

# NORTH AMERICAN MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN

## Make Jesus Known

“Then he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation’”  
(Mark 16:15, CSB).

## Study Overview

The theme for the 2024 Week of Prayer for North American Missions is “Make Jesus Known.” The focal Scripture verse is Mark 16:15, where Jesus gives His apostles final instructions before His ascension into heaven. These instructions are known as “The Great Commission.” Jesus commissions all his followers to tell the world about him. He wants everyone everywhere to embrace Him as Lord and Savior.

We can’t all go, so we send missionaries. Our gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® provide the funds missionaries need as they train and serve all over North America, making the name of Jesus known. We are helping missionaries across North America when we support them through prayer and giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Through this mission study, children will learn how church planter Joseph Gibbons and his wife, Kristen, and their two young children work to make Jesus known in Las Vegas, Nevada. They will learn that one effective way to make Jesus known is to make disciples who make disciples. They will learn how important it is to give to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and pray for all missionaries serving in North America.

## Prepare for the Study

- For the promotion of the North American Missions Emphasis to your entire church, order the free North American Missions Emphasis printed resources, including a theme poster, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering envelopes, a promotion guide and prayer guides from your state convention office. Ordering information can be found at [AnnieArmstrong.com/StateConventions](https://AnnieArmstrong.com/StateConventions).
- Work with missions leaders and other church leaders to plan aspects of the study, such as scheduling, scope and promotion. Encourage these leaders to enlist other church members to take ownership by helping in the planning and implementation of the study. You may choose to do the study as a special event or incorporate it into an existing meeting or group setting.
- Publicize the study through church bulletins, social media, churchwide announcements, newsletters and so forth.
- Ask Sunday School classes and church members to pray for the study outcome. Pray individuals will be inspired as they learn about missions efforts in North America and will eagerly support those who are serving as missionaries with the North American Mission Board (NAMB).
- Consider enlisting an outside speaker, such as a North American missionary, to address the church before beginning the study or as part of it.

- Explore the website, [AnnieArmstrong.com/resources](https://AnnieArmstrong.com/resources), for resources that will enhance the learning experience for your church.
- Download the study materials and video segment from the website, [AnnieArmstrong.com/resource/childrens-study](https://AnnieArmstrong.com/resource/childrens-study).
- Other segments found online can be used anytime for study purposes or during the Week of Prayer and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering emphases. The video segment for children features Joseph and Kristen Gibbons in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Order or download and print enough 2024 Week of Prayer bookmarks and prayer guides for each participant or family to have one of each. Bookmarks can be ordered from NAMB at [AnnieArmstrong.com/resources](https://AnnieArmstrong.com/resources).

*Note: Your church has permission to download videos and other resources from [AnnieArmstrong.com](https://AnnieArmstrong.com). Downloads are free. To order DVDs free of charge, call 1-800-634-2462 or email [AAEO@namb.net](mailto:AAEO@namb.net). You can also check out NAMB's Facebook page at [facebook.com/aaeo.sbc](https://facebook.com/aaeo.sbc)*

## Prepare for the Lesson

- Ensure you are equipped to show the featured video and that you have previewed it with the equipment and in the setting in which you will be showing it. If you don't have a way to show the video, you can tell the children about the missionaries in the story provided in the lesson plan.
- Read through the lesson plan and become familiar with it.
- Acquire a map of North America. Display it in a prominent place. Note the location of Las Vegas, Nevada, from where you are located.
- Write Mark 16:15 on a whiteboard or on a posterboard.
- Make a copy of the word search and crossword puzzle activities at the back of the lesson plan for each child.

Note: More activities for children can be found at [AnnieArmstrong.com/kids](https://AnnieArmstrong.com/kids).

- Provide a pencil for each child.
- Make one copy of each word search and crossword solution for yourself.
- Purchase a bag of dried beans and small cups for use in the activity after the story/video time. Or use a whiteboard or poster board to illustrate the activity.

## Arrival

As the children arrive, allow them to work on one of the word searches or the crossword puzzle found at the back of the lesson or from [AnnieArmstrong.com/kids](https://AnnieArmstrong.com/kids). Help those who need it.

