

One example on how to explain the concept of salvation is:

The Bible tells us that our sins are like filthy or dirty rags (Is. 64:6). God said that we would have to be punished for our sins and that He would never allow sin to come into Heaven. God sent His Son Jesus to come down to this earth a very long time ago to take the punishment for our sins. You see, God knows everything. He knows about all the bad things that many have done or said or thought of a hundred years ago, and He even knows about the bad things that people will do tomorrow before they even do them. So, because Jesus is God's perfect Son, He could take the punishment for our sins. The punishment was death. But the Bible tells us that God did a miracle (something only God can do) and Jesus did not stay dead, but He came up out of the grave and went back to Heaven to be with God the Father. You see, when Jesus took our punishment, He took all our filthy rags of sin and put them on Himself, and He lets us wear all of His goodness (Is. 61:10).

Praise the Lord for that garment of righteousness that our Father clothes us with. May the Lord help us to not shove a child into a questionable salvation experience, but to show them "the way that leadeth unto life" (Matt 7:14).

#### Contents

The contents of this brochure is taken in part from the section "The Importance of Invitation Time" in the APM Children's Worker Training Program. The training session is a four to six hour practical instruction time taught by Steve and Rebekah Lilly.

#### Authors

Steve and Rebekah Lilly (APM) serve as staff missionaries with The Voice in the Wilderness. With over ten years of teaching experience both in Christian education, churches, and the mission field setting, the Lilly's employ dozens of practical examples and strong Biblical foundations to teach the lay person how to prevent discipline issues, tell a story and reach the heart, teach and lead doctrinally sound Bible songs, facilitate Bible memory and many other needed teaching topics. The training session concludes with the much enjoyed "Rapid Fire" when the lay people are loaded up with scores of practical teaching visuals, game ideas and Bible memory tips.

#### For More Information:

Steve and Rebekah Lilly  
The Voice in the Wilderness  
Po Box 7037  
Asheville, NC 28802  
828-649-1043  
[www.thevoiceinthewilderness.org](http://www.thevoiceinthewilderness.org)

## Suffer the children

When they come to you...

### •Smile and Welcome

Make the child feel comfortable in coming to talk to you about spiritual things.  
*I'm glad you came today. We sure did learn a lot today in that lesson!*

### •Why do you want to talk?

Listen carefully to the child's answer and respond accordingly with thought-provoking questions.

If the child answers:

1. Because I want to get saved (or go to Heaven).

Say: *Why do you need to be saved?*

*How do you get to go to Heaven?*

2. I want to pray/He (the teacher) said to get up and go talk to an adult.

Say: *Why do you want to pray?*

*Why do you think the teacher said to get up and go talk to an adult?*

3. I want to pray for...(or they say something else non-related to a salvation invitation time.

Say: *Let's pray about that. Take time to pray with them.*

### •Salvation Questions

*Why do you need Jesus in your heart?*

*What does God call all those bad things?*

*What is sin?*

*Do you ever sin?*

*Who does Jesus let in to Heaven?*

*How can you tell Jesus that you want to go to Heaven?*

*Do you want to pray and talk to Jesus about this?*

Be sure to have your Bible open and read key verses-Rm. 3:10, 23; 5:8; 6:23; 10:9-10, 13; Jn. 3:16

### •Assurance Questions

*Where will you go one day when you die? IJn.5:13*

*If Jesus comes back, and says that it's time to go to*

*Heaven, will you get to go? Jn. 14:1-2, 5:24*

*Take the time to teach him what to do when he sins.*

*What happens if you do something wrong tomorrow?*

*Do you have to get saved again? Lk. 15:7; IJn. 1:9*

### •Make a Record

Give them a child's tract or new believer's material, a Bible, and record the day of their salvation in their new Bible. Encourage them to share their news of salvation with others. Rm. 10:11; Mt. 10:32-33  
Add the child's name and personal information to the church records.

Inform the Pastor and the child's parents.

# Suffer

## the children...

Bringing children  
to a point of  
personal salvation  
decision

*What must I do to be saved?*



# Are you Shoving or Showing?

Illustration 1: A little five-year old lifted her trusting heart to God one night and asked Jesus to be her Saviour. Being excited and fully committed to her new found Saviour, she became an active soul-winner among the neighbors and school friends. While attending a Christian school chapel service, the little girl, in her childlike faith in Jesus and concern for her unsaved friends, began to wonder if the school leaders were really doing a good job of leading boys and girls to Christ. Determined to answer her concerns, she went forward during the chapel invitation to assess the situation as many altar bound children were gathered in a separate room with another teacher. Thankfully, the little girl's fears subsided as she heard the teacher read verses to the children and explain how Jesus would forgive them of their sins. Knowing that she did not need to be saved again, but not wanting to reveal her reason for coming during the invitation, she mimicked the other children in bowing their heads for a silent prayer as the teacher prayed aloud. Because none of the school leaders ever spoke individually to the children before, during, or after this time about their spiritual condition, it was assumed that each child received Christ as Saviour at that moment.

