

INTRODUCTION

POWERING UP YOUR KIDS' FAITH!

Congratulations! You're about to embark on a wonderful mission to strengthen, energize, and stabilize your kids' faith and fundamental knowledge of God—faith and fundamentals that will launch your kids powerfully into the twenty-first century!

Disciple Makers is part of the Power Builders Series, an exciting and powerfully effective curriculum that includes *Value Seekers*, *Faith Finders*, *Servant Leaders*, and *Disciple Makers*, the book you're now holding.

Disciple Makers is dedicated to building and reinforcing kids' faith so they can serve and live in today's—and tomorrow's—world. Thirteen theme-oriented lessons will help your kids discover what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, understand why they want to be disciples, and explore how they can be Jesus' disciples every day of their lives. In addition, woven throughout each lesson is Scripture, Scripture, and more Scripture!

Each lesson in *Disciple Makers* has the following features:

POWER FOCUS (Approximate time: 10 minutes)—You'll begin with a mighty motivator to get kids thinking about the focus of the lesson. This may include an eye-popping devotion, a simple game, or another lively attention-getting tool. Included is interactive discussion and a brief overview of what kids will be learning during the lesson. *Purpose: To focus attention and cue kids in to what they'll be learning during the lesson.*

MIGHTY MESSAGE (Approximate time: 15 minutes)—This is the body of the lesson and includes engaging Bible passages that actively teach about the lesson's theme. The Mighty Message is not just “another Bible story,” so your kids will discover God's truths through powerful passages and important portions of Scripture that are supported by additional verses and made relevant to kids' lives. Processing questions help kids explore each side of the passages and their relation to the theme, beginning with easier questions for young children and ending with more challenging think-about-it questions for older kids. Meaty and memorable, this les-

son section will help kids learn tremendous truths! *Purpose: To teach powerful biblical truths and offer thought-provoking discussion in age-appropriate ways.*

MESSAGE IN MOTION (Approximate time: 10-15 minutes)—This section contains engaging activities that enrich and reinforce the lesson theme. It may include creative crafts, lively games and relays, action songs and rhythmic raps, mini service projects, and much more. *Purpose: To enrich learning in memorable and fun ways that build a sense of community.*

SUPER SCRIPTURE (Approximate time: 10-15 minutes)—This all-important section encourages and helps kids effectively learn, understand, and apply God's Word in their lives. The Mighty Memory Verse was chosen so every child can effectively learn it during the course of three weeks, but an extra-challenge verse is offered for older kids or children who can handle learning more verses. You are free to substitute your own choice of verses in this section, but please keep in mind that the activities, songs, crafts, and mnemonic devices are designed for the Mighty Memory Verse and the accompanying extra-challenge verse. And remember, when it comes to learning God's Word, effective learning takes place when kids work on only one or two verses over the course of several weeks! *Purpose: To memorize, learn, recall, and use God's Word.*

POWERFUL PROMISE (Approximate time: 5-10 minutes)—The lesson closes with a summary, a promise, and a prayer. You'll summarize the lesson, the Mighty Memory Verse, and the theme, then challenge kids to make a special commitment to God for the coming week. The commitments are theme-related and give kids a chance to put their faith into action. Finally, a brief prayer and responsive farewell blessing end the lesson. *Purpose: To make a commitment of faith to God and express thanks and praise to him.*

POWER PAGE! (Take-home paper)—Each lesson ends with a fun-to-do take-along page that encourages kids to keep the learning going at home. Scripture puzzles, crafts, recipes, games, Bible read-about-its, Mighty Memory Verse reinforcement, and more challenge kids through independent discovery and learning fun. *Purpose: To reinforce, review, and enrich the day's lesson and the Mighty Memory Verse.*

PLUS, in every Power Builder's book you'll discover these great features!

★ **WHIZ QUIZZES!** At the end of each section is a reproducible Whiz Quiz to gently, yet effectively, assess what has been learned. Completed by kids in about five minutes at the end of lessons 3, 6, 9, and 12, the Whiz Quiz is a nonthreaten-



Introduction

ing and fun measuring tool to allow teachers, kids, and parents to actually see what has been learned in the prior weeks. When kids complete each Whiz Quiz, consider presenting them a collectible surprise such as a cool pencil and pad to symbolize that they are disciples (or learners) of Jesus. For example, after the first Whiz Quiz, present each child with a pencil case. After the next Whiz Quiz, present one or more pencils. Then use nifty erasers and cool notepads for lessons 9 and 12. When the book is complete, kids will have an entire “school” set to help them continue learning about being a disciple of Jesus. Kids will love the cool reminders of the lessons and their accomplishments! Be sure to keep children’s completed Whiz Quiz pages in folders to present to kids at the end of the book or at the end of the year, in combination with other Whiz Quizzes from different books in the Power Builders Series.

