This book is the result of many years of fruitful ministry among boys and girls. With remarkable ability and spiritual insight Dr Sam Doherty reminds us of the importance of biblical discipleship. All who come to faith in Christ need to grow in Christ likeness.

A study of this book will enable you to learn important principles in helping children take those first steps of discipleship as they pray, learn Bible truths, and follow the path of obedience. You will find yourself growing in faith as well as having the joy of seeing the children you have led to Christ growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

This is also an important teaching tool for those who instruct others in a ministry to children.

Child Evangelism Fellowship Inc.
Specialized Book Ministry
Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide
www.cefbookministry.com

U-Can Help Christian Children to Grow

Dr Sam Doherty



U can

Help Christian Children Grow

Guidelines to help children's workers teach children who have trusted in Christ to grow strong spiritually

Dr Sam Doherty

U-CAN HELP CHRISTIAN CHILDREN TO GROW

Guidelines to help children's workers teach children who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour - so that they will grow spiritually



Dr Sam Doherty, BA, EdD.

A series of short 'U-can' training manuals for children's workers:

U-can Know God's Plan for Children
U-can Evangelize children
U-can Teach a Bible Lesson
U-can Lead Children to Christ
U-can Help Christian Children to Grow
U-can Counsel a Christian Child

This book is for free distribution only — and not to be sold.

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

This book is a shortened version of the book "*Growing Up*" first published in May 2000

Published by
Child Evangelism Fellowship® Inc.
Specialized Book Ministry
Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide
PO Box 308, Lisburn, BT28 2YS, Northern Ireland, UK
© February 2011 All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: "Fishing and Feeding"
The Two-fold Responsibility of the Children's Worker ..2

Chapter 2: "Remember, Remember ..."
Five Basic Principles for Follow-up Work 7

Chapter 3: "Your Responsibility Toward Saved Children"
Five Steps to Follow in Personal Follow-up Work 12

Chapter 4: "How Can You Help Saved Children to Grow?"
Fifteen Aspects of a Follow-up Programme 23

Chapter 5: "Feed My Lambs"
The Ten Main Themes to be Taught to Saved Children.....38

Chapter 6: "God Speaks to Me"
The Bible, the Word of God 42

Chapter 7: "How Can I Be Sure?"
Assurance of Salvation 48

Chapter 8: "It's Good to Talk"
The Practice of Prayer 55

Chapter 9: "Alone With God"
How to Have a Daily Quiet Time 63

Chapter 10: "Sound and Secure"
Teach Them Bible Doctrines 67

Chapter 11: "Let Your Light Shine . . ."
Christian Conduct 71

Chapter 12: "'V' Is for Victory"
How to Deal With Sin in the Christian Life 77

Chapter 13: "How Shall They Hear Without a Preacher?"
Witnessing 88

Chapter 14: "Across the Street . . . Across the Sea"
Missions 92

Chapter 15: "A New Master"
The Lordship of Jesus Christ 96

Chapter 16: "Strength and Safety in Numbers"
Fellowship and the Church 101

Conclusion 105

INTRODUCTION

The subject of follow-up work is (or at least should be) upon the heart of everyone who teaches the Word of God to children. The evangelism of children is absolutely vital; but there is a danger that we spend so much time, energy, work and money upon evangelism, and not enough of all of these upon a follow-up programme which will encourage saved children to grow in their Christian life. It should be the purpose of every children's worker to give "spiritual milk" to saved children so that they may grow in their salvation. The Lord Jesus commands us not only to evangelize (Mark 16:15), but he also gives us a command to teach and make disciples (Matthew 28:19.20a). And he Himself has set us an example by spending much of His time investing Himself in, and teaching, the small group of twelve men who had responded to His call to follow Him. And the Apostle Paul did the same.

This book on the subject of follow-up work has been written as an attempt to assist all those who work with saved children, and who want help for their ministry. It is a shorter version of a longer and more detailed book on the same subject also written by myself.

My prayer is that God will help you, my dear children's worker, to be a faithful shepherd of those lambs whom the Lord has saved and entrusted to your care. The Lord Jesus said, "*Feed My Lambs*" (John 21 v15).

Chapter 1:
"Fishing and Feeding"
The Two-fold Responsibility of the Children's Worker

The very first questions for any children's worker to ask are:

- What am I supposed to do?
- What is my aim?
- What should my goals be in my ministry to children?

Someone has said that, "the person who aims at nothing hits it every time." Such questions are therefore very relevant and need to be answered.

There are Two Kinds of Children

Many who work with, and teach, children just think of them as children. But the Bible makes it clear that there are two kinds of people and therefore two kinds of children.

