

# MAGICALLY MAKING DISCIPLES!

Easy Magical Object Lessons to  
Share the Gospel with Children

BRAD  
BROWN  
MAGIC



Brad Brown is a Christian entertainer who travels from coast to coast delighting audiences with his unique blend of comedy and magic. More than mere entertainment, Brad uses his programs to present the gospel of Jesus Christ.

He got his start in magic as a child, when he found a box of magic apparatus in his grandmother's attic. "Like many kids, I went through a phase where I liked magic," says Brad, "but I just never outgrew it." After becoming a Christian in the seventh grade, Brad became involved with the Fellowship of Christian Magicians, and started presenting the Gospel through his magic performances.

Brad continued to hone his skills in performing and ministry through his college years. He directed the Georgetown College Baptist Student Union's creative performing arts teams. He also used his magic in ministry while serving as a summer missionary for several years. After graduation, his ministry continued to expand.

Later, Brad earned a master's degree in Theological Studies from Liberty University. Now, he is a full-time Christian entertainer, working in partnership with churches, camps, conferences, and other Christian organizations to share the love of Jesus through his magic and comedy. He has also taken his magic on tour overseas numerous times.

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**“I have become all things  
to all people so that by  
all possible means  
I might save some.”**

1 Corinthians 9:22b (NIV)

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# INTRODUCTION

As a Christian magician, my job is to travel across the country and around the world using magic and other silly things to share the love of Jesus. And it's a pretty awesome job to have! This booklet is designed to equip you to use some of the same tools as I do to present the gospel.

While I invest a lot of time and money developing my routines, I want to make it as simple and inexpensive as possible for you. So, these object lessons can be put together with readily available materials and very little preparation.

Before we get into the specific object lessons, I'd like to share a few thoughts on sharing the gospel with kids.

## TIPS FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL

### Share the “Whole Story”

A generation or two ago, most people in our culture had basic foundational knowledge of the Christian faith. That is no longer the case. Today, it's not just that people haven't responded to Jesus, but they often have no real understanding of who he is or why they need him.

So, don't assume that kids today know which God you are talking about, what sin is, who Jesus is, why bad things happen, what happens after death, and so forth. We must share the whole story from the beginning.

### Avoid Jargon

There are a lot of words and phrases that we Christians use that can lead to confusion. Any word or phrase that kids either don't

use in their daily conversations, or that mean something different in the context we are using them should be avoided or clearly explained. Even words as simple as “sin” and “faith” need to be explained.

## **Be Literal**

Kids are very literal and have difficulty with abstract concepts and language. Even middle school aged children tend to be very literal. So share the gospel in a clear, literal way. Watch out for abstract or figurative phrases like “ask Jesus into your heart.” Setting aside the fact that the phrase really isn’t scriptural, it’s just confusing to literal-minded kids.

## **Give Them Reasons to Believe**

Kids hear a lot of stories. Why should they believe the ones you are telling them are true? Many kids think that church is where you hear stories, but school is where you learn how the world really works. There are very good reasons to believe in God and to trust the Bible. Kids need to know that.

For example, how do we know the Bible is true? (For that matter, what is the Bible? Where did it come from? How is it different from other books?) How do we know God is real? How do we know what he’s like? How do we know Jesus really is God?

## **Beware of Inadvertent Manipulation**

Depending on the situation, it can be very easy to get kids to make some outward profession of faith, like raising their hands, walking down an aisle, or repeating a prayer. If kids like you, they’ll want to do what they think you want them to do. Also, in a group situation, they’ll tend to follow the crowd and do what their friends do. This makes it easy for kids to just “go through the motions” without really understanding.

# A Complete Gospel Presentation

What are the things people need to understand in order to respond to the gospel? Obviously, there's room for debate on this topic, and it will depend on the specific situation. Below I have listed the basics that I feel are important. You won't necessarily cover everything in a single presentation—especially if you are working with the same children week after week. However, these represent basic, foundational truths that I believe people should understand in order to be in a position to make an informed decision.

