

FAMILY TOOLBOX



SERIES

LEADING YOUR CHILD TO CHRIST



Children's Ministry

Golden Hills Community Church

2401 Shady Willow Lane

Brentwood, CA 94513

925-516-0653

A Note to Families

The Children's Ministry of Golden Hills Community Church exists to *“Glorify God by helping families develop age-appropriate disciples who impact their world for Christ”*.

In order to accomplish this task, we at GHCC have attempted to describe the discipleship of a believer, which includes these three elements:

- **Worship**
- **Grow**
- **Serve**

We believe that children, as followers of Christ, can also participate in the discipleship process. We have further identified twelve specific spiritual growth issues within these three elements of discipleship.

It is our desire in Children's Ministry, to create a balanced program, which addresses all of these spiritual growth issues, helping to produce a healthy, age-appropriate disciple.

However, statistics tell us that the national average for children attending Sunday school is 26 hours each year (that's only half of the time). And our church is no exception to this. Our average Sunday attendance is roughly half of our total registration. What does this mean? Well, we could have the best programming, the best teachers and staff (which, by the way, I think we do) and we would still have a very hard time in accomplishing the goal God has set before us. But there is a way.

The way in which we can realize the goal of making age-appropriate disciples is stated in our purpose: "...by helping *families* develop age-appropriate disciples..." In fact, the best approach to aiding your child's faith development is *not* in the formal setting of the church, but in the informal, everyday life of your home. God's Word clearly reminds us of this in Deuteronomy 6:4-7:

"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. The commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress (teach) them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down at night and when you get up."

We encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity to "impress upon your children" spiritual truth. Use dinner conversation, driving in the car, bedtime routines and getting ready each morning as times to reflect and teach about God and his faithfulness.

To help you in these discussions, we have developed a series of tools for you to use. These tools are series of booklets (**THE FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**), each addressing the spiritual growth issues. In them you will find information, discussion questions and activity suggestions to help you guide your children on their spiritual journeys.

Introduction

Leading your child to Christ is perhaps the single greatest privilege and reward a Christian parent can experience. But many parents are afraid of discussing spiritual issues with their children. Often, this is simply because they do not feel equipped to do so.

With that in mind, we have put together this booklet (part of the **FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**) to help you in leading your child to Christ. It is organized in the following way:

- Questions you may have about leading your child to Christ
- Questions Kids often ask about salvation
- Some tools to help you lead your child to Christ

Resources available to you.

May god bless you as you lead your children to Jesus!

Pastor Mark

Questions You May Have About Leading Your Child to Christ

Here are several questions (and some answers) you may have about leading your child to Christ:

When should I talk with my child about salvation?

The obvious answer is when they ask about it. But, like a teacher, you can create opportunities to evangelize (remember to take advantage of everyday situations).

Ask about your child's Sunday school lesson and see if salvation can be discussed in the context of the lesson.

Watch *The Story of Jesus for Children* video together and talk about the need to respond to the message.

Use Christmas and Easter as natural times to discuss who Jesus is and what it means to be a Christian.

How Should I explain the message of salvation?

The Gospel message is really a simple one, but we should always include Scripture to support our statements. A children's tract (there are several available in the children's ministry office) offer excellent assistance. Whatever you choose, be sure to include:

Am I a sinner? (Romans 3:23)

Do I need to be saved from my sin? (Romans 6:23)

How did God make a way to save me from my sin? (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Can I be saved any other way than through Jesus? (John 14:6)

What must I do to be saved? (Acts 16:31)

How do I know my child understands?

It is important to note that your child will want to please you. Your body language and facial expressions may give clues to your child to say what he/she thinks you want to hear regardless of understanding. It is recommended that you ask questions of your child to check for understanding. Ask questions that require some thought, not simply yes

or no responses. Here are some hints for asking good questions:

Not: Have you ever sinned?

Better: What have you done that God would call sin?

Not: Do you believe Jesus died and rose again to pay for your sin?

Better: What did Jesus do so your sins could be forgiven?

Above all, you must rely on the Holy Spirit and the power of God's Word to convict your child of his/her sinfulness and show their need of a savior. Childlike faith, not extensive education, is what it takes for salvation. Aren't you glad?

If my child wants to receive Christ, how do I help him pray?

Study the "*Some Tools to Help You Lead Your Child to Christ*" section. In it, you will find several suggestions or plans for leading your child to Christ. These will help you know how to pray. Remember, the steps to salvation are easy-don't make it complicated!

Again, a good way to check for understanding is to ask questions. Ask your child to pray out loud so you can prompt her with questions like, "What do you believe Jesus did for you?" or "What do you want Jesus to do for you right now?"

How do I help my child with assurance?

Scripture is your best tool. If you use a verse like Acts 16:31, explain to your child that they can replace their own name in the verse in place of "you".

Encourage your child to tell someone of his decision to receive Christ. This may be a grandparent, a sibling or a teacher (children's pastors like to hear too!).

You need to trust God that their decision was real.

Mark on your family calendar the day of your child's spiritual birthday.

Questions Kids Often Ask About Salvation

Have you ever noticed how kids are full of questions? They ask questions about everything:

- Are we there yet?
- Why is the sky blue?
- What is the weather going to be like tomorrow?

Are we there yet?

Yes, sometimes they can even seem a little repetitive. But kids want answers. Their natural curiosity is key to how they learn. As a parent, you are in a prime position to be able to guide and direct their natural spiritual curiosity as well. Especially when it comes to that all-important question, “How do I become a Christian?” You don’t have to be afraid of such questions, if you are ready with answers. Of course, our source for these answers is the Bible. I pray these common, everyday questions will help you guide your children into spiritual discussions. So, here are some questions kids may ask:

What is sin?

The Bible, God’s Word, contains God’s rules of behavior. When you choose not to follow God’s rules, you sin against God.

- Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins (James 4:17).

You can describe sin as anything we *say, think or do* that goes against God’s laws.

Will God punish me for my sin?

Yes. When you choose to disobey God, you do not feel close to God or happy with your life. Without God’s forgiveness, punishment continues after death.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).

Will God forgive me for my sin?

Yes. When you ask God’s forgiveness and trust in His Son, Jesus, God forgives your sins.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16).

What does it mean to trust Jesus?

To trust in (or believe in; have faith in) Jesus means trusting Jesus to save you from punishment and choosing to follow His example. By His behavior, Jesus showed us how to live in God's way and how to follow God's rules.

- Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me (John 14:1).

We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved (Acts 15:11).

How do I tell God I want to be a Christian?

The Bible says you must be sorry (repent) for your sins. You must pray to God and ask God to forgive your sins. You must trust Jesus to save you from the punishment you deserve. Then you promise to follow Jesus' example and do your best to live in ways that honor Him.

- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

If you love me, you will obey what I commanded you (John 14:15).

So, you can simply instruct your child to talk to God using his or her own words. Their prayer might include:

1. Tell God that you need to be forgiven for their sin.
2. Thank God that He sent His Son to die for them.
3. Ask God to forgive them and to help them from doing wrong.
4. Thank God that Jesus is alive and will be with them forever.

Why do I need to be baptized?

Jesus said we must be willing to tell others that we are Christians. Jesus was baptized when He began to teach others about God. When we follow Jesus' example by being baptized, we show others that have promised to live by Jesus' example.

Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven (Matthew 10:32).

Some Tools to Help You Lead Your Child to Christ

There are several organized plans of presenting the Gospel message to your child (or anyone else for that matter). They are listed here with Scripture references. I encourage you to review each of the plans, be familiar with the steps and references and you will be ready to share the Gospel with anyone, anytime!

The Romans Road

1. Romans 3:23 All have sinned.
2. Romans 6:23 The wage of sin is death.
3. Romans 5:8 But God Commanded His love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
4. Romans 6:23b But the gift of God is eternal life.
5. Romans 10:9-10,13 Confess that Christ is Lord.

Salvation

1. God's part...John 3:16
2. Christ's part...Romans 5:8
3. Man's part...John 6:37

The A-B-C's of Salvation

- A. Admit you are a sinner (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6; James 2:10; Romans 3:10-12; John 3:3; Acts 4:12).
- B. Believe in Christ (Acts 16:31; Luke 5:32, 13:3; Hebrews 11:6; Romans 2:4, 10:17; John 3:16, 20:21).
- C. Confess Christ as Savior (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 19:18; 1 John 1:9, 4:15).

Four Words of Salvation

1. NEEDED...Romans 3:3
2. PROVIDED...1 Peter 2:24
3. OFFERED...Ephesians 2:8
4. ACCEPTED...1 John 5:12

The Four Spiritual Laws (by Campus Crusade for Christ)

1. God LOVES you and has a wonderful PLAN for your life. (John 3:16; John 10:10)
2. Man is SINFUL and SEPERATED from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's plan for his life. (Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23)
3. Jesus Christ is God's ONLY provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-6)
4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives. (John 1:12; John 3:1-8)

Resources Available to You

The following books are available in the Parent Lending Library (available on Sundays in the rear lobby of the E building):

- Leading Your Child To Jesus by David Staal
- My John 3:16 Book by Robert J. Morgan
- I Believe In Jesus, Leading Your Child To Christ by John MacArthur

These tracts are available in the Children's Ministry Office (located off the main lobby of the E building):

- *God Loves You!* (Gospel Light)
- *The Born Again Birthday Book!* (Creative Children's Ministries)
- *The Wordless Book* (Child Evangelism Fellowship)

The Spiritual Growth Issues:

Worship

- Salvation
- Worship

Grow

- Bible knowledge/Application
- Bible Memory
- Stewardship
- Healthy Relationships
- Using Gifts, Talents and Skills
- Church Commitment

Serve

- Outreach
- Missions Involvement
- Christian Service