spit them out. "This is the worst cookie I have ever tasted!" says one of them.

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"It's just about supper time anyway," says the old lady, "and the cafeteria is serving pizza today!"

"Pizza?" says one of them men. "That's my favorite!" "And the cafeteria is serving snow cones for dessert!"

"Snow cones?" says the other man. "That's my favorite!"

"Well why don't you boys run along so you get in line first," says the old lady.

The two men walk out of the room. "Who is that old lady?" one of them asks.

The other shrugs. "I have no idea. She's only been here for a couple of days. She just helps around the place and keeps it clean."

"She makes terrible coffee," says the other.

Inside the room, the little old lady hums to herself as she tidies up the tray of cookies and pours herself a cup of coffee.

Then with a careful look around the room, she walks over to the table and looks at the books and the map. She opens up the computer and clicks a few buttons, humming as she reads what's on the screen. Suddenly, she stops what she's doing and stares at the computer screen for a long time.

Then she reaches into her purse and pulls out her make-up kit [*pull the compact out of a bag or your pocket and open*] and opens it up. She lifts out the make-up to reveal a small keyboard and computer screen. She presses a few buttons and a face appears on the computer screen.

"Who are you?" asks the person on the screen.

The little old lady takes off her glasses and her wig and her false nose and a tall, muscular man with a thick, square jaw is revealed.

"My name is Ace Warburton, Master Spy."

The person on the screen answers: "Oh, it's you, Ace. I didn't recognize you behind all of that make-up. Well, at least you're not wearing the goose costume this time... remember what happened last time you wore that! Hang on; I'll transfer your call to the boss."

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A moment later, another face appears on screen.

"Hi Boss," says Ace Warburton, "It's Ace Warburton, Master Spy."

"Hi Ace, I know who you are, you don't have to introduce yourself as 'Master Spy'... hey are you wearing a dress?"

"I am, boss. It's part of my disguise."

The boss responds: "At least it's not the goose costume, remember the last time?"

Ace grimaces. "Yes, boss, I remember the last time. Anyway, I've infiltrated a secret spy base, which I found on my last mission. I've discovered something chilling that I HAVE to tell you about!"

Ace reaches over and picks up his coffee and sips it. "Ewww! I DO make terrible coffee."

The boss looked confused. "Ace, you're calling me long distance from the mountains IN A DRESS just to tell me the chilling news that you make bad coffee?"

"No," says Ace, "I'm calling to tell you that I've infiltrated this base and I've just discovered that they are plotting something terrible for the world. I'm not sure what yet but what really worries me is who's behind it."

"Who?" asks the boss. "My evil arch-nemesis, Sedgwick Sly," answers Ace.

"I thought Sedgwick Sly was in prison. In fact, you put him there a couple of years ago," says the boss.

Ace nods. "I did put him in prison but I'm looking at an email he sent to the people here at the base that seems to suggest he just escaped from prison."

"Escaped!?! What does the email say exactly?" asks the boss.

"It says, 'Hi guys, I just escaped from prison'."

The boss nods. "That pretty much sums it up. Does it say anything else?"

Ace keeps reading: "It says, 'I cut through the bars in my prison cell using

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the metal-cutting equipment you baked into the cupcake. Much appreciated.

Keep planning the evil scheme that we talked about and before you know it, we'll take over the world. PS, Aunt Patty sends her love."

The boss scratches his head for a moment. "Okay, forward that email to us and we'll see if we can track where it was sent from. I want you to come into base and we'll see about setting you up with a disguise to track down Sedgwick Sly."

Ace nods. "10-4. Ace Warburton, Master Spy... out." And he clicked shut the make-up case [*shut compact*].

Gospel Message

Materials: poster paper; markers; 8 index cards; Bible; extra Bibles for children who don't have one

Prep: write one Bible reference on each of the index cards - Luke 2:7; Luke 4:1-2; Mark 15:37; Luke 2:52; John 4:6; John 11:35; Mark 8:31; Luke 8:22-23

Today is all about the spy identity. Does anyone know what that is?

Your identity is the qualities that make you different from all others. A spy has to create an identity for themselves. It's also called their legend. What is your spy name? What is your backstory? What skills do you have? All of those things make up your identity.

Ace Warburton is a Master Spy. He's skilled. He's experienced. In our story today we met Ace in the middle of an operation. He revealed his identity a number of times in the story. Who is he? He is Ace Warburton, Master Spy.

I'm going to read you three short stories. Then I want you to tell me what we discover about the identity of the main character in those stories and I'm going to write it on this poster [reveal poster paper and have markers ready].

Remember, spies need to be observant and have a good memory. Listen carefully to discover the identity of the main character.

[*Read the account of Jesus calming the storm - Matthew 8:23-27*]

"Who is this guy?" they asked. Here is the second story. [*Turn to Matthew*

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14:14-21 and read the story of Jesus feeding the 5000]

Making food appear out of nowhere!! Who is this guy? Here is the last story. It is found in the book of Mark, chapter 2. [*Read Mark 2:1-12, the story of Jesus healing the man lowered through the roof*]

Who is this guy??

[Ask the following questions after you have read all three stories.]

1. Who is the main character in each of these stories? [*write Jesus at the top of your chart after the children have responded.*]

2. What do these stories reveal about His identity? [*write down the things that reveal Jesus' identity from these stories – Jesus has power over nature; Jesus can perform miracles; Jesus made food multiply; Jesus healed people; Jesus forgave sin.*]

The people who heard Jesus speak & saw Jesus do amazing, incredible things didn't know what to make of Him. "Who is this guy?" they asked.

Well, the best place to find the answer to that question is the Bible. We can trust the Bible always to tell the truth. So, let's look at the book of John, chapter one, verse one. [*Give the kids a couple of minutes to find the verse in their Bibles.*] It says, "In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God." (NIRV)

The Word – is that a code name? Is that a person? Who is that? The Word is Jesus. We know that because other places in the Bible tell us that it is Jesus. So, in the beginning, Jesus was already there. Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God.

Why do you think Jesus is called "The Word?" [*allow children to respond*]

Whoa! In the beginning, when the world and everything in it was made, Jesus was already there! Jesus was there with God and Jesus is God!

Jesus did the kind of things only God does. Let's go back to the stories I told you earlier.

Jesus made a huge storm stop – just like that. He had control over the wind and the waves and the storm. They obeyed Him. Only God has that kind of power.

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Jesus healed people and made food appear out of nowhere. Only God has that kind of power.

And Jesus forgave sin – remember the guy who was lowered down through the roof. Jesus made him walk again, but Jesus also forgave his sins. Only God can forgive sin.

So, Jesus is God. [*Write God in big letters on your poster paper.*]

Maybe you have heard the name, the Son of God? That's Jesus. So, to answer the question, "Who is this guy?" The answer is Jesus is the Son of God.

But if we keep reading in John chapter one, we discover something else totally amazing about Jesus. Verse fourteen says, "The Word became a human being. He made His home with us. We have seen His glory. It is the glory of the one and only Son. He came from the Father. And He was full of grace and truth." [*Encourage the kids to read along with you in their Bibles.*]

This verse tells us that Jesus became something. What did He become? [*Allow responses*] Jesus became a human being. It's true.

God, the Father sent Jesus, the Son to this world. Jesus didn't come as a grown up. He didn't just suddenly appear as an adult and start doing amazing things.

The Bible tells us about how Jesus was born and grew up. Jesus was a real person.

Do you remember anything from the three stories I read to you that shows that Jesus was a real person? [*Answer: Jesus was sleeping*]

Let's discover more proof that Jesus was a real person. I'm going to give you some verses to look up. Each group is going to look up one verse and figure out what it says about Jesus. [*Hand out index cards. If there isn't enough time for the kids to look up the verses on their own, write out each verse on the back of the corresponding index card.*] Read them and tell me what they say about Jesus:

- Luke 2:7 – Jesus was born
- Luke 4:1-2 – Jesus was tempted; Jesus got hungry
- Mark 15:37 – Jesus died
- Luke 2:52 – Jesus grew from a boy to a man]

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- John 4:6 – Jesus got tired
- John 11:35 – Jesus cried
- Mark 8:31 – Jesus felt pain
- Luke 8:22-23 – Jesus slept

[Write what the kids discover on the poster paper]

Jesus felt pain, got tired, cried, was hungry, slept, had to learn to walk and read, had to resist temptation.

So, to answer the question, “Who is this guy?” the answer is Jesus was a man [write ‘man’ in big letters on the poster paper].

But wait a minute. I said the answer was that Jesus is God. Is Jesus God or is Jesus a man?

Jesus is God and Jesus is a man at the same time. How does that work? Was He God sometimes and a person other times?

This is hard to understand but Jesus is 100% God and 100% person all the time. This is really important for us to believe.

Remember the verses from John I read earlier? John 1:1,14 “In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became a human being. He made his home with us. We have seen his glory. It is the glory of the one and only Son. He came from the Father. And he was full of grace and truth.”

What does this verse tell us about Jesus? [allow children to respond] Jesus is God and Jesus became a human being.

[show poster again] Today is all about identity. What is the identity of Jesus? Jesus is God and Jesus is a man. That’s amazing! There is no one like Jesus! Does it matter that Jesus is God and that Jesus is a person at the same time? Yes, it matters a lot and tomorrow I will tell you why.

[Pray]

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Day 2 – Disguises

Daily Theme – Jesus Came to Take Our Sins Away

Bible Passage - But you know that Christ came to take our sins away. And there is no sin in Him. 1 John 3:5

Ace Warburton Story (cont.)

Materials: glasses with nose and mustache

Prep: No preparation required

Imagine: A tall building with dark windows. On a big sign on the front of the building it says: "Secret Spy Headquarters."

Ace Warburton, looking nothing like an old lady, walks through the doors. He's wearing a suit and carrying a briefcase. He walks up to the woman at the desk.

"Hi Ace" she smiles.

"Hi," Ace says, "I'm Ace Warburton, Master Spy. I have an appointment with the boss."

"The boss is waiting for you, Ace," the woman behind the desk says, "and you don't have to add 'Master Spy' when you say your name. I know who you are; we've worked together for years." Then she points behind her to the many elevators along the wall. "Take elevator 8. When you get on the elevator type in the secret code: 1284 3264 9865 4981 4352 4679 4. Got it?" She asks.

"1284 3264 9865 4981 4352 4674 9?" Ace Warburton confirms.

The woman shakes her head. "No: 1284 3264 9865 4981 4352 4679 4."

Ace nods. "Got it! Thanks!" He goes to the elevator, types in the secret code, and is whisked up to the boss' office.

Ace knocks on the boss' door. "It's Ace Warburton, Master Spy. Can I come in?" he calls.

The boss calls from inside the office to come in.

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"Hi sir," Ace says as he enters, "it's Ace Warburton, Master Spy."

The boss nods. "Yes, I know who you are, Ace. You don't have to add 'Master Spy' every time you introduce yourself. You've been a Master Spy for 15 years." The boss points to a chair and Ace sits down. "Okay, let's get down to business. We were able to trace Sedgwick Sly's email right to this city! He's here and he's up to something."

Ace agrees: "Sedgewick is an evil mastermind. Whatever he's planning is going to be terrible and it will probably include him taking over the entire world."

"That's what we're afraid of," the boss says. "So here's what we're going to do: I've written the address where Sedgwick Sly is living right now. I want you to get into a disguise and follow him. BEFORE you apprehend him, you need to perform surveillance to find out what he's planning. We can't send him to prison until we find out what he's up to and stop him."

Ace leaves the boss' office and takes the elevator down to the 10th floor, where the sign reads "Disguises."

Ace walks up to the counter and rings the little bell. "Ace Warburton, Master Spy" he calls out and after a while an older man walks to the counter. "Hi Ace. It's nice to see you again," says the disguise clerk. "Are you here to return the old lady disguise?"

Ace opens his briefcase and removes the dress and wig and purse and make-up kit. The disguise clerk types his name into the computer. "Okay, that's checked back in. What can we set you up with today?"

Ace answers: "I need a disguise that will let me travel around the city freely. I need to find my evil arch-nemesis Sedgwick Sly."

The disguise clerk's eyes widen. "Sedgwick Sly? Oh be careful. Remember what happened the last time... with the goose costume."

Ace nods grimly. "I remember... Sedgwick Sly does not like animals. What else do you have?" asked Ace.

The disguise master consults his catalogue. "We have other spies who have signed out the tree disguise, the bush disguise, the George Bush disguise, the George Foreman disguise, the foreman disguise, the fireman disguise, and the fire hydrant disguise."

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"I don't want the fire hydrant disguise again," says Ace, "it smells too much like dog pee."

The disguise clerk says: "It is a very realistic-looking fire hydrant. For you, I want to go with the most effective disguise ever invented: [show prop] the glasses, fake nose, and moustache. It's classic... and it works. No one will ever recognize you."

Ace agrees and the disguise clerk goes into the backroom and comes out a few minutes later with the disguise kit.

"If you'd just sign your name here, you can take it out. Now, just a reminder, you can have it out for 4 days and if you don't return it, you pay a \$0.25 fine for every day overdue. And make sure it doesn't come back damaged."

Ace shakes his head: "I'm still paying for that goose costume!" Ace signs the book, thanks the disguise clerk, and walks toward the elevator. The clerk looks down at Ace's signature, which reads "Ace Warburton, Master Spy." The clerk calls out to Ace: "You don't have to write 'Master Spy'... I know who you are," but Ace couldn't hear him.

Gospel Message

Materials: 2 clear plastic cups; canola oil; water; Bible; extra Bibles
Prep: Fill one cup about half full of water. Fill the other cup about a quarter to half full of oil.

Yesterday I told you that I would explain today why it matters that Jesus is both God and man. Jesus came to earth to complete a very important mission. And for that mission to succeed, Jesus had to be totally God and totally man.

We find out what that mission was in our theme verse. Let's look it up and you can tell me what Jesus' mission was. [*Encourage kids to find 1 Timothy 1:15 in their Bibles and follow along with you as you read it out loud from your Bible.*]

1 Timothy 1:15 "Here is a saying that you can trust. It should be accepted completely. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

What was Jesus' mission? [*Allow children to respond. Answer = to save sinners.*]

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Yesterday's training was the spy identity. And we learned that Jesus definitely has a unique identity. What did we discover about Jesus? [*The answer you are looking for is: He is both God and man.*]

Today's training is in using disguises. Why do spies use disguises? [*Allow answers*]

To disguise ourselves is to conceal our identity by changing our dress or look. Disguises are often clothes, but we can disguise ourselves by changing our hair color, wearing wigs or fake beards. We also disguise ourselves by changing how we walk. It's all about hiding who we really are – concealing our identity.

When Jesus came to earth, did He disguise His identity? [*Allow kids to respond*]

People who didn't understand who Jesus was may have thought that he was disguising the fact that He was God by appearing as a man. But Jesus isn't only one or the other. He is both God and human and He came to take our sins away.

Jesus is the perfect, sinless Son of God who came to this earth for a specific mission. He came to save sinners. Right away, there are a couple of questions. How did Jesus save sinners? Why do sinners need to be saved? I think we can discover the answer to both of those questions together.

Let's start with why sinners need to be saved.

What is sin? Does anyone know what sin is? [*Allow responses*] Sin is anything we think, say, or do that goes against God's rules. Can anyone give me an example of a sin? [*Allow responses*] So, sin is disobeying God. It's choosing to do what we want to do rather than obeying God.

Who are sinners? We can find the answer to this question in the Bible. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

So, who are sinners? [*Allow responses*] Everyone – you, me. We have all broken God's rules. The Bible says that everyone is a sinner.

Why do sinners need to be saved? Sinners need to be saved because sin is a huge problem that we can't get rid of on our own.

[*Show the cup of oil and the cup of water.*] I have a cup of oil and a cup of

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water. What do you think will happen when I pour the oil into the water glass? [*Allow the children to answer and then pour the oil into the water glass. Do not shake.*]

What happened? [*Allow responses*] The oil quickly separated from the water. Oil and water do not go together.

Seeing that helps us to remember that God and sin do not mix. They are completely separate. God and sin do not go together.

God is holy (that means He is completely separate from everything that is wrong or sinful.) God and sin do not go together.

We were created by God to be friends with God. God loves us and created us to have a special relationship with Him, but there's a problem. Something has broken our relationship with God and that something is sin. We can't have a close relationship with God because sin is in the way. Because of sin we can't be friends with God. That's a huge problem because we will either spend forever with God or forever without God.

Our relationship with God is broken – this problem it lasts into eternity. Rather than eternal life with God, there is eternity without God – separated from God forever.

How do we get rid of sin? The Bible tells us that “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). The payment for sin is death. Sin has to be paid for and someone has to pay with their life. The only person who could pay for the sins of the entire human race would have to be a perfect person. Are you perfect? No, we've already discovered that all of us are sinners.

Now, we are getting to the answer to the question “why do sinners need to be saved?” Because we can't save ourselves! We need someone to save us from our sin and that someone has to be perfect.

Do we know anyone who is perfect? Jesus! That's why Jesus came. Listen to this verse: “But you know that Christ came to take our sins away. And there is no sin in him.” (1 John 3:5)

Jesus is the only one who can save us. It matters that He is totally God and totally man. He had to be God in order to be perfect and He had to be a man so that He could die.

Jesus came to save us by taking our sins away and He is the only one who

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can because He is perfect! And when Jesus took our sins away, He didn't just hide them or disguise them. He took them away completely! Tomorrow we will discover how Jesus took our sins away.

[*Pray*]

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Day 3 – Trailing & Surveillance

Daily Theme – God Sent Jesus Because He Loves Us

Bible Passage - God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life.
John 3:16 NIrV

Ace Warburton Story (cont.)

Materials: newspaper

Prep: cut two eyeholes into the newspaper

Imagine: A busy city street; cars and taxis and buses drive by. Stores line both sides of the street and there's a small restaurant with outdoor tables. A man reads the newspaper while sitting at one of the café tables, sipping his coffee. He's wearing glasses, he has a big nose and moustache... and there are [*hold up a newspaper with two holes cut into it*] two holes cut in the newspaper so he can watch the door on the other side of the street.

The waiter comes over and gives him the bill. The man at the table signs the bill "Ace Warburton, Master Spy". He looks up as the door he's been watching opens up. A man steps out and starts walking down the street. Ace recognizes the man; it's his evil arch-nemesis Sedgwick Sly.

Sedgwick walks down the street and Ace follows, but on the other side of the street, keeping a very close watch over the man he's following. Sedgwick pauses to look behind him and Ace freezes and holds up his newspaper.

After a moment, Sedgwick continues on, satisfied that he isn't being followed. Ace tip toes behind, blending in with the other people on the street. Ace follows Sedgwick for several blocks until Sedgwick gets to a park, walks along the path, and sits down at a park bench. Ace hides behind a nearby tree, waiting and watching. Ace sees him reach under the park bench, pull out a piece of paper, read it, and put it back. After several minutes, Sedgwick stands and walks away.

Ace runs up to the park bench and reads the same paper: "Sedgwick, Meet me immediately. Location: Rick's American Café."

Ace folds up the paper and places it back under the park bench. Then he pulls a map from his pocket, finds Rick's American Café, and goes there as quickly as he can.

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Upon arriving, he looks in the reflection of the window and sees Sedgwick Sly just sitting at a table, holding a glass of water. But he's alone! Did Ace miss something? Wasn't Sedgwick supposed to meet someone?

Ace thinks for a moment then goes into the café and sits down at a table near the door, far enough away that Sedgwick can't see him but close enough for him to keep an eye on Sedgwick. Ace orders a sandwich and a cup of coffee to keep an eye on Sedgwick. Ace waits and waits and waits.

The entire time, Sedgwick Sly just sits there with his glass of water. From time to time he looks around. He taps his fingers. He looks at his water glass but doesn't really drink anything.

Then Sedgwick stands up and walks out, leaving his entire glass of water! Ace knows that if he leaves right away, Sedgwick will certainly spot him.

Baffled, Ace just sits there. Was he outsmarted by his evil arch-nemesis? Did he miss something? But moments later, he watches as another café customer, who had been sitting on the other side of the room, also leaves the cafe... and THAT customer's water glass is completely full. Something is too mysterious about the situation!

Ace runs out of the restaurant, looking to tail both suspects but they had walked in opposite directions and were quickly disappearing into the crowded street.

Ace is sure they had met here, even though they never actually stood face-to-face. But what did they do?

He walks over to the table where Sedgwick was sitting and he looks around. Did Sedgwick drop a secret note somewhere? Ace checks all the places that a Master Spy would know to check but he can't find anything. He looks across the restaurant at the table where the other customer had been sitting. He can see the other glass of water.

Then he gets an idea... an idea that only a Master Spy would have. He speaks to the café owner and says, "My name is Ace Warburton, Master Spy. I'd like the footage of your security cameras for the last few minutes."

And moments later, Ace walks out of the café holding the security footage in his hand.

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Gospel Message

Materials: clear, carbonated beverage (ex. Club Soda); 4-hole buttons; clear plastic cups; Bible; extra Bibles

Prep: If you have a large group, prepare packets for each group leader that includes a bottle of the carbonated beverage, one 4-hole button for every member of the group, and one clear plastic cup for every member of the group.

Today's training is in trailing and surveillance. Trailing is following the tracks of someone. Surveillance is keeping a close watch on someone without being caught.

The Bible tells us about a man called Nicodemus. In John chapter three, it says that Nicodemus went to see Jesus at night. It was like his own covert operation! Maybe he didn't want other people to know he was talking to Jesus; maybe he thought it would be easier to get Jesus alone at night. We don't know, but we do know that he wanted to talk to Jesus.

Nicodemus said he believed that Jesus was a good teacher sent by God. You see, Nicodemus didn't understand who Jesus really was. He believed that Jesus was simply a good teacher. He didn't understand that Jesus was God. Even though Nicodemus didn't understand, Jesus did. Jesus knew exactly what Nicodemus needed to hear.

Jesus told Nicodemus, "God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life. God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world. He sent His Son to save the world through Him." John 3:16&17 (NIrV)

There are three important truths that Jesus told Nicodemus.