- God is the creator of everything. When God created the world it was perfect.
- We humans turned our back on God, and corrupted God's perfect creation. It is this rebellion that is the ultimate cause of the suffering and evil in the world.
- All of us are guilty of breaking God's law.
- There is a price that must be paid when the law is broken. Since we have broken God's law, it is only fair that this price must be paid.
- Jesus is God in human form. He lived a perfect life, and died to pay the price for our sin. He then rose from the dead.
- God knows each of us, and desires for us to be in a relationship with him.
- We each must respond to what God has done for us. We can put our trust in God, or keep living apart from him.

# MAGICAL OBJECT LESSONS

## Three Bead Illustration

### Overview

Three large beads are threaded onto ropes. The first one represents God. The one on the opposite end represents a person. The one between them represents sin, and is keeping God and the person separated. The "sin" falls off the ropes. With the sin out of the way, God and the person are now able to get together.

### Required

#### ***3 "things" to thread onto the rope***

They must be large enough to be seen by your group. Ideally, they should each be different colors.

Three four-inch segments cut from the end of pool noodles work well. In a pinch, even decorated toilet paper tubes would work.

#### ***2 pieces of rope***

They need to be at least four feet long. The ropes should be thick enough to be easily seen by the group. Shoelaces are good for smaller settings. For larger crowds, soft rope, such as sash cord, works well. Ribbon could be used instead.

#### ***Thread***

It should be thin enough to break easily, though stronger thread will be required if your three objects are heavier.

#### ***Handkerchief with a cross on it (Optional)***

You can just use a Sharpie marker to draw and color in a cross on a cheap white handkerchief.



## Preparation

Using a piece of thread, tie the two pieces of rope together in the middle. (Illustration 1)

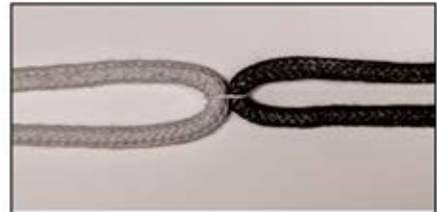
Tie the “sin” tube onto the ropes, as described below.

While it is possible to secretly do this secretly during the presentation, I recommend keeping it simple, and doing this part ahead of time.

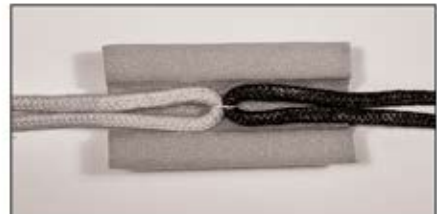
Fold each rope in half, so they just meet up where they are tied together. Slide the “sin” tube over both ropes, so the place where the ropes are tied together is hidden inside the tube. (Illustration 2)

Take one end of the left rope and one end of the right rope, and tie them over the tube in a single overhand knot, like the first knot you use when tying your shoes. (Illustration 3)

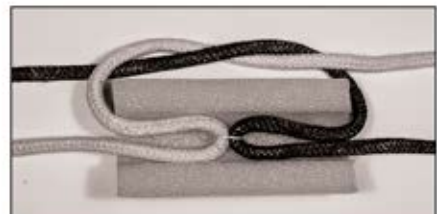
Now it should look like the tube is tied onto the ropes, but if you pull the ends of the rope, the thread will break and the tube will fall off.



**Illustration 1:** Ropes tied together with thread. Different colors of rope are shown here for clarity. Don't really use different colored ropes!



**Illustration 2:** Cut-away view of ropes threaded through tube. (Again, don't really use different colored ropes!)

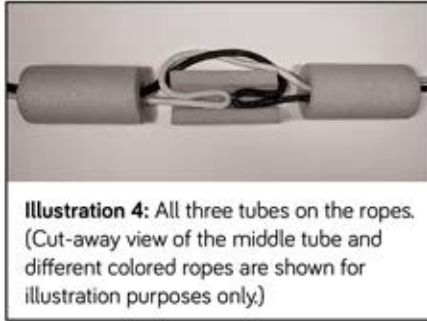


**Illustration 3:** Cut away view of ropes tied around tube. (Of course, both your ropes will be the same color.)

# Presentation

Introduce the “God” and “person” tubes. Explain who God is, and that he desires to have a friendship with us, but there is a problem.

