



**FAMILY
NEW
BELIEVER
FOLLOW-UP**

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One of the best ways we can help kids to understand and get grounded in their new faith in Jesus is by helping them have good follow-up to a faith decision. Most children will believe relatively easily because they are young and not prone to being skeptical when someone tells them about Jesus. But this trust can be harmful in the future because as they grow older and mature and start to ask harder questions, they may think this decision is a fantasy from their childish years. This follow-up material is developed for you, the parent, to go through it with your youngsters who have made a decision for Jesus. Our desire is to use a combination of teaching the basics of what the Bible says about our faith and having it come from a parent or other trusted adult so they can get a good start on their walk of faith. We will use some teaching, some activities, some questions and helpful hints so you can be empowered to impart your child with the faith that has changed your life. Here's to beginning that journey!

Serving Jesus,

Your Family Ministry Staff

OVERVIEW

LESSON 1: REVIEW GOSPEL

Share it completely and get a response that they are followers of Jesus

LESSON 2: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Can't lose your salvation even when you sin going forward.
You are adopted as His forever child

LESSON 3: FORGIVENESS

Once for all forgiveness - Justification
Ongoing daily forgiveness - Sanctification

LESSON 4: WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

Bible reading
Prayer
Daily listen to His voice
Praising confessing responding

LESSON 1

REVIEWING THEIR DECISION TO FOLLOW JESUS

It's of vital importance to start working with your child from the first day they make a decision to follow Jesus. There are four lessons that we will be using to help cement this decision and help them get a good start. This lesson will focus on reviewing the gospel, or good news, that led to their decision in the first place.

READ THESE VERSES

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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

John 3:16-17

TALKING POINTS

AFFIRM

Affirm their decision to believe in Jesus by reminding them about what they did and where it took place. This will cement it more and more in their memories.

SHARE

Share with them about how the decision they made was to believe in the "Good News". Let them know that you are going to play a match game to try and remember just what the good news is.

PLAY

Play the following Good News Match Game with them by cutting out the different picture cards and helping them to match which cards go with each of the parts of the Good News. (Good News Match Game PDF available for download at rhkids.org).

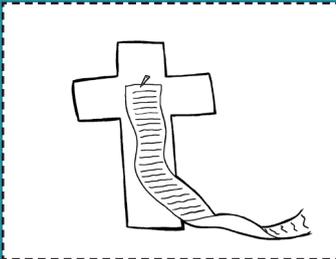
GOOD NEWS MATCH GAME



GOD LOVES YOU



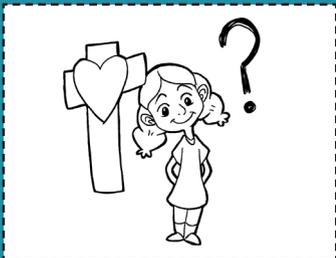
GOD IS SAD
BECAUSE WE SIN



JESUS DIED FOR
ALL OUR SINS
ON THE CROSS



WE BELIEVE IN
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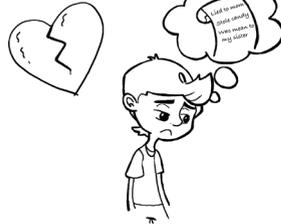
DID YOU
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GOOD NEWS MATCH GAME

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DID YOU
BELIEVE IN
JESUS?



TALKING POINTS

AFFIRM AGAIN

Let them know about how happy you are that they did such a great job learning and remembering their new faith in Jesus.

THANKFUL

Ask them to pray to Jesus with you and thank him for all he did to give us faith.

HELPFUL HINTS

If they are able to do the different matches correctly, great. They likely have a good understanding of their new decision. If not, you may want to help them with each of the different steps. Try the match game again and see if they get it this time. If not, don't pressure them. It may take a couple of times to work with your child to help them firm up their decision.

However, maybe they didn't make the decision for themselves yet. Sometimes we as parents are so excited that our kids make a decision to follow Jesus that we accidentally pressure them about their decision. Also, they may not be in the mood to review their decision when you sit down with them to do it. Try and make it a natural experience, but know that it is still important to take the time to do it.

