

# Helper

Handbook



# *Helper Handbook*



Petersburg, Kentucky, USA

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#### *Helper Handbook*

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# Let's Dive In!

Imagine you're standing at the beach with your eyes closed. Can you hear the waves gently washing against the shore? Do you feel the soft sand between your toes? Is there a smell of freshness in the air and a taste of salty sea mist on your lips? Open your eyes and gaze upon one of the most amazing places on Earth—the ocean.

Then get ready to road trip with us as we head out for the newest AnswersVBS—*Ocean Commotion*, where we'll dive into Noah's Flood and learn important life lessons from Noah such as:

- Standing for God (even if it means standing alone);
- Obeying God (no matter what);
- Trusting God (He's a life saver);
- Thanking God (in everything);
- Fearing God (taking Him seriously).

It promises to be a boatload of fun every jam-packed day! We'll plunge right in as we start with the Under-the-Sea Opening Assembly, a high-energy opening with entertaining welcomes, rockin' songs, a mission moment, and prayer.

Then we're off to four fun rotation sites:

- Lifesaver Lesson Time, where we dive deep into God's Word and learn important Bible truths in fun and creative ways;
- Seaside Snacks, where prep is a breeze and taste is tropical;
- Splish! Splash! Games, where we make some waves with both land and sea escapades;
- Sunsational Science and Crafts, where a wide array of science experiments and crafts are waiting to be explored.

After finishing the day's rotations, everyone heads back to the Under-the-Sea Closing Assembly that includes more singing, a Creature Feature, contest results, and the greatly anticipated daily drama, which is a highlight of the kids' day. The drama begins as Alex, the lead character, falls asleep. Then starts a fantastical dream sequence that places her smack dab in an under-the-sea world. While meeting crazy ocean characters and having even crazier experiences, she learns that there's only one way to safety—through "the door." Just as Noah went through the door in the Ark and found safety, we too find safety in just one way—through Jesus, our "door" to salvation.

With all that's in store, it "shore" is going to be fun! So "water" you waiting for? Let's dive on in!

# Frequently Asked Questions

## *Our Goal*

If you asked the people of your church and community how they felt about the Bible, what would their response be? Would they consider the Word of God relevant to their lives and interesting to learn from? Or would it seem irrelevant and trumped by “science”?

A recent survey<sup>1</sup> by America’s Research Group<sup>2</sup> revealed that an alarming number of young people<sup>3</sup> are leaving the church after they graduate because their questions about the Bible have not been answered. Respondents indicated that Sunday school materials were shallow and irrelevant. Of those polled, 86% had begun to question the Bible by their high school years. Of those who said they did not believe all the accounts in the Bible are true, 82% cited doubts about the Bible’s authority or its trustworthiness.

We trust that the Lord will use Answers VBS to help reverse this sad trend by equipping today’s youth and adults with the answers they seek. We have designed *Ocean Commotion* to provide solid Bible-based teaching delivered in a fun and entertaining way that counters the misinformation about the Bible and science that children encounter daily.

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<sup>1</sup> Britt Beemer poll commissioned by Answers in Genesis.

<sup>2</sup> America’s Research Group, Ltd., is a full-service market and behavioral research firm offering expertise in all phases of survey research, from questionnaire design to final report preparation.

<sup>3</sup> These were people now in their twenties who regularly attended an evangelical church as they were growing up. The poll was nationwide.

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

The content of *Ocean Commotion* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit [answersvbs.com/ocfaq](http://answersvbs.com/ocfaq).

# Terms to Know

## *Terms to Know*

Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here's a list of some of the most common terms to know.

- **Divers/Dive Clubs:** The children are nicknamed "divers" and are placed in "dive clubs" (individual classes) named after animals, such as the Dolphin Dive Club (Dolphins, for short) or the Sea Turtle Dive Club (Sea Turtles).
- **Dive Club Leaders:** Group leaders who lead the groups from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.
- **Lifesaver Lesson Time:** Bible and apologetics teaching time.
- **Dive Instructors:** Teachers at the Lifesaver Lesson Time.
- **Sunsational Science and Crafts:** Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.
- **Seaside Snacks:** Indoor or outdoor site where snacks are served.
- **Splish! Splash! Games:** Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.
- **Lifeline Verse:** Daily memory verse.
- **Creature Feature:** Daily time during the closing assembly when we marvel together at God's design of various marine animals.
- **Toddlers:** 2–4-year-olds.
- **Pre-Primaries:** 4–6-year-olds, or 4-year-olds through children who have completed Kindergarten.
- **Primaries:** 6–9-year-olds, or children who have completed grades 1–3.
- **Juniors:** 9–12-year-olds, or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multi-age K–6th groups, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