Introduce the “sin” tube and ropes. Thread the “God” tube over both ropes on one side, and the “person” tube over the ropes on the other side. (Illustration 4)



**Illustration 4:** All three tubes on the ropes. (Cut-away view of the middle tube and different colored ropes are shown for illustration purposes only.)

Invite two helpers to come up and hold the ends of the rope. One will stand on your right, holding both right ends, and the other on the left, holding the other ends. (Be sure you choose people who will follow your instructions, and not pull and break the thread too soon.) Explain how our sin separates us from God.

Introduce the cross handkerchief. Explain what Jesus did for us on the cross, and cover the “sin” tube with the cross. Reach under the handkerchief and pull on the ropes on each side of the “sin” tube, breaking the thread that is holding the ropes inside that tube. Remove the “sin” tube, or just allow it to fall to the ground.

It is not necessary to use the handkerchief in this illustration. You could simply have the volunteers pull the ropes and the “sin” tube will fall off. However, I prefer having a visual representation of the cross to reinforce the concept that it is the work of Christ that takes care of our sin.

Remove the handkerchief and show that now that the sin is no longer in the way. It is possible for God and the person to get together.

# Choices

## Overview

Six envelopes are displayed. They contain different things people think are important in life. An audience member chooses one. The others are opened, showing various things people think bring meaning to life. Finally the chosen envelope is opened, revealing the audience member made a good choice. It contains a picture of a cross, representing what should be most important in our lives, knowing and serving Jesus.

## Required

### **6 envelopes**

If you have a large crowd, use large manila envelopes. For smaller groups, you can use smaller envelopes. Subtly number the envelopes from one to six using small numbers on the top corner of the back. This will enable you can keep them in the order you want. There must not be numbers that are visible to the audience.

### **6 pictures**

You'll need six different pictures. Depending on your presentation, these can represent things people consider important, ways people try to get to heaven, or things that people try to find meaning in life.

You may wish to put notes or Bible verses on the back of each picture, to aid you in your presentation.

You can easily find free clip art on the web. For example:

- Smiley Face (Do what makes you happy.)
- Money Bag (Live for money and power.)
- Cross (Jesus)

- Non-Christian religious symbols (Other faiths)
- Church (Going to church)
- Ten Commandments (Being good)

## Presentation

Display the envelopes, and explain that they contain pictures illustrating ways people try to get to heaven. Keep them in order using the small numbers you've subtly written on the back, with the number one envelope on your left, and the number six on your right. For a small crowd, you can lay them out in a row. For a large crowd, bring up six kids, and have one hold each envelope.

Choose someone from the audience, and ask them to "quickly shout out a number between one and six." It is critical that you do not ask them to choose an envelope! Just ask them to quickly give you a number, without telling them what it is for. Most often, people will choose either three or four which is ideal. However, no matter what they choose, you will give them the cross.

Below are the counting procedures that ensure the third envelope is chosen. They assume envelope one is on the left.

### Three

Count starting from the left envelope, the one you secretly numbered 1. You'll end up on envelope 3, containing the cross.

### Four

Count starting from the left envelope, the one you secretly numbered 6. You'll end up on envelope 3, containing the cross.

For all other numbers, tell them you'll spell the number to make it more random. It is a rather odd thing to do, just do it quickly and don't make a big deal about it. You will spell the number they

choose, indicating one envelope for each letter. As the numbers one, two, five and six are spelled with three or four letters, you'll end up on the cross as long as you start from the correct side.

### **One, Two, or Six**

Start from the left, saying one letter for each envelope. For one, for example, you'd say "O" for the first envelope, "N" for the second, and "E" for the third.

