



## Pass the Parcel

**Description:** A game in which a package is passed around and unwrapped

**Aim:** To illustrate our responsibility to pass the good news of Jesus onto others

**Audience:** Primary, any size group (but participants may have to be limited to the number of sweets available – see instructions below)

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Equipment:** Wrapping paper, sweets, Bible verses written on cards, Bible, music

**Scriptures to study:** 1 Timothy 6:18; Romans 6:23; John 8:36, 10:10, 12:46

### Leader's instructions

1. In advance, wrap a Bible in several sheets of heavy wrapping paper. In each of the layers put enough individually wrapped sweets so that there is at least one sweet for each participant. (Alternatively, there could just be a good number of sweets, rather than one for everyone every round.) Also include one of the Bible verses written on a piece of card (see proposed order below).
2. Tell the children to sit in a circle. Explain that when the music starts, they must pass the package around the circle.
3. Start the music and let it play while the package is passed around.
4. Stop the music. Whoever has the package when the music stops opens one layer, discovering the sweets and Bible verse. Make sure everyone sees all the sweets they find. Exclaim, 'Oh look! You've been blessed with a LOT of sweets! Do you have pockets big enough to hold all of them?'
5. At this point the other children should start protesting, 'Hey, I want some!' 'They should share!' 'Why do they get all the sweets?' Stop now and discuss what Jesus would do and what he tells us to do.



6. Ask the child with the package to read 1 Timothy 6:8 from the card they unwrapped. Ask the kids what this verse tells rich people to do. (*It tells those who are rich in this world to share. Does that include sweets? Yes, everything.*)
7. Make sure the sweets get shared – if possible, evenly – amongst the children (maybe put into named bags to take home at the end), or alternatively, just encourage the winner to give away all but one to other children. Then begin again.
8. This time, when the music stops, review. Ask, 'When God blesses you with something, what should you do?' Everyone should know now that the 'blessed one' is supposed to share their sweets.
9. Have the next package-holder read Romans 6:23 from the card. Tell the kids, 'Sweets are one gift. What is another gift – a bigger, more important, life-changing gift – talked about in this verse?' (*Eternal life.*)
10. Repeat this pattern with as many layers as you like. Choose from these verses: John 12:46, 10:10, 8:36. Keep going until you've unwrapped all the way and reach the Bible inside. Use either an English Bible or one in a foreign language. (NB If the Bible is not intended as a prize to keep at the end, it might be good to put in with it a small gift for the winner to keep.)
11. Use the following *Discussion and application* section to emphasise your point.

## **Discussion and application**

**Sweets:** Everyone likes sweets! If your friends have sweets, it's nice when they share them with you. How would you feel if the person who opened the package didn't share them?

**Verses:** Three of the verses hidden in the parcel were from the Gospel of John, one of the books of the Bible. The word 'gospel' means 'good news'. The book that John wrote is called a Gospel because it tells us the good news that Jesus came to:



- Set us free
- Give us life in all its fullness
- Lead us out of darkness into light.



The person who opened the package shared the sweets and the Bible verse so that everyone could have two gifts: God's word and sweets. Which one will last longer? Which one is more important? That's right. The Bible.

**Bible:** The Bible is the whole of God's message of good news to us. In this game you were passing a Bible around to each other. Even though you didn't know what it was until the very end, everyone was included in the game and everyone had the same chance of being the one to open the package when the music stopped. But that's not how it is in real life. Did you know that not everyone in the world has the Bible? Why is that?



- Some people can't afford one
- Some people don't have it in a language they understand
- Some people can't read
- Some people have never even heard of the Bible.



There are many people in the world who don't know God's good news, and that's because it hasn't always been passed on by those who do have it. How about you? What can you do to pass the good news on to someone else?

- Tell your friends and family the good news of Jesus Christ
- Help missionaries tell the good news to people far away.

**Bible verses:** Put between the layers in reverse order, as numbered, so that they will be found in the order listed:



- 5. 'Command them (those who are rich) to... be generous and willing to share.' (1 Timothy 6:18)
- 4. 'For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 6:23)
- 3. 'So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.' (John 8:36)
- 2. '...I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.' (John 10:10)
- 1. 'I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.' (John 12:46)

## Helpful hints



- Make sure that there are enough sweets for everyone to have one each round. Alternatively, make a teaching point about the winner of the round giving away (all but one of) the sweets. After all, there are not yet enough Bibles to 'go around'.



- Add blank layers of wrapping paper to make the game last longer.
- In a large meeting, use boxes for each layer, decorated with wrapping paper.
- If available, use a Bible in a foreign language and verses in different languages, to illustrate the need for Bible translation. When they try to read a verse – surprise! They need a Bible in their own language or it makes no sense. After all, a Bible you cannot read is not good news at all!

## **Ideas for use**



This activity works well in almost any setting with children, including Sunday school classes and family services. It can also be adapted for use in assemblies and classes, depending on the school. It can be used when you have a wide range of ages together but if there are very young children present, make sure there are older ones to help them read the verses. However, if the number of participants is more than the number of sweets in each layer, it might be good to make sure everyone gets at least one sweet in the end.