

LEADING A CHILD TO CHRIST SALVATION COUNSELING

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I. _____ **FOR THE CHILDREN - WE STAND TALLEST WHEN WE ARE ON OUR KNEES.**

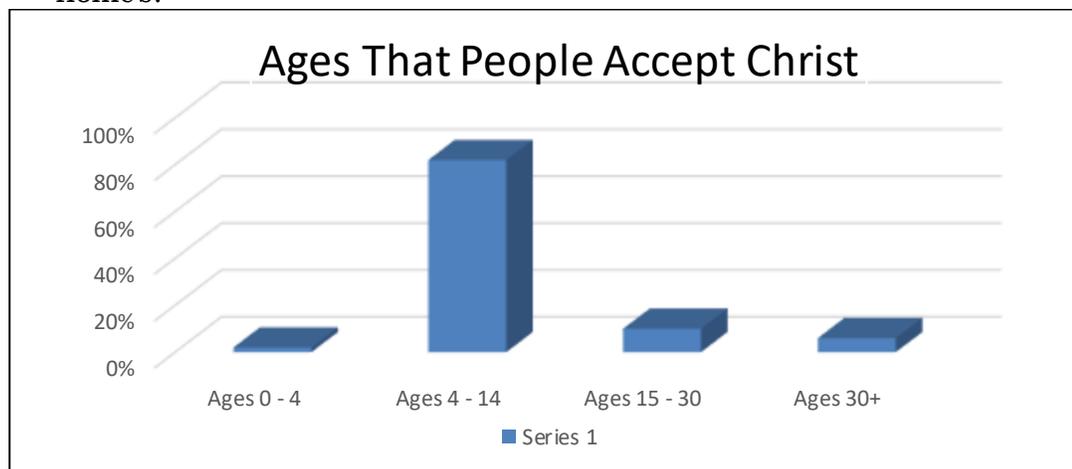
The strongest action that we can take in any situation is to go to our knees and ask God for help. If we are going to see children saved, attitudes change and spiritual maturity increase it will start with prayer for the children.

II. _____ **THE CHILDREN - CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT TO GO TO HEAVEN.**

“But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Matt. 19:14 In this day and time, when sin is seeking its beach head in very young lives, we (the church) must be more aggressive than ever before. Someone must get up out of the pew and take the message of Christ to children and to all ages.

A. CHILDREN HAVE MANY STRIKES AGAINST THEM:

1. The world and its system are more aggressive than ever before in going after our children.
2. Many are raised in ungodly and unconcerned homes.
3. Many are raised in “religion” but not in Christ.
4. The philosophies of elementary schools impact the child five days each week.
5. A “form of godliness” creates confusion in children in most Christian homes.



B.

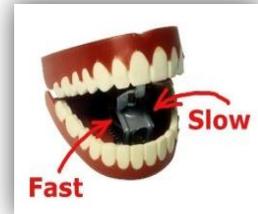
After fourteen years of age, statistically only a few ever come to Christ. We cannot deny the influence of this world.

III. _____ **FOR THE CHILDREN – GREAT CHILDREN’S WORKERS KNOW THEIR CHILDREN AND HOW CHILDREN THINK!**

A. WHAT CONFUSES CHILDREN?

We should never be the reason for a child’s confusion of the wonderful truth of the story of Jesus, the gospel.

1. _____ –Adults often forget that children have not been around as long as we have. They have not had so long an exposure to words and phrases and spiritual terms as we have. They cannot think and grasp concepts as fast as we can talk. Adult “fast-talkers” must not put their confidence to their ability to talk fast and long, thus saying more words than the average teacher. More words and terms only extend the pain of listening and the amount to comprehend.



- a. Talk slower than normal.
- b. Watch the terms you use, remember they are children.

2. **WORDS AND TERMS CHILDREN DO NOT UNDERSTAND** – Learn to define the terms in verses that you have chosen. This is one of the first places that you can lose a child, especially a young one.

Examples:

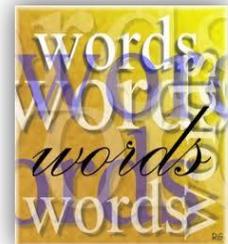
“As it is written, there is none **righteous**, no not one.”
Romans 3:10

“For all have **sinned** and **come short** of the **glory of God**. Romans 3:23

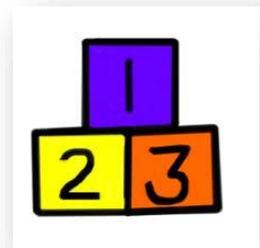
“But God **commendeth** his love toward us, in that, while we were **yet sinners**, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

“Wherefore, as by **one man** sin entered into the **world**, and **death by sin**, and so death **passed upon all men**, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12

“For God so loved the **world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **believeth** in him should not perish but have **everlasting life**.” John 3:16



3. **AN ILLOGICAL PRESENTATION** – Verses, ideas or concepts given without a logical step-by-step process are very often confusing. The heart does not get excited about the end result unless the mind has sorted out the pieces and there is understanding. Yes, you know what you are saying, but you are not talking to yourself. You do not have to “mechanically” say the same thing everytime you witness, but there should always be structure and clear direction to the plan to salvation. The simple plan of salvation should be



simple in explanation, bringing the student to a point of decision, yes or no. If the young mind cannot sort it out, it cannot be a decision.

