

t_{he} Chalkboard

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Zion Assembly Church of God



A Lasting Impression

Children are creative. They enjoy coloring, cutting, molding, and pasting. Children especially enjoy working with clay. They love its malleable texture. The cool dough stimulates a child's mind, as he squishes and pounds it with his hands. When clay is first taken from the package, it is soft and pliable. The possibilities from that small lump are endless. If left exposed to the elements, it will become dry, brittle, and unusable.

Children are like this - like an unopened package of clay. As a Children's Minister, you have the awesome responsibility of shaping young lives into the image of Christ. You have the opportunity to teach and train them while they are still impressionable. What a blessed responsibility! You have a high calling from God. Have you ever considered yourself to be a sculptor? You are Christ's hands gently fashioning children to be useful vessels for the Master. What do you expect your finished masterpiece to resemble? Every Bible lesson you prepare and each guiding Word you speak are molding the life of a child. Seize the opportunity to make a lasting impression on the children in their formative years.

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day
And as my fingers pressed it still
It moved and yielded at my will.

I came again when days were past,
The bit of clay was hard at last.
The form I gave it, it still bore
And I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day
And molded with God's power and art
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone
A man now I looked upon
And he that early impress wore
And I could change him never more.

Anonymous



Ideas To Illuminate

Clay is a useful sensory material for children's Bible lessons. As children shape the dough with their hands, the Bible point will be cemented in their minds. Keeping the attention of active boys is simple when you pull out a container of fresh clay. Pound and smooth a piece of dough in your hands as you recite the Bible story. Small pieces of clay can be utilized to stand up Bible character cutouts when illustrating a story. Use a toothpick to inscribe a Bible verse on a flattened piece of clay. Roll the clay into ropes to form letters in keywords from a story, such as *love* or *forgive*. Also, make homemade dough together as you discuss II Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." As you add each ingredient, share with the students how becoming a Christian is like being made new. In the story of Jesus and Nicodemus, Christ's teaching on being "born again" can be reinforced with a hands-on activity. After teaching the lesson, give each child a piece of clay to mold into a new creature of his choosing. For a challenge, have the children close their eyes while they create. This helps students to get a mental picture of their sculpture but the outcome will be quite different. Of course, another basic lesson to teach when using clay is the "days of creation." Rehearse with the children how God made the earth, plants, and animals. Then have every student shape a different item and tell the day it was created. Making homemade dough together with children is both an exciting and messy project. There are many websites which offer a variety of safe recipes to use with children, such as <http://applesaucekids.com>.

Chalk Talk

Let's Talk! Have you taken the *Back to the Book* Scripture memorization challenge? I want to hear the creative ways in which you are teaching your students to memorize the Bible. E-mail me at youngdisciples@att.net

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