

BIG IDEA

Don't skip this step —
tell others about Jesus.

BIBLE

Philip in Ethiopia:
Acts 8:26–40; Isaiah 6:1–8

LARGE GROUP TIME

Our intergalactic journey is nearing its end and it's almost time to return to Earth. We have taken one small step after another together as we learned about what it means to follow Jesus. The step we are going to take this week is mission-critical. We have a true and important story that we all need to share!

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Rocket Race

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up rocket ships (plastic cups) on “flight paths” (string) as shown [here](#). There should be one string course for every team of five to eight kids. Kids will take turns aiming a “booster” (water blaster or spray bottle) at the open mouth of a cup to have it travel the length of the string. A leader should reset the cup at the starting end for the next player. The first team to get all of their team members to send their “rockets” to “space” wins! If playing this indoors, set up tarps or towels underneath the playing area and provide ponchos to your leaders running the game. Alternatively, you could do a [balloon race](#) instead.
 - ✳ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** For kids who might struggle with the trigger action of a water blaster or a spray bottle, consider getting [rocket ship toys](#) with wheels they can release down a ramp or pool noodles cut in half.
- What a space race! Traveling through space has always been a fascination for humans everywhere. For a period of time, people were competing to see who could travel to space first. As with any race, tensions ran high, and enemies were made.
- Jesus’ followers had enemies, too, but that didn’t stop them from sharing the good news. They were so excited about their mission that they were ready to talk to complete strangers about Jesus when they were sent to different parts of the world!

ACTIVITY | Comet-y Pairs

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write out some space-related jokes (you can reference a list like [this one](#)) on separate pieces of paper, separating the answers and the questions. Mix them all up and pass out one piece of paper to each kid — they will get a random question or an answer. Have them walk around the room and try to find the person who has the corresponding question or answer. Then have the pair present their joke to the rest of the group together.
 - ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Do it Jeopardy-style, where you give kids a word (gravity, planet, Neptune,

Saturn, rocket), and they have to write a joke incorporating that word in the answer.

- **What made this activity challenging?**
- When you tell a joke or a story, it's good to have all the pieces in place. Not knowing your matching question or answer probably felt like you skipped over something. It's like when someone tells you a story but leaves out the beginning or the ending.
- As followers of Jesus, there are many things we can do to grow closer to God, but there's one super important step that we absolutely cannot skip!

QUESTION | "How many stars are in the galaxy? "

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have kids try to guess how many stars are in the Milky Way galaxy. Have them call out numbers and indicate how close they are by pointing up to tell them to go higher or pointing down to go lower.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Have preteens, as groups or individuals, write down their guesses on paper. Collect all the papers and arrange them from lowest to highest. Then have kids line up behind the answer they think is correct, even if it wasn't their original guess. Congratulate the people who picked the answer choice that was closest to the answer.*
- **How many stars do you think are in the Milky Way, which is the galaxy we live in?**
- Okay, even the smartest space scientists doesn't know for sure. But that's because stars die and new stars are born all the time and they are light years away. We can't see all of them, even with all the cool space tech. Most people agree there are probably about 100 to 400 billion stars in our galaxy alone.
- So we can't see or count the stars, but we can start with the one that we can see . . . the sun!
- When Jesus told his followers to go to the ends of the Earth and tell people about him, it must have felt like a huge, impossible task, like counting the stars in the galaxy. But they obeyed and went around sharing the good news . . . with one person at a time.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Acts 8:26–40 (Philip in Ethiopia)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read the Bible passage (or parts of it) then share the talking points below. You may also consider dressing up as an astronaut each week as a storyteller in space!*
- Hey, space explorers! I'm so glad you can join me today as we learn about true stories from the Bible that are sometimes even more unbelievable than the things we've learned about outer space! It's time to turn from stargazing to zooming into Scripture.
- **Let's read Acts 8:26–40.**
- Philip was a follower of Jesus who had taken all the right steps – he believed in Jesus, he prayed for others, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. That's why when an angel of God told him where to go, he not only got the message, he obeyed. Turns out, there was someone God wanted him to meet.
- The Ethiopian man he met was an important guy who was probably well-educated. But he was struggling to understand the words he was reading from the book of Isaiah in the Bible. How fortunate for him that Philip "happened" to be walking that way!
- Philip knew that this was why God sent him here. So he took the time to explain to the man that the passage he was reading was actually talking about Jesus. Even though Isaiah had lived long before Jesus came to Earth, Isaiah was a prophet who received messages from God about what would happen for God's people. Isaiah had talked about someone who would die, even though he had done no wrong. Philip explained to the man that the person Isaiah was describing was Jesus.
- Then one thing led to another. The Ethiopian man received the good news, asked to be baptized, and

became a follower of Jesus, too.

