



UPWARD BOUND

Gospel Presentation Manual

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“...whoever **hears** my word
and **believes** him
who sent me
has **eternal life**
and will not be condemned;
he has **crossed over**
from death to **life.**”
John 5:24 (NIV)

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Truly great is the Lord; His ways are high! And yet His Gospel message is within reach of the youngest child attending your VBS. To help you tell of Mt. Zion's God and His saving grace to the next generation at Upward Bound, this special Gospel presentation, Crossover to Life (Crossover), is offered. Pictured below and in the Trail Log, and included in the Content Outline below (pages 7–16), this adaptation of the Navigator's *Bridge to Life*, contains six Illustrations likening life and salvation to a backpacker's spiritual journey.

Crossover's purpose is two-fold:

- to help you explain God's plan of salvation to your Backpackers in a simple form, that many of them may be saved;
- to help the children learn a Gospel presentation, Crossover having been included in the daily memory work goals, which they in turn can tell to their families and friends.

Crossover's dual purpose should be explained to the children as it is taught.

Please note that as part of your preparation for Crossover, you are strongly urged to read the Upward Bound Bible Lesson Curriculum in its entirety, and to attend your staff training meetings. Your familiarity with the curriculum content and overall focus of Upward Bound will prove invaluable as you seek to integrate Crossover with what your Backpacker audience will be learning and experiencing at Upward Bound. During VBS week itself, your daily observation of Setting Up Camp (page 4, "Who" section), as well as of the Mapping the Route Bible lessons when possible, will help you weave the adventure theme, lingo, and lesson and skit truths into your Gospel presentation, making it all the more enjoyable and effective, Lord-willing, for your young listeners.

As you labor to advance Christ's Kingdom in your community through your

**Great is the Lord,
and greatly to be praised
in the city of our God!**

**His holy mountain,
beautiful in elevation,
is the joy of all the earth,**

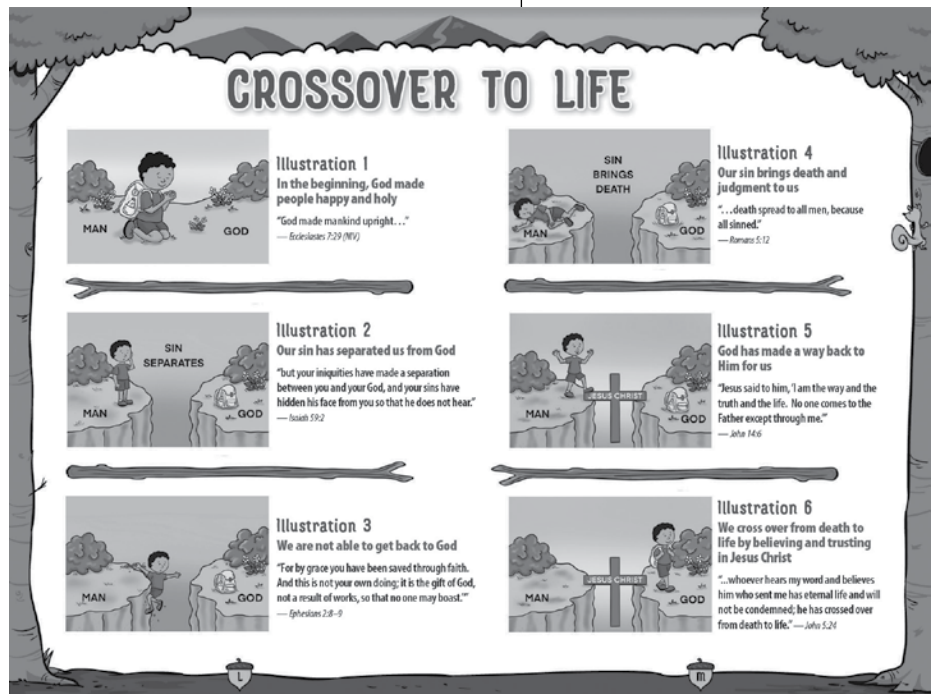
**Mount Zion, in the far north,
the city of the great King. Walk about
Zion, go around her,**

**number her towers,
consider well her ramparts,
go through her citadels,**

**that you may tell the next generation
that this is God,
our God forever and ever.**

He will guide us forever.

