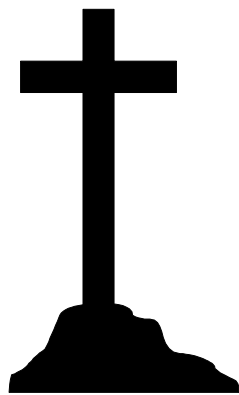


Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa
Children's Ministry

Leading a Child to
Christ



How to Become a Christian



- God cares about every person He has made. He has a plan for your life and He has sent you this message.
- God wants you to know four things:
- **God's goal for you is abundant life**
 - God loves you and wants to give you an abundant life - a full and satisfying life!
 - God's Word says:
 - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16
 - The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. John 10:10
- **Man's problem is sin. God and man are separated by sin.**
 - God gave people free will. That means that each one of us can choose to reject God's law, His love and to disobey Him. This disobedience, or breaking of God's law, is called sin. Sin makes it impossible to be close to God. The Bible tells us that every person has been disobedient to God.
 - God's Word says:
 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23
 - The wages of sin is death [separation from God]. Romans 6:23
 - So what can you do to get rid of sin and the habit of sinning?

How to Become a Christian



■ God's solution is Jesus Christ

- The only way to be free from the sin that separates us from God is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died on a cross to take the punishment for our sin. Jesus' death made it possible to cross the gap that separates us from God.
- God's Word says:
 - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8
 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6
- Jesus does not force Himself on us. We must each choose whether or not we will accept the solution to the sin that separates us from God.

■ Man's response is to receive Christ

- We must personally ask God to forgive us our sins and ask Jesus to come into our lives and take charge.
- God's Word says:
 - that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:9,10
 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Matthew 16:24
 - But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. Romans 6:22
- When we invite Jesus to come in and clean up our lives, He makes us members of God's own family and His Spirit lives in us.
- God's Word says:
 - But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name John 1:12
 - The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, Romans 8:16

How to Become a Christian



- If you want to become a part of God's family, here's how
 - Admit that you are a sinner
 - Believe that Jesus Christ loves you so much that He died for you so you can be close to God
 - Change your mind about sin - be willing to break your sinful habits and build good habits by obeying God's Word, the Bible. The Bible calls this repentance.
 - Ask God to live in you through His Spirit, to forgive you for the sinful things you have done and to take charge of your life. When you talk to God and ask Him to do these things for you, you are praying.
 - When you pray, talk honestly to God. God knows what you are thinking and feeling. He is not concerned about the words you use.
 - When you ask Jesus to come into your life, He promises to do it!
- If you asked Jesus to come into your life, you have just begun a new life.
 - God's Word says:
 - Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4
 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Examples That Help Kids Relate to the Gospel



■ Use the acronym S E A R C H

■ S erpent

■ E ve

■ A dam

■ R iptide

■ C aught Speeding

■ H eaven

The SEARCH



- Serpent
 - Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21:4-9 and John 3:14-21)
- Eve and Adam
 - Decision in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-24)
- Riptide
 - Example of being caught in a riptide and being saved by the lifeguard
- Caught Speeding
 - Example of being caught speeding and giving excuses to the officer
- Heaven
 - The eternal perspective

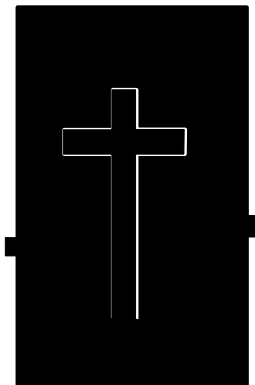
Serpent in the Wilderness



- Read the account of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness (Number 24:4-9)
- Discuss and draw attention to the following important points:
 - The people were disobedient and sinned against God
 - Their sin brought God's judgment
 - God's judgment brought death
 - The people didn't want to die
 - The people realized their sin and went to God through their mediator (Moses)
 - God wanted to help the people
 - God told Moses what to do in order to be saved and live
 - There was no other way for the people to be saved from death
 - Moses obeyed God's command when he gave the people the remedy
 - The people couldn't save themselves
 - The people chose to accept God's method of salvation
 - The Result: new life was given to them

Serpent in the Wilderness

- Read John 3:14-16 and discuss the following similarities by explaining what God's people experienced in Numbers 24 and how we are like them
 - We have sinned against God
 - God's has said that we will receive His judgment, which is death
 - We cannot save ourselves from sin
 - If we want to be saved from death, we must pray to God, just like Moses prayed to God to help the people who were bitten by serpents and dying
 - Only God's remedy will save us
 - We must respond to God's solution to fix our problem of sin
 - God's solution is Jesus
 - Jesus said that He would be lifted up just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness
 - If we look to Jesus we will be saved, just like those who were bitten by the serpents
 - New life will be given to anyone who believes in Jesus (looks to Jesus on the cross)



