

How to lead your child to Christ

By Guest Columnist Paige Atkinson



One of the greatest privileges we have as parents is to help our children come to a saving faith in Christ. Many parents feel like they do not quite know how or when to approach the topic of salvation, because they do not want to be pushy. They also worry that they will not explain it correctly, and think it's better to leave it to the "professionals."

Elyse Fitzpatrick, in her book, *Give Them Grace: Dazzling Your Children with the Love of Christ*, writes, "Give your children the gospel - not just once, but over and over again - then trust the Savior to work in their hearts to grant them faith and love to serve." Leading your child to Christ can be memorable and exciting, but it can understandably feel quite intimidating.

Here are some practical tips to help you feel more confident when sharing the Gospel with your children:

1. Rely on the Holy Spirit. Commit your conversations about the Gospel with your children to prayer.
2. Talk to your child one on one. Talk to them on their level and away from distractions.
3. Use a visual aid or illustration. Be sure to have your Bible handy, so that you can point your children to the Scriptures.
4. Use your own testimony. Share how Christ has changed your own life.
5. Ask open-ended questions. Do not simply ask "yes" or "no" questions, since children want to please adults and will typically answer in the affirmative. Consider asking questions such as "Who is Jesus?" or "What is sin?"
6. Use simple language and words they can understand.

7. Be careful with emotions. Guard against having just an emotional experience.
8. Guide your child to help them in making an appropriate decision. Are they simply wanting to ask questions, needing clarification or making the decision to follow Christ?

Lifeway has a wonderful resource entitled *God's Plan For Me*, which lays out the Gospel in a very simple and understandable way for children:

1. God rules. God created everything and is in charge of it all. Genesis 1:1, Col. 1:16-17.
2. We sinned. All of us have sinned. Romans 3:23.
3. God provided. Jesus came to live a perfect life, but then took our punishment. Eph. 2:8-9, John 3:16.
4. Jesus gives. Because He rose again, death is defeated, and we have the opportunity to live with God eternally. Romans 5:8.
5. We respond. We admit to God we are a sinner. Believe in Jesus as God's Son and that He died on the cross and rose again. Confess Jesus as Savior and Lord. Romans 10:9-10.

Parents, be encouraged! God has equipped you to share the truth of Christ with your children. In his books, *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, Ted Tripp offers an important yet encouraging reminder: "It is your task to faithfully teach them the ways of God. It is the Holy Spirit's task to work through the Word of God to change their hearts."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Paige Atkinson is the elementary director at Morrison Heights Baptist Church. She has been in children's ministry for over twenty-five years and is pursuing a Master of Arts in discipleship and family ministry.

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