- Philip didn't shy away from explaining what he knew about Jesus to this man because he knew that part of being a follower of Jesus was to invite others to follow him, too. He took *one small step* to obey God and helped the Ethiopian man take his first step toward God.

BIG IDEA | Don't skip this step – tell others about Jesus.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Project the [printable](#) provided and invite kids to take turns using a [telescope](#) to locate the Big Idea. You can also zoom into the image to show kids where it is. Alternatively, print a copy for each kid or pair of kids and have them circle it when they locate it.
- It looks very small but this is a very Big Idea to take back to Earth with us: **Don't skip this step – tell others about Jesus.**

ACTIVITY | Constellation Confusion

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create a page with a bunch of marker dots all over in a random array. Using a transparency film on top of the dots, connect the dots to create a simple image or a word. Give each pair of kids a copy of only the dots and have them try to figure out how to form the image or word you tell them. After a few minutes, place your transparency paper on top of the dots to reveal the image or word. You may want to show kids an image of a constellation (like [this one](#)) as well.
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Give kids both the blank copy with only the dots and a copy of the lines connected to form the desired image. Help kids connect the dots on their page to resemble the worked example. You may want to use different colors for the dots and the lines so the strokes stand out more.
- **Do you know what a constellation is?** It's a group of stars that form a pattern. Astronomers can look at the starry sky and tell you exactly what constellations form in the sky. But for most people, all we see are little dots in the sky . . . just like how you might have only seen a bunch of dots on your piece of paper until I showed you how I connected the dots!
- The man from Ethiopia was probably just as confused reading from Scripture as we are when we look up at the stars. But when Philip came along and connected the dots for him, it all clicked! He understood and wanted to follow Jesus, too.
- There are still so many things we have yet to learn about God. But the deeper we dive into Scripture and find out what it says about God, the more dots we can connect, too. And sometimes, God will use us to help someone understand something about the Bible, too. So even if you feel like you have much to learn yourself, **don't skip this step – tell others about Jesus.**

ACTIVITY | Where's That From?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare a few verses to read out of context (like Genesis 25:30, Judges 7:5, Jonah 2:10, 2 Kings 2:23, Mark 11:14, and more.) Without saying where the verse is from, read a part of the verse out loud (omit names) to see if kids can guess who said it, what story it's talking about, or what book in the Bible it comes from.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Remind preteens that Philip was able to help the Ethiopian eunuch because he was knowledgeable about Scripture. How well do they feel they know the Bible? What practical steps might they take to be more familiar with what the Bible says?
- **Have you ever been confused by something you read in the Bible?** There are times when we may not understand something we read in the Bible. We typically don't understand because we may have only read

one verse that maybe is a part of a whole story.

- We just read some funny and strange verses that would be hard to understand if you have not read the full story. If it weren't for Philip obeying God and helping the Ethiopian man understand what he was reading, he may not have come to understand all that Jesus did for him. There are people we know who may not know much about who Jesus is and how he came to save them because he loves them. That's why, like Philip, your church leaders, family members, and all of us who follow Jesus must take care that we **don't skip this step – tell others about Jesus.**
- **Who can help you understand what the Bible says?**
- **What can you do to help someone else understand what the Bible says?**

