

Leading Your Child to Faith in Christ

*Important Truths Your
Child Needs to Know*

*Liberty Park Baptist Church
12001 Liberty Parkway
Vestavia Hills, AL 35242
(205) 969-1236
www.libertypark.org*

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Important truths your child needs to know...

by Pastor Scott Guffin

Liberty Park Baptist Church

The most important job we have as parents is leading our children to Christ. As God begins to deal with your child and he or she begins to ask questions about becoming a Christian (or being baptized, or “asking Jesus into my heart”), there are some vital truths that your child needs to know. This guide will introduce you to the basics of the Gospel that will help you in leading your child to understand the heart of what it means to become a Christian. It will also include several verses that will help you to understand and explain each of the concepts that every believer needs to know.

1. God loves you!

I would suggest using **John 3:16** as your basic guide in teaching your child the basic truths of **the Gospel**. That single passage, more than any other, contains the Gospel in a nutshell. Here it is:

“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.” (NIV)

The fact that God loves us more than we could ever imagine is the very beginning of it all. Because of His great love for us, God wants us to lead a good life (**John 10:10**) here and also to have eternal life (**2 Peter 3:9**)—that is, to someday be with Him in heaven forever.

2. We all have a big problem called sin!

God has this wonderful plan for us both in this life and in the next, but there is a big problem that keeps us from being able to be a part of God’s plan. The Bible calls it **sin**, which can basically be defined as “disobeying God.” Whether it’s doing things that are wrong or *not* doing things that are right, the Bible says that every single one of us is guilty of sin (**Romans 3:23**).

The problem with sin is that it requires a payment, and the Bible says that the payment is “death,” or eternal separation from God (**Romans 6:23a**).

3. God sent Jesus to pay for our sins!

Because God loves us so much and wants us to be with Him in heaven for eternity, He made a way to pay for our sin. He sent Jesus (“**...he gave his one and only Son...**”), who lived a perfect life and then died on the cross to pay for our sins (**1 John 4:10**)!

The Bible says that God offers us this **salvation** from our sins as a free gift (**Romans 6:23b**). Because it is a free gift, there is nothing that we can do to earn it. We cannot be good enough, work hard enough or even go to church enough to earn God’s salvation—it’s a free gift!

As with all gifts, however, in order to make it ours, we have to receive it. But how do we do that?

4. We receive God's gift of eternal life by believing in Jesus!

The Bible says that we receive God's free gift of eternal life by believing in Jesus. To "believe" in Jesus means far more than just admitting that He exists. In the Bible, to believe means to completely put your trust in Him. The Bible word for "believe" is the same word as "faith." So, to believe in Jesus is to place your faith in Him, to trust Him to pay for your sins and to give you eternal life. It also means that you are to trust Him for all areas of your life.

In Vacation Bible School and in Sunday School, we often teach the children something called the "ABC's" that goes like this:

A = Admit to God that you are a sinner and turn from your sin

B = Believe that Jesus is God's Son and that He died for your sins and rose again

C = Confess Jesus as the Lord of your life

These basic ideas express what it means to place your trust in Jesus—admitting to God that you are a sinner and that you need salvation; trusting Jesus as the one who died to pay for your sins and who rose again to show His power over sin and death; and declaring Jesus as the Lord of your life.

Some of these concepts are difficult enough for adults to completely grasp, so you shouldn't be anxious about your child completely understanding *how* it all works. As long as they grasp the basic facts, are willing to place their trust in Jesus and are willing to make Him the Lord of their life, God's promise is that they will be saved. **John 1:12** puts it this way:

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

And, of course, don't forget our foundation verse, **John 3:16**—"... whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

5. Anyone can believe in Jesus and be saved!

John 3:16 reminds us that "whoever" believes in Jesus is saved. **Romans 10:13** says, "**Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**"

Various people have put together model prayers that are often called a "Sinner's Prayer" to help people to call on Jesus and receive the gift of eternal life. Here's an example of a simple "sinner's prayer":

"God, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and rose from the grave. I now turn from my sins and ask you to save me and to make Jesus the Lord of my life. Thank you for loving me and giving me eternal life. Amen."

You can lead your child in a prayer like this or let them express themselves. Just remember that there are no "magic words" that make it all happen. The important thing is that your child understands the basic need for salvation and expresses faith in Jesus Christ to receive that salvation. If you have any questions, please call your church staff ministers, who will be glad to assist you in leading your child to eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Verses used in this guide:

“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

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” – John 10:10

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” – 2 Peter 3:9

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” – Romans 3:23

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
– Romans 6:23*

“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” – 1 John 4:10

“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” – John 1:12

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” – Romans 10:13