

Leading a Child to Christ

Many of the ABC lessons present an ideal opportunity to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ with your students. Every teacher should be ready to clearly present the gospel and counsel those wanting to learn more. Children are usually soft-hearted toward things of the Lord, and some will be interested in becoming followers of Christ. Be ready, because eternal matters matter most!

Before

Pray. Salvation is God's work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone. We need to ask God to prepare the children and open their hearts to Him.

Prepare. Learn more about presenting the gospel and counseling a child about salvation.

During

The gospel is clearly presented in many of the ABC lessons. You may give a group invitation or choose to share with a child one-on-one or with a small group of children. When you explain the gospel, please keep the following in mind:

- Becoming a child of God involves repenting of one's sin and having faith in the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Repentance involves understanding what sin is (disobeying God's commands) and desiring to turn from that sin.
- Use your Bible to explain the plan of salvation. Children need to see and hear God's Word, so have your Bible opened and marked ahead of time with the appropriate Scriptures.
 - Avoid abstract phrases like "asking Jesus into your heart." Instead, use terminology like "becoming a child of God." Most children still think in concrete terms and need examples that are easy to understand.
- If a child indicates an interest to know more after hearing the gospel, determine if the child has an understanding of his sin. This is

very important. A child who cannot verbalize sin, who does not seem to be repentant toward God because he is a sinner, or who does not realize that he must turn away from his sin, cannot fully understand his need for a Savior. Ask questions about sin that require more than "yes" or "no" answers:

- Do you know what sin is? Can you explain it to me?
 - Can you think of some sins you have done?
 - Are you sorry for your sins? Who are you sorry to?
 - Why are you sorry for your sins?
 - What do you think you should do about these sins in your life?
- If you are not satisfied that God has revealed to this child that his sin is an offense against our holy God, we recommend that you present a booklet we have developed for children that explains the gospel further. It is called *How Can I Become a Child of God?* and can be printed from the Online Resource Page at AnswersBibleCurriculum.com or purchased from AnswersBookstore.com.
 - If the child does seem to be sincerely sorry for his sins, you can proceed with more questions like the following:
 - Why did Jesus come to earth? Why did Jesus need to die? Why did Jesus rise again?
 - Why do you want Jesus to be your Savior?
 - Why should God let you into His family? (Make sure the child understands that salvation is not based on what he does, but is a gracious gift of God through faith in the death and Resurrection of Jesus.)
 - When a child seems to have a basic understanding of salvation (belief in Jesus' death and Resurrection, admission of and repentance from sin, and a desire to follow the Lord), encourage him to talk to his parents about what it

means to become a child of God (if they are followers of Christ). Encourage a child who comes from a non-Christian home to verbalize his understanding to the Lord through prayer. There is no one prayer that should be prayed. Encourage him to ask the Lord to forgive him and help him know he is a child of God.

- Let him see in your words and your face that you are excited that he wants to become a child of God! Read Luke 15:10 to him.
- Some children may not be ready to make a decision for Christ but may want to learn more, to be assured of salvation, or to confess sin. Read Romans 10:9–10 and John 10:28–29 with children who are seeking assurance of their salvation. Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are His children. Read 1 John 1:9 with children who want to confess sin and encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are forgiven when they repent.

After

- Review what it means to be a child of God.
 - How long does God keep His children? (Hebrews 13:5b, John 10:28–29)

- Can anything separate God from His children? (Romans 8:38–39)
- What happens when God's children sin? (1 John 1:9)
- What do children of God believe? (Romans 10:9)
- Explain that Jesus loves His children and wants to spend time with them. Discuss practical ways to grow as a child of God. Provide him with the booklet *Growing Up in God's Family* (available at AnswersBookstore.com), and share the following:
 - Read your Bible, and obey what you read. (Make sure he has a Bible at home, and if not, provide one. Write his name, the date, and the occasion on the presentation page.)
 - Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.
 - Go to a church that believes and teaches the Bible as the Word of God.
 - Tell others about Jesus. Tell your friends, family, and neighbors how they can become children of God.
- Stay in touch with the child through postcards, visits, or phone calls.