- **Children who have not trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.**
  The Bible is clear about the condition of children without Christ. They are born with a sinful nature (Psalm 51 v5). The Lord Jesus said that children, like sheep, have gone astray (Matthew 18 v12,13) that they are lost as far as their position is concerned (Matthew 18 v14) and that they are outside God's Kingdom (John 3 v3, 5 and 7). Their sin separates them from God. These children are spiritually dead (Ephesians 2 v1), spiritually blind (2 Corinthians 4 v4), and under the dominion of sin (Romans 6 v17a). If they have reached an age of accountability, responsibility and understanding and have not trusted Christ they are also guilty before God (Romans 3 v19), and if they die in that condition they will be lost for ever (John 3 v36).

These children need Jesus Christ as their Saviour. He will give them spiritual life (John 6 v47), spiritual sight (Acts 26 v18), entrance into God's kingdom (Matthew 18 v3) and a new nature (2 Corinthians 5 v17). He will also break the power of sin in their lives (Romans 6 v18), forgive them (Ephesians 1 v7) and save them eternally (Luke 19 v10; John 3 v16).

God's command to these children is:

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16 v31).

- **Children who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.**

  The Bible teaches that children can believe on (trust) the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour (Matthew 18 v6). They can have their sins forgiven (Acts 13 v39) and they can know the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2 v38). Through personal faith they can be regenerated, become saints and can enter into vital union with Christ (Ephesians 1 v1; 6 v1). These children do not need spiritual life; they already have it. But they need spiritual food so that they can grow. The command of God to these children, as it is to all believers, is:

  "*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen"* (2 Peter 3 v18).

God Uses His Word to Meet the Needs of Children

Our ministry to children must always be based upon the Bible, the Word of God.

- **God has given His Word to us for, at least, three main purposes:**
  - ✓ To reveal Himself to us
  - ✓ To show us how to be saved and how to grow
  - ✓ To enable us to give spiritual help to the children to whom we minister
- **God uses His Word and the preaching of the Gospel to**

bring unsaved children to Jesus Christ— to regenerate them (1 Peter 1 v23), to bring them into God's kingdom (Colossians 1 v13) and to save them. *"The gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation"* (Romans 1 v16).

- **God uses His Word to help saved children to grow spiritually**
  "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2 v2). (Psalm 119:9,11 & John 17:17)

The Children's Worker Has Two Responsibilities

The ministry of the children's worker is therefore to teach and apply the Word of God to the children.

But there are two kinds of children. Therefore while he will teach the truths of the Word of God to all the children, he will want to apply these truths in two different ways so as to meet the needs of both groups of children.

- **The children's worker is a fisherman.**
  While teaching he is "fishing" for children who are not saved. His first role is that of an evangelist and he wants to apply his teaching to unsaved children so as to encourage and help them to trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.
  The Lord Jesus called Simon Peter to be such a fisherman: *"Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men"* (Matthew 4 v19).
  Peter's first call was to FISH.
  And what a fisherman he was to become! His greatest-ever catch was to take place on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2 v41) when he "caught" 3,000 souls.
  The first call of the Lord Jesus to everyone who works with children is to EVANGELIZE them, to FISH them, and as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts to CATCH them and LEAD them to the Saviour.

- **The children's worker is a shepherd.**
  Through his teaching he wants to feed children who are saved. He wants to apply his teaching to saved children, to help them to grow spiritually. This book has been written to help him in his "feeding ministry."
  The Lord Jesus also called Peter three years later to feed and to be a shepherd:
  "*Feed My lambs*" (John 21 v15).
  And what a shepherd he was to become—through his prayer ministry (Acts 4 v23-31), through his spoken ministry of teaching and encouragement (Acts 2 v42; Acts 4 v32-35; Acts 5 v42; Acts 15 v7-11) through his ministry of correction and chastisement (Acts 5 v1-11), and through his writing ministry as contained in his two epistles!
  Similarly, every children's worker has been called to a shepherding or follow-up ministry—to pray for, to help, to encourage and, if necessary, to correct boys and girls who are saved.

Every children's worker has therefore two responsibilities—to FISH and to FEED. He is called to work among children by HOOK **and** by CROOK

Do Not Sin Against the Child

The Lord Jesus gives to every believer a solemn warning concerning believing children:

> "*But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea*" (Matthew 18v6).

You and I must never cause one of these little believing ones to stumble. If we do, we leave ourselves open to God's chastisement.

How can you cause a believing child to stumble? How can you sin against a believing child?

- **By a wrong example**
  Children imitate you—consciously or unconsciously. What

you do, they feel they can do; where you go, they feel they can go; what you say, they feel they can say. "It must be alright, my teacher does it!"

