

# WEEK 1: THE GREAT INVITATION

**MINISTRY IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS! THE BEST WAY TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS IS THROUGH CONVERSATION. AS KIDS ARRIVE, BRING THEM INTO THE CHAT USING THE CONVERSATION STARTERS BELOW. BEING HEARD HELPS KIDS FEEL CONNECTED AND CONVERSATION WILL HELP BREAK THE ICE! MAKE SURE YOU GET IN ON THE FUN AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS TOO!**

## Conversation Starters

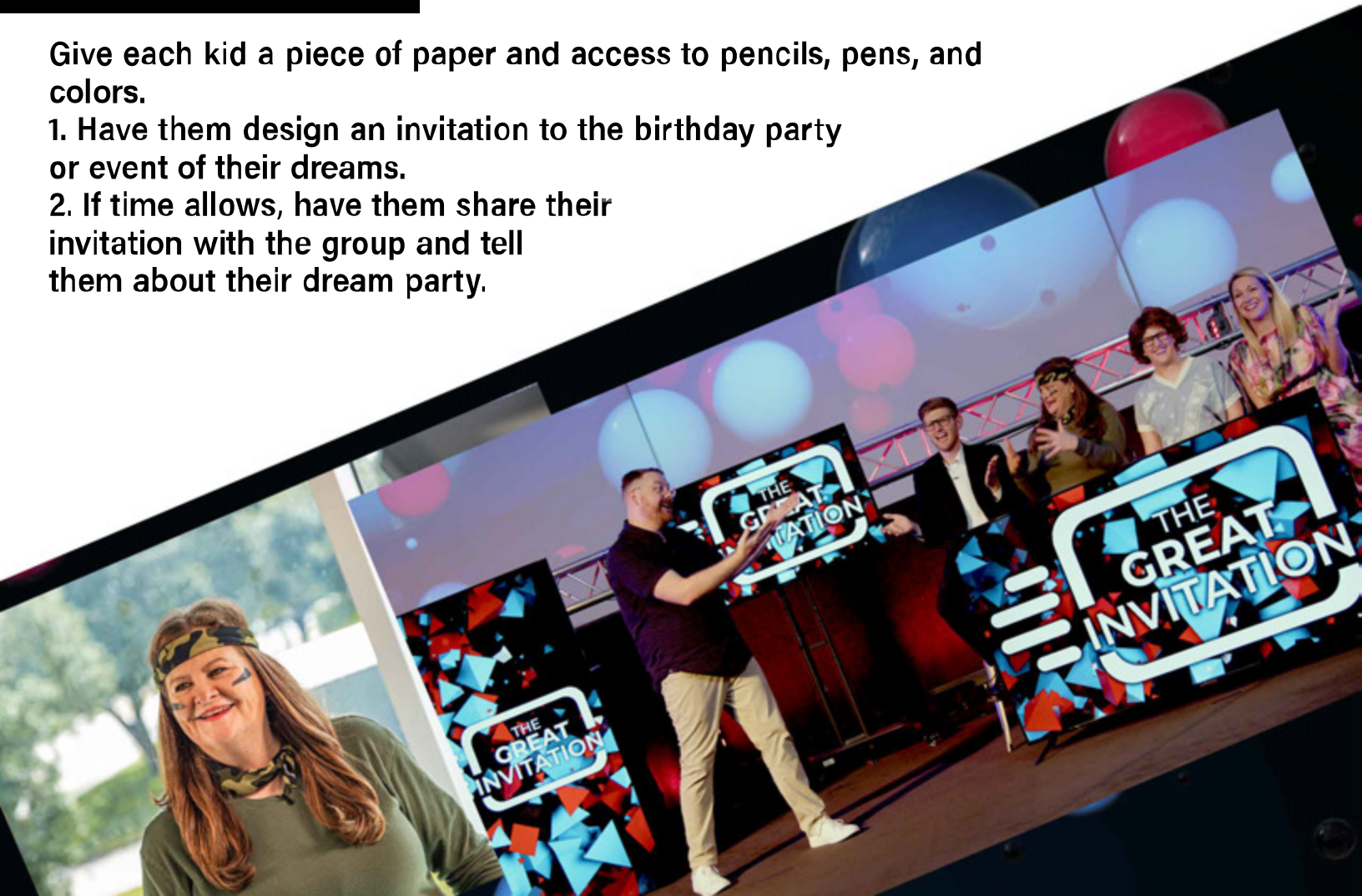
1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of the week?
3. What is your favorite flavor of birthday cake?
4. What is the coolest invitation you've received?
5. What is the best birthday party or event you have ever been invited to?
6. What was your favorite birthday and why?

**ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.**

## Opening Group Activity

Give each kid a piece of paper and access to pencils, pens, and colors.

1. Have them design an invitation to the birthday party or event of their dreams.
2. If time allows, have them share their invitation with the group and tell them about their dream party.



# WEEK 1: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

## Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to week one of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the great commission. In a moment, we will learn more about that as we watch the first episode of The Great Invitation.

The Great Invitation follows four contestants that receive a mysterious invitation to take part in something great. To make it even more fun, each small group will be rooting for one of the four contestants!

Group 1, Are you ready to meet your contestant? Let's have a drumroll...you are TEAM BLUE! \*show blue team slide\*. Group 2, drumroll...you are TEAM ORANGE! \*show orange team slide\*. Group 3, drumroll...you are TEAM PINK! \*show team pink slide\*. And lastly, group 4, drumroll...you are TEAM GREEN! \*show team green slide\*.

Each week, as we watch our contestants compete, you will get to cheer for your champion! We will also have group competitions of our own. That being said, can I get the leader of the teams up here to start us off? Let's hear it for your team leaders!

## Game

"Head, Shoulders, Knees, Invite!"