Illustration 2: Eager to know that all her little pupils were safely heaven bound, a teacher asked all the students to close their eyes for a moment after the Bible lesson. Confident that all eyes were closed, she then asked how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. All little hands present flew quickly into the air. The teacher then proceeded to lead the children in a group prayer of salvation.

Think about it: We all have little children close to our hearts whether they are our family's blessings from God or simply the ones who come for candy on Sundays. As their precious innocence grows into a childhood full of inquisitiveness and learning, our Heaven-mindedness tugs at our hearts, knowing that they must choose Jesus to have a home with Him one day. With such a desire to take that one jewel with us to Heaven, we sometimes **shove** the children to Jesus instead of **showing them** Jesus. Jesus cautioned the adults to permit not manipulate the children to come to Him when He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Surely it would have been much more simple, in our human minds, to have said – "Have each child repeat this prayer: Dear Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, forgive me of my sins, come into my heart and save me, and I will thank you in Jesus' name, Amen." BUT – Attention all Christian Workers – that prayer is not even in the Bible! Nevertheless, in our eagerness

to secure a mansion for our little ones, we quickly ask, "Honey, do you want to go to Heaven," and, of course, most children will just as quickly answer, "uh-huh." Then off we go to have them repeat a prayer. If it were a certain prayer that saved us, surely many other "religious" people would be in Heaven today. Remember what Philip said to the Ethiopian eunuch when the man asked what was hindering him from baptism. Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (Acts 8:37). Not, "do you want to go to heaven" or "have you prayed the prayer." Also, Paul told the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Of course, we should not dismiss the significance of "confess with thy mouth" or "call upon the name of the Lord" as we quote in the Romans Road that many Christian workers use with children. God does want us to express through prayer our belief and trust in Him. However, we must be careful to let them come unto Him in their childlike faith and trust, even if it means many days on our knees in prayer.

Illustration 3: If anyone had been on their knees in prayer, it was the parents of a first-grade girl. For many months the young child had been questioning her parents about salvation. Trusting and following the direction of the Lord, both mother and father, at varying times, patiently answered their daughter's questions. Many times, while explaining spiritual things, the parents would come to that eternal question, "Would you like to pray to Jesus today?" But continuously the answer was, "No, not today. I just am afraid that maybe I don't believe that Jesus would really take me to Heaven, and I know that if I don't really believe, then when I pray, I won't really be saved." (Oh, the understanding of a child!) Many weeks continued in this pattern and, with every day passing, each parent became more anxious of their child's eternal state. But, God is faithful, and one day she decided to believe in Jesus. How thankful were her parents to be able to listen to the prayers of their daughter as she told Jesus that she believed in Him, wanted her sins washed away and a home in Heaven.



How about you: Are you as burdened as those parents for an unsaved child? Have you ever felt pressured to quickly ask the "yes" questions and facilitate a prayer of salvation? If yes, then remember that a prayer of salvation may comfort your ears, but it is prayer for salvation that starts Heaven's choir.

*So the Bible lesson is over.*

## NOW WHAT?

### Suggestions when dealing spiritually with young children.

1. If a Bible lesson is being taught, always give opportunity at some point after the lesson for children to talk with an adult about spiritual things.
  - a. Give a formal invitation where children can come to an altar to be counseled by a trained Christian worker.
  - b. During an invitation, have children raise their hand if they need someone to pray with them about a spiritual decision. Have a worker go to the child's seat for prayer.
  - c. During the invitation, instruct the children to come and talk to a worker after the Bible time has concluded. Be sure to offer a designated time so that the children will remember when that time comes that they need to talk with someone. This effective method discourages peer-pressure decisions and allows the Holy Spirit to burden the child's heart until he meets with a worker at the designated time.
2. When talking with a child about his spiritual condition, do not ask only positive, manipulative, or leading questions that simply require one-word answers. Always ask specific thought-provoking questions that need a sentence answer.

#### Leading Questions

- Do you want to be saved?
- Do you want to go to Heaven?
- Do you want Jesus to forgive you of your sins?
- Do you want Jesus to save you?
- Do you want to pray?

#### Thought-provoking Questions

- Why did you come to talk with me?
  - Why do you want to go to Heaven?
  - How can you get into Heaven?
  - What is sin?
  - Who does Jesus let into Heaven?
  - Why do you want to pray?
3. Remember, when talking about salvation with children, be sure to ask questions as you are talking to determine if they understand your terminology. Do not assume that they understand words such as: saved, salvation, trust, believe, forgive, God, Jesus, Heaven, pray, sin.