LESSON 2

BEING SURE THEIR FAITH IS REAL

When I was eight-years-old and had first believed in Jesus, I remember praying about becoming a follower of Jesus almost every day for the first month after that first decision. You know why? It's because I sinned so much and disobeyed my parents so often. I felt bad and figured I didn't really believe in Jesus or that I did something wrong since I kept sinning. Each night when I went to bed I would feel real sad that I still sinned even though I was a follower of Jesus. I wanted to feel God's love, but I didn't feel it because I didn't behave like I thought a follower of Jesus would behave. It really made me confused. Could I believe my feelings? Was God angry at me? Did I really become a follower of Jesus or did I just fake it? All these questions are a big part of this lesson on assurance. Assurance of salvation is having confidence that my faith is real, even if their feelings or actions don't seem to keep up with the decision your child has made. This lesson will help you work through the feelings and actions that come with being a follower of Jesus.

READ THESE VERSES

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:8-10

TALKING POINTS

REMEMBER THE GOOD NEWS

Go through the Good News Match Game with them again. After you get through it once, go back and focus on the step that is about how we believe and Jesus forgives us for our sins.

EXPLAIN AND HELP THEM UNDERSTAND GRACE

Grace is a gift. You cannot earn grace. God gives it to us when we believe and he never takes it back. Grace means the faith that we have in Jesus is a gift from God that he will never take away.

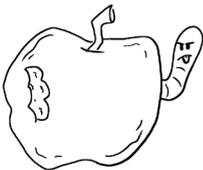
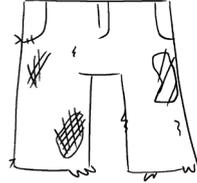
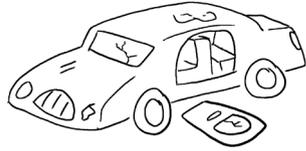
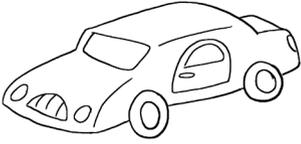
PLAY

The following game will help your child learn about the differences between being a new follower of Jesus and what they used to be before they became a follower.

OLD & NEW

- Go through each of these pictures and ask them which are old and which are new. Also, ask them why they think they are old or new.
- Talk about the differences
 - Help them to understand the difference between new things and older things.
 - Then, ask them how a person acts who is a new follower of Jesus.

OLD & NEW GAME



QUESTIONS

I'm going to talk about some things and you tell me if that sounds like someone who is a follower of Jesus, okay?

- Person praying?
- Helping a person who is hurt?
- Going to church?
- Obeying your parents?
- Reading the Bible?
- Telling a friend about Jesus?

Now I'm going to tell you about some other things and you tell me if those are things that a follower of Jesus does.

- Yelling at someone?
- Taking something that doesn't belong to them?
- Lying to your teacher about doing your homework?
- Not cleaning your room when your parents ask you to?
- Making fun of someone at school?

HELPFUL HINTS

One of the biggest challenges for a new follower of Jesus is to remember that they are still young and their maturity and understanding are limited the younger they are. I would say that the question "Why?" together with non-shaming answers are key to learning what a difference their faith makes. For instance, if we say you shouldn't yell at someone, we don't mean yelling when you are far away and are calling out to a friend. We actually mean yelling at someone to make them feel bad because you're angry or trying to make them feel bad. If you ask them why going to church is good, make sure your reasoning is that it is a positive connection with Jesus can happen when we go to church. Just going to church isn't what makes it right. Going to church for the right reasons makes it a great thing.

A second hint is to remember your perspective is different than theirs. You may always focus on the fact that your child doesn't listen to you the first time (or second or third or fourth time...you get it!) and feel like disobeying you is the key wrong in their life. But, having a relationship with God is more important than just doing the right things. One usually leads to the other, but when kids are young, they may do many contradictory things that require a bunch of grace to wade patiently through. Remember to grant grace and pray for wisdom to know when to focus on behaviors and when to focus on relationship.

LESSON 3

FORGIVENESS

The only person who ever lived on this planet and didn't do anything wrong was Jesus. He was perfect. Every time he did the right thing. Now, when I think about my life, being perfect is nowhere close to what I am. There are days where I don't sin or mess up and do what God told me not to do. But, more often, there are other days where my thoughts get me in trouble or my actions end up hurting someone I love. It takes time to learn about how to grow up as a follower of Jesus. This means I won't do the right thing every time. But how do I know what to do if I accidentally make a mistake? What do I do if I intentionally hurt someone? We want to help you teach your child about forgiveness. There are a couple of parts of this lesson that are review of the previous lesson, but another part that is about how to live with daily forgiveness that all of us need while we live each and every day.

READ THIS VERSE

But if we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away.