## Welcome (5-10 minutes)

After all the children have arrived, welcome them to the mission study. Introduce yourself and your helpers. Tell them they will be learning to pray for and help missionaries who are serving in North America. Show them on the map that North America includes the United States and Canada, as well as the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

During the Week of Prayer for North American Missions, we pray for missionaries, and we collect an offering for them named the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

*If you would like to share more about who Annie was and why the offering is named after her, go to [AnnieArmstrong.com/who-is-annie](http://AnnieArmstrong.com/who-is-annie). There you will find lots of information and even a video.*

Explain to the children that they will be focusing on missionaries Joseph and Kristen Gibbons, who live and serve in Las Vegas, Nevada. They planted (started) a new church called Favor City Church.

Show them where Las Vegas is on the map of the United States and note where your church is located to help the kids gain context.

Explain that the theme for the mission study is “Make Jesus Known.” They will be learning how Joseph and Kristen make Jesus known by making disciples who make disciples.

## Bible Verse Word Study (10 minutes)

Read the Bible verse Mark 16:15 from the poster or whiteboard. Explain that a similar verse can be found in Matthew 28:8-10. Read this passage as well.

Set context by telling the children that Jesus spoke these words to His disciples right before He went back to heaven after He rose from the dead. (If some in your group don’t know the story, you can briefly share.)

We call these verses “The Great Commission.” When a person is commissioned, it means he is given a job to do. Jesus gave all His followers—including us—the job of telling everyone the good news about Him.

Define the following concepts in simple terms for the children in your group. Don’t assume they already know what they mean. Your explanation of the gospel should include the four points below.

### Gospel (Good News):

1. All of us have done things that don’t please God (sinned). God takes this very seriously and can’t let it go unpunished.
2. Jesus, God’s Son, came from heaven to take the punishment for the sins of everyone in the world by dying on a cross.
3. After Jesus had been dead for three days, He came back to life (was resurrected) and appeared to many to prove He was really alive.
4. Because of what Jesus did, we are forgiven of our sins and can have a relationship with him now and someday be in heaven with Him, if we trust and follow Him. That’s good news!

**Disciple:**

A person who accepts the gospel about Jesus and follows His teaching. He is the teacher, and we are His students (disciples).

Read Mark 16:15 again and ask the children to repeat in their own words what they think it means.

*Transition to the video/story.*

**Children's Video/Story and Discussion (15–20 minutes)****Learning Goal**

Children will learn through the ministry of the Gibbons family in Las Vegas that the best way to grow God's kingdom is to invest in others in order to make them disciples of Jesus and to encourage them to do the same.

Jesus is our example as He spent more than three years investing in the lives of His apostles, who in turn invested in the lives of others, thus bringing many to faith in Jesus. We should all be disciples who make disciples.

**Lesson**

*Show the video or read the story below.*

Joseph and Kristen Gibbons and their two young children moved from Alabama to plant Favor City Church in Las Vegas. They were being obedient to God's call to do that. There are very few Jesus followers in Las Vegas, and the people in the city needed a church and someone to tell them about Jesus.

The Gibbons met people by inviting them to their home for fellowship and Bible study. They also hosted at the church "invite nights," when people would invite a friend to church. It was during an invite night that Joseph met Maki.

Maki is a professional mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter from Hawaii. Before giving his life to Jesus, his goal in life was to be a championship fighter. He wanted to be a good dad and husband but didn't think much about God. In fact, he thought God could never love him because he was a fighter.

Then Maki, his wife and his children started coming to Favor City Church, and Joseph was able to lead Maki to faith in Christ and get baptized. Joseph and Maki work out together at the gym and meet regularly in a coffee shop for a time of devotion and support. Joseph is discipling Maki.

Maki in turn is discipling his friend Rodney, who is also an MMA fighter from Hawaii. Just as Joseph spends time with Maki, so Maki spends time with Rodney. Because of Maki, Rodney accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior and was baptized.

Joseph is a disciple who is making disciples and so is Maki. We can expect that Rodney will do the same. As church members take Jesus' instructions to make Him known by preaching the gospel to all creation, people in Las Vegas can realize that Jesus is for everyone, everywhere.