### **Five**

Start from the right, saying one letter for each envelope. You'd spell F-I-V-E, ending up on the cross.

Go through each of the envelopes that weren't chosen, explaining their significance. Finally open the chosen envelope, showing the cross.

## **Quicker Variation**

You can do a quicker version, using only three envelopes. When displaying the envelopes, keep the cross in the center. Below are the procedures to ensure that the cross is chosen.

Ask a volunteer to pick up two of the envelopes.

If they left the cross envelope behind, you're done. Say "You choose to leave this envelope behind. Let's look at the two you didn't choose."

If the cross was one of the envelopes he took, say "Hand me one of the two envelopes you choose."

If he hands you the cross, say, "So this (the one just handed to you) is the one you chose. Let's look at the two you didn't choose."

Otherwise, say, "That leaves you with one envelope. Let's first look at the two you didn't choose."

# Forgiveness

## Overview

A glass of water is used to represent the presenter's life. Iodine is added to the water, illustrating a life stained by sin. A second glass of water is displayed, representing Jesus. Water from the "Jesus" glass is poured into the glass representing your life. The dirty water becomes clear, illustrating how Jesus takes care of our sin when we invite him into our lives.

## Required

*Two Clear Glasses*

*A bottle or other container of water*

*Iodine, available from most drug stores*

*Bleach*

## Preparation

Fill the "Jesus" glass with water. Add about one cap full of bleach. (If you are using a large glass or container, you may need more bleach. Be sure to try it out beforehand.)

## Presentation

I fill up the glass representing my life, talking about how I thought I was a good person. I add iodine to my glass, talking about how my life was stained by sin. I add more clean water, sharing about my attempts to make up for my sin with good works. Finally, I talk about deciding to invite God into my messed up life. I introduce the "Jesus" glass, and pour a small amount of the liquid from it into the glass representing my life. The water becomes clear.

# Torn and Restored Paper

## Overview

A strip of paper is torn into several pieces, representing a life destroyed by sin. It is restored to a single full piece, illustrating how God can restore a broken life.

## Required

### *Two strips of paper*

I cut an 8.5x11 sheet vertically into four equal 11-inch long strips, and use two of those.

### *Glue*

Glue dots are ideal, as they don't bleed through and require no drying time. Glue sticks work well. Tape is also fine. Just find something sticky!

## Preparation

Using a small amount of glue placed about 1 inch from the end of one of the strips, attach the two strips back-to-back.

After the glue dries, fold one of the strips into a small packet, so it can be easily concealed behind the other strip.

Start by folding the second strip in half, and then in half again.

Finally, fold it in from all four sides, to make it small enough that it will not be seen when the strip is displayed from the front. (Illustration 5)



## Presentation

Display the piece of paper, keeping the extra packet hidden at the back.

Just hold the paper naturally. As long as you don't act like you're hiding something, the kids will have no reason to suspect there's anything unusual about the paper.

While talking about sin, tear the strip into four pieces, each a couple of inches long.

First tear off about one quarter of the strip, including the secret packet. Then continue to tear the remaining piece twice more., ending up with four pieces roughly the same size. You can freely show the separate pieces, just don't reveal the folded packet.

Arrange the pieces in your hand so they're roughly aligned. The secret extra strip must be at the back, facing you.

Fold the torn pieces together into a packet, about the same size as the hidden packet at the back.

In the process of folding up the torn pieces, turn the entire packet around, so the whole strip is toward the front, and the torn pieces are facing you. There's no need to be "sneaky" about this. No one will be able to distinguish the folded extra strip from the packet of torn pieces.

Now snap your fingers or wave your hand to make the magic happen, and unfold the whole piece paper, keeping the packet of torn pieces concealed behind it.

Talk about how God wants to forgive and restore us, if we'll put our trust in him.