Eve and Adam



- Read the account of Eve and Adam in (Genesis 3:1-24)
- Discuss and draw attention to the following important points:
 - God's command was clear - "If you eat of the fruit of the tree, you shall surely die."
 - Eve and Adam disobeyed (it was their choice to go against God's Word)
 - Their behavior caused their problems and difficult circumstances
 - When God wanted their fellowship, they tried to hide from God
 - Their fellowship with God was broken
 - They didn't want to take responsibility for their own actions, and as a result, they tried to blame others for their sin
 - They tried to cover their sin (nakedness) with their own works (they sewed fig leaves)
 - God rejected their own attempts to cover their sin
 - God covered their sin by shedding blood (God used coats of skin)

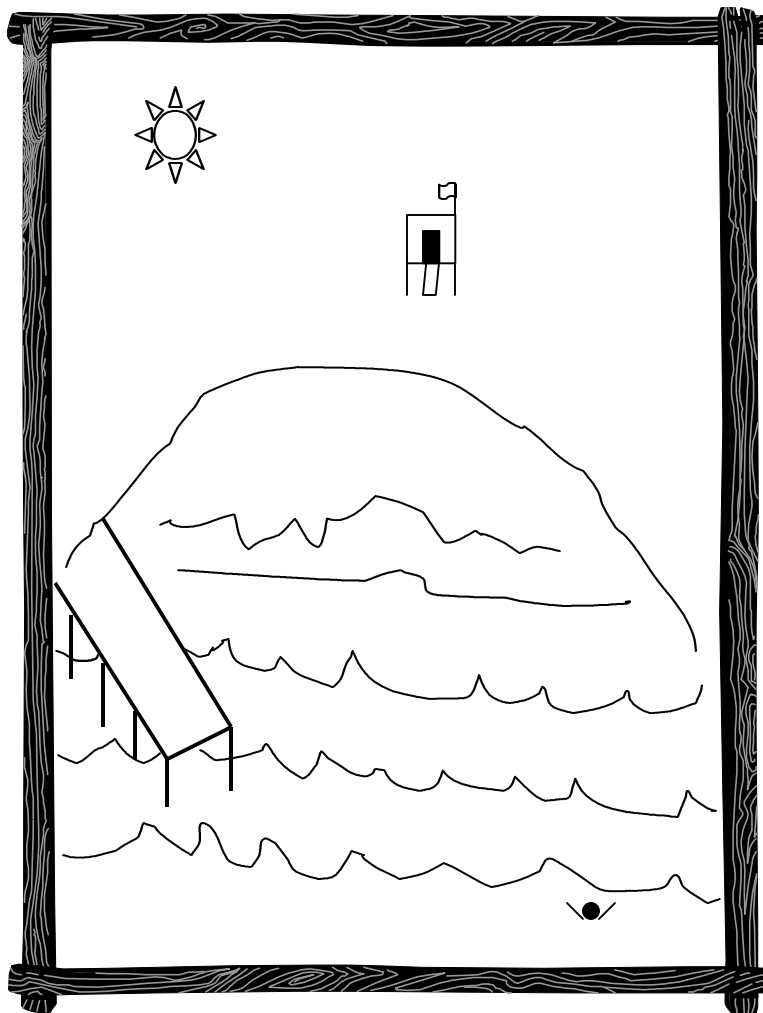
Eve and Adam



- Discuss the following similarities by explaining what Eve and Adam experienced and how we are like them
 - God's has given us commandments that are clear and understandable
 - We have disobeyed the commandments, we have sinned against God
 - Because we have disobeyed, we are in a terrible circumstance and have our own problem
 - We are condemned to death because of our sin (just as God told Eve and Adam that they would surely die, so will we and all of the world)
 - We may try to hide from God like Eve and Adam, but God always sees us and He will seek for us us just like He did for Eve and Adam
 - Our fellowship with God is broken and we don't desire to know Him
 - We don't want to take responsibility for sinning against God
 - We may try to cover-up our own sins by doing good deeds or trying to ignore our problem
 - If we want to restore fellowship with God, we must accept God's remedy to cover (forgive our sins)
 - God's remedy is Jesus Christ
 - God had Jesus die on a cross and shed His blood so we could receive forgiveness of our sins and eternal life
 - All people must receive Jesus Christ, God's remedy, in order to live eternally with God

Riptide

- This example doesn't have an opening passage of scripture, but it has been used powerfully as an illustration to draw children to Christ as they understand their need to be saved
- Begin by drawing a picture similar to the one below