- **By wrong teaching**
  It is unlikely that you will give wrong teaching or wrong doctrine to the children who have trusted Christ. But on the other hand, if you, for some reason, neglect to teach them the truths which they need to help them grow in their Christian lives, you could be causing them to stumble.
- **By a wrong expectation**
  Undue criticism of the believing child and the setting of unrealistic standards for his life can also cause a child problems and cause him to stumble. The problem comes when we voice our doubts to the child about his salvation, because of what we have seen and heard—and this can cause the child to doubt, and even to be offended.
- **By a wrong attitude**
  This is probably the greatest danger. If you in any way create doubts in the child's mind concerning his salvation you could cause him to stumble. These doubts could, for example, be caused by an adult's obvious disbelief in a child's conversion, when he says to him quite openly, "You are too young"

You and I must always be careful to feed and help our saved children, and we must be sure not to cause them to stumble. We want to be stepping stones and not stumbling stones!

Chapter 2:
"Remember, Remember . . ."
Five Basic Principles for Follow-up Work

There are at least five basic principles concerning follow-up work which you need to remember at all times, and to which you need to keep coming back. A correct understanding of these principles will encourage you to do follow-up work, and will help you to do it efficiently!

1. Evangelism Should Be Biblical and Thorough

One of the criticisms most frequently leveled against the evangelism of children and the possibility of them trusting Christ as Lord and Saviour is that there are many children who have professed to trust Christ, but have shown no evidence of spiritual life and spiritual growth. I do not deny that this does happen (although it can also happen with regard to the evangelism of adults); and I believe that there are several reasons for its occurrence.

One of the main reasons (as we saw in the introduction to this book) is that the children involved were **not** evangelized in a thorough and biblical way. There are at least four possible weaknesses in our evangelism of children.

- **The use of pressure**
  When pressure of any kind is brought to bear upon children there will generally be a considerable response. This pressure can include prolonged appeals and pleading, and the use of fear and threats. It can even result from the attraction and influence of a teacher with a strong and overbearing personality. But this type of evangelism runs the risk of a shallow and superficial response which does

not always result in salvation. Children who are not saved cannot grow spiritually, no matter how efficient the follow-up programme is.

- **A lack of understanding**
  When the teacher has not explained the Gospel clearly, there is, as a result, ignorance and lack of knowledge on the child's part concerning what he is doing. The Lord Jesus made it clear that the good ground which received the seed and saw it grow was *"he that heareth the Word and understandeth it"* (Matthew 13v23).
- **The omission of key Gospel truths**
  When a Gospel message is presented which is very attractive and gives all kinds of promises to children but omits the fact that there will be a change in their lives, and that Jesus Christ will expect that change after they trust Him, there is a risk of a quick response without understanding and without time or opportunity to think the matter through. This could result in later problems in the child's Christian life, when he comes to realise all that is involved; or it could result in "profession without possession."
- **The influence of others**
  When a situation is created where children are encouraged, consciously or unconsciously to "follow the leader" there can be a real danger of false professions. They see other children responding in some way and they do the same without really understanding what they are doing. This applies especially to younger children.

It is most important therefore that, before you get involved in a follow-up programme, you should examine your evangelistic programme to ensure that you will avoid, as much as is possible, the danger of false professions of salvation.

2. All Follow-up Work Is Dependent Upon God

You and I have a responsibility with regard to the evangelism of children, but it is God Who saves boys and girls. Similarly you and I do have a responsibility to follow up children who have trusted Christ; but it is God Who gives them spiritual growth.

- **Follow-up work is first and foremost God's work**. He follows up and looks after children who have trusted Christ.
  Paul wrote to the Thessalonians:
  "But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thessalonians 3 v3).
  Paul wrote to the Corinthians:
  "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase" (1 Corinthians 3 v6, 7).
  The Bible teaches that "*The Lord knows those who are His*" (2 Timothy 2 v19); and He Himself says, "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*" (Hebrews 13 v5).
- **God alone can make a saved child grow in grace**.
  Spiritual growth is God's work.
  "Just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5 v25, 26).
  "*Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth"* (John 17 v17).
  We are simply "*workers together with Him"* (2 Corinthians 6 v1).
- **God cares for these saved children much more than we do.** He is able to work in their lives and enable them to grow even when our possibilities and abilities to help are extremely limited.
  Trust God for Him to do His work in the heart of these children and pray that He will do it.
  "And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you" (2 Thessalonians 3 v4).

But, as we have already seen, and as we will see later, trust in God to do **His** work does not release us from our responsibility to do **our** work. God uses us in our follow-up ministry to accomplish His purposes in the lives of saved children.

3. Without Follow-up Work the Children Will Remain "Babes in Christ"

We have already emphasized that it is God Who gives spiritual growth to the saved child and Who sanctifies him. That is

absolutely true. But we need to keep a sense of balance. God uses people to accomplish His purposes and He calls people like you and me to teach these children the Word of God so that they will grow. Humanly speaking if we don't feed them they won't grow.