1 John 1:9

TALKING POINTS

EXPLAIN FORGIVENESS

Spend time asking about what things that they do that make God sad or disobey our parents. After they tell you, talk about how Jesus said we are forgiven for our sins when we believe in Jesus and put our trust in Jesus' forgiveness. This is so important. We are forgiven for every sin we have done and every sin we will do in the future. We don't want to sin anymore, but when we do we know that Jesus has already forgiven us.

QUESTIONS

- Is it okay to take something that isn't yours? Why?
- Is it okay to get angry if you don't get what you want? Why?
- Is it okay to lie to someone if you don't want to do what they say? Why?
- Who is hurt when you take something that isn't yours?
- Who gets hurt when you get angry?
- Who gets hurt when you lie to someone?
- Do you think God wants you to hurt other people by doing wrong things like that? Why or why not?

READ THIS VERSE

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

James 5:16

TALKING POINTS

CONFESSION

Confession is a word that is important for our new faith in Jesus. When we confess the wrong things we do, we agree with God that what we are doing is wrong and we should not do it. First, we confess to God because he sent Jesus to forgive us for all our sins. We confess so God knows we didn't obey him. Second, we confess our sins to the person or people we hurt because of our sins. By confessing, we tell them we are sorry and sad that we sinned and we don't want to sin anymore. We ask them to forgive us so they know we care about their feelings and want to do what God wants us to do.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Confession helps us to repair our friendship with God and with others. He wants us to care more about others than about us getting our own way. Confession teaches us to be humble and know that we are not perfect and we will need to ask forgiveness from people, sometimes every day!

DO I CONFESS?

When I say these different things, you tell me if you should confess them or not, okay?

- Mom tells you to put your shoes in the closet and you decide you don't want to do that anymore.
- You go to your friend's house and play after Dad said you could go.
- You are afraid to sleep at night without having a light on.
- You take money from your brother without asking him.
- Mom says to not play any more video games today, but you decide to play because Mom left the house and she won't know you played if you do it while she is gone.
- You yell at Dad because he won't let you play with a toy that your brother has.
- When Mom asks you if did your homework and you forgot to do it.

TALKING POINTS

IT'S HARD!

Confession is a hard thing to do. We don't want to do the wrong or sinful thing, but sometimes we do. Sometimes we don't know if something is wrong or if it's just an accident. Remember how I said that nobody is perfect and does the right thing everytime? Well, that's why we have confession, so we can repair our friendships when we sin and blow it.

IT'S SCARY

Sometimes when we know we have done something wrong, we choose to hide our sin and not confess it because we are afraid of what will happen to us when we get caught. Remember it is always better to confess than to hide our sins. Do you know why? Because we cannot hide our sins from God! He sees everything we do and he knows what those things are and what you are afraid of. It may be hard to admit you sinned, but confession is always better for both you and for making things right with God.

PRAY

Take some time to talk to God by praying and asking God to help your child to be brave and confess his/her sins as soon as possible when they sin. Thank Jesus that he forgave us for all our sins when we became a follower of his, but also pray that you will become a person who confesses your sins always, even if you are afraid.

HELPFUL HINTS

The fear of punishment and discipline is very real when you are talking about confession. Try and affirm that when we confess and tell the truth, it doesn't mean that we will get away with doing wrong things. It does mean that we will learn better how to live for Jesus, even if we have to get disciplined sometimes for our sins.

Being age-appropriate is important with this lesson. As kids get into later elementary ages, the ideas of hiding sins or wondering what is sin and what is not can get a bit foggy. Older kids will learn to justify their actions because that's what they see at school and when they are exposed to kids who are not followers of Jesus. For that matter, if you as a parent model that you justify your actions too, you can do some damage by introducing them to a concept we call hypocrisy. Don't justify your gossip or your casual inconsistencies because kids pick it up really easy. Remember, it's better to confess YOUR sins of hypocrisy, especially to your kids, when they are old enough to get it. And, even if they are too young to get it, God knows and confessing to him is always the right way to go!

LESSON 4

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

How does a God we cannot see guide our lives? How do we “walk in the Spirit?” Is this even something a child can understand? Those are some of the questions we are going to attempt to answer in this lesson. When I was a young boy, I had such a hard time believing that Jesus could lead me in a real way. I didn’t get it. Most of the time that was because I only knew what I could see, hear, smell, touch or taste. But Jesus can’t be seen or smelled or heard or touched or tasted in a tangible or real way, right? As I grew up, I realized that Jesus could touch me by my emotions, not my sense of touch. I could hear from Jesus through someone else’s voice or the written Word of God, not his actual words spoken to me. It’s not that those words are any less God’s words, but it’s how much more often God speaks to me through someone’s teaching about or reading the words of the Bible. This lesson is designed to help your child to learn about walking in the Spirit by using something called spiritual breathing.