## *Staff Devotions*

### *Devotion 1 Stand for God!*

by Stacia McKeever

*"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." Hebrews 11:7*

This week at *Ocean Commotion*, we'll be teaching our kids to stand for God, obey God, trust God, thank God, and fear God, just as Noah did 4,300 years ago. All characteristics that we want to instill in our children, right? But if we're not careful as we teach good character qualities, we can easily fall into the trap of moralism. Moralism is the idea that we can achieve righteousness or right living apart from the gospel.

We teach moralism when we say, "Noah took a stand for God, and you should, too!" While it's true that Noah stood for God in the face of unrelenting wickedness, he did not do it in his own power. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8). He walked with God (Genesis 6:9). He knew that God was the one who was saving him from the coming judgment and, by faith in God, he willingly responded to God's call on his life (Hebrews 11:7). Noah's stand for God was grounded in his faith in God.

Think about it this way: So what if we teach kids to stand for God? If we teach them to stand for God apart from the gospel, they are as much in danger of

the fires of hell as the child who mocks God. If we teach kids to obey God's commands (be kind, tell the truth, obey your parents, stay sexually pure until marriage) apart from the gospel, they are as much in danger of eternal separation from God's goodness as the homosexuals who outright defy God's commands. If we teach them to thank God but don't hold out the ultimate reason we give thanks—that we've been rescued from the eternal wrath of God on our sins—we bring them no closer to the kingdom of heaven than the ingrates who refuse to acknowledge God even exists.

We don't want to encourage kids to change themselves—to take a stand in their own power just because some guy did it thousands of years ago. Being good, standing for God—moralism—doesn't save anybody. After all, it wasn't for the righteous that Jesus came; He came for sinners (Luke 5:32). Instead, we need to encourage our children to realize their desperate need for a Savior who will help them stand for Him through the indwelling power of His Holy Spirit.

## Devotion 2 Obey God!

As we go through this week, let's look for opportunities to share Noah's life with our kids—how he stood for God, obeyed God, trusted God, thanked God, and feared God—through the lens of his faith in God. Let's point them to the only One who can save us and sanctify us—the only truly moral One who gives us His morality when we can't manu-

facture any on our own (2 Corinthians 5:21). Let's reject the idea that morality is our end goal. And let's encourage them to trust whole-heartedly in Jesus and to rely on Him to work out these attributes in us—the only true basis for morality that exists.

### *Devotion 2 Obey God!*

by Dan Lietha

*"If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15*

Images of Noah's Ark—mostly directed at children—are everywhere: on fine art prints, children's books, wall-paper, toys, tapestries, greeting cards, T-shirts, magazine and TV ads, posters, wall decorations, and even business logos. And these images are not just aimed at the "religious" market; they are also hot items among the secular crowd.

Have you ever stopped to think how the Ark—such a powerful reminder of God's judgment—became so popular, considering so many reject the true account of Noah's Flood?

It can't be because of what the Ark really stands for. The Bible says that people are willingly ignorant that "the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water" (2 Peter 3:5–6).

A clue to the Ark's popularity can be found in the Ark images themselves. Most Ark images bear little resemblance to the one described in Genesis. Artists generally ignore the information in Scripture in favor of a wide variety of

imaginative shapes, sizes, and themes. The most common version is a toy-like boat, stuffed full of cuddly animals that crowd around Noah. Why is that?

Some artists treat the Ark like an amusing myth or children's fairy tale. They do not believe that the story is an account of actual events, and therefore they have no problem in doing anything they want with it. Even artists and companies who believe the Bible's account of Noah's Flood sometimes choose to create a caricature of the Ark for artistic and sales reasons. For instance, small arks take less time to draw, are cute, sell well, and make it easy to show the entire Ark and animals in one scene. And small arks aren't controversial, either, because they don't look real.

In addition to a lack of accuracy, the modern arks have a more serious drawback. One of the most-asked questions about Noah's Ark is how Noah fit all the animals into it. The size of the Ark is critical to the believability of the bibli-