

Talking to Children About Salvation



When talking to a child about salvation:

- * **Ask follow-up questions.** When a child asks a question, often he does not know exactly what to ask. Get clarification before deciding how to answer a question. For example, you might say, "Tell me more about what you are thinking," or "What made you ask that question? Where did you hear about this?" Remember, many times the question a child asks may not be the actual question for which he is needing an answer. Avoid asking questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no."
- * **Avoid giving more information than a child needs.** Adults can be tempted to tell all they know on a subject. When a child asks a question, only answer what the child is asking. If a child asks for more information, be more specific with your answers.
- * **Don't jump to conclusions.** A child may ask, "Why did Andy get baptized?" This question may be only a request for information, not a request for the gospel presentation.
- * **Speak in clear terms.** Avoid symbolic analogies that may distract from discussion and understanding.
- * **Use simple wording.** Rather than using the phrase "accepting Jesus into your heart," say the words "becoming a Christian."



Steps in talking with a child about God's plan for salvation:

1. **God loves you and has a great plan for you (Psalm 139:13-16).** Talk about these truths: God made the world, God made people, God made you, God wants to have a relationship with people, and God wants to have a relationship with you. Say, "Tell me one way you know God loves you."
2. **We have all sinned (Romans 3:23).** Everyone must understand that he is separated from God. Sin is best understood as choosing to do things our way instead of God's way. (Give some examples of sin such as disobedience, ungratefulness, untruthfulness, etc.) Then ask the child: "Have you sinned? What does God think about sin?" Point out that everyone has sinned.
3. **Even though we choose to sin, God still loves us and offers to forgive us (Romans 5:8).** Ask, "How do you think it makes God feel when you sin?" Focus on the fact that God loves the child even when he sins. Say: "God promised that one day a Savior would come and not sin and would die for all people. Do you know who that Savior is? Did you know that He died for you?"
4. **Jesus died for us (John 3:16).** Talk about John 3:16 and explain that because sin separates people from God, everyone needs a Savior. Ask, "Do you know why Jesus died?" Say, "Jesus loved you so much. He willingly died for you, so you could be with God forever." If the child is old enough to understand the resurrection, say, "Jesus rose from the dead, so we could have eternal life."
5. **You can become a Christian by confessing that Jesus is your Savior and Lord (Romans 10:9).**
Ask, "Would you like to be a Christian?" State that the word *confess* means to say that Jesus is your Savior and that you must:
 - A**dmit you have sinned
 - B**elieve that Jesus is God's Son
 - C**onfess that Jesus is Savior and Lord
6. **Review and follow up.** Encourage a child to tell you in his own words what he understands and believes. Either ask the child to repeat a prayer after you or help the child know what to say in his prayer. After the prayer, read Romans 10:13 and remind him that this verse is a promise. Jesus will be his Savior forever.



About Baptism:

- * **Always make distinctions between baptism and becoming a Christian.** Point out that becoming a Christian comes first, and then baptism follows because it is a way of showing he has become a Christian.
- * **Avoid emphasizing the emotional side of the baptism experience.** Keep in mind that public recognition should not become a motivating factor for making a decision.