If a child is born into this world and his mother does not feed him he will starve, and fade away. He certainly will not grow.

Follow-up work is therefore essential if the saved children are to grow in the Christian life. Their future is at stake. They often find it difficult to feed themselves because their reading ability and powers of concentration are limited and because they do not have access to as many sources of help as adults.

Also if they are not followed up properly and thoroughly and if, as a consequence, they do not grow, as they should, the work of evangelizing children will be criticized. Fewer people will want to reach children with the Gospel. So, in the long run, it is the children who will suffer.

4. Conversion Is Just the Beginning

When a child trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour it is not the end. His new life has just begun. You and I still have a great responsibility towards the child—to teach him and to help him in the Christian life. God's work of sanctification is linked to His Word and with the teaching of that Word to the saved children (John 17 v17; Ephesians 5 v25, 26). You and I are the ones who have the responsibility to teach God's Word to the children—so that they will grow!

Every new born child needs to be fed with milk (and later with meat) if he is to grow. No mother, when her child is born, allows it to be placed out in the garden, in the rain and without food for a few days, to see whether he is really alive or not. Not at all. She nurses and feeds him and watches him grow; and that is what we must do with our new born spiritual children.

There is always a danger that you and I, having led a child to Christ, become so busy looking for other children to evangelize that we neglect to care for the saved child. It is vitally important not to abandon the "babes in Christ" and that we see our responsibility to get involved with the long process of

sanctification and growth which follows their conversion. It takes years of patient work to follow up a saved child.

5. Evangelism Is Necessary— Even If Follow-up Work Seems Impossible

There are sometimes circumstances which make most types of follow-up work impossible. As a consequence, there are those who might say that if there is no possibility of follow-up work, children should not be evangelized.

This is not so. Your first responsibility is to evangelize—no matter what happens afterwards. If you were walking by a river and saw a drowning child in the water you would try to save him. You would not refuse to do so because you were not able to give him dry clothes or warm food. Your first responsibility is to rescue him. Then afterwards you must do all you can to help him.

One important method of follow-up work which is always available to you is PRAYER. So it is never correct to say that **all** follow-up work is impossible.

It is important to remember also that there have been many children from non-Christian homes who have been evangelized, and led to the Lord and, in such difficult circumstances, have grown spiritually. They have sometimes even had the joy of seeing other members of their family come to Christ through the witness of their life and lips.

Chapter 3:
Your Responsibility Toward Saved Children
Five Steps to Follow in Personal Follow-up Work

This chapter will outline five vital steps or guidelines for you to follow in your follow-up of a child who has trusted Jesus Christ.

1. Accept as a Christian the Child Who Has Professed to Receive Christ

If the child seems to have truly received Christ, accept him as a born again Christian, unless later events prove otherwise. Our legal system says that a man on trial is innocent until he is proven guilty. So it is with your approach to the child convert. He should be regarded as a Christian unless or until he shows conclusively that he is not. It would seem that the early church accepted as born again believers those who professed faith in Christ (see Acts 2 v41; 16 v33). The other alternative is to doubt his salvation until he has passed through a trial period. Unfortunately, such an attitude, which tends to be critical and unsympathetic, communicates itself easily to the child and discourages him. It is difficult for him to grow spiritually in an atmosphere of doubt. This attitude could be compared with that of the gardener who digs up his plants each week to see if they are growing, and in this way hinders them from growing!

On the other hand, you do not want to encourage a child to believe that he is born again if, in actual fact, he is not. Only God knows. But the new birth will become evident in the process of time through what the child says, what he does and what he is. Meanwhile, unless his life shows otherwise, you should accept him for what he claims to be.

2. Watch and Pray for the Fruit of the Spirit in His Life

You must not watch the child critically, ready to blame him when he does something wrong. If he is really born again, there WILL be a change in his life. This change may be small and it may be slow in coming, but it should be there.

"Therefore by their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 7 v20).

"Therefore, if anyone (or any child) is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5 v17).

There are three important guidelines to follow:

- **Do not expect too much from the child who has received Christ**

  Many teachers make a mistake here. They expect saved children to become similar to mature adult Christians immediately, and are disappointed when they don't. They see children, whom they have led to Christ, do things which are wrong, and their immediate reaction is to think that they are not saved at all. A lady once said to me, "I have a young girl in my Sunday School class who says she is a Christian but she is not." I asked her how she knew. "Because she has a very bad temper," was her answer. I asked her if the same reasoning applied to adults!