Psalm 48:1–2, 12–14



¹Joseph Hart, *Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy*, 1759.

²J.I. Packer, *Introductory Essay in John Owen's The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, 22.



Expedition D (4's–K)

In order to minimize distractions from these potentially restless little ones, Expedition D may exit *prior* to the body of your presentation if you give your Gospel presentation during Setting Up Camp. If Crossover is given during Breaking Camp, Expedition D may enter Base Camp *after* Crossover has been presented to the older Backpackers. Note also that Expedition D has its own Gospel presentation in its Outpost each day. Coordinate with your VBS Director as to whether you or an Expedition D Guide will give that presentation.

Crossover presentation, prepare your heart before the Lord, drawing near to Jesus, that you may reflect Him to the children. Come to Him in prayer whatever your state—praising, confessing, thanking, pleading. In the words of the great 18th century hymn, “Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream; all the fitness He requires is to feel your need of Him.”¹ Then go in His name, in His power, heartened with the knowledge that, as J.I. Packer so eloquently expresses below, Christ Himself will be working in and through you:

...the old gospel is proclaimed in the sure confidence that the Christ of whom it testifies, the Christ who is the real speaker when the Scriptural invitations to trust Him are expounded and applied, is not passively waiting for man's decision as the word goes forth, but is omnipotently active, working with and through the word to bring His people to faith in Himself.... Those who preach [the gospel] know that as they do their work of setting Christ before men's eyes, the mighty Saviour whom they proclaim is busy doing His work through their words, visiting sinners with salvation, awakening them to faith, drawing them in mercy to Himself.²

When and Where

Crossover is designed to be presented to your Grades 1-6 Backpackers (Expeditions A–C) assembled in your Base Camp during Setting Up (preferably) or Breaking Camp each day for four consecutive days beginning on Day 2, and to Expedition D (4's–K) in their Outpost at a time that best suits their individual schedule (see sidebar). Presentation of the six-part message is given as follows:

- Day 2—Intro, Illustrations 1 & 2
- Day 3—Illustrations 3 & 4
- Day 4—Illustrations 5 & 6
- Day 5—Review & conclusion

Each day's content can and should be covered in 5–7 minutes to accommodate the shorter attention spans of the younger children. To give you a sense of timing, note that the introduction's first section on the inerrancy and authority of Scripture (page 7), can be covered in less than 20 seconds when delivered as indicated. Scheduling singing just before Crossover is helpful. Also, specially selected songs sung *after* each presentation are good content reinforcers. Coordinate these with your VBS Director and Song Guide.

Who

With Base Camp Assemblies Manual

If your VBS Director is adhering to the daily assemblies scripts, it is important that you observe the Setting Up Camp (opening assembly) skits in Base Camp each day so that you can weave the developing drama, which reflects the Crossover Illustrations, into your presentations.

When you are introduced (usually toward the end of the assembly), make a grand entrance in eye-catching backpacking attire. After greeting the Backpackers, ask

one or two humorous or straight questions related to the skit and its characters before transitioning into your presentation. Place similarly-related questions throughout your presentation to help the children connect the truths of the skits to the Gospel message. On Days 3 and 4, begin with a quick review: “Remember what happened yesterday? The backpacker was stuck on the cliff, separated from God because of sin. Today we’re going to discover what will happen to him.”

Without Base Camp Assemblies Manual

If your VBS director is *not* using the Base Camp Assemblies scripts, use the following suggestions to enhance your presentation and engage the attention of your Backpackers.

As the Crossover presenter, appear each day dressed in camping or hiking attire. After greeting the Backpackers, get their attention by asking one or two whimsical or straight outdoor-life questions (“I was roasting marshmallows around the campfire last night with some raccoons and they said to say ‘hi’ to you this morning. Do you know the ones I mean?” or, “How many of you have ever gone hiking?”). You may wish to show some intriguing hiking or climbing gear on alternate days.