*Supplies*

*-Two plain envelopes*

*-A third envelope that is decorated and has a coupon inside for one free high five.*

This is a great invitation that grants the owner a prize. What do each of you think the prize might be? *Allow them to answer.*

The 4 of you will be competing to see who wins the invite. So are you guys ready to play? For the first round, pair up and stand facing your partner. Hold out your hands and make sure you are far enough apart that your fingers barely touch. I will place an invitation between each of you and am going to call out either "Head, Shoulders, knees, or invite." As I say each body part, place your hands on your head etc. Whenever I finally say INVITE, the first person to grab the invite gets to move on to the next round. *Play one time through, leaving you with two winners.*

# WEEK 1: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

## Game (continued)

Let's hear it for our two losers as they make their way back to their teams. Now we have our final champions! You know what to do! Pair up, stick out your hands, and get ready! *Play one more time.*

Why don't you open your invitation and see what your prize is? It is...a high five! From me! You can cash that in whenever you want. *Hold on to envelope for object lesson.* Let's cheer for our champion!

## Video

Alright, are you ready to meet the contestants and find out about the Great Invitation? Let's GO! *Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 1"*

## Object Lesson

There was week one! Starting next week you will get to see your contestant compete in their first round of competitions.

The gameshow host is completely right - we have ALL been invited to take part in something GREAT. When we played our game earlier, none of the contestants knew what was in this envelope. It could've been \$100, a coupon for a high five, or something less than desirable - like an extra trip to the dentist. But, we know exactly what we are invited to do when we accept the Great invitation to take part in the great commission that can be found in Matthew 28:19-20.

*Put verse on screen or read from Bibles distributed to the group.*

Let's read this together:

**"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

**Matthew 28:19-20**

# WEEK 1: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

## Bible Lesson

Before we can even talk about what the Great Commission is, let's talk about WHY the Great Commission is so important.

Genesis 1:1 tells us that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." If you keep reading in Genesis you will learn that God created light, the sea, land, plants, the universe, the animals, and then He created two humans - Adam and Eve and placed them in a place called the Garden of Eden.

Everything was PERFECT. Adam and Eve lived peacefully in the Garden of Eden and even got to be in the presence of God. God let them be in charge of everything He created and only gave them one rule which can be found in Genesis 2:17: "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." God didn't mean that they would immediately die. He meant that they would no longer be immortal beings and would one day die. He also knew that if Adam and Eve ate from that tree, their eyes would be open and they would know EVERYTHING. Not just all the good things, but all the bad and sad and scary things too. They would also be separated from God - no longer living with Him in the Garden.

For a while, they obeyed and everything continued to be perfect. But then Satan, an enemy of God, twisted God's words and tricked Adam and Eve into disobeying God. As soon as they ate the fruit, their eyes were opened, and sin entered the world. Sin is when we disobey God. And everyone born after that, including all of us, have a sin problem. Romans 3:23 says that "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," That sounds like bad news, right? But, I have good news. Right after that, in Romans 3:24, it says "and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

You see, God did not want to leave us stuck with a sin problem, forever separated from Him. Instead, He sent His only son, Jesus, to live a perfect life on earth so that he could be the perfect sacrifice and take the punishment of ALL our sins. Jesus died a painful death on the cross and rose three days later - defeating death and giving us all a chance to have our sins forgiven and allow us to go to heaven when we die to be with God forever!

After Jesus died on the cross and rose again, he appeared to many people before returning to be with God. Does anyone know what the last thing Jesus says in the Bible? It is the Great Commission! Jesus charged or invited his disciples to go out and tell the world about Him. He wanted them to spread the Good News of Jesus so that anyone that hears and believes, will get to have their sins forgiven and live forever with God.

Telling others about Jesus is THE most important thing we can do. Do you think you're ready?? Over the next 5 weeks we will talk more about what the commission means AND help you prepare yourself so that you can say YES to the Great Invitation!

# WEEK 1: WORSHIP & SMALL GROUP

## Worship

We are going to sing a song that helps us memorize the Great Commission! Lets stand up and sing!

*Play "Go" by Seeds Worship.*

## Dismiss to Small Groups

I will pray for us and then we will dismiss back to small groups so we can discuss what we just learned!

## Small Group Time

### Discussion

1. What does the word "commission" mean? (*an instruction, command, or duty given to a person or group of people*)
2. Why do you think we call this the GREAT commission?
3. What qualities or characteristics do you think the contestants on the Great Invitation might need to have to help them win?
4. How would you have responded if you got an invitation to do something GREAT? Would you accept it?
5. How does it feel to know that we are all invited to take part in the Great Commission?
6. What is sin?
7. Let's look up Romans 3:23-24 in the Bible.
  - How do you feel after reading verse 23?
  - How do you feel after reading verse 24?
8. How does it make you feel knowing that everyone is a sinner and needs Jesus?
9. How does it make you feel knowing that you have been invited to tell others about Jesus?
10. What about sharing about Jesus makes you scared? Nervous? Excited?

### Group Game

Have kids pair up and play "Head, Shoulders, Knees, INVITE." Play until you have one big winner and then start over if time allows!



# WEEK 1: SMALL GROUP (CONTINUED)

## Bible Verse Review

Have the kids sit in a circle. Look up Matthew 28:19-20 in your Bible. Tell the kids how you are finding it to help them learn how to look up Bible verses. Pass the bible around the circle and have each kid read one word from the verse. Be patient as it will take time for each kid to locate the verse and the word we are at. If a kid doesn't want to read out loud they can pass. The goal of this is for kids to get used to finding a verse on a page.

## Pick Up Time

Play "Head, Shoulders, Knees, INVITE" or let the kids work on their invites as they wait for parents to pick them up.

