

GOING FURTHER - Resources

Teaching Kids About God (by John Trent, Rick Osborne, and Kurt Bruner) will help you steer your child along the path of knowing, loving, and living with God, offering age-appropriate milestones from the time your child is a toddler until he or she enters the teen years.

God's Great News for Children - Leading Your Child to Christ (by Rick Osborne and Marnie Wooding) includes gospel-centered Bible stories, application questions, and salvation guides to help make talking with your child about Christ easier.

GOING FURTHER - Church Support

Faith Path - Free age-appropriate kits are available for parents to guide a child's spiritual journey one step at a time. Faith Path will begin in January 2015!

NextGen Resource Center - Free, easy ideas for faith conversations at mealtime, bedtime, family night, movie nights and more are available from the NextGen Resource Center or online (coming November 2014) at fbcsa.org/nextgen

First Kids - FBCSA offers a variety of programs that come along side parents in their effort to instill faith in children including age-graded weekend classes, RAs, GAs, camps, and much more. To learn more, visit fbcsa.org/firstkids

Refuge Youth Ministry - The Youth Ministry at FBCSA desires to equip and partner with parents to develop spiritual growth and maturity for Middle School and High School students. Find out more at fbcsa.org/youth

Young Marrieds Ministry - At FBCSA, we are seeking to grow strong families in strong communities that are joining in God's mission of renewal and redemption downtown and around town. Learn more at fbcsa.org/youngmarrieds

Pastor's Baptism Class - An orientation and explanation of baptism, it's symbolism, and importance to the faith growth of believers. Contact the FBCSA church office for more info



INTRODUCING YOUR CHILD TO CHRIST



Introducing Your Child To Christ

*From Jimmy Gunn, Minister of Preschool and Children
With Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families*

The fact you're reading this indicates you are concerned about your child's faith. As you care for your child's daily needs and work to prepare him or her for success in life, there's nothing more important than caring for their spiritual needs and helping them prepare for eternity. It's likely that you are reading this because, like many parents, you don't know quite how (or when) to go about introducing your child to Christ. Parents who worry that they don't have the training or understanding to lead their children to salvation may be tempted to just leave it to the "professionals"—to rely on people at church or ministry events. That's understandable, but God has given you the most important and most influential role when it comes to influencing your child's path to salvation. All it takes is a little training for you to feel more comfortable about the when and how of introducing them to Christ.

STEP ONE: Lay a foundation

A child's decision to follow Jesus is rarely a one-stop process. Your son or daughter grows in their understanding of God by developing a foundation (hearing the stories of the Bible, learning scriptures, singing about Jesus, and so forth) as well as experiencing life in your home (watching your example, feeling your love, learning right from wrong). These two ways of learning work best when they are connected in your home and integrated into your family life. We see it in Deuteronomy: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Dt. 6:6-7).

STEP TWO: Discern readiness

Do your best to discern when your child is mature enough to put the pieces together. Avoid the temptation to push him or her too fast, making sure they are ready and can truly understand the gospel. When you feel they are ready, ask a

few questions to help gauge your child's level of understanding. Read Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord." Then ask questions like, "What is sin?" "How does your sin affect your relationship to God?" and "How can you be right with God?" How they respond can help you sense whether your child is ready in addition to helping your child apply the gospel to his or her own life.

STEP THREE: Guide your child in prayer for salvation

Romans 10 tells us, "...if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved" (Romans 10:9-10). If you sense your child has a basic understanding of what sin is and what it leads to, as well as what it means to accept God's gift of salvation and His Lordship, then you can guide your child to pray along those lines. Instead of quoting specific words for your child to repeat, it's best to prompt them to use their own words—to tell God they are sorry for their sins, to ask for His forgiveness, and to ask Him to be Lord over the rest of their life.

STEP FOUR: Prepare them for baptism

Once your child has understood and decided to accept God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, it is time to guide them toward following Christ in believer's baptism. Schedule them to attend the Pastor's Baptism class where they will learn the basics of Christian faith and be prepared to celebrate baptism with their family, or they can speak with our children's minister.