As the children are quieting down, have Great Grizzly or some other fanciful character (comical Park Ranger Rob/Ruth) make a grand but quick-moving entrance into Base Camp. (You might point binoculars toward the back, asking, “Say, do you see something big and furry heading this way?” or the like.) In a brief (1–2 minute) exchange, have Great Grizzly introduce himself, display his affection for the children, and then urge them to heed the important message they are about to hear. If desired, Great Grizzly can grunt in “bear talk” and have you “interpret” for him. “What’s that you’re saying, Great Grizzly?” More grunting. “Ah, when you were a young cub, one time you didn’t pay attention to your Bear Guide and you climbed right into a prickly thorn tree. Ouch!” (Note that in your initial presentation, more time is allotted for introducing your guest character.) Then have a happy but speedy “Great Grizzly Good-bye,” perhaps hinting at his return. This creates delightful anticipation in the children, while bringing a sense of continuity to the six-part message. The special guest character makes a vivid and lasting impression on the children, who quickly learn to associate his played-up arrival with a time calling for attentive eyes and listening ears. After your guest has left and you’ve regained the children’s attention, start your presentation, beginning with a quick review on Days 3 and 4: “Remember what happened yesterday? The backpacker was stuck on the cliff, separated from God because of sin. Today we’re going to discover what will happen to him.”

How

Crossover Illustration

Thoroughly familiarize yourself with the Crossover illustration. Have clearly in mind each Illustration’s:

- caption, which summarizes the main point
- Scripture memory verse, being sure to study it in its context in the Bible



Creating Costumes

Gospel Guide

- Cargo-style pants/shorts
- hiking hat & boots
- hiking waist pack
- hiking stick
- carabiner, water bottle, compass, etc. clipped to waist pack or belt loops

Great Grizzly

- rent/purchase a bear costume from costume supply store, or
- check with government agencies and university departments of forestry regarding availability of a bear costume to rent or borrow

Park Ranger Rob/Ruth

- khaki short-sleeved shirt with arm patch, and name & ranger badges
- dark pants/shorts
- park ranger hat
- boots



Scriptural Support

To help you restate, emphasize, and explain more fully each day's message, Support Verses are listed in the sidebar for each Illustration. These verses will direct you to surrounding passages and often entire chapters relevant to your points. Consider the verses listed as well as those of your own choosing.



LOOK ONLINE

for additional resources (music, artwork, and publicity information) available on the Upward Bound portal. Talk to your Director for more information or visit: portal.reachoutadventures.com

- artistic details, developed to prompt and correspond to your message
- application, making your message specifically relevant to the children

Visual Aid

The Crossover visual aid serves several purposes. It immediately focuses your audience's attention, guides the direction of your presentation as you point out the artistic significance of each Crossover Illustration, and serves as a memory prompt for you during the talk. This visual aid can be a Powerpoint slide or a poster. Resources for each are available on the portal.

Be sure to have any necessary equipment ready in your Base Camp for Crossover use during Setting Up or Breaking Camp each day and for the Summit Celebration (closing program). Quick and easy access to it will help you keep up the pace of your presentation.

What

Use the outline and suggestions that follow to formulate your four daily messages. Concepts to cover are listed, with sample wording offered within quotation marks. Since there is great interconnection between the Illustrations, and because you are the one familiar with your audience, as well as the one God has specifically chosen to be His ambassador, we encourage you to compose your message in your own words, based on the content provided. Keep in mind, however, the importance of adhering to the content as well as incorporating explanations of the visual aid.