  You should not expect too much from the saved child, and you should not expect him to behave like an adult. You cannot judge him by your own standards, or expect old heads on young shoulders. If a boy, who was the greatest mischief-maker in the children's meeting, trusted Christ it does not mean that he will be an angelic being from now on, with no more mischievous tendencies. When he does something wrong, when he loses his temper, when he uses a swear word or tells a lie, you should not automatically come to the conclusion that he is not a Christian. You must not judge a child's conversion just on those grounds.

  There are at least three ways in which the saved child is different from an adult believer:

  - A child is very much under the influence of his family and friends:

    The child comes to Good News Club or Sunday School for one hour each week, but he is at home for a much

longer time. When, for example, you hear a child who has come to Christ using bad language, you need to remember that this may have been the kind of language he has heard at home for years.

- A child is under the authority of his parents:
  An adult can choose where he wants to go and what he wants to do. A child cannot do so. For example, a child who has trusted Christ in Good News Club may not be allowed to come back again. A child who has received his first Bible correspondence course may be prevented from sending it back again.
- A child's emotions are on the surface.
  The child "wears his heart on his sleeve." He is not able to hide his feelings like an adult. For example, if he feels like striking someone, he probably will; or if he feels like displaying anger, he probably will. He is not able to exercise self-control in the way an adult can.
  Therefore, a saved child will often say and do things which an adult believer would not. This is not necessarily because the adult does not desire to do them; it is because he has more self-control than the child. The adult is able to hide his feelings, choke back his words and stifle his anger, but the child often cannot, and does not, do so.

➢ **If you see the fruit of the Spirit in his life—rejoice**

Galatians 5 v22 teaches that "*the fruit of the spirit is love. . .*" This fruit is the one you should look for, first of all, in the life of a child who has received Christ.

The child may show this fruit in different ways:

- Love for the Saviour—a desire to know more about Christ.
- Love for the Word of God—an interest in the Bible and the things of God.
- Love for prayer—a growing eagerness to talk to God in prayer.
- Love for other Christians—a desire to be with others who also love Christ.

- Love for the lost souls of others—a concern to see others come to Christ.

Or you may see a change in his conduct (be it ever so small) which would be in keeping with one or more of the other eight fruits of the Spirit (joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance or self-control).

If you see the child manifest love in one or more of the ways listed above or if you see a change of any kind in his conduct, you can rejoice and be encouraged. Such fruit may be still quite small and immature, but it is **fruit** and could well be evidence of the new birth.

One or more of these fruits should appear in the young Christian's life at some time. It may be by a word, or a glance, or a tear, or a quiet attitude in the meeting, or it may be a few sincere words in conversation with you. But, if you watch carefully, new life, if it is there, will flicker through. This "flicker" may show itself in some little way, at first, and then increasingly later, if the teaching of, and care for, the child are persistent, intensive, kindly and well prepared.

When lighting a coal fire, you place paper in the fireplace, then wood, and then coal on the wood. You light the paper and leave the fire to ignite. The burning paper ignites the wood and that, in turn, causes the coal to burn. Thinking the fire is burning well, you attend to some other household task, but when next you look at the fire it appears to have gone out. All that you can see is black coal! You start to remove the unlit coal and wood to make a new beginning. Then . . . you see, among the pieces of coal, a little flicker, a little flame! It is not very much, but it is there! You do not need to start all over again! Instead, you need to encourage the flame so that it will grow. As the flame grows, the black coal disappears. If you only watch the black coal, you will become discouraged; but your task is to feed the flame so that it will grow and this will, in turn, consume the coal.

So it is with saved children. You must not be discouraged

by those parts of their lives (the "black coal") which are not being conformed to Christ's likeness. Seek to feed the "flame." Encourage them in the positive Christian virtues which they are showing. In this way, the other parts of their lives will be changed too.

- **If there is no fruit in his life, find the problem**

If there is no change whatsoever in the child's life after a period of time, speak personally with him and find out what is wrong. There are several possible reasons for lack of fruit and lack of growth in the Christian life:

- Lack, or loss, of assurance of salvation.
- Some confusion, or incomplete understanding, concerning the step he has taken. Perhaps he is confused, for example, about the way of salvation, thinking that a person is saved by good works or by faith and good works, but not understanding that salvation is by faith alone. The person who led him to Christ may not have done so simply and clearly enough.
- Wrong influences or pressures at home, at school, or from other boys and girls.
- Some sin in his Christian life which he has not put right with the Lord.

If you find that any of these are true, take the child back to the Bible, and explain the answer to his problem, using appropriate Scriptures.

Often, if a child who has received Christ is not growing spiritually, it is because of unconfessed sin. In this case, you should explain 1 John 1 v9 to the child, and allow him to pray and confess his sin to the Lord, claiming His promise of forgiveness. Encourage him to take a clear stand for the Lord. Give Bible examples of those who did so.