4. **TOO MUCH EXPLANATION** – Keep it simple: We talk too much most of the time. **SIMPLE – LOGICAL – UNDERSTANDABLE**, are words to remember. Keep it simple and thorough! Be thorough, but not too much. See and hear from the eyes and ears of a child.



5. **COUNSELORS WHO _____ TOO MUCH** – Learn to ask the right questions, Joey, have you ever done this before. Sally, if you wanted to be saved right now, what would you do? Learn to listen. Ask the questions and then be quiet and listen to the child. Often we assume too much. Perhaps because it is the child of one of the faithful families or a child that has ridden the bus for a long time and we assume they understand therefore we see multiple decisions.



B. TERMS AND PHRASES THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED – Every teacher should think through words, terms and phrases before using them. There are key terms or phrases about salvation that you will use often. Make sure it is the best way to say it!

1. **“OPEN YOUR HEART’S DOOR AND LET JESUS COME IN.”** Often Revelation 3:20 is used and the child could be confused, as though Jesus will literally walk right inside. In reality, the Spirit of God comes in. If you ever ask a small child questions (and you should), he will say, “Does it hurt?” “How big is He anyway?” “Will I feel Him?” Even though this is a beautiful verse, there are more verses easier to grasp for a child.



2. **“GIVE YOUR HEART TO JESUS.”** It makes for a good bumper sticker and sounds good, but an unbeliever cannot give his heart to Jesus. In fact, as an unbeliever, we have nothing worthy of giving to God. We can only accept His gift, not give Him one of our own. There are simply better ways to explain this action than this one.



3. **“CONFESS YOUR SINS AND ASK GOD TO SAVE YOU.”** What if we can’t remember them all? We confess our sins daily after we are saved. We are saved from the penalty of that sin that we are born with inherited from Adam. We are cleansed from our sin by the work and blood of Christ when we get saved but there are better ways to approach children with their need to accept Christ.

4. **BIG BIBLE WORDS** – Words such as surrender, commit, make Him Lord, forsake your sins, are excellent for a believer, but the unbeliever does not have the spiritual nature to make such a prayer to God.

C. DOCTRINALLY CORRECT TERMS AND PHRASES

1. **“WOULD YOU RIGHT NOW RECEIVE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOR?”** This can be asked after you have explained the Gospel components: DEATH – BURIAL – RESURRECTION. This is a good term if you feel the child understands that his sin separates him from God, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse him of that sin.

2. **DO YOU BELIEVE THAT CHRIST DIED FOR YOUR SINS, WAS BURIED, AND AROSE VICTORIOUS OVER DEATH? He will save you from your sins too, if you will call upon him now!** Again, this type of statement brings in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, showing that it is specifically for the sinner.

3. **“FOR WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.” ARE YOU READY RIGHT NOW TO CALL UPON THE LORD?** If the unbeliever has faced his own sin and has heard the Gospel message, then he is ready to “call”.

IV. _____ WITH THE CHILDREN – *QUESTIONS GIVE ANSWERS TO BOTH STUDENT AND TEACHER*

A. ASK THEIR NAME: The first thing you should do when dealing with a child that has come forward, is ask them their name. In addition to recordkeeping, knowing the child’s name will allow you to call the child by name throughout the dealing session. Using the child’s name will help make the conversation more personal. Nothing is quite as endearing as when someone addresses us by name. This is true of adults and children as well.

B. ASK THEM WHY THEY CAME FORWARD: The next thing that you want to ask a child that comes forward is: “Why did you come forward today?” Don’t assume that they came forward to get saved. The child might say something like, “My dog, Spot, hurt his leg yesterday and I wanted to pray for him.” That’s great. . .no matter what the child says, make their experience of coming forward a positive one! In this case, pray with them about “Spot” and let them return to class.

If the child doesn’t say that he or she came forward to get saved then don’t suggest it. For example, don’t say, “Did you come forward to get saved?” By asking it this way the child may respond “yes”, simply because they are trying to please you as the adult.

Throughout the process of dealing with the child it is better, **not** to ask questions that can be answered “yes” or “no”. Ask questions which make the child respond in his or her own words, this will help to make sure the child understands the information.

It's better to ask, "Why did you come forward today?" Then the child has the opportunity to say in their own words what the Holy Spirit has impressed on their heart.

