

The Backpack of Grace Children's Story

A 6 to 7 minute object lesson for Annual NAD Stewardship Sabbath

Supporting the message All In When Grace Claims Your Whole Life

Story Purpose

This story helps children understand that stewardship begins with God's grace. God gives first, Jesus wants our whole lives, and everything entrusted to us can become part of His mission.

Bible Text

"They first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God." 2 Corinthians 8:5
NKJV

Props

Item	Suggested Prop
Backpack	Any colorful backpack
Time	Small clock or paper clock
Temple	Water bottle
Talents	Crayons or a paintbrush
Treasure	A few coins in a clear bag
Trust	Small umbrella
Theology	Bible
Testimony	Toy microphone or paper speech bubble

The Backpack of Grace

Hold up the empty backpack and look inside it.

Children, have you ever wanted to help someone but thought, 'I do not have enough'? Maybe you did not have enough money. Maybe you thought you were too young. Maybe you did not know what to say.

A girl named Jordan felt exactly that way. One Sabbath, her church announced a special mission project. A family in the neighborhood had lost many of their belongings in an apartment fire. The family was safe, but they needed food, clothing, school supplies, friendship, and prayer.

Jordan watched adults bring bags and boxes into the fellowship hall. One person brought groceries. Another brought blankets. Someone else gave money. Jordan looked at her empty hands and whispered, 'I wish I could help, but I do not have anything to give.'

Mr. Lewis, Jordan's Sabbath School teacher, heard her. He smiled and handed her a bright backpack. 'Before you decide that you have nothing,' he said, 'look inside.'

Reach into the backpack but do not remove anything yet.

Jordan unzipped the backpack. 'Whose backpack is this?' she asked. 'It is mine,' Mr. Lewis answered, 'but I am placing it in your care. Everything inside is a gift. You did not earn it, buy it, or fill it. Receive it, and then use it to bless someone.'

Mr. Lewis opened his Bible and read, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.' Then he said, 'Jordan, stewardship does not begin with what we give God. It begins with what God has already given us. Before we ever gave, God gave Jesus.'

Invite the children to repeat the first response.

Leader Grace came down

Children God gave first

Jordan smiled. The backpack itself was a gift. She reached inside and pulled out a little clock.

Grace Takes Over

Remove each item as it is named.

'This clock reminds you that your time belongs to God,' said Mr. Lewis. Jordan decided to spend time sitting with Eli, the boy from the family, so he would not feel alone.

Next she found a water bottle. 'Your body is God's temple,' Mr. Lewis explained. 'When you care for your health, God can use your hands, feet, strength, and smile.' Jordan filled the bottle and helped carry a box of groceries.

Then Jordan pulled out crayons. 'Those remind you of your talents.' Jordan loved to draw, so she made Eli a card that said, 'You are not alone. Our church family cares about you.'

At the bottom of the backpack was a small bag of coins. ‘Treasure,’ Jordan said. She added two dollars she had been saving and helped purchase a new notebook for Eli. Her gift was not large, but it came from a willing heart.

Jordan reached in again and found a tiny umbrella. Mr. Lewis said, ‘An umbrella reminds us of trust. We cannot control every storm, but we can trust the God who stays with us in the storm.’ Jordan was nervous about meeting a new family, so she quietly prayed, ‘Jesus, please help me be brave and kind.’

Next came a Bible. ‘Theology means what we believe about God,’ said Mr. Lewis. ‘When we know that God is our Owner, Savior, and Provider, we do not have to live with closed hands.’ Jordan remembered that Jesus had given Himself for her.

The last item was a toy microphone. ‘Testimony,’ Jordan said. Mr. Lewis nodded. ‘A testimony is simply telling what God has done.’ When Jordan met Eli, she did not give a long speech. She said, ‘When I feel afraid, Jesus helps me. I asked Him to help your family too.’

Jordan looked at the empty backpack. ‘Mr. Lewis, I used everything.’ ‘No,’ he replied gently. ‘You did something even better. You gave yourself to the Lord first. Then your time, body, abilities, money, trust, beliefs, and story became available for His mission.’

Invite the children to repeat the second response.

Leader Grace takes over

Children Jesus wants all of me

Grace Goes Out

That afternoon Jordan sat beside Eli while the adults organized supplies. They colored together, shared a snack, and laughed. Before long, Eli was helping Jordan make thank-you cards for everyone who had served his family.

Do you see what happened? Grace came down when Jordan received a gift. Grace took over when she gave herself to God. Grace went out when everything entrusted to her helped someone else. And then grace kept going: Eli began using his own talent to encourage others.

Children, you may not have a lot of money, but you have something God can use. You have minutes in your day. You have a body that can serve. You have abilities. You may have a coin or two. You can trust God. You can learn what the Bible says about Him. You can tell someone what Jesus has done for you.

The most important gift is not what is in your pocket. The most important gift is you. Jesus gave His whole life for you, and today you can say, ‘Jesus, I belong to You. I am all in.’

Invite the children to repeat the final response.

Leader Grace goes out

Children God can use my life

Child Friendly Appeal

Ask the children to hold both hands open in front of them.

Your open hands are a picture of an open life. If you want to receive Jesus' love, place your whole life in His hands, and let Him use you to bless someone, keep your hands open while we pray.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for giving Yourself for us. Thank You for every good gift You place in our care. We give ourselves to You. Please use our time, bodies, talents, treasure, trust, beliefs, and stories to help others know Your love. By Your grace, we are all in with Jesus. Amen.

Transition to the Sermon

Church family, the children have shown us the heart of biblical stewardship: grace came down, grace takes over, and grace goes out. Before we ever gave, God gave. And when we first give ourselves to the Lord, everything entrusted to us becomes available for His mission.