Even kids can do this. Joseph says that the church is quickly growing as kids lead their parents to Christ, and parents lead their kids to Christ, and entire families come to know Jesus as their Savior.

This is made possible because of the prayers of God's people and giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Our giving to the offering allows the Gibbons family to bless their community with free events like fall festivals. Through our gifts to the offering, teenagers can go to youth camp and Favor City Church is able to start more churches in places that need them. Our gifts to the offering also encourage the Gibbons in tough times as they see they have friends and partners all over North America who are supporting them in their work.

## Count the Beans Object Lesson

### Items needed:

- Bag of dried beans
- Package of small cups
- Marker (optional)
- Whiteboard or poster (optional)

### Learning Goal

Kids will learn through a visual demonstration how making disciples who make disciples grows God's kingdom exponentially.

## Before the Lesson

Decide if you would like to use the bean activity or a poster or whiteboard to illustrate how quickly God's kingdom grows if every disciple comes alongside another person who becomes a disciple and then that person, in turn, does the same.

## Object Lesson (10-15 minutes)

Set out cups for each child. Place one bean in each cup. Distribute a cup with a bean to each child.

Tell the children that each bean represents a disciple. The one in the cup represents the child holding the cup.

Ask the children how many beans would be in their cup if they made one new disciple (2). Add one bean to each child's cup.

Ask the children how many beans would be in their cup if the new disciple they made in turn made another disciple (3). Add another bean to each child's cup.

Now ask the kids how many new disciples would be made if each one made another new disciple (6). Add three more beans to each child's cup.

If your group is of older kids, challenge them by asking how many disciples there would be if each disciple in their cups made two more disciples each (18). Add 12 more beans to each child's cup. You may need to sketch this one out to make it clear as it would seem the correct answer would be 12, but it is 18.

Make sure the children understand this way of growing God's kingdom. They can make disciples by inviting their friends to church or their home. This would include kids at school or on their sports teams. They could do a Bible study and just spend time with each other as friends, always being a good example of who Jesus wants them to be.

*Transition to the prayer activity.*

## **Prayer Activity (5-10 minutes)**

Remind the children that it is important to pray for our missionaries in North America.

The Gibbons family asks that we pray God would give them wisdom as they disciple new believers and develop leaders. They also ask we pray God would continue to provide what they need as they start new ministries.

You can also use the prayer guide you downloaded or ordered. Read the missionary prayer requests one at a time, inviting the children to pray aloud for each missionary couple's requests.

If the children don't wish to pray aloud, they can pray silently. Distribute the bookmarks to remind the children to pray for missionaries often.

Invite the children to also pray that many people will give to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering so missionaries will have what they need to bring many people to Jesus. Encourage the children to give as well. Have offering envelopes handy.

Giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering helps missionaries who have limited resources do more. It allows them to impact their communities more effectively.

## **Closing**

While the children wait for their parents, they may either work on the crossword puzzle or word searches some more.

You can also offer a snack at this time.

# WORD SEARCH

Jesus gave us instructions to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” Jesus wants everyone, everywhere to know Him. He wants us to follow His example of making disciples who make disciples.

Find the words from the word bank hidden in the word search below. Work with a partner to solve the puzzle faster.

P L P Q I S E R V I C E M Z H  
W A N C Y Q K F R F Y N A M J  
R I R C Q U R R M C D A K A O  
M L T T F G Q I X O O N I K S  
H P N U N B B E K R W X T J E  
A J D R I E X N B D W D K L P  
P Q X O N U R D F Q Q S I K H  
B P F D V Q A S Z X Z A N I T  
H C U N I Y K H Q K V V G M J  
Z E I E T U G I C G Z E D U E  
K P E Y E E U P W O L D O R S  
P R V A C B W T E S E Q M U U  
D I S C I P L E S P K V T U S  
O M Y I N Q G B D E N I D E V  
K O Y J G P I D Q L O Y Y V F

## WORD BANK

Disciples

Gospel

Joseph

Maki

Rodney

Friendship

Service

Jesus

Saved

Invite

Kingdom

Partner

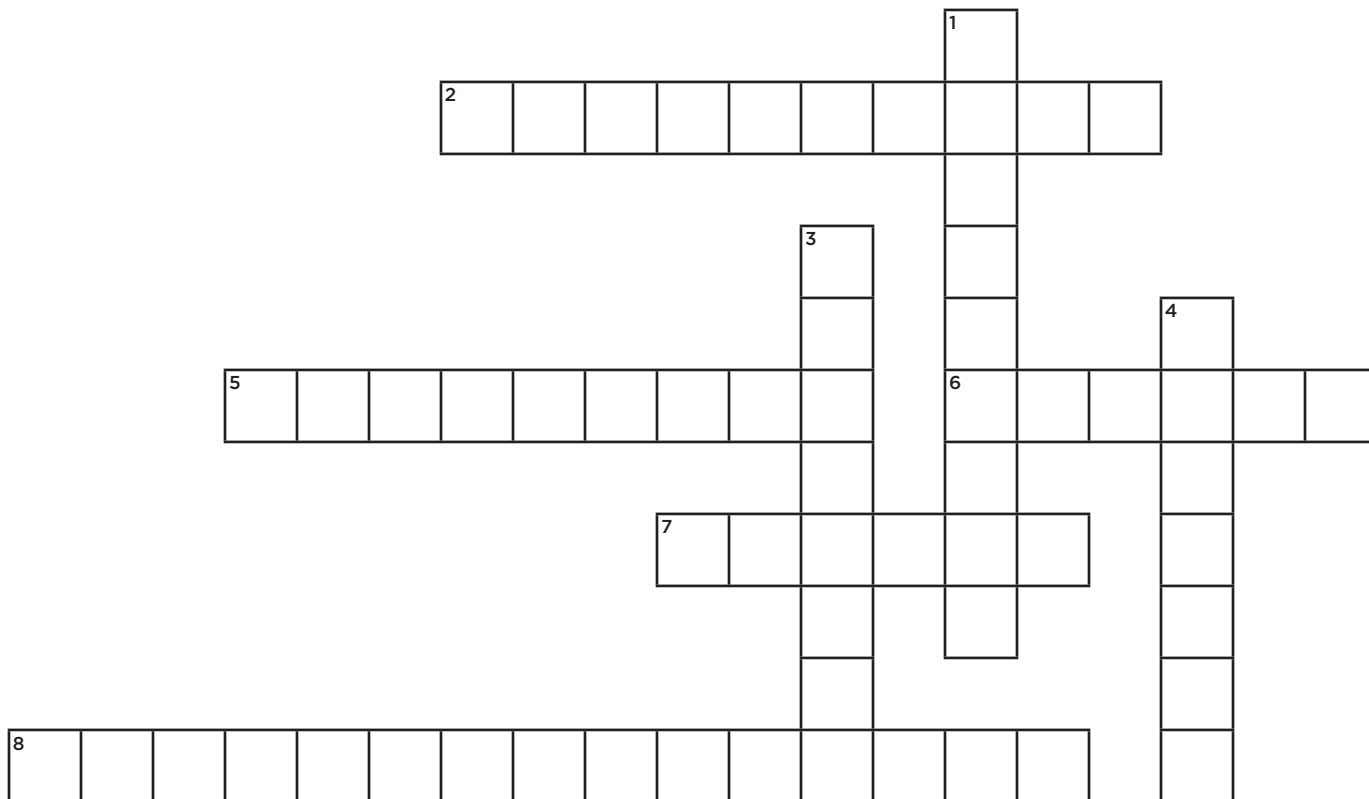
# WORD SEARCH SOLUTION





# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Use the clues and the word bank below to complete this puzzle. You will need to read the story about the Gibbons' ministry to know the answers to the clues.



## Word Bank

Great Commission  
 Las Vegas  
 Favor City  
 Events  
 Disciples  
 Friends  
 Missionary  
 Church

## Down

1. The name of the church planted by the Gibbons.
3. The name of the city in which the Gibbons are serving.
4. People you can help become disciples.

## Across

2. Someone who leaves home to tell others about Jesus.
5. People who love and follow Jesus.
6. Where people go to worship God and be with other Christians.
7. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering provides the funds for these.
8. Jesus' instructions to His disciples.

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