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 6:1–8

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read the passage together.*
- In this Scripture passage, Isaiah had a vision where he was standing before God. He describes loud sounds and bright light, angels flying all around praising God. In the middle of all of this, he hears the voice of God ask who is going to be God's messenger? Isaiah basically said, "Pick me!"
- God doesn't force anyone to tell people about Jesus. God wants willing messengers. And when we really get to know and love Jesus, we can't help but share this with others. It makes us eager to tell others about how Jesus fills our lives with joy, peace, and love.
- Just like God sent Philip and Isaiah, God sent your pastors, your leaders, your parents, and other people to tell you all about Jesus. Now it's our turn to share what we've learned. So as you continue to grow in your relationship with God, **don't skip this step – tell others about Jesus!**

VIDEO | One Small Step, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's episode of [Press Play](#).*

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | Gravity With God

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play ambient music ([like this](#)) as kids reflect. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to do so. For more information, [read this!](#)*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *You may want to provide kids with some images that help tell the story of Jesus to others. Check out the coloring pages or Bible story illustrations provided in your resource folder to put together a booklet kids can carry around to help them remember and share their story!*
- It's time to follow that gravitational force and step back down to Earth. Think about the Bible story we heard today. Philip did not wait to go to the place an angel told him to go. He didn't ask follow-up questions, he didn't make any excuses, and he didn't even stop to comment about how weird this whole thing seemed. He just went.
- **Why do you think he didn't wait at all?**
- People like Philip and the prophet Isaiah not only heard from God, but they did what God instructed them to do. When an angel of God appeared to Philip, he didn't say, "I'm a little busy right now, can I do it later?" When the voice of God spoke asking who will be God's messenger, Isaiah said, "Here am I, send me!" and not, "Here's another guy, send him."
- **What are some of the things that stop us today from sharing Jesus with others?**
- **Who can we turn to when we need the courage to share Jesus?**
- We can always turn to God to help us be brave when it comes to talking about Jesus to others. Even when it

feels scary, **don't skip this step — tell others about Jesus.** God will always be with you.

RESPONSE | Mission Log

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Distribute the mission log you've been using for the Response segment each week. Have them respond to this week's prompts with words or pictures. Feel free to pass out fun stickers once they complete their log. This week, flip through the pages to review what they've learned then send the logs home with the kids.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *If you had kids logging their responses remotely and digitally, now would be the time to check in and discuss their entries.*
- It's time for our final mission log entry. Today, let's think about five people who we can start a conversation about Jesus with. It's okay if these people already go to church. The more practice you get sharing the story of Jesus with others, the easier it will be to share with more people!
- **Let's write down their names or draw pictures of them.**
- Afterward, think about some ways you might want to tell them about Jesus. Will you meet with them in person? Will you call them? Send them a video message? Write them a card? There are many ways you can talk to someone about Jesus!

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 19:1 (NIV)

- **"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have two teams sit in a row and face each other. Assign each kid one (or more) word(s) of the memory verse. The objective is for them to say the words of the memory verse in quick succession. The last person from each team to say the last word jumps up and rings a bell or presses a buzzer placed between the teams.*

PRAYER

- God, thank you for giving us the good news of Jesus we can share with others. Lead us to the places and people who need to hear this good news. Give us the right words to say and be with us as we go and tell the world about you. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS**
 - **Who told Philip to go down to the desert road?** *An angel of God.*
 - **What was the Ethiopian eunuch doing when Philip found him?** *Reading from the book of Isaiah.*
 - **What did the Ethiopian eunuch do immediately after Philip told him about Jesus?** *He asked to be baptized.*
 - **Read Isaiah 6:8. What was Isaiah's answer to the voice of God asking who will be God's messenger?** *"Here am I. Send me!"*
- **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**
 - **How do you think you'll know that God is leading you to share Jesus with someone?**
 - **Once you have an opportunity to tell someone about Jesus, what would you say?**
 - **Are there ways you can share Jesus with others besides with words? How?**

ACTIVITY | Mission: Earth

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give kids a blank piece of paper and have them sketch out a rough map of all the places they*

usually go (home, church, school, friend's house, library, swimming lessons, grocery store).

- Whether it's at school, on the playground, on the soccer field, or at family gatherings, we are surrounded by so many people!
- Draw a map of the places you go each week. Include your home, your school, your church, your sports practice, your friend's house, and more on the map. While you're drawing them out, think about ways you can tell others about Jesus when you are there this week! After you've thought about it, make a plan to do it! **Don't skip this step – tell others about Jesus.**