★ **LESSON 13 REVIEW!** The last lesson in *Disciple Makers* is an important review of all that’s been learned, applied, accomplished, and achieved during the past twelve weeks. Kids will love the lively review games, action songs, unique review tools, and celebratory feel of this special lesson!

★ **SCRIPTURE STRIPS!** At the back of the book, you’ll discover every Mighty Memory Verse and extra-challenge verse that appears in *Disciple Makers*. These reproducible Scripture strips can be copied and cut apart to use over and over for crafts, games, cards, bookmarks, and other fun and fabulous “you-name-its”! Try gluing these strips to long Formica chips to make colorful, clattery key chains that double as super Scripture reviews!

★ **TEACHER FEATURE!** Discover timeless teaching tips and hints, hands-on help, and a whole lot more in this mini teacher workshop. Every book in the Power Builders series offers a unique Teacher Feature that helps leaders understand and teach through issues such as discipline, prayer, Scripture memory, and more. The Teacher Feature in *Disciple Makers* is “Prayer in the Classroom.”

God bless you as you teach with patience, love, and this powerful resource to help launch kids into another century of love, learning, and serving God! More POWER to you!

PRAYER IN THE CLASSROOM

Ah, we teach our children so many wonderful things in our classrooms, from Scripture verses and Bible stories to God's truths and how to apply them in our lives. But what about teaching prayer? *Teaching prayer?* Hold on a minute! No one can teach prayer—you just *do* it, right? Wrong! We need to teach prayer in our classes as much as we need to teach any of the other wonderful things we work so hard to get through to kids! Prayer isn't an innate activity or one that we're born "just doing" any more than we're born reciting John 3:16 or the Ten Commandments. Yet prayer is perhaps the most overlooked area for instruction in the history of the Christian classroom! Let's explore a little about prayer and why it's essential to provide at least some instruction for kids to understand and grasp the fullness of prayer so they can make it a daily, lifelong habit.

"Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." So begins Luke 11:1 with the disciples' plea to Jesus to instruct them in the way of powerful prayer. Even the disciples knew there must be something more to this intimate time with God than first meets the eye. And just how did Jesus respond? Did he turn them away saying, "Oh, there's no need for that! Just talk to God. It's a natural thing, you know?" No, Jesus took the time to give his disciples a precious lesson about prayer—and us a dear passage of Scripture better known as the Lord's Prayer. Jesus offered us important guidelines for praying to our heavenly Father and encouraged his disciples to pray in that way. If the disciples recognized the need for prayer instruction and Jesus provided us a perfect prayer model, why isn't prayer a more studied area in children's Christian education?

Have you ever invited your kids to pray aloud for the class? Chances are you'll see more nervous glances than goodies at a bake sale! Reluctant kids aren't against praying aloud any more than most adults receiving the same invitation. Shyness, insecurity, and lack of words are usually the culprits keeping our kids from the fullness of prayer and the wonderful gift of praying for others in God's presence. So let's discover a few practical ways to teach prayer

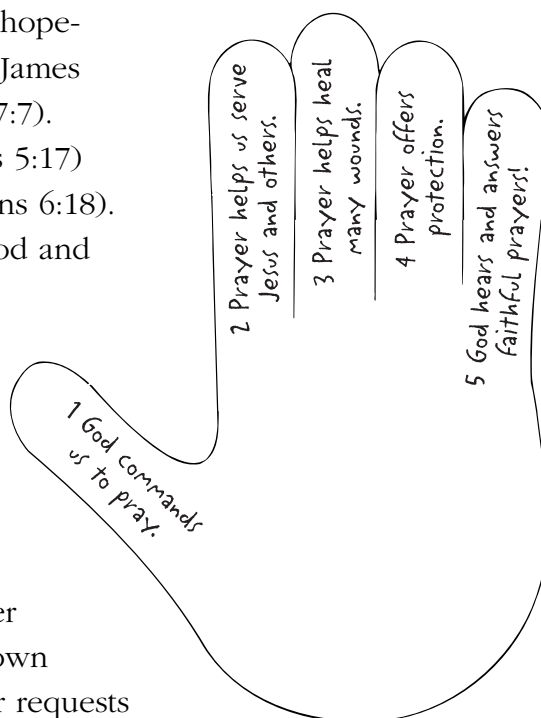
and to give our kids the encouragement and tools to offer sound, solid, spirit-filled prayer in a classroom setting and during their own private prayer times. For when kids have a prayer model and a bit of security, their voices will rise to the Father in beautiful prayers that still all heaven to hear!