Riptide



- Begin describing the picture as you draw it and focus the child's attention on the water, the shore (dry land) and the lifeguard tower
- Begin telling the story with the following key points:
 - A person is swimming in the water at the beach
 - He was warned about a "Riptide" and he was encouraged to do the right thing to protect himself
 - He either: 1) didn't listen, 2) disobeyed, or 3) was subtly deceived (e.g. he didn't realize that he was in any danger until it was too late)
 - He now finds himself caught in a riptide
 - The riptide pulls him away from shore
 - He cannot be freed from the riptide using his own strength
 - If he continues trying to free himself from the grip of the riptide, he will eventually die because the strength of the riptide is greater than his own
 - He contemplates his choices: save myself, or cry out to the lifeguard
 - He knows that the lifeguard will save him if he is willing to let him
 - He cries out to the lifeguard, who comes to his rescue
 - The lifeguard frees you from the riptide and brings you safely back to shore
- After telling the story, draw associations as follows:
 - You are the person, God is the shore, the "Riptide" is like sin, and Jesus is the lifeguard
 - Then, retell the story in the same manner as the first time, but replace the characters, landmarks and the Riptide as indicated above
- As the lesson becomes very clear to the child, indicate that they must also cry out to the lifeguard to be saved from their sins

Caught Speeding

(Time for Excuses)



- This example also doesn't have an opening passage of scripture, but it has been used powerfully as an illustration to draw children to Christ as they understand their problem with God's Law and their need to be freed from the effects of breaking the law
- Similar to the Riptide example, begin by telling a story in which you describe yourself driving down a recognizable street or freeway.
- As you tell the story, discuss the following:
 - The law says "No Speeding"
 - The law is a higher authority, so I must obey or pay the consequences (whether I like it or not)
 - We are obligated to keep the law
 - We may intentionally or unintentionally break the law
 - The law is for my safety and the safety of others
 - PROBLEM: You are caught speeding and here are the excuses you give to the officer:
 - You: I didn't see the sign
 - Officer: Sorry, you're supposed to identify the signs and know the law
 - You: If you let me go without a ticket this time, I promise to never speed again
 - Officer: You're not promising anything special. You're saying that you will do what the law requires and you don't receive any extra credit for keeping the law
 - You: OK, I've driven this stretch of road 100 times and I've never exceeded the speed limit. Do you mean to say that you won't let me go this time?
 - Officer: It doesn't matter what you have done in the past. You're guilty now, so you must pay the consequences. Besides, even if you were good in the past, you were only doing what the law required.

Caught Speeding



- Admission of guilt and absolution
 - You: OK, I'm guilty, what's my punishment?
 - Officer: Pay the fine.
 - You: Who do I pay?
 - Officer: The authority which has the right to absolve you
- You can't pay the fine, so you go to be judged
- You appear before the judge
 - You: Judge, I can't pay the fine because I can't afford it
 - Judge: Either pay the fine, or go to prison
 - You: Isn't there any other way to be absolved or forgiven for my crime?
 - Judge: Only I can set you free
- After telling the story, draw associations as follows:
 - You are the one who has been caught speeding
 - The Officer represents our conscience and declares or points-out our guilt
 - We stand guilty before the judge, regardless of our excuses
 - Our excuses to God are similar:
 - I didn't know I broke one of Your laws
 - I promise not to break Your laws again, You're a forgiving God, right?
 - My good deeds (driven this road 100 times without speeding) outweigh my bad (I was speeding only once)
 - We can't absolve ourselves for our crime
 - We must admit our guilt and plead for the Judge's mercy
 - Only the Judge can forgive us and absolve us for our crime because He is the authority
- As the child sees that they have broken God's laws (they have sinned), they realize that no excuse is good enough and they must plead for mercy and pray that the Judge (God) extends His grace

Heaven



- Children relate to their physical world much more than their spiritual world
- Give them a picture of the eternal versus the temporal by talking about heaven. Describe heaven to a child and that child will immediately recognize that heaven is the place they want to be.
- If they don't ask you first, you can ask them if they know how to get to heaven.
- Begin by describing heaven and its eternal characteristics. Compare earth's temporal things to heaven as follows:
 - Heaven is eternal
 - Life on earth is too short
 - Compare a man's 70 years on earth to eternity
 - Examples of man's short term perspective
 - Excitement over a toy, music, etc. (it never lasts forever)
 - Fill the heart with distractions (all are temporal and never address man's eternal problem or issues)
 - Explain that every decision has a lasting effect
 - Eat breakfast
 - Receive energy later
 - Brush teeth
 - Avoid tooth decay
 - Only eat junk food
 - Die at an early age
 - Don't complete homework
 - Fail test, no promotion to next grade, drop out of school

Heaven



- | Study in college
 - Job choices, good paying job
- | Sin against God
 - Separation and broken fellowship with God
- | Obey God's Word
 - Blessings and peace
- | Finally, discuss God's desire to be with them in heaven and give them His road map on how to get there
- | See the Roman's Road to salvation

The Romans Road to Salvation



- Everyone has broken God's law; thus, no one is (righteous) good enough
 - As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; Romans 3:10
- Everyone is a sinner
 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23
- From one sinner comes another
 - Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned -- Romans 5:12
- The result of sin and the free gift available to fight the effects of sin
 - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23
- The free gift given out of love
 - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

The Romans Road to Salvation



- Receive the free gift
 - For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." Romans 10:13
 - that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9
 - For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:10
- God's Assurance
 - "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16
- ADMIT and CONFESS
- REPENT
- BELIEVE
- RECEIVE