- Another reason for his lack of growth could be your failure to feed him and follow him up properly. You need to be sure you have not neglected him. If you feel this is the reason, tell him so and apologise to him, and then determine to make a new beginning in your follow-up of the child.

- The other possibility for a lack of fruit and growth is that he was not saved at all.
  If it is obvious that the child has not at all understood what he has done and has not trusted Christ, tell him so, and then go over it all again simply and clearly until you are certain he understands. Then you can ask him if he now wishes to trust Christ. If so, you should lead him to Christ.
  There may be other reasons, apart from a lack of understanding, for a child professing to be saved when he is not. He may not have been sincere when someone tried to lead him to Christ, or he may have made an outward profession just to please someone or because he was simply curious. If you feel that any of these reasons are valid, and that his life seems to deny completely his acceptance of Christ, be ready to counsel him all over again. If he now sincerely wants to trust Christ as his personal Saviour and Lord, show him simply, step by step, how he can do so.
  You should, of course, only evangelize him and lead him to Christ if you are reasonably sure that he was not truly born again. Be careful. Otherwise you may give the impression that he is to come back and get saved every time he has doubts or has made mistakes. If you are in doubt about what to do, it is best to encourage him to talk to Christ, and clear the matter up once and for all. Tell him that both you and he are not sure whether he is saved or not; and that it is better for him to tell the Lord Jesus that he is not sure if he is saved or not, and ask the Lord Jesus to save him now—if he is not saved.

3. Understand the Needs of the Saved Child

Instead of just simply **waiting** for the child to prove that he is a truly born again Christian, you should understand that he has present needs and you should seek to meet these needs now.

He needs:

- **Love**. Love is a language which is understood by all children. The saved child needs to know that you are truly interested in him, and that you want to see him grow in the Christian life.
- **Patience**. The saved child will make many mistakes, especially at the beginning of his Christian life. Be patient with him.
- **Understanding**. You need to understand that the child who has been saved is still a "babe in Christ."
- **Spiritual food**. You have a responsibility to teach the Word of God to the saved child. This is his greatest need. Babies without food don't grow. So, without spiritual food, the new babe in Christ cannot grow in his Christian life.

4. Teach the Saved Child the Four Things He Needs to Do

A child who receives Christ is a new born babe in Christ and needs, like any new born babe, to learn how to do four things:

- **To eat**
  It is absolutely necessary for the child to eat. If he doesn't eat he will starve and suffer. At first he will learn to drink (spiritual) milk and then he will learn to eat (spiritual) meat.
  - ✓ With you. At first he will depend, to a large extent, on your feeding him and your teaching him from the Bible. Always include teaching for saved children in your Good News Club or Sunday School class. For example, the central truth of every Bible lesson should always be applied to the saved children—if at all possible.
  - ✓ By himself. He needs to be taught how to feed himself from the Bible. This means teaching him how to have his Quiet Time, and how to read his Bible for himself, every day.
- **To walk**
  The Bible uses the word "walk" with reference to Christian living (Ephesians 4v1, Galatians 5v25) and just as a baby needs to learn to walk, so should the saved child learn to

walk.

- ✓ With God**.** He needs to be taught Christian conduct, with reference to his duty to God. This includes teaching on reverence, obedience, faith and love to God.
- ✓ Before others. He needs to be taught Christian conduct with reference to his duty to others. This includes frequent teaching on the need to display the fruit of the Spirit in his Christian life as a witness to others (Galatians 5 v22,23).

We must remember, and we also need to remind the child, that it is not easy for a baby to learn to walk:

- he will stumble and fall
- he must keep trying
- he needs help
- he will gradually improve

➢ **To talk**

Christian children need to learn how to talk and use their gift of speech in the correct way.

- ✓ To God. He needs to be taught how to talk to God in prayer. Just as parents love to hear their children talk, so does God, even though the child cannot say much, or say it very expertly. And he needs to understand that the best way to learn how to talk is to go ahead and do it.
- ✓ To others. He needs to be taught how to talk to others about God. Children are the best children's evangelists. They should be taught how to lead other children to Christ.

➢ **To obey**

Over and over again the Bible teaches the importance of obedience and submission. "*To obey is better than sacrifice*" (1 Samuel 15 v22). The saved child needs to learn how to obey:

- ✓ God. He needs to be taught how to obey God. Teach the child that God speaks to him through the Bible, and that he should obey God's Word implicitly and

completely.

- ✓ His parents. He needs to be taught to obey his parents as commanded in Ephesians 6 v1 and in Colossians 3 v20. Paul stresses the importance of children obeying their parents. You should also stress it.