1st, Jesus told Nicodemus that God loved every person in the world a lot! God made us and loves us. God loves us enough to send a Savior to save us from our sin.

God sent Jesus to take away our sins because He loves us. He loves us and wants us to have a special relationship with Him. But the sin problem has to be dealt with in order for that to happen. So, God's plan was to send Jesus to take away our sin. Who remembers why it has to be Jesus? [*Possible answers include: because Jesus is perfect; He has never sinned.*]

So, God loves everyone in the entire world, a lot! God loves us so much that

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He did something. And that is the next thing Jesus told Nicodemus.

2nd Jesus told Nicodemus that God gave His only Son to this world.

God's only Son is Jesus.

What does that mean – God gave His only Son? [*Allow responses*]

The Bible tells us that Jesus, who had never done anything wrong, was arrested, put on trial, and sentenced to die on a cross. After Jesus died, He was buried in a tomb.

[*Pass out cups and fill half full with carbonated beverage. Pass out buttons.*]

What do you think will happen when we drop our buttons into our cups?
[*Encourage responses*]

[*Show your cup and drop your button into the cup, encouraging the children to copy you. The carbonated bubbles will attach to the buttons. The buttons will quickly rise to the surface. Gently tap the cup to dislodge the gas bubbles so the button will sink – and rise – again.*]

What did the button do? [*Answer: It rose to the surface.*]

Three days after Jesus died, some women went to the tomb to care for Jesus' body. When they arrived, they discovered something completely surprising – Jesus wasn't there!

Who was surprised when the button rose to the surface? [*encourage responses*]

Jesus rose from the dead. That means that He came back to life! Jesus is not dead anymore – He's alive! That is a great surprise!

"Christ died for sins once and for all time. The One who did what is right died for those who don't do right. He died to bring you to God. His body was put to death. But the Holy Spirit brought Him back to life." (1 Peter 3:18 NIRV)

Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins. He did it once and that was enough for all time. Because Jesus is perfect, when He died, He paid the price for the sins of the entire world. Jesus is the One who did what is right. Who are those who don't do right? [*Allow answers – sinners; us.*] Jesus died for us.

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Sin has to be paid for and the penalty for sin is death. Jesus paid the penalty when He died on the cross.

He came back to life proving that He is stronger than sin and stronger than death. Jesus is alive and He offers us forgiveness of sin and a restored relationship with God. He died to bring us to God – to give us a chance to restore our relationship with God. How do we do that? That's the third thing.

[Have group leaders/volunteers gather cups and buttons so that they do not become a distraction.]

3rd, Jesus told Nicodemus that anyone who believes in Him will have eternal life.

When we believe in Jesus and what He did for us we don't have to be separated from God forever anymore. Instead we can have life that lasts forever with God!

How long is forever? *[Encourage responses]* I want everyone to stand up. Now hold your leg out and up. Can you stand like that while I count to 10? *[Count to ten.]* Can you hold your leg up like that longer? *[Encourage those who want to participate. Start counting. Stop when most kids have dropped their leg.]* Hold your hand up if you think you could have held your leg up for 10 minutes?...1 hour...forever?

We can't hold our leg up in the air forever, but there is something that we can do forever. We can live with Jesus forever. Anyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life. That is life forever with Jesus.

What are the three important truths Jesus told Nic? *[Encourage responses]*

1. God loves us.
2. God sent Jesus to die for our sins.
3. Anyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

Tomorrow we are going to talk more about what it means to believe in Jesus.

[Pray]

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Day 4 – Secret Messages

Daily Theme – The Gift of Salvation is Offered to Anyone Who Puts Their Faith in Jesus

Bible Passage - God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift. It is not based on anything you have done. No one can brag about earning it.
Ephesians 2:8&9 NIrV

Ace Warburton Story (cont.)

Materials: 'Hello My Name is...' nametag

Prep: Write "Ace Warburton Master Spy" on the nametag

Imagine: Back at the Secret Spy Headquarters, Ace Warburton walks through the doors, he introduces himself as Ace Warburton, Master Spy, he gets a code to use the elevators, and he takes the elevator up to the 12th floor where the sign says "Video Room".

The woman at the desk greets him as he walks in the door.

"Ace Warburton, Master Spy," he says as she shakes his hand.

"I know who you are, Ace," she says. "What can I do for you today?"

Ace answers: "Sedgwick Sly has escaped from jail and I've been following him."

The woman exclaims: "I hope you didn't follow him in that goose costume again!"

"No," replied Ace, "I used glasses, a fake nose and moustache."

"Ah! The best disguise ever invented! You can never go wrong with that one... but you've got a nametag right on your shirt that says, "Hello, my name is Ace Warburton, Master Spy. [show nametag] Did you have that on the whole time?"

Ace looks down at his shirt. "Yeah, I guess I did."

"And your briefcase has your name on it, too," she points out.

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"And you have a monogrammed handkerchief sticking out of your pocket... with the initials A.W.M.S. on it." She shrugs. "Well, what can I do for you today?"

Ace removes the security tapes from his briefcase and hands to her. She puts them into the machine and plays the footage and she and Ace watch. The security tapes show the entire café from the corner of the room where the camera had been located.

The video clerk points out, "Okay, so there's Sedgwick at that table... and a few minutes later, you come in and sit down and order coffee. That's a great disguise you're wearing. I would never recognize you... oh, and you can see that you are indeed wearing your nametag!"

They watch for a few minutes and then Sedgwick leaves. Ace and the video clerk watch the video a second time. And then a third time. And then a fourth time.

Then Ace points out something to the video clerk: "See how the other guy on the other side of the room leaves right after Sedgwick? He barely drank from his water glass, too."

"You're right, that's more than a coincidence," the clerk says, rubbing her chin. "It was like the water glass was just for show and neither of them really wanted the water... but they had to order something because they were in a cafe. But why aren't they talking to each other? Why are they sitting on opposite ends of the room?"

They watch the footage again and again. Suddenly, Ace jumps out of his chair: "I've got it! Let's watch it again, but this time watch how they move their hands!"

They watch the security tape again, watching the hands of Sedgwick and the other customer. Both of their hands were tapping on their glasses.

"They're talking in code!" Ace exclaims.

He takes the security video down to the 5th floor, where the sign says

"Codes and Ciphers", and greets the code clerk: "Ace Warburton, Master Spy."

"I know who you are, Ace," the code clerk says.

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Ace excitedly explains the situation: "Sedgwick Sly escaped from prison and I've got some video footage of him communicating in code with someone else. I need you to break the code."

"Did you wear the goose costume this time?" the code clerk asks as he puts the tape into the machine.

Ace shakes his head "not this time," he says, and he points to himself on the screen.

"Ah, the classic disguise. Very clever... but are you wearing a nametag?"

"Never mind that," says Ace, "watch their hands."

The code clerk watches for a few moments. "Looks like Morse Code. I can break that pretty easily."

He watches for a few moments and makes notes and then hands Ace a piece of paper. Ace reads it and all the color drains out of his face. He runs to the elevator, takes it to the top floor and bursts through his boss' office door. Ace greets his boss: "It's Ace Warburton, Master Spy. I've just discovered Sedgwick Sly's evil plot to take over the world. According to a coded communication we've just intercepted, Sedgwick has a flashdrive containing a computer code and this code will give him complete control of all of the world's electricity generating systems. He can control the world's electricity from his own computer."

The boss looks worried. "If he took over the world's power systems, we'll be helpless... completely at his mercy! Nothing would work. It would be dark at night. We'd have no television. Planes wouldn't be able to fly. Traffic lights wouldn't work."

Ace nods. "We have to stop him, he's going to upload this to the internet tonight and by tomorrow all of the world's power generating systems will be under his control. There's only one person that can stop him. Ace Warburton, Master Spy. The greatest spy the world has ever known –"

The boss interrupts Ace: "Who are you talking to, Ace?"

Ace looks around sheepishly. "I guess I'm just talking to myself. Okay, so what should I do?"

The boss thinks for a moment. "We've located Sedgwick Sly's headquarters."

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It's a tall building right downtown but it is very secure and armed guards would never let you in the door. The only suggestion I have is to go down to the disguise department and get a goose costume..."

Ace shakes his head. "Not the goose costume again. I have a better idea..."

Gospel Message

Materials: three empty boxes; wrapping paper; tape; Bible; extra Bibles
Prep: nicely wrap three empty boxes

Today's training is secret messages. Secret messages are a way to communicate using code or cipher.

Jesus told a lot of stories when He lived here on earth. Sometimes His stories seemed like they were in code because they were hard to understand. They are called parables.

One of those stories Jesus told went like this [*hold open Bible while you tell the story – Luke 15:11-32*]:

- There was a man who had two sons. The younger son said, 'Father, give me my share of the family property.' So, the father divided his property between his two sons.
- Not long after that, the younger son packed up all he had. Then he left for a country far away. There he wasted his money on wild living. He spent everything he had.
- Then the whole country ran low on food. So, the son didn't have what he needed.
- He eventually found a job feeding the pigs. The son was so hungry that he wanted to eat what the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything.
- Then he began to think clearly again. He said, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food! But here I am dying from hunger! I will get up and go back to my father. I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against God. And I have sinned against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers." So, he got up and went to his father.
- While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him. He was filled with tender love for his son. He ran to him. He threw his arms around him and kissed him.

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- The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.'
- But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattest calf and kill it. Let's have a big dinner and celebrate. This son of mine was dead. And now he is alive again. He was lost. And now he is found.'

Let's decode the story. This story is a way of telling us what God is like and how God treats sinners who repent.

In the story, the father welcomed the son home and forgave him. The father chose to forgive the son. The son didn't deserve it. All the son could do was accept this gift of forgiveness his father offered him. When we decode this story, we learn that God is the father in the story and people are the son who was lost. God forgives us and rejoices when we are saved, just like the father in the story.

This story tells us a lot about what God is like. It shows us that God is gracious and forgiving.

I need three volunteers. [*Choose three volunteers to come to the front. Whisper these instructions in the ear of the third volunteer, "When I give you the gift, say that you don't want it."*] I have gifts for these volunteers. [*Hand a gift to the first volunteer.*] Here is your gift. It will cost you \$5. [*Hold your other hand out for the money*] Is that really a gift? [*allow responses*]

[*Turn to the second volunteer and hold out a gift.*] I have a gift for you but you need to return it in two days. Is that really a gift? [*Allow responses*]

[*Hold the third gift out to the third volunteer.*] I have a gift for you. [*Wait for response from volunteer – "I don't want it."*] Is this a gift? [*Allow responses – correct answer is yes but it was not received.*]

Ephesians 2: 8-9 (NIrV) says, "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift. It is not based on anything you have done. No one can brag about earning it."

Salvation is a gift from God. We don't have to pay for it and God will not ask for it back.

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Accepting God's gift of salvation is all we can do. There is nothing we can do to earn salvation and forgiveness. Our sin is just too big. There is no way we can get rid of it on our own.

Salvation is a present; the best present ever. We do not deserve it and there is nothing we can do to earn it. Jesus did all the work for us. The gift of salvation is given to everyone who repents of their sin and believes in Jesus.

To repent means to completely reverse your attitude and values. Repentance involves heart change.

[Start walking one direction, repeating, "I'm doing things my way." Stop, do a 180 degree turn and start walking the other way, repeating, "I'm doing things God's way."]

That is repentance; to turn away from sin and start living God's way. The wonderful thing about true repentance is that when we repent, God forgives us and reconciles us. Reconcile means restoring a relationship to what it was before it was broken.

Remember, because of sin our relationship with God was broken. But when we repent, God reconciles us and that relationship is fixed.

Salvation is a gift that is given to anyone who repents and believes. What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

Believing in Jesus means that you believe that He is real. But it also means that you believe true things about Him. You believe that He is God's Son. You believe that He never sinned. You believe that when He died on the cross, He was punished for your sin.

Believing in Jesus means that you trust Him to save your life. You are putting all your confidence in Him.

Repentance and belief always go together. God tells you to believe in Jesus and repent of your sins and you will be saved.

Ephesians 2: 8-9 (NIRV) says, "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift. It is not based on anything you have done. No one can brag about earning it."

There is nothing we can do to earn salvation. There will never be enough

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good things we can do to get salvation. Salvation is a gift from a gracious God. All we can do is accept it.

How do we accept salvation? [*wait for responses*] We accept salvation by repenting and believing. That's it.

Have you accepted God's gift of salvation? [*Tell the kids who they can talk to – their leaders; counsellors – if they are ready to accept God's gift of salvation.*]

[*Pray*]

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Day 5 – Gadgets

Daily Theme – The Holy Spirit Helps Us Grow to Be More Like Jesus

Bible Passage - But the Father will send the Friend in My name to help you. The Friend is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26 NIrV

Ace Warburton Story (cont.)

Materials: None

Prep: None

Imagine: It's night time. On the street, the air is still and only disturbed by people out for a midnight stroll. But hundreds of feet in the air a helicopter races through the darkness over the city, just skimming the tops of the buildings. One of the doors is wide open and it's very windy inside. Ace Warburton stands in the open door, wearing his suit and a rope trails out from his suit jacket and is attached to a winch on the helicopter. He pauses for a moment to comb back his hair and he gives a thumb's up to his boss, who is strapped into one of the seats, controlling the winch.

Ace puts on sunglasses and presses a button on the side of them and watches out the helicopter door as the buildings race by below. Through the glasses he sees a read-out of what the building is and, before long, one building comes into his view with a red flashing light above it. That's the building Sedgwick Sly is in!

The building approaches and Ace speaks into the headset he's wearing to communicate with the helicopter pilot.

"This is Ace Warburton, Master Spy," he shouts. "The building is straight ahead!"

Ace directs the pilot to the building then instructs him to hover near it so he can see straight down the wall to the street below. The pilot gives Ace a thumbs-up when the helicopter is locked in position.

Ace jumps out of the helicopter and the rope automatically lowers him down.

Ace looks through his sunglasses as he drops past each window, scanning each room for people. But it's the middle of the night and there isn't anyone else in the office building...

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... until he reaches the 22nd floor and he sees someone hunched over a computer. The scanner in his sunglasses identifies the person as Sedgwick Sly.

Ace speaks into a button on his lapel: "This is Ace Warburton, Master Spy. I've found him! You can stop the rope." The rope slows and stops.

Ace swings the rope back and then the rope swings forward toward the glass and just as he's about to crash through the glass, he touches his watch and a laser beam shoots out and the window explodes. He swings through the opening and lands on the floor.

Sedgwick looks up from his computer. "It's Ace Warburton, Master Spy!"

Ace looks at Sedgwick: "Sedgwick Sly, my evil arch-nemesis. I'm here to stop you from uploading that computer code and to send you back to prison."

Sedgwick glares at Ace. "You won't be able to stop me... even if you aren't wearing a goose costume!" Sedgwick turns back to the computer and types as quickly as he can.

Ace reaches into his pocket and pulls out a pen. He aims it at Sedgwick and presses the button. A tiny dart shoots out from the pen, misses Sedgwick, ricochets off the wall and strikes Ace Warburton in the neck.

Ace's eyes get bigger. Sedgwick pauses and looks back at Ace.

"Did you just shoot yourself with a knock-out dart?" Sedgwick asks.

Ace rubs his neck. He can already feel the cold knock-out drug starting to ooze through his veins. "It was an accident." Ace says and he sits down on the floor. Sedgwick walks over to Ace and takes the pen out of his hand.

"Are there any more darts in here, Ace?" Sedgwick asks.

Ace tries to speak but his voice is already slurring. "Yes, there's one more. Just push the button."

Sedgwick points the pen at Ace and pushes the button and another dart buries itself into Ace Warburton's side.

"I wish you wouldn't have done that." Ace says, his eyes getting heavy.

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"Oh? Why not?" Sedgwick asks.

Ace answers: "Because what I have to do next is going to be much more difficult now." Then, Ace speaks into the button on his shirt. "This is Ace Warburton, Master Spy. We'll be ready to go in 5 seconds."

Sedgwick looks at Ace.

Ace says, "4" and he presses a button on his belt buckle and there is a high-pitched noise that gets louder and louder...

Then Ace says "3" and all the lights go out in the room and suddenly Sedgwick's computer bursts into flames.

Sedgwick yells: "My computer code! My diabolical plan! It's ruined!"

Then Ace says "2" and he reaches over and grabs Sedgwick's leg. "You'd better hope that I don't pass out... 1."

Suddenly the rope from the back of Ace's suit tightens and he's dragged toward the window. Sedgwick is dragged right after him. They're pulled out the window and up to the helicopter hovering above.