HOLD YOUR BREATH COMPETITION

You are going to take turns holding your breath and seeing how long you can do it. Try and use a stopwatch or an app on your phone that can keep track of the seconds. Moms and dads, you will be able to hold your breath longer than they can, but see if you can give them two or three seconds for every second you can hold your breath. Of course, please don’t pass out. That’s not the point of this little competition.

QUESTIONS

- How long could each of you hold your breath?
- Why is it so hard to hold your breath? Because breathing is more than just breathing in. It is also breathing out, too. Breathing in our bodies is about both breathing in and breathing out. If we stop breathing in or out, our bodies stop working.

TALKING POINTS

LEARNING ABOUT SPIRITUAL BREATHING

Spiritual breathing is like when we breathe in our bodies. We breathe in and we breathe out so our bodies can work right. When we spiritually breathe, our faith can work right.

BREATHING IN, BREATHING OUT

- When we breathe in spiritually
 - We read the Bible
 - We listen to what God teaches us
- When we breathe out spiritually
 - We talk to God through prayer
 - We obey God in how we act

READ THESE VERSES

You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that.

Matthew 5:43-47

QUESTIONS

BREATHE IN

What is one thing you learn from these verses?

BREATHE OUT

How does God want you to act today if you obey what you learned?

BREATHE OUT

Finally, pray and ask God to help you obey what He taught you today.

See how easy that is? It doesn't matter how much you read or how long you pray. What matters most is learning how to do this everyday.

HELPFUL HINTS

WHAT IF YOUR CHILD CANNOT READ?

Not every child can read so how do you help them learn how to spiritually breathe? By reading with them! Each of us wants our children to learn the basics of life and reading is one of those basics. When we read TO our kids, they learn almost as much as if they read THEMSELVES. In the old days before books, the Bible stories and teachings were memorized and repeated from person to person and generation to generation. When you read books to your kids before they go to bed, make sure part of your reading rotation is a children's Bible. Read a story from the Bible and ask the questions above as a way to start teaching spiritual breathing at a young age.

WHAT IF THE BIBLE IS TOO INTIMIDATING BECAUSE IT IS SO BIG?

Reading the Bible all the way through is a huge challenge for adults, much less kids. To read it all the way through would be an even bigger challenge for a child who is learning how to read. Plus, where does a child begin to read? If they start in 1 Chronicles, they would end up reading 11 chapters of unpronounceable names and that's just outright disheartening.

I would encourage learning how to read from a good children's Bible. It will focus on Bible stories and Bible people, which allows them to learn from the ways those people obeyed or disobeyed God. Second, I would guide them to start with the stories of Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Those books are the best way to get to know Jesus and follow how He lived His life.

WHAT IF MY CHILD DOESN'T GET PRAYER?

Prayer is simply talking to God and telling Him what you need and how you are feeling. Prayers do not have to be long or memorized. Prayer can be a conversation you have where you talk and God hears you. I would encourage you to talk to God with your child each night so they see how you do it.

Try to not pray "official" sounding prayers (i.e. Dearest Heavenly Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, please convict me of my evil desires...)

Instead, try prayers that are more conversational (i.e. Jesus. I love You so much. Help me to obey You today. I'm sorry I got angry at my brother and hit him. Will you please forgive me? Thanks Jesus!) Do you see the difference? To a child, praying like the first one feels like a very adult sounding speech that isn't anything like a kids talks normally. When you pray with your child, make sure and simplify your language so that you relate to them and they know that God relates to them, too.

Congratulations on walking through this faith follow-up material with your child! Think of these four lessons as a beginning, not an end. The fourth lesson is a great launch pad for helping your child to keep living for Jesus day by day for the rest of their life. In a way, follow-up is the first steps of discipleship and the best people to be discipling your children are you, the parents! If you help them to continue to walk in the Spirit by spiritually breathing each day, you will be guiding them towards the most important relationship they could ever have. I hope I'm not being overly dramatic, but having faith in Jesus has impact not only on a person today, but for all of eternity. It's more important than any other relationship or career or accomplishment.

As a staff team, our passion is to help you continue to help your child grow in faith and life. If there is any way we can help you move forward in discipleship in your family, please feel free to contact us to help you and we will do our best to be a good resource for you as a parent. We are your biggest fans and we pray you will see transformation daily as you invest in the next generation of Christ followers.

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