C. ASK THEM IF THEY HAVE DONE THIS BEFORE: If the child says something like, "I want to get saved" or "I want to get Jesus in my heart" or "I want to go to heaven," the very next question you ask is "Have you ever (use their wording for salvation) done that before?"

For example: "Have you ever asked Jesus to come into your heart before?"

If the child says "Yes" then say, "Tell me what you did back then?"

If the child understands salvation and is saying that they want to get saved "again", explain to them that salvation is so wonderful that once they are saved they are always saved. They never have to do it again!

Once again, **make sure that this is a positive experience for the child.**

Don't say, "You've already done this! Go sit back down." Deal with the child about **Eternal Security / Assurance.**

Even if the child comes forward every day, to get saved "again", deal with the child on these two topics.

If the child says "No", saying that they've never asked Jesus to come into their heart, then you move on to explaining salvation. Remember to speak in simple terms, you can use the "How to Get to Heaven" tract to help guide you through the plan of salvation. Explain to the child that heaven is a wonderful place and there are many wonderful things in heaven. But there is one thing that is not allowed in heaven: SIN.

D. ASK THEM IF THEY ARE A SINNER: *Everyone has sinned.*

Ask the child to tell you what sin is. If they don't know, explain that sin is anything we do that God has told us not to do. Sin is those bad things that make God sad.

Ask the child if they can name some sins that people do.

Explain that the Bible says that everyone has sinned. Make sure the child understands that even you, as an adult, have sinned.

Now you can ask a "yes" or "no" question to the child, "Have you ever sinned?"

If the child says, "No" then thank the child for coming forward and pray with him or her asking God to watch over them. Also, ask God to help them understand the wonderful gift of salvation that He offers to us.

If you feel like you have explained sin adequately and the child refuses to realize that they are a sinner, **don't try to convince them that they are sinners.** Let the Holy Spirit do that! The child has to get lost before they can get saved.

If the child says, "Yes," explain to the child that sin has to be punished, or paid for.

E. ASK THEM IF THEY KNOW THE PAYMENT FOR SIN: *Death in hell forever.*

Explain to the child that sin has to be paid for. The Bible tells us that the payment for sin is death in hell. Explain that hell is a terrible place created for the devil and his demons. It's a place where we can never see mom or dad or any relatives.

Sometimes I will ask the child, "Where does your mom or dad work?" I explain that at the end of the week their mom or dad gets money for the job that they do. Well, there is a payment for sin too! Romans 6:23 says that the payment for sin is death in hell.

Then I say, "That's terrible, we have a big problem! You and I just said that we are sinners and now the Bible tells us that the price we have to pay for our sins is death in hell! That's terrible isn't it? . . . BUT. . ."

F. ASK THEM IF THEY KNOW WHO DIED FOR THEIR SIN: *Jesus died for your sin.*

Explain to the child that Jesus died for their sins. Ask them, "How did Jesus die?" Briefly explain the crucifixion to them pointing out that Jesus lived a perfect life, He never sinned, yet He suffered a very painful death. He had to die that way so that He could pay for our sins. Ask them, "What happened after He died?" If they don't answer, help them by saying, "Did He stay dead?" *1 Cor. 15:3, 4 says, ". . . Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"* Ask them, "Do you believe that Jesus died for your sins and rose again on the third day?"

G. ASK THEM IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF GOD, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: *Receive Jesus as your Savior.*

Explain that Jesus gave us this special **gift** by dying on the cross for our sins because He loves us and wants us to spend "forever" with Him in heaven.

You can explain that receiving Jesus Christ is as easy as ABC! To emphasize you might want to say, "You know your ABC's, don't you?"

ADMIT YOU ARE A SINNER

BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED, WAS BURIED, AND ROSE AGAIN FOR YOU

CALL UPON JESUS TO SAVE YOU

Many times I ask the child, "Do you like to get gifts for your birthday and Christmas?" Then I say, "Suppose you wanted a certain kind of toy. How would your parents know what you wanted?"

They will say, "I would have to ask them for it." Then you can explain, "It's the same way with God, we have to ask Him for it. You can ask God by praying to Him right now."

Try to get the child to pray their own prayer to God.

I will normally say something like this, "Johnny, you can talk to God right now, just like you can talk to anyone else. So right now, why don't you pray to God. Tell Him you know you're a sinner, and that you believe He sent Jesus to die for your sins. And then tell Him what you want. Ask Him to save you from your sin so that you can go to be with Him in heaven someday."

Then I say, "If you don't mind, Johnny, can you pray out loud so that I can listen to what you and God talk about?"

Some of the most precious moments of my life have been listening to a child word their prayer to the Almighty God of heaven. If possible try to encourage the child to talk to God "unscripted". You'll be glad that you did!

However, some children are just too shy to construct their own prayer. If this is the case, feel free to use the sample prayer found in the "How to Get to Heaven" tract.

After the child has prayed, **you're not done**, deal with them about eternal security.

