Counseling: Guiding a Child to Trust in Jesus

How do you begin the counseling time when a child responds to the invitation?

Counseling for Salvation

1. Begin with a series of **questions** to find out what the child understands.
2. **Review** God, the need, and way of salvation with questions.
3. Allow for the child to have a **personal** response to God.
4. Give **assurance** of salvation based on the Word of God.
5. Give beginning instructions for **growth**.

Getting Started

1. _____, trust the Holy Spirit to guide.
2. Find a quiet and safe place.
3. Put the child at ease..
4. Counsel according to the child's need.
5. Keep their vocabulary simple. Use "childrenese".
6. Use questions that cannot be answered with _____ or _____.

Why did you come to talk with me?
Why do you need the Lord Jesus Christ?

The True and Living God *(John 3: 16a)*

- Who is God?
- What does it mean that God is holy?
- Does God love you? John 3:16a

Need of Salvation *(Romans 3:23a)*

- What is sin? Who has sinned? Child reads Rom 3:23a
- Are you a sinner? Name one sin that you have done.
- What is God's punishment for sin?

Way of Salvation (1 *Corinthians* 1S:3-Sa)

- Who is Jesus? Jesus is God, God's perfect Son.
- What did the Lord Jesus do for you?
- Why is Jesus the only one who could die for your sins?
- What happened to Jesus after He died?

Believe in Jesus

- Let's look in the Bible to see what God says about believing in Jesus. *(Use a condition/promise verse such as John 1:12; John 3:16 or Acts 16:31 and the terminology used in the verse you choose, e.g., believe in, believe on, receive, etc.)*
- What does God promise He will do?
- What does God say you must do?
- Do you believe in the Lord Jesus as the only Savior from your sins?

Suggested Prayer of Response

- Tell God that you have sinned and that you are sorry.
- Tell God you believe in (trust) the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for your sin and rose again.
- Tell God you want to live His way, with His help.

Believe is to agree with God that you have sinned and to trust completely that Jesus is the only one who can take care of your problem of sin.

Assurance

- If you truly believe in the Lord Jesus, what did He do for you?
- How do you know? *(Read the condition/promise verse again. Put child's name in it.)*
- The Bible says that Jesus comes into your life when you believe in Him. Jesus will never leave you! *(Read Hebrews 13:5b.)* Where is Jesus now?
- *(Read Hebrews* 13:6a.) Who will help you say NO to sin?
- If you choose to sin, what should you do? Let's look and see what God's Word says. *(Read and explain* 1 *John 1:9.)*

Tell God… Thank God… Ask God

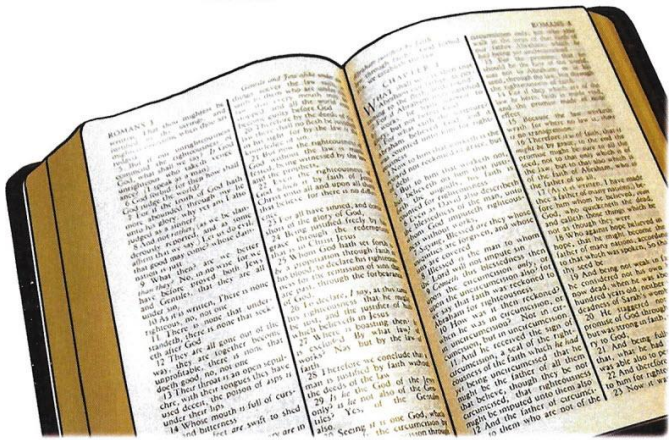
Grow (2 *Peter* 3: 18)

- **G**-*Go* to church, Sunday school and **Good News Club.**
- ***R***-*Read* God's Word and ***pray*** every day.
- ***O***-*Obey* God! God, the Holy Spirit, lives in you to give you the power to help you do what is right. *(Read Hebrews 13:5b-6a.)*
- ***W***-*Witness* to others, telling them about what the Lord Jesus has done for them.

Encourage him to talk to God right now:

- Thank God for loving you and saving you from sin.
- Thank God for helping you live for Him.

Pray for the child by name.
Before the child leaves, give him or her a tract.



Counseling a Group of Children

- Use the same questions you would use with an individual but direct the questions to different ones in the group. Think of ways to rephrase the same question so that different ones can answer in their own way.

  Examples for questions on sin:

  Why do you need Jesus, Jimmy?

  What keeps you from going to Heaven, Sue?

  What is sin, Bill?

  What things do boys and girls your age do that are sin, Cathy?

- Try to involve as many of the children as possible in answering the questions by directing them to specific children so the same ones aren't answering all the questions.

- Give the children an opportunity to silently express their belief in Christ. ("Have you believed in Jesus for salvation today for the first time?") Provide prompts for children who have believed to talk to God silently in their own words.

  - Tell God **that you have sinned and that you are sorry.** – *Do you really mean it?*

  - Tell God **you believe in (trust) the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for your sin and came alive.**

  - Tell God **you want to live His way, with His help.**

It is of vital importance that children understand it is not saying certain words that will save them but belief in Jesus as the only one who can save them. After going through assurance of salvation and growth, each child could pray a silent thank-you prayer afterward. Give each child a tract and pray for the group.

COUNSELING: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

REPEATER LACKS ASSURANCE:

- Take child to an invitation verse and emphasize the promise
- Review hand "Jesus will never leave you"
- Ask "Do you believe now?" Allow the child to talk to God.

REPEATER NEEDS TO CONFESS SIN:

- Sinned again – Explain 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins"
- Use hand as visual, "I will never leave you..."
- Ask them to talk about when they received Christ
- Encourage the child to pray and read the Bible, seeking God's help in times of temptation.

REPEATER FOR TERM CLARIFICATION:

- Tie all terms together

REPEATERS FOR ATTENTION:

- Sit with them in class
- Involve them – give them special jobs
- Give them time before and after class
- Small groups in clubs are so important

WON'T ADMIT SIN:

- Show them a verse about sin
- Tell them, "I have sinned too."
- Asl them if they have ever had a timeout or loss of a privilege. Why did you get punished, for being good?
- Give different examples

SHY - WON'T TALK:

- Ask nonthreatening questions (family, pet, etc.)
- Will you talk to someone else, the other teacher?
- Is there a friend you would like to come sit with you?
- Begin each question with, "Do you remember...?"
- Try yes or no questions about lesson

DON'T KNOW WHY THEY CAME (JUST OBEYED COMMAND):

- Tell them why you asked for a response at the end of the invitation.
- If a child does not really know, have him listen while you counsel others
- Use this quality teaching time to reinforce the message of salvation.

"NO" THEY WON'T RECEIVE THE LORD NOW:

- Find out why not
- If he says he has already, have him tell you about when he believed in Jesus.
- Feels parents would object, ask why
- Pray that soon he will be ready to receive the Lord as Savior

DEALING WITH THE CHILD WHO SAYS HE HAS ALREADY BELIEVED ON JESUS:

- Don't assume this means the child is saved. Ask questions such as: *When did you believe in Jesus? Where were you when you believed in Jesus? Why did you need to believe in Jesus? What does it mean to you that you believe in Jesus?* Listen carefully to the child's answers to discern if he truly has received Christ.
- If you feel he has, find out what need brought him to respond to you today, and counsel him for that need.
- If you feel he has not truly received Christ as Savior or has misunderstood what you mean, proceed with the counseling questions.