

Preschool Magic Ministry



by Richard Lenski

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Preschool and magic; two terms that do not go together. My first time dealing with this was years ago when I was relatively new in using magic to teach the gospel and at a new church. My wife and I were teaching large group introduction to the lesson. All the students K-6th were gathered together, we created a magic intro to the verse or subject and then the classes were broken down for age appropriate teaching. All went well for about a year and one day the leader of the group pulled me aside and said we have a problem. “The teachers are complaining you and your wife are too good and you need to tone it down because the teachers cannot match what you do.” Because I was much younger and not too wise I responded, “Well maybe they need to get better.” That was the last time we taught large group.

The next week I was assigned to the preschool group of 2, 3 and 4 year olds. There was an immediate check in my spirit and I felt God saying to me don't do it. I declined, stepped down and eventually changed churches.

It has taken years to understand why I wasn't to teach that group with gospel magic illustrations. These children have no idea what magic is. For me to produce an ice cream cone from my bare hands is equal to mom reaching into a freezer and handing them one. Everything in their lives is magic, it appears, disappears and it is just their lives. Produce a bunny, so what, they want to pet it, the entire concept of magic is lost on them.



Avoid the following several areas.

Every day, every minute, children are learning. Part of that learning experience is to copy what they see. So we should avoid the following items.

1. Balloons: I do not recommend the use of balloons with preschoolers. Besides the obvious choking hazard it presents, try blowing up a balloon in front of the children and watch how many cover their ears and are frightened it may pop.
2. Chopper effects: Last thing we need is a child that thinks they can cut parts of bodies.
3. Chemical effects: Children will put anything in their mouths.
4. Fire effects: Fire should never be used for obvious reasons.
5. Ropes or restraint items that would involve tying someone up. You do not need to find a toddler with a rope around their neck.

Over the years I have been dragged into preschool classes with the request to just do one thing for the children. I believe I have found ideas that work and would like to share them. Not all have a bible message.

Get on the floor!

Get down on the floor with the children; let them see you eye to eye and not staring up at a giant. Be prepared for them to grab your stuff and sit on you.



Mouth Coils

Mouth coils sound great and look good but never put anything in your mouth or do anything a child might try to imitate. I never put or pull anything out on my mouth, ears or any place a child might be

inclined to do so.

So what do we do with a mouth coil? Producing one is not amazing to the children, what intrigues them is the colors and how long it is. And don't expect it to stay in one piece. I simply produce it from my hand, nothing fancy. This would be a good place to talk about God's rainbow and why God made it.

Paper Hat Tears

There are several varieties of hat tears. They are colorful and will hold their attention as you make one. I would use this around Easter time and tie it in with an Easter bonnet and how girls dress up for Easter. New life can be talked about when the flower is created. Also depending on age, tie in new life with Jesus and new life in him.



Zipper Change Bag



Change bags are fun but a zipper change bag can have them laughing. Have several small different items on the floor in front of you. Sit behind them. Use the bag in the unzipped position. Throw something small into the closed part of the bag and say, where did it go? Some will say into the bag. Look through the bag right at them through the unzipped side. Now reach in and say “That was a good guess, I will get it back out.” Reach through the other side of the bag, through it and pull out an object from the floor. “Say that’s not it.” Toss it aside and reach in for the next. Some of the children will call you out on what you are doing and they will be laughing and be involved. When you run out of items to pick up, reach in and grab the item you first put in and say, “There it is.” Now pick up the bag, look through it at the children and say, “This must be an old, old bag, look at the hole in it.

Get Them Involved

Come up with simple stories that get them involved. You will see this in the next routine. Having them answer and talking to you about what they will do will grab their interest. After all you normally can only hold them for two to five minutes. But get them involved and you can hold them for a bit longer.

Zipper Bag & Silk Story

Just producing silks won't impress them, you have to come up with a story they will be involved in. I made so simple silks you can easily



copy with Sharpie. Copy the idea on 9" silks and put them in the bag in the order instructed. Do not wash these silks as the ink will run.

Of course it is a simple snowman but how you handle the story will give you some fun results. Load them in the change bag with the snowman first, hat and face silk next, arms and middle piece next and finally the big snowball with the lumps of coal. You will pull them out in reverse order.

Pull out the white silk and say, “Did you ever look out the window see the ground with white stuff? What is that? That’s right it’s snow.”

Put the silk back in the other side of the bag. “Do you like to play in the snow? What do you do out there? Make snowballs, go sledding, did you ever make a snowman?” What is the first thing you need for a snowman?” Pull out the next silk. “Do you think you need a big ball of snow like this to start it and maybe some buttons or rocks.” (Ask them how they would make a big snowball for the base.)

Put that silk back and pull out the next. “What else do you think you need? This looks like you need another ball to go on top of the first one. Maybe you need some sticks for arms and some more rocks or buttons. How do you get the next ball on top of the first? Do you get someone to help? Now we have a big ball and a small ball on top of it, what else do we need?”