Ace calls out to Sedgwick as they're flying up toward the helicopter: "Before I pass out, I'm placing you under arrest."

Ace is barely able to stay awake. He and Sedgwick reach the helicopter and are pulled in moments before Ace's strength gives way.

Ace's boss puts handcuffs on Sedgwick.

Ace looks sleepily up to his boss. "Ace Warburton, Master Spy." And then he goes to sleep.

Gospel Message

Materials: GPS, Compass, Flashlight, picture of a cross, picture of the word SIN, Bible, extra Bibles

Prep: before lesson place cross picture and sin picture so they can be easily seen by the children and are on either side of where you will be standing.

Today's training is in using gadgets. Gadgets are interesting, unfamiliar, or unusual devices with a practical use. What gadgets did Ace use in our story

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today? [*Wait for responses – sunglasses, pen*] Could Ace have completed his mission successfully without the help of the gadgets? [*Allow responses*]

Sometimes spies need help. They use gadgets to get them out of sticky situations.

Believers have something even better than the coolest gadget to help them.

On the night Jesus was arrested, He had a special supper with His disciples. One of the things Jesus told them was that soon He would have to leave them and go back to heaven.

Jesus made a promise. Even though He was going back to heaven, He was going to send a Friend who would help them.

But the Father will send the Friend in My name to help you. The Friend is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26

This promise is for all believers. This Friend will teach us; this Friend will remind us of what Jesus said. This friend is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives inside all believers, helping them to obey Jesus and helping them to become more and more like Jesus.

You might be wondering who the Holy Spirit is. The Holy Spirit is God. This is a hard thing for us to understand – There is one God in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God and He has the supernatural power to make us new and help us become more and more like Jesus.

How does the Holy Spirit help believers? The Holy Spirit lives inside believers and helps them to think and talk and behave in ways that are good and right.

Even though we have been forgiven for our sins, we still sin sometimes. We still make the wrong choices. Because we are following Jesus, doesn't make us perfect.

We need help to choose to do right. We need help to obey Jesus. The Holy Spirit is that help.

Does anyone know what this is? [*Hold up the GPS. Wait for responses.*] It's a GPS – a Global Positioning System. A GPS works by pinpointing where you

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are on earth at any time and at any place. You can use a GPS to help you get where you want to go. When you turn a GPS on in a car, it tells you where you are right now. Then you can type in where you want to go and the GPS will guide you. It will give you directions and if you follow those directions you will reach your destination. A GPS can also help you get back on track if you take a wrong turn. It will tell you the right way to go.

A GPS is a gadget that we can use to help guide us in the right direction. This GPS can remind us that the Holy Spirit guides us in the right direction.

One of the ways the Holy Spirit helps us is as a guide. The Holy Spirit directs us and helps us grow as believers.

But the Father will send the Friend in my name to help you. The Friend is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26

[Take out compass and tell children what direction you are facing. Turn towards the sin sign and tell children what direction you are now facing. Ask if they can guess what direction you will be facing if you turn towards the cross. Turn towards the cross and tell the children what direction you are facing.]

This is a compass. A compass tells you if you are going north, south, east, or west. A compass will guide you in the direction you want to go. The Holy Spirit is kind of like a compass. Except that the Holy Spirit will always lead you to what's best.

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. John 16:13

The Holy Spirit is a guide to help us grow. The Holy Spirit helps by leading us to what is best.

[If possible, darken the room and then turn on the flashlight so that it reveals the picture of the cross.]

When it was dark, we couldn't see very much. The flashlight revealed more of what is in this room. Especially the cross because I was shining the flashlight right at the picture.

The Holy Spirit is like a flashlight. He reveals more of Jesus.

When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the

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Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. John 15:26

The Holy Spirit helps us know Jesus better. The Holy Spirit helps us understand true things about Jesus.

So, gadgets can help spies. Believers have something even better than the coolest gadget to help them. The Holy Spirit is a guide [*hold up the GPS*] to help us grow. He is like a compass [*hold up the compass*] leading us to what is best. The Holy Spirit shines like a flashlight [*hold up the flashlight*] revealing more of Jesus.

Jesus promised to help us. He promised to give us a Friend who would help us become more like Him.

The Holy Spirit lives inside believers and helps them become more and more like Jesus. What was Jesus like?

Think back on the stories I've told you this week and remember what Jesus was like [*encourage responses*]. Obedient, humble, faithful, kind, loving, compassionate, focused (He had a mission to accomplish and He didn't let anything distract Him from it).

The Bible says that when we let the Holy Spirit work in our lives, we start to behave and act differently. When we let the Holy Spirit work in us, we become more loving, more joyful, more peaceful, and more patient. We become kinder. The result is goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself."

Those are all qualities Jesus had. The more those show up in our lives, the more we are becoming like Jesus.

How can we learn from Jesus, the Master and be more like Him?

Well, to learn from Jesus and become more like Him, we have to know Him. The best way to get to know Him is to spend time with Him.

We can spend time with Him by reading the Bible. The Bible tells us what Jesus is like; what He did when He was on earth; how He acted; how He

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treated people; what He said. The books in the Bible that tell us about Jesus are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Those are the first books in the New Testament part of the Bible. So, spend time every day reading the Bible. That is one way we can spend time with Jesus.

Another way we can spend time with Jesus is by talking to Him. This is called prayer. It's a little different than talking to other people, because we can't see Jesus. But we can know that He hears us. Talk to Jesus; tell Him everything. Tell Him about school and your family and your friends. Tell Him how you are feeling. Remember, He understands what it's like. Tell Him that you love Him and want to be more like Him.

But the Father will send the Friend in My name to help you. The Friend is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26

The Holy Spirit helps us grow to be more like Jesus!

[Pray]