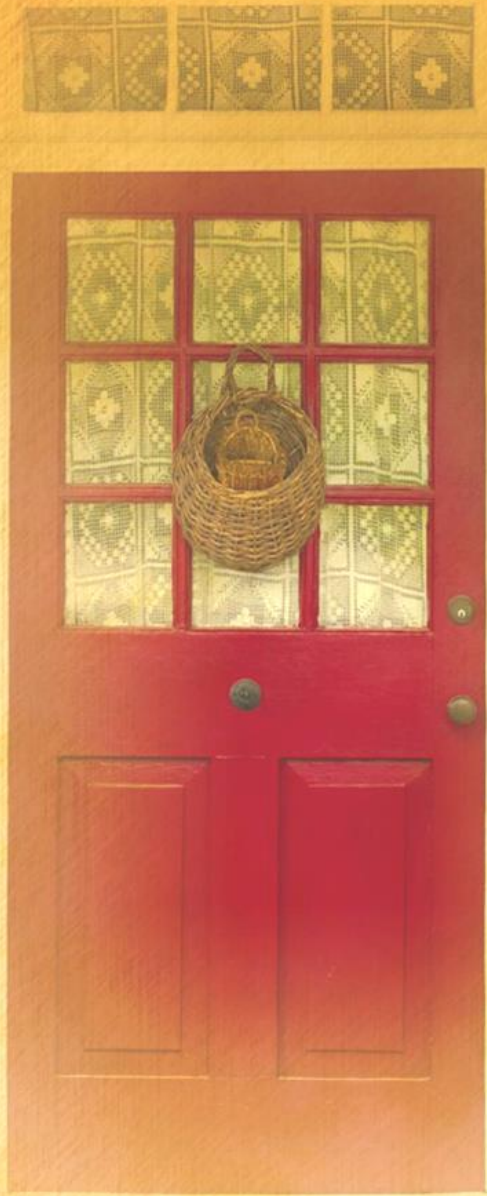


Introducing Your Child To Christ



HomePointe[™]
Pointers

Introducing Your Child To Christ

*From Josh Bundy, Lead Minister
With Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families*

The fact that you're reading this indicates you are concerned about your child's faith. As you care for your children's daily needs and work to prepare them 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-step 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; make 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. There is not a "right age" for a child to become a Christian. Some children will want to put on Christ at an early age; others may still be thinking it through late in their teen years. None of this is abnormal. What counts is their heart and your readiness to lead them.

STEP THREE: Guide your child through scriptures about forgiveness and salvation

Read stories from Acts, such as Acts 2:37-41, Acts 8:26-40, and Acts 9:1-19. These are powerful because they are about people who were saved. Ask some questions to gauge if your child understands what is being read, such as "What were these people told to do to be saved?" "What attitudes did these people show when they wanted to be saved?" and "Why did these people need to be saved?" Read Jesus instructions to his disciples in Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:15-16, and also read John 3:16-21 and John 20:31. Ask your child, "Who is Jesus?" "What does he want people to believe about him?" and "When you believe Jesus is the Son of God, what are you supposed to do?"

Your child will see through these scriptures that a believer in Jesus repents of sin, confesses belief in Jesus as the Son of God, and obeys Jesus in baptism. As you talk with your child about these things, encourage them to be praying and asking God for guidance – show them that you take their decision to follow Christ joyfully and seriously.

STEP FOUR: Celebrate the baptism of your child

We don't wait to schedule baptism services; we believe any time is the right time to put on Christ in baptism. We are happy to have baptisms after worship services or Bible classes and we are also happy to open the building during the week for a baptism.

The baptistry is kept clean and warm throughout the week, and we have clean baptismal garments available. Someone from the ministry staff will be happy to perform the baptism or assist the one baptizing the child. Before and after the baptism pray with your child; show them the depth of your own commitment to God and the joy of welcoming them into the family of God. Consider writing a letter or card to your child so that they can have something to keep reminding them of the day they put on Christ. Ask for favorite songs to be sung, take the time to go eat and celebrate afterwards... or just find some special way to celebrate with your child about this life-altering reality of being a child of Christ.

GOING FURTHER – Church Support

Shepherd/Minister Support

Any of our leadership team is happy to visit with you about your studies with your child. We believe that you, as the parent, are the best equipped to share Jesus with your child, but we are happy to help you. If they have tough questions (or if you do!) during the time of studying, share them with us and we'll discuss them with you. We want you to know that you are not alone in this – please contact any of us at any time.

Our email addresses and phone numbers can be found at www.bentonvillechurch.com 479-273-2178