



The following are some helpful instructions for parents on how to evangelize their children.

a. _____ **the Gospel of Christ**

It is good and right to make the gospel understandable. But this does not include leaving out aspects of the gospel. Hard concepts and big words can be explained in such a way that children can understand them

Children must be able to understand the gospel clearly before they can be saved. This involves grasping concepts such as good and evil, sin and punishment, repentance and faith, God's holiness and wrath against sin, the deity of Christ and His atonement for sin, and the resurrection and lordship of Christ.

Parents should learn to explain these things in easy to understand terms. We can use daily real-life illustrations to this end.

Remember, God emphasized *thoroughness* in teaching our children! (Deut 6:6-7)

b. _____ **a Profession of Faith**

It is easy for parents, who are zealous for the salvation of their children, to encourage an outward profession of faith (such as the sinner's prayer) before a child has grasped the gospel message. We do not want our children to respond due to outside influence, expectations or peer pressure. We want them to respond sincerely to the work that God is doing in their heart in repentance and faith.

Remember that God is sovereign in salvation. He is the one who does the work. We help by preparing the soil of our children's hearts. We do this by consistently teaching the principles of the gospel from God's word. (1 Pet 1:23)

c. _____ **the Reality of Regeneration**

Children often respond positively to the gospel simply because

they trust their parents, or perhaps because they feel it is expected of them. This is not full-fledged saving faith.

The Bible describes children as immature (1 Cor 13:11), Naïve (Prov 1:4), foolish (Prov 22:15) and easily deceived (Eph 4:14). A good approach is to observe to see if their response to circumstances confirm or cast doubt upon their profession of faith.

d. **Assuring the Child of Salvation** _____

Many people are counting on a prayer or profession they made as a child because their salvation has been affirmed or reaffirmed by others based upon that profession. There are many whose lives do not evidence salvation but believe they are saved because they prayed a prayer when they were a child.

Certainly children can be saved and that faith will show itself through prayer. But we must be careful not to take an initial expression of child-like faith and use it to convince our children that they are saved. In reality, it is not the place of the parent or anyone else to give someone assurance of salvation. That is the Holy Spirit's job. (Rom 5:16)

What we can do is point to scripture and show our children what characterizes a Christian and allow the Holy Spirit to affirm their salvation or to not affirm it.

Let Them See There is a Choice to Make

Tell your kids that some people don't love Jesus. That only people who believe in Jesus and who want to allow him to be in charge are going to heaven.

Make it plain to them that there are two choices and that only one choice results in forgiveness of sins and Heaven when we die.

e. _____ **the Child into Baptism**

Ensure that he or she can make it reasonably clear that they understand and embrace the gospel. Oftentimes children falsely associate the outward act of baptism as part of salvation. We must ensure that they understand the distinction between salvation and baptism.

2. Foundational Keys to Evangelizing Children

Having seen the pitfalls in evangelizing children, let's turn now to see some affirmatives. These are the keys to evangelizing our children.

a. Teach the Gospel According to their _____ Stage

These stages are basic generalizations only.

i. Birth to 5 – The _____ Stage (first impressions, foundation building)

The child stores huge amounts of information every day. This is the stage at which to build in children an arsenal of Bible stories and memory verses. A foundation of Biblical knowledge and a foundation of trust.

ii. 4 - 8 – The _____ Stage (gathering facts, exploring the Bible, curiosity, asking questions)

At this age a child begins to question things. More than just absorbing what he is told. "Why" and "How" questions.

Help them to understand their sin nature. Not that sins are just "mistakes" or that we "do bad things" but that Man is unable to keep God's laws or to meet His standard of holiness. Teach them the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. We need to impress children over and over again with the holiness of God and the perfect obedience that God demands – not in order to get them to try to meet that standard but for them to understand that no man can meet the standard.

Don't jump too quickly to the latter half of the gospel message. Spend time teaching the holiness of God and the depravity of man so that Christ's sacrifice makes sense.

iii. 7 - 12 – The _____ Stage (conviction, struggle, faith, transformation)

The child understands that the gospel has implications for him personally – he must either make a personal commitment to Christ or reject the saviour.

Salvation involves both repentance and faith. This is true for

adults and children alike. Children must not only believe the facts of the gospel but also surrender their rebellious hearts to God's control.

iv. 10 and Up – The _____ Stage

Young faith must be directed and taught in the Word. The most powerful form of discipling is modeling a saved life.

b. Proclaiming the _____ of Christ

Be clear and thorough. Seek to please God with your gospel message by explaining the pure, Biblical gospel in a way that your child can understand.

Use daily situations such as discipline as opportunities to teach.

c. Understanding the Biblical _____

The evidence of a child's salvation is the same as an adults - Following Christ (John 10:27), Confessing sin (1 John 1:8-9), Loving the Brethren (1 John 3:14), Obeying God (1 John 2:3), Abiding in God's Word (John 8:31, John 17:6), Doing Good Works (Eph 2:10).

d. Encouraging _____ of Conversion

We can go to extremes with the "pitfalls of child evangelism" and discourage child-like expressions of faith because of the fickle nature of children. We should encourage every sign of faith in our children and use the opportunity to teach them even more about Christ and the gospel.

Even if parents conclude that it is too early to regard their child's interest in Christ as mature faith, they must not deride a profession of faith as false, for it may be the seed from which mature faith will later emerge. Instead, the parent should continue to point that child toward Christ, teaching the truth of God's Word with patience and diligence, and always looking to the One who is able to open hearts to respond to the gospel.

e. Trusting the Absolute _____

Regeneration ultimately is an act of God. Salvation cannot be produced by the faithfulness, or diligence of parents, but only by the sovereign work of God. Our job is to do all we can to prepare the soil to receive God's word.