Remember, it takes a baby a long time to learn—both physically and spiritually. He does not become an adult instantaneously. Many mistakes are made before he learns properly.

So be patient as you teach these truths to the child who has received Christ. Do not expect too much too soon. Growth takes time.

5. Continue Your Follow-up Until Three Goals Have Been Achieved

The children's worker who is engaged in a follow-up ministry with children has three main and ultimate goals in mind. He should not terminate his follow-up work until these three goals have been achieved:

- **Until the child has become a mature Christian**
  In Colossians 1 v28-29 you can see that this was Paul's aim when he was teaching:
  "Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily."
  In Ephesians 4 v12,13 Paul presents the purpose of the ministry of gifts in the Church:
  "For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."
  The word "perfect" in these two passages has the meaning of mature, full-grown, fully developed, but not sinlessly perfect. The aim in follow-up work should be that the one who has trusted Christ become a mature, full-grown, fully-

developed Christian.

It is important for the children's worker to have this in view. The saved child needs much help, prayer and teaching. In his early Christian life, he will depend much upon others. However, the eventual aim is that he will be able to walk on his own. That means, for example, that you should help him in the realm of Bible study so that he can eventually study the Bible for himself; that you should help him in his prayer life, so that he will know for himself how to pray; that you should teach him about giving to the Lord's work, so that he will do this on his own.

- **Until he is able to teach others**

  Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2 v2:

  *"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who **will be able to teach others also.**"*

  Not only should the saved children become mature Christians, but they should be able to teach others also. The Lord desires that those who follow Him be witnesses.

  *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be **witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* (Acts 1:8)

  The saved child should learn to witness to others just as someone previously witnessed to him.

- **Until he is a well integrated member of a local church where the Bible is faithfully taught**

  The New Testament emphasizes the importance of belonging to a local community of believers where Christians can worship together and fulfil the ministry which the Lord has committed to them. God's command to believers is:

  "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10 v25).

  The Bible teaches that the believer is not called to live the Christian life alone; but that he is to be a living stone in God's building (Ephesians 2 v20-22); and a member of Christ's body (Romans 12 v4-8). Each member of the Body of Christ has a function to fulfil in that Body, and in the

local church as part of that Body. The joy of the believer is to find and fill the role that God has given to him in the Body. You should therefore have as your third aim, in follow-up work, the incorporation of saved children in the fellowship of a local church where the Bible is faithfully taught. Not only should the children attend such a church, but they should feel a real part of it and serve God in it. More information on this in the following chapter.
Fellowship with other Christians in a local community is necessary to help the saved children to worship, to grow, and to witness.

Together these three aims constitute a great task; but you are not alone in this task. Paul said in Colossians 1 v29:

"To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily."

Paul knew that he worked with the Lord's power and not with his own. As you seek to teach the saved children, the Holy Spirit will strengthen, guide and equip you with His power.

Chapter 4:
How Can You Help Saved Children to Grow?
Fifteen Parts of a Follow-up Programme

You may not be able to use **all** the methods of follow-up work, outlined in this chapter, with every child. You should use or adapt that which you feel will work in your particular situation. But you should try to incorporate as many of these methods as you can in your follow-up programme.

Also some of the methods outlined here may not be known where you live, (e.g. weekend camps and junior helpers' courses) and some of the materials suggested may not be available (e.g. correspondence courses). Consequently, and especially if you are a full-time children's worker, you may need to assume the responsibility of beginning and organizing such activities for the benefit of the saved children.

1. Pray for Them

Prayer is the most important and effective way to follow up saved children. Remember how Paul prayed for the Christians he had left behind (Ephesians 1 v16-23; Philippians 1 v3-11; Colossians 1 v9-12).

- Keep a prayer notebook with the names and addresses of the children you have led to the Lord. Each day, pray for at least several on the list.
- Enlist the help of prayer partners or prayer groups. Give them the names of saved children.
- Encourage your church to remember the saved children in their prayer meetings.
- Pray for the saved children individually, praying for the specific needs they have in their lives, such as those in the list which follows. You could pray for any one of these (or,

over a period of time for all of them). Pray that they will:

- ✓ have the assurance of their salvation
- ✓ grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ
- ✓ live a life that is truly glorifying to God
- ✓ always give Christ first place in their lives, and be yielded and obedient to Him in all things
- ✓ be kept in time of temptation
- ✓ walk in fellowship with God and other believers
- ✓ become active members of a church where the Bible is faithfully taught
- ✓ attend Sunday School, church and Good News Club regularly
- ✓ be a testimony to Christ and a blessing to others wherever they go
- ✓ be rooted and grounded in the Word of God
- ✓ be boys or girls of prayer
- ✓ be faithful witnesses, winning others to Christ
- ✓ have the joy of seeing the other members of their families trust Christ also
- ✓ in later life, choose the Christian partners whom God wants for them
- ✓ know, and follow, God's will for their lives and, if God should so lead them, enter full-time Christian service
- ✓ be waiting and ready for Christ's return

2. Start a Good News Club

It may be that the child you have led to Christ comes from a home where his parents are not Christians, and does not attend a church where he can receive spiritual help.

