

## **Truth78 Backyard Bible Club (VBS) Curricula**

### **What is a Backyard Bible Club? How is it different from Vacation Bible School?**

A Backyard Bible Club is simply a new twist on an old idea—namely, a new twist on a traditional Vacation Bible School (VBS) program. VBS usually takes place over a week during the summer at a local church or another designated location, and is organized and led by the children’s director along with volunteers. Most often, the focus of the VBS is evangelistic—creating an appealing environment for welcoming children from non-Christian homes in order to expose them to the Gospel. A Backyard Bible Club (BYBC) shares this focus but is held in the backyards (or front yards) of church members who have been equipped and trained by their church.

Here are just a few of the many reasons we believe a BYBC is strategic:

- An increasing number of people are completely un-churched. Therefore, they may be less willing to send their children to an actual “church” event. On the other hand, most Christians already have some level of positive engagement with the parents and children in their own neighborhoods. A BYBC takes advantage of these existing relationships and seeks to build on them. Therefore, a BYBC helps foster a long-term, relational model of evangelism that can provide ongoing interaction with both parents and children. Unbelievers can see the Gospel modeled and lived out in the lives of their Christian neighbors.
- Because a BYBC is not centralized in one location, it can be conducive to a local church’s larger mission of engaging the community—reaching un-believers close to where they live. Thus, unbelievers learn to identify “the church” as not mainly “a building” but as a people—a people who trust and follow Jesus, not just on Sunday but every day of the week.
- A traditional VBS program is labor intensive for both church staff and volunteers. By design, a BYBC is smaller by nature, more flexible in structure, can accommodate a greater diversity of schedules, and distributes the work among a greater number of members. Furthermore, a BYBC offers individual families in the church an excellent way to minister together. Every member of the family can participate in a meaningful way.
- Most VBS curricula are not only expensive but also require extensive set-up and preparation. Much of the expense and preparation is geared toward “bells and whistles”—exciting visual elements, fun activities, crafts, food, etc. While a BYBC does include some of these in limited measure, the focus is on communicating the life-giving message of God’s Word and encouraging thoughtful interaction with the Word.

### **Truth78 Backyard Bible Club curricula.**

We currently have the following curricula available for BYBC. Please note that these curricula can also be used for a traditional VBS.

*The Call of God (Revised!)*

*An Evangelistic Study for Children on the Work of God in Redemption*

*Things Hidden (Revised!)*

*An Evangelistic Study for Children on Kingdom Parables*

*Wisdom Calls Aloud*

*An Evangelistic Study for Children on Wisdom and the Fear of the Lord*

*God Always Wins*

*An Evangelistic Study for Children on the Greatness of God in Salvation*

### **Getting Started—Basic Questions and Answers about Using Our BYBC Resources**

1. **When do Backyard Bible Clubs meet, and where?** Most clubs run five sessions. You could hold them in the morning, afternoon, or early evening. They are often held daily over the span of a single week (i.e., Monday through Friday), but you could hold them once a week for five weeks. Your Backyard Bible Club could meet indoors or outdoors.
2. **What is the duration of each session?** Depending on how many activities you include, the sessions can run from one to three hours.
3. **Whom should we invite?** Invite neighborhood children, friends of your children, children of relatives—especially children with whom you will have continued contact
4. **What ages should we include?** The material is recommended for kindergarten through sixth grade.
5. **How many children can we include?** The number of children you invite should take into account the number of helpers you have and the size of your yard and/or home. A recommended ratio would be one adult for every six to eight children. The younger the children, the smaller the adult/child ratio.
6. **What does a typical session look like?**
  - An opening activity
  - A 30-minute interactive lesson
  - Application discussion done in smaller groups that may be separated by age
  - Additional activities (e.g., games, crafts, songs, snacks, etc.)
7. **What roles (or people) do we need for a Backyard Bible Club?** For each session, you will need people to assume one or more of the following roles:
  - A host to provide the location
  - A teacher to prepare and present the Bible lesson
  - Adults to facilitate small group discussion
  - Volunteers to prepare and help with additional activities

We strongly suggest filling these roles with a committed team of people working together (e.g., one or more families, a small group from church, etc.).

**8. Is there any outreach to the parents of the children, or any other follow up with the children?**

Each lesson offers a Parent Page for the children to take home, providing a brief summary of the lesson, the memory verse, and something to think about. We also strongly recommend that you and your church consider giving each child a Bible or other Bible resource (e.g., a New Testament, the Gospel of John, etc.) to take home. Also, here are some family friendly resources that would introduce parents and children to some basic truths of the Christian faith:

[God's Word](#)

[God's Names](#)

[God's Gospel](#)

[God's Promises](#)

[God's Wisdom](#)

**9. Is conversion the goal of the Backyard Bible Club?** The goal is to introduce children to spiritual truth and provide an opening for ongoing spiritual discussion with children and their parents. Each of our BYBC curricula present essential Gospel truths and encourage children toward a right, genuine response to those truths. However, we do not overly press children toward a profession of trust in Christ. Rather, we emphasize planting seeds of the Gospel, praying that the Holy Spirit would bring about the fruit of faith in the lives of the children as you pursue an ongoing relationship with them and their parents.

**10. How can the church help facilitate Backyard Bible Clubs?**

- Communicate the vision behind the BYBC strategy. It is ideal if you can do this in the late winter or early spring to give your members time to understand and embrace the vision.
- Equip and train those who want to participate in a BYBC.
  - Provide all the necessary curriculum components.
  - Offer practical training on how to host a BYBC and effectively use the materials.
  - Facilitate and coordinate networking, matching volunteers with their desired roles.
  - If possible, offer financial assistance for any additional costs associated with activities, snacks, crafts, etc.
  - Consider providing a Bible resource for the BYBC hosts to give to the children who participate.
  - Commit to pray for each BYBC as it occurs.