“We will need a smaller ball for his head. Do you think his head will be cold? What should we put on his head to keep him warm? A hat, very good. Maybe we need some more buttons or rocks for his face.” (Pull out the last silk) “What else do you see we need? Right, a nose so he can smell.”

Put the last silk in the bag and ask them to help tell you how to make one from the start. Even try to act it out in a simple way. Pull out the last silk of the completed snowman. “You all did a great job. We have the three snowballs on top of each others. He has his arms and buttons. And look at the smile on his face, he is happy too.”

So a simple story that got them involved will keep them interested for a while longer than normal. Find simple stories to accomplish the same type lesson.

***IMPORTANT NOTICE!** No matter what age group you are dealing with, you will never get everyone interested in what you are doing. This age group will probably have more that won't care about what you are doing than an older group. Make sure you have helpers that can oversee those that are not involved.



Spring Puppets Raccoon and/or Skunk



Spring puppets are a great way to have them interact with an animal with no chance they can get bit. With a little practice you can make them life like. Simply introducing the puppet will grab their interest. Pretend to feed them and let them pet them. It would be a good time to teach them God made all the animals and we should always be kind to them and not hurt them so they will not bite you or run away. Also teach them never to approach or pet an animal without their parents' permission.

Wilting Flower



This is a fun magic trick that is easy to do and versatile.

As a walk around you can go to each child and tell them your flower is sad and have them jump or applaud or cheer to get it to stand up.

You can use it the typical way that it droops when everyone is sad or not listening but when they are happy, have them applaud or cheer it stands up straight and tall.

When storytelling you can use it to gauge the emotion of the story. During the good parts, it stands up but in bad or sad times it droops and is very sad.

A simple gospel application would be telling how God sends rain to water the crops to feed us.

Humpty Dumpty

A well known fairy tale can entertain and teach at the same time.



Most children know this rhyme and you can easily use it. Depending on the children, you may want to perform this without the breakaway pieces. In this case it would be used simply as an object lesson.

“Everyone knows Humpty Dumpty. What happened to him? Right he fell and broke in many pieces and no one could put him back together.” (If you are brave enough to use the breakaway feature go ahead.) “Everyone say, Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. All the kings horses and all the kings men couldn’t put Humpty Dumpty back together again.

You can leave the lesson there or continue with, “Did you know there is someone who could put him back together? That person is God. He could put Humpty together easily. In the same way, if someone is sick, God can put them together, fix them. There is nothing that God cannot do. Let’s change the last line to, “And only God can put him back together again.”

Thumb Tip & Silk

Thumb tips are simple to use and with the children I would take the silk and say, “I have a little cloth here, we will call him Bill. Bill loves to hide; do you think you can find him?” Now make the silk disappear and reappear several times and add some fun to it by finding him in several places, maybe even someone’s shoe or pocket. “Did you have a hard time trying to find him? He seemed to be everywhere. There is someone else who is everywhere and that is God. He is always around; He loves you.”

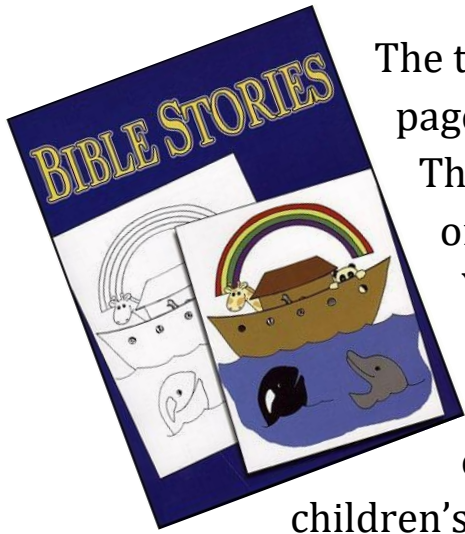
Squeakers

(In days gone by you could touch their noses but COVID has changed the world. You can wear gloves and do that or touch their shoulder or shoes and accomplish the same result.)



Squeakers will bring smiles and wonder to a room of children. Walking among the little ones squeaking it as you touch their noses will have them lining up to get “squeaked”. Touch their noses and squeak but touch yours and it doesn’t work. Seem disappointed that your touch doesn’t work on you and when you finally get your nose to squeak act shocked and smile.

Bible Coloring Book



The typical use of the coloring book is to show the pages blank; then show the black and white pages. Then ask the children to either pretend to throw or yell out colors. And then show the color pages. Yes this can be done It's fun but you can use it to start a discussion on a certain Bible story if it is in the book. Or teach them the Bible is full of true events and possibly talk about their children's Bible.

Instant Art

The instant art pictures come in all varieties. These can be used in the same way the Bible Coloring book is used. (Some may not know what you are talking about here. Do you have any pictures?)

Yes I will admit there was very little magic here but just ideas on working with preschoolers. In every interaction with the children always let them know God loves them no matter what. Try to make all stories and interactions personal to their level of knowledge.

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