The vocabulary used below to outline each Illustration's content section will need to be translated in your delivery into terms understandable to the children, with *concrete, age-appropriate examples* given. For instance, explanations for the sins of commission and omission, to reach both 1st and 5th graders, respectively, might include: "Sometimes we sin by doing wrong things on purpose, like when we hurt someone's feelings or put someone down. Maybe we shove someone on the playground or push him around to look cool, or maybe steal their pencil or lunch money. And sometimes we sin by *not* doing something we should, like when we don't clean up our toys or do our homework before going outside to play, even though we know we're supposed to." Use your discretion concerning time, attention spans, and the inclusion of the lesser details mentioned. End each message with a leading comment or question to whet their appetites for the next day's Illustration. Finally, remember to pray, trust, and enjoy!



DAY 2

Introduction, Illustrations 1 & 2

Introduction

opening

This first day of Crossover, take some time to:

- establish rapport with your Backpackers
- explain Crossover's two-fold purpose (see page 3)
- let the children know that you will be back with them each day to teach them about Crossover
- inform them that they will have the opportunity to learn Crossover themselves in their Outposts and at home

basic introduction

- *inerrancy and authority of Scripture*: Introduce the Bible as God's Word, completely true, trustworthy, and authoritative (II Timothy 3:16): "Can we know what's true and how God wants us to live? We sure can! Where do we learn that? That's right—in the Bible! Is there any part of the Bible we shouldn't believe or obey? It is *all* God's Word and instruction to us, isn't it? He knows what to say, because..."
- *God as Creator*: "...God made the world: the stars, planets, animals, and plants—all of nature. But best of all, God made you! People are the most important part of God's creation. And because He is our Creator, He is the One we are to worship and obey."

visual aid introduction

"These Crossover to Life pictures are going to help you understand something that is the most important thing you could ever know! Everything in these pictures represents something that is true about our lives. When you see this backpacker (point to visual aid), I want you to think of yourself. He is representing each one of us—you, me, your Guides, your families and friends, every person in this world."



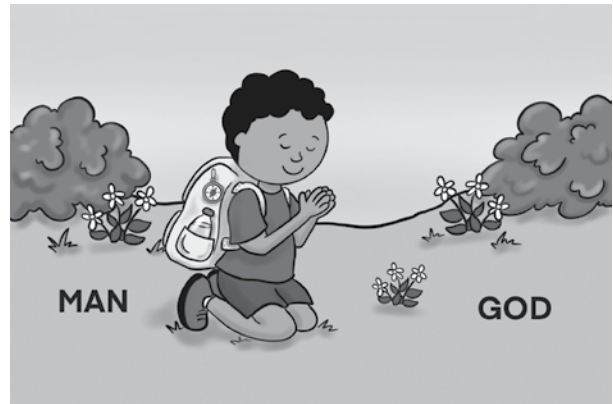
Support Verses

Genesis 1 & 2

If you teach Crossover after the children have had their Bible lesson, refer to Gabriel's explanation of how creation went from perfection to brokenness (Bible Lesson Curriculum, Lesson One).

Illustration 1

"... God made mankind upright..."
— Ecclesiastes 7:29 (NIV)



In the beginning, God made people happy and holy

creation

creation as perfect, unspoiled beauty: "When God first made the world, it was perfect! Not one thing was bad or scary or sad or ugly or painful. No war, no pollution, no drugs, no pushing or being mean on the playground.

backpacker on knees (close to God)

no separation between God and Man (note unbroken landscape): "The first people were perfect, too. As Ecclesiastes 7:29 says, '...God made mankind upright...' Do you remember the names of the first people? Yes, Adam and Eve. They loved and worshiped God with their whole hearts, just like this backpacker. They were close to God. They talked and even took walks with Him!

backpacker's gear

equipped with everything necessary for life and godliness: "What is this on the backpacker's back? Yes, he has a backpack and all the things a backpacker needs. God gave Adam and Eve *everything* they needed to live joyfully in the garden, loving and trusting God and each other completely, and worshiping and obeying God perfectly. They were holy, and they were very happy. As the caption says—'In the beginning, God made people happy and holy.'

transition

"But we know that we're not all happy and holy like this backpacker, and our world isn't perfect anymore, is it? Something terrible happened and now our world is full of problems. Let's find out how life became ruined."