In this situation he could be greatly helped by attending a weekly meeting for children conducted in your home, or in the home of someone who lives in the same locality as he does (which you could teach). Non-Christian parents will often allow their children to attend an interdenominational meeting in the home of a neighbour although they might not allow the child to attend an evangelical church.

A Good News Club has two main purposes:

- **To evangelize the children of the neighbourhood.**
  Many of them are probably unreached with the Gospel, but would come to a meeting held in a home in their area. In that meeting the Gospel can be explained through Bible lessons, good songs and choruses, Bible memory verses, missionary stories and doctrine lessons. And very often some of these children, at least, will trust Christ.

- **To help the saved children to grow spiritually.**
  These children will include those who have already come to Christ in the Good News Club; but can also include other children you have already led to Christ. One reason you started the Good News Club was to follow them up.

Consequently, in the Good News Club the saved children will receive spiritual food during all sections of the teaching programme—and this will help them to grow.

3. Channel the Children Into Churches

The saved children should be encouraged to attend a church or Sunday School where the Bible is faithfully taught. The local evangelical church is a divine institution, and each convert should, where possible, be directed into the life of such a church.

- Every Christian parent or teacher needs to set an example by being a faithful member of a local church and a regular attender at it.
- If a child already belongs to a Sunday School where the Bible is faithfully taught, encourage him to go regularly each Sunday.
- Be careful about trying to take children away from one Sunday School or church to take them to another. This might result in your losing contact with the child altogether.
- Invite every saved child who does not already attend Sunday School or church to begin attending one regularly:
  - ✓ You could have the privilege of taking the child to your own church and Sunday School.
  - ✓ Ask the parents for their permission for their child to

attend Sunday School, first of all.

- ✓ Introduce the children (and where possible, their parents) to the church, and the church to them, through a special event such as:
  - a children's rally in the church
  - a Christmas programme, a musical programme, or some other special meeting
  - a Good News Club parents' night
- ✓ Give the names and addresses of unchurched children to a pastor, Sunday School teacher or leader, so that they can invite them to their Sunday School and church.
- ✓ If necessary, arrange for transportation to bring the children to Sunday School. Don't just ask the children to attend Sunday School; bring them with you.

➢ Encourage your church (and others if possible) to see the outreach to these unreached children as a vital part of their ministry. The church as a whole, and the pastor in particular, should have a personal interest in the work being done in the church among the children, and a desire to reach out to the children with whom the church has no contact. When such children are contacted, the church should welcome them and pray for them.

4. Counsel Them Personally

Most of your follow-up teaching will take place **during** your Sunday School class or Good News Club—or, in the case of parents, during your family worship time.

But there will often be opportunities for follow-up teaching in personal conversations with the child or even in counselling sessions when a concerned child comes to talk with you.

➢ Invite the saved children to speak with you personally after the meeting, or at any other suitable time, about any problems that they may have in their Christian lives. When a child comes to you, listen to him carefully and prayerfully, and show him, as best you can, the answer to his problem from the Word of God.

- Spend time in personal conversation with each saved child whenever you have opportunity, encouraging him in his walk with the Lord. The time spent with the child does not need to be long. Try to take a few minutes regularly to encourage him and help him.
- Try to get to know each saved child on a personal level. Find out about his home, his hobbies, and his interests. Show him that you are interested in him personally.
- In most cases never betray a child's confidence. Never share with others what a child has told you in confidence. It would hurt him very much if he knew that his secrets were being told to other people. However be careful to follow child protection laws in your country.
- Be careful not to show favouritism to any particular child. Other children may think you are preferring him, and they may look upon him as a "teacher's pet."

5. Visit Them in Their Homes

One of the best ways to make contact with saved children, and to have opportunities to help them grow spiritually, is to visit them in their homes.

- **A biblical example to imitate**
  Paul saw visitation as an essential part of his follow-up programme:
  "Therefore we wanted to come to you; even I, Paul, time and again; but Satan hindered us" (1 Thessalonians 2 v18).
  "Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you" (1 Thessalonians 3 v11).
  Paul sent Timothy to visit the Christians in Philippi and Thessalonica:
  "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state" (Philippians 2 v19).
  "And sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this" (1 Thessalonians 3 v2, 3).

- **An urgent need to understand**
  Many children who come to Christ are from non-Christian homes. As Paul needed to know the state of the Philