

# Grace Chapel

LEIPERS FORK

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



## The Salvation Conversation:

Help for Leading your Child to Christ

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>First Things First.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How Old Should my Child Be?.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How can I Find Time for Faith Discussions?.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>What Kids Need to Know.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The Role of the Holy Spirit.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Leading my Child to Christ.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Celebrating and Next Steps.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Baptism: a First Step of Obedience.....</b>	<b>10</b>

## Introduction

All Christian parents look forward to the day their children accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. As much as we may wish our own faith will be enough, we know that each of our children must make a personal decision to become a Christian. This is the most important decision we can lead our children toward making. It is a decision with eternal implications.

Though we agree it is important, the journey of leading our children to Christ is one most of us have never taken. We know what we believe, but trying to convey that information to our kids in a relevant way can be difficult. That is exactly why the Grace Chapel Children's Ministry has put this resource together for you. It is our desire to come alongside you and to help equip you in any way that we can.

The truth is, leading our children to Christ is an exciting opportunity and a biblical mandate. Look at what it says in Deuteronomy 6:4-9:

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

We hope this resource will provide the information you need to take your position as the spiritual leaders in your home. If there is anything else we can do to partner with you in this divine adventure, please don't ever hesitate to contact us.

Grace Chapel Children's Ministry  
Bill Cannon, Children's Pastor  
[bill@gracechapel.net](mailto:bill@gracechapel.net)

(All scripture is taken from the New King James translation unless otherwise stated)

## First Things First

We've all heard it said on every airplane trip: "Make sure to secure your own oxygen mask before helping small children." The same advice holds true when we're talking about the issue of faith and salvation. We as parents must be secure in our own faith before we can ever hope to effectively communicate the need for Jesus to our children.

Before you embark on this journey toward leading your child to Christ, take some time to evaluate your own spiritual condition. Do you have a solid relationship with Jesus? Do you really consider Him your Lord? Don't you know that children have an amazing ability to spot a fake from a mile away? They do what we *do* more than what we *say*. This is one reason it is vitally important to take an honest assessment of our own walk with Christ. We must allow the Holy Spirit to shine His light on the places where we aren't consistent – where we say one thing and yet do another – and give Him permission to have His way in our own hearts.

The Bible tells us in James 4:6 that God resists the proud but gives His grace to the humble. When we humbly admit our own need for the Lord - or for healing - or for growth, we get the benefit of God's grace in our lives. When we stubbornly insist we've got it all together, or that we are exempt from the very expectations we put on our children, we are walking in pride. Pride will nearly destroy all our efforts as a parent. But humility will usher in the very life and power of God that we all need to effectively lead our children in their faith.

## How Old Should my Child Be?

It's never too late to accept Jesus as our Savior, and really...it's never too early. Even so, a child's decision to follow Christ often occurs between the ages of 7 and 11. By this time, most of our children are able to read and write and can thus read from the Bible. Also during this time, children are usually able to understand the concept of sin and the need for forgiveness.

We all know that every child is unique, and because of that every child's salvation experience will be different. It is important that we not place expectations on our children based upon age or what other children may or may not be doing. As we continue to pray with our children and spend quality time with them, we will begin to see the signs of readiness in their hearts. They will begin to ask questions about spiritual things. You may begin to see the evidence of personal conviction at work - a change in behavior that may indicate the Holy Spirit's work in their life. They may even ask specifically to be baptized or to pray to accept the Lord.

## How can I Find Time for Faith Discussions?

It seems like schedules are busier than freeways these days, but as parents we must find the time to talk with our children about the truth of God's Word. We have a couple of suggestions for how to make these moments happen:

- **Family Faith Talks** – This is a scheduled time you set aside each week for conversations about the Bible. This can look different depending on how your family likes to connect. You might make Saturday morning a time for faith talks and breakfast out. There are many options, but family faith talks should be:
  - Intentional – place effort and energy into creating a good environment to teach God's truth.
  - Consistent – family faith talks should happen each week. Frequency and consistency open the door to spiritual conversation.
  - Conversational – let the teaching be a conversation at your child's level – not a mini-sermon.
  - Scriptural – use your Bible. God's Word changes your child.
- **God moments** – These are unscheduled, unplanned moments where God shows up in your life – or in your child's life. These are teachable moments, and we must seize the opportunity. The best learning happens as a result of natural curiosity and real-life experience. This is true for all of us. The issues that have been discussed during the family faith talks will come to life in these God moments.

## What Kids Need to Know

Before we expect our children to accept Jesus as Savior, there are some core questions we will want to answer for them.

### 1. Why was I created?

- a. God created us to have a personal relationship with Him and to enjoy Him.
  - John 10:10: *I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*
- b. God created us to take care of His creation.
  - Genesis 1:27-28: *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God*

*blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.*

- c. God wants us to enjoy the benefits and freedom of being in a loving relationship with Him as our Heavenly Father:
- A clear conscience and a clean heart (1 John 1:7)
  - A blessed life and peace (Romans 8:6)
  - Help when we feel weak (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
  - A prosperous life filled with purpose (Jeremiah 29:11)
  - Godly confidence (Romans 8:31)
  - Security and safety (Romans 8:39)
  - Power and strength (Philippians 4:13)
  - All our needs taken care of (Philippians 4:19)
  - Freedom from sin and freedom to live an adventurous life (John 8:32)

## **2. What’s the problem?**

Sin is the problem. Sin is disobeying God’s plans and His ways in our life. It’s our own desire to be the “the boss” of ourselves instead of living in obedience. The Bible tells us that everyone is born with a sinful nature:

- Isaiah 53:6: *All of us like sheep have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way.*
- Romans 3:23: *All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*
- 1 John 1:8: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

The Bible also tells us that our sin breaks our close relationship with God and that the penalty for sin is death:

- Isaiah 59:2: *But your iniquities (sin) have separated you from your god; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.*
- Romans 6:23: *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### 3. What's the Solution?

Because of God's great love for us, He has a plan for bringing His children back into a peaceful relationship with Him. In fact, God's plan is actually a gift – a free gift.

- Romans 6:23: *For the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- Romans 5:8: *But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

God took care of our sin problem by sending Jesus to die on the Cross to pay the price. He lived the perfect life that we cannot, and then gave it up for us. His sacrifice makes us clean before God. The Bible says that God's free gift is the way back to Him, and it's the ONLY way:

- John 14:6: *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

## The Role of the Holy Spirit

*And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)*

The verses above show that Paul understood that his words, no matter how clever, could not lead anyone to Christ. We need to understand that same thing as parents in order to take off some of the pressure we can feel. Our job is to be obedient to teach our children the ways of God, but the Holy Spirit is the only One who can open their spiritual eyes and bring understanding. We are being used as vessels through which God's Spirit can love our children.

- **God helps** our children begin to put things together as we consistently present them with truth. For some children it will happen on the school bus. Others at church on Sunday. We cannot control anything about how our children will make spiritual connections. God's got that under control.
- **We can pray.** When we intercede on our children's behalf it is powerful. The prayers we pray for our children will not only affect them, but the generations after them. And another wonderful truth is that Jesus is also praying for our children – non-stop (Romans 8:27).

**Important note:** Salvation is not a box to check. It is the beginning of a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ. Often with good intentions, we can force our children into a decision he or she is not ready to make. Children need to make this decision with a good understanding at the Holy Spirit's prompting in their life.

Also, if your child doesn't receive Christ, continue praying and sharing the truth and don't live in fear. Continue in your personal relationship with the Lord, modeling the benefits in your own life. The road to salvation doesn't look the same for everyone.

## Leading my Child to Christ

Once we feel certain our child understands the core issues related to salvation, and we see the signs of readiness in their life, we can enjoy the privilege of leading them to Jesus. Here are the basic steps in the process of becoming a Christian:

1. **A - Admit** that you are a sinner and that you deserve to be punished.
  - a. Romans 3:23: *All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*
  - b. Romans 6:23: *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
2. **B – Believe** that Jesus died and rose again for you to be your Savior.
  - a. Romans 5:8: *But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
3. **C- Confess** your sin and commit your life to God.
  - a. 1 John 1:9: *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
  - b. Romans 10:9: That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Pray:** (Have your child pray something like this. You can have them repeat after you.)

*“Dear Jesus, I am a sinner and I need you to save me. Thank you for dying on the cross. Because of this, I am forgiven. I want you to be the leader of my life. Help me live my life for you. Amen”.*

After your child has prayed, it's a good idea to confirm his decision to become a Christian. Ask him the following questions:

1. Where are your sins? (Gone – nailed on the Cross with Jesus)
2. Where is Jesus or the Holy Spirit? (In my heart)



Help your child understand the great news that this decision is an eternal decision. Nothing can remove us from God's hand once we give our lives to Him.

*John 10:28-29: And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.*

## **Celebrating and Next Steps**

Accepting Jesus as Savior is the most important decision we all make. When our children make this decision for themselves, it's cause to celebrate. Think about planning a little "Born Again" birthday party with some cake and ice cream and special people who have contributed to their faith. Or maybe give your child something special to remember the occasion.

After celebrating, it is important to prepare our children for what's to come in their Christian life. We can do this by continuing to have regular Faith Talks and by pointing out God moments. We can also choose a quality devotional and go through it as a family. Whatever we choose, the most important thing we can do for our children is to model true Christianity. Life doesn't suddenly become dreamy and easy when we accept Jesus. In fact, sometimes it can get more difficult as we take a stand for God. But, we have a Helper – a Teacher – a Comforter, and we have hope. This is what we need to show our children.

As we demonstrate what it is like to walk in relationship (not religion) with a loving God by reading His Word, praying, and living to glorify Him in all our decisions, our children will grow and learn how to walk out and enjoy their faith, as well.

## **Baptism: A first step of obedience**

As Christians, we choose to be baptized in order to identify with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Colossians 2:12). We take this step of obedience as a way of telling everyone that we've decided to follow Jesus and live a Christian life (Romans 6:4). It is an exciting decision to be baptized - one to be celebrated.

At Grace Chapel, we baptize people by immersion, which means to be dunked under the water. We do this because Jesus was baptized by immersion, and so was everyone else who was baptized in the Bible. The Greek word for baptism actually means, "to immerse or dip water."

**When your child is ready to be baptized**, contact the church office at 615-591-5091. We have baptisms at least once a month at Grace Chapel, so you can schedule this event in order to invite family and friends.

## **Is my child ready for Baptism?**

As a follower of Christ, your child needs to make their decision public by getting baptized. Baptism is a picture of what Jesus did on the cross and He tells us to be baptized to show others that we follow Him. Here are some things to talk about with your child.

*(If at any point you feel your child has not made a firm decision to invite Jesus into their life, switch to our Salvation tool then return to this at a later time.)*

## **Share: Baptism is when we go under the water, symbolizing:**

1. Washing away all the dirty stuff — our sins.
2. Jesus' death and resurrection — Jesus died and came back to life again on the third day.

**Look Up Matthew 3:1-16, Matthew 28:16-20, John 3:1-21**

Share your story of how you were baptized and what it meant to you to share publicly of the decision you made to follow Jesus.

**Discuss:** Have your child tell you why they want to tell others about the decision to follow Jesus through baptism.

It's important to only listen during this time. Refrain from the urge to finish their sentences or help them complete a thought. The goal prior to baptism is that your child is able to articulate (tell others) their personal reasons for wanting to be baptized.

**Ask:** When you sin again, what do you do?

Most kids are more worried about getting in trouble by Mom or Dad when they do something wrong than asking God for forgiveness, so it's hard for them to not connect "getting in trouble" when we talk about God and sin. Make sure they understand that it's by the grace and love of Jesus that our sins are forgiven. The answer is to confess or "say" your sins to God in prayer and sometimes to the person we may have done wrong to.

**Ask:** Does this mean you'll never sin again?

**Look Up** 1 John 1:8-10 and Romans 6:1-5

No. You do not need to live a life that chooses sin, but you will continue to make mistakes (sin). Only Jesus lived a sinless life.

**Pray:** Take this opportunity to pray a blessing over your child.

This is as simple as asking for God's favor in their life. As a parent, you have so much influence over your child and they need to hear what you think of them. Take this time to verbalize your thoughts about your child's decision in prayer.