# Airplane

## Overview

The presenter folds a paper airplane, asking whether a plane can take us to heaven. The wings are torn off making a rocket. The presenter then asks whether a rocket can take us to heaven. Finally, the rocket is unfolded revealing a cross, the only way to heaven.

## Required

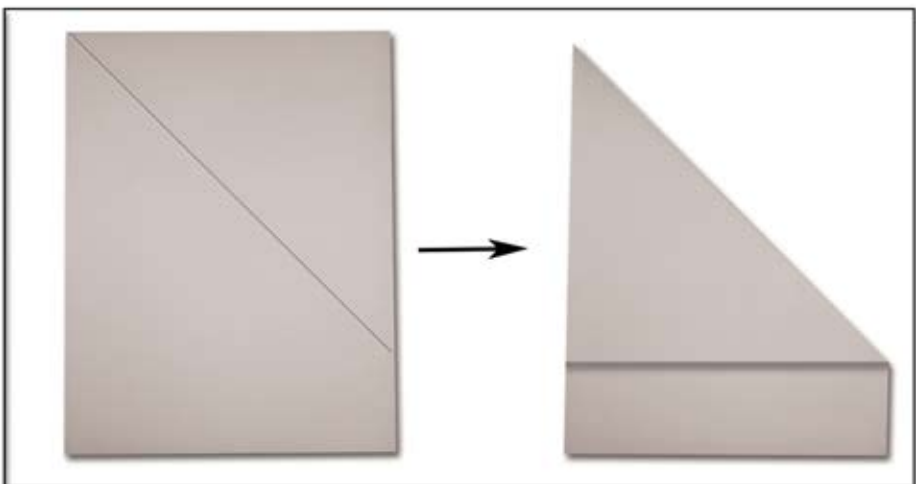
*A sheet of 8.5x11 paper*

## Preparation

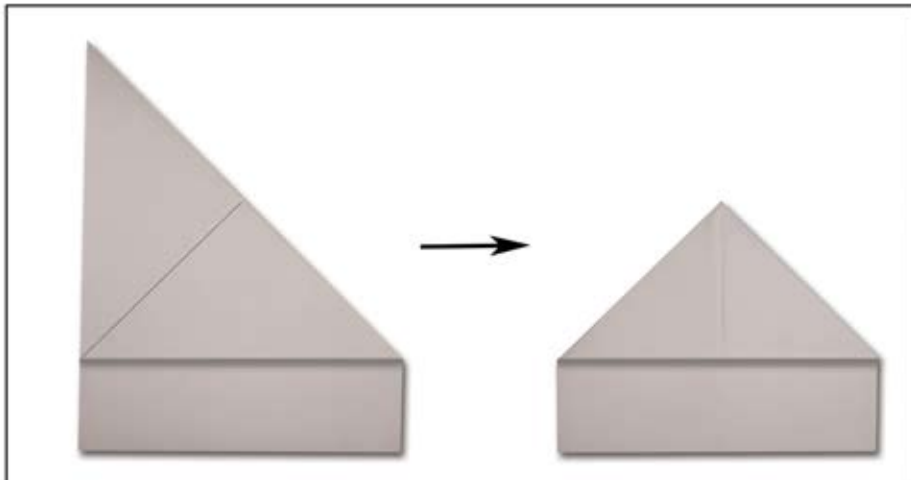
None is required. You can optionally pre-fold the plane and then unfold it. That will allow you to simply follow the creases during the presentation.

## Presentation

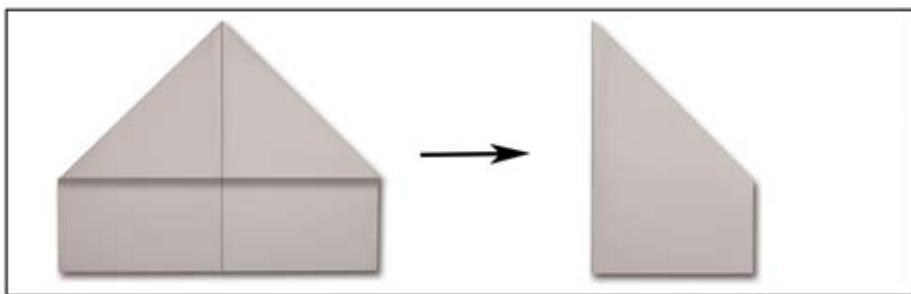
Tell the kids you're going to show them how to make a magic paper airplane. Hold the paper vertically. Fold the top edge over at a 45-degree angle, so the top is even with the side.



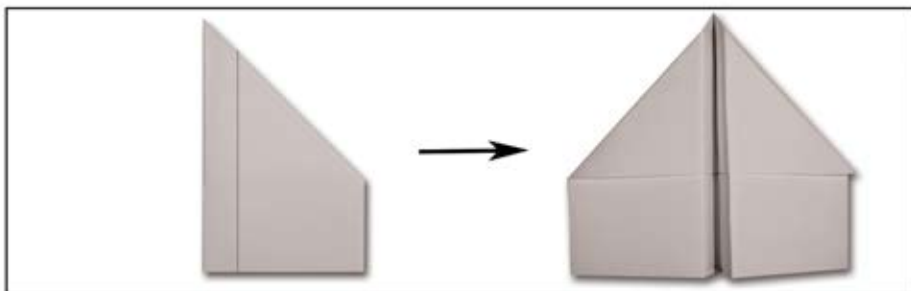
Fold the top corner over to the opposite side.



Fold it in half vertically.

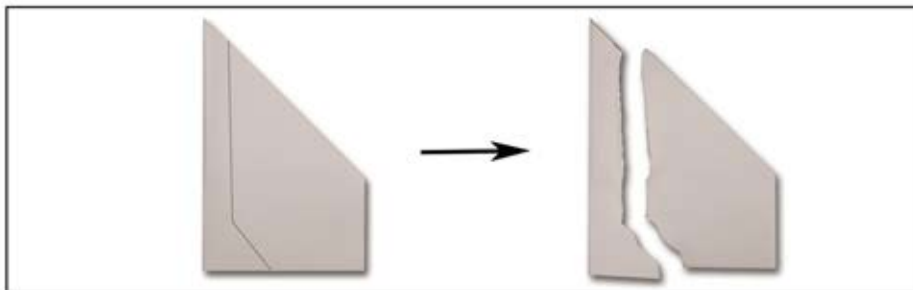


Now you can fold the wings down, making the plane. Ask kids whether or not it's possible to get to heaven in an airplane.



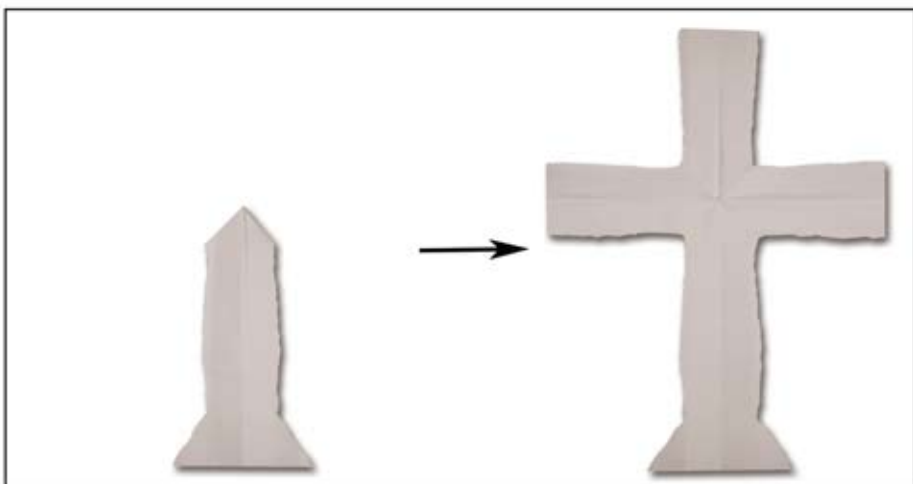
After showing the plane, put the wings back up into their original position.

Starting at the point, tear the wings off, as indicated. Discard the wing pieces.



Open up the middle crease, revealing a rocket ship. Ask the kids whether or not they can get to heaven in a rocket.

Finally, unfold the paper completely, revealing the shape of a cross.



Explain that the only way for us to get to heaven is through what Jesus did for us on the cross.

# God Knows Everything

## Overview

The presenter demonstrates the ability to know the color that a child is thinking of. The presenter then explains that even though this is only a trick, God really does know everything we think and do.

## Required

*Different colored crayons*

## Preparation

No advanced preparation is required.

## Presentation

Give the crayons to a child helper. While your back is turned, have him hand one crayon to you behind your back. The remaining crayons are concealed from view before you turn back around.

Even though you keep the crayon behind your back, you are able to seem to read the child's mind and know the color they selected. Behind your back, scratch the wax of the crayon with your right thumbnail. While keeping the crayon behind your back, bring your right hand in front of you and place it on your forehead, as if concentrating. As you do, take a quick look at your thumbnail, and you'll see bits of the crayon, revealing the color. Now you can pretend to read the child's mind. Repeat the "mind reading" several times.

Explain that, although this is just a trick, God really does know everything we think and do. This includes the bad things we don't want anyone to know about us. But, God still loves us, and wants to be our friend.

# CLOSING THOUGHTS

I hope that you've found a thing or two here that you can use. Being a professional Christian magician, I may be biased, but I really believe object lessons like these can be a great way to hold kids' attention and help them to understand and remember important concepts.

Here are a few closing thoughts on using object lessons.

Keep it simple and keep the focus on the message. The goal is to clearly illustrate a point, not to wow them with the magic.

Don't worry about things going wrong. Of course, you'll do everything you can to ensure things go well, but life doesn't always go according to plan. That's OK. You can use the problem to your advantage.

The problem itself can be used as a teaching point. For example, you can point out that we humans sometimes make mistakes and mess things up, but it's great to know that God never makes mistakes.

When disaster strikes, just find the quickest path back to the message. That can be as simple as saying something like "Well, that didn't go according to plan!" Then tell them what was supposed to happen, and go right back into your message. The problem may even make the lesson more memorable than if things had gone as you intended.

Finally, have fun! If you're having fun doing the lesson, the kids are more likely to have fun and be engaged in the presentation.


May God richly bless you and your ministry to kids!

*Brad Brown*

# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT BRAD'S PROGRAMS


It was excellent and more than we expected. We wanted the Gospel to be clearly explained to the families who attended. We feel that it was presented in an engaging, believable, and compelling way. There was intense interest and attention by all ages. It was amazing!

Carol Key  
Valparaiso, Indiana



Brad did a great job and it was the perfect addition to our event. I think the cool part was the younger kids enjoyed him and the older kids wanted to figure out how he did everything. It was a good balance for different age groups. Brad presented the gospel in a very clear way and wove his magic together so it was neat to hear.

Victoria Weaver  
Houston, Texas



Brad shared the Gospel clearly to many who were in attendance who had never prayed to receive Christ as Lord. He provided good variety of tricks and involved the audience in his presentation well. I've had lots of positive feedback since Brad left.

Josh Wilson  
Pace, Florida



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# MAGICALLY MAKING DISCIPLES!

Of course there's nothing "magical" about helping kids become disciples of Jesus. However, magic can be a great tool to communicate the unchanging message of the gospel.

Brad Brown is a full-time Christian entertainer. He has traveled across the country and around the world using comedy and magic to share the love of Jesus. Now he's sharing some simple ideas you can use with your group.

These high-impact object lessons can be done using inexpensive, readily available materials and require minimal preparation time. They are specifically designed to share the gospel in a way that today's kids can easily understand.

So now you can add these magical ideas to your "ministry toolbox" and put them to use sharing Jesus with your kids.