PRAYER FINGERS

These simple fingers of prayer and faith will enable kids to see the importance of praying and help them begin to feel more comfortable praying for themselves and others. You may wish to make cool prayer gloves, labeling each finger as you learn what it means and what God promises with it. Or better yet, let kids make their own gloves and learn as you go and grow!

Finger 1—God commands us to pray. Help kids discover that prayer is commanded by God and not just something we do at church to end services. Jesus tells us to continue to pray when we feel hopeless (Luke 18:1), when we have troubles (James 5:13), and when we're in need (Matthew 7:7). We're to pray continually (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and in the spirit on all occasions (Ephesians 6:18). Knowing that prayer is commanded by God and done willingly by those who love him feels good to kids and helps ease some of the shyness in praying, especially in a group.

Finger 2—Prayer helps us serve Jesus and others. With immense love and passion, Jesus offered a moving prayer for his disciples, for himself, and for our own needs in John 17. Jesus didn't keep prayer requests for himself, nor did he only pray for those people whom he knew personally at that time. Jesus prayed for all the world and many millions of people who weren't even born yet! Jesus lifted intercessory prayers to God on our behalf out of love, servitude, and selfless giving. Helping kids understand that praying for others is a beautiful way to serve the Lord as well as others goes a long way in teaching them the power of prayer!



Finger 3—Prayer helps heal many wounds. Perhaps one of the most neglected powers of prayer is that of healing. Modern chemistry, prescription drugs, and a host of doctors may be needed to cure or alleviate illness, but the prayers of the faithful will do miraculous things! God is *Yahweh Ropheka*, our healer, and power to heal lies in his hands (Exodus 15:26; James 5:15, 16). Kids recognize suffering, whether it's their own or other people's afflictions, and kids realize that suffering can be as much physical as it is emotional. Teaching kids the power of healing prayer brings comfort, peace, and security because they know that health is in God's hands and will.

Finger 4—Prayer offers protection. The Bible tells us very clearly in several powerful passages that prayers offered to God for his protection and safe-keeping are all-powerful and can drive away darkness! Jesus himself told Peter to pray against temptation (Matthew 26:41). Ephesians 6:16, 18 caution us to take up the shield of faith, which includes faithful prayer. James 4:7, 8 tell us to submit and to draw near to God in order to resist Satan. What better way is there to do this than through powerful prayer?

Finger 5—God hears and answers faithful prayers! What a stalwart truth to lean into and rely upon! God *does* hear our prayers and will answer in his time and in his way—God has promised us (Zechariah 13:9b)! What can be more powerful and secure for a child than to know that God *is* listening! “His ears are attentive to their prayer” (1 Peter 3:12). Help kids understand that God always has time to listen to and answer their prayers in his way.

When kids understand why we pray and what promises God makes to those who pray, a willing and more confident prayer attitude is inevitably born! Use the following ideas to help nurture prayer in your classroom and to begin kids on a lifetime journey of drawing near to God in powerful, sweet, comforting, and even commanding prayer.

ECHO PRAYERS—Before class, write a simple prayer that the entire class can pray. Write the prayer on newsprint for everyone to read, then read each line and have children echo back the words to the prayer. End with a corporate “amen.” *Purpose: To give kids an example of praying; to help kids feel comfortable praying aloud.*

GOD-CAN PRAYERS—Let each child decorate a tin can with designs and the words “God Can If We Pray!” Provide slips of paper each week for kids to jot down a quick prayer. Then invite kids to read their prayers in small groups and deposit their requests in their God-Can containers. Have kids read through them often to see how and when God answers! *Purpose: To offer practice composing prayers; to encourage kids to look for how God answers their prayers.*

PRAYER PACKAGES—Hand kids colorful paper and let them write a prayer for a partner in class, then roll the prayer like a scroll and tie it with a bright ribbon. Tell kids to read their special prayers at bedtime, then offer their own prayers for the person who prayed for them. *Purpose: To teach children to pray for others in intercessory prayer.*

PRAYER LETTER HANDS—Use this hand as a pattern and enlarge it on poster board. Write the following, one on each finger: Greet God; Praise God; Needs & Wants; Praise God; Close Prayer. As kids sit in a prayer circle, pass the hand to five kids and have each pray according to a finger. For example, kids might say, “Dear heavenly Father [Greet God], You are all-powerful and loving [Praise God]. Please help us to be good disciples and to serve you and others every day [Needs & Wants]. Your examples of love are perfect and complete [Praise God]. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen” [Close Prayer]. *Purpose: To give kids practice praying for and in a group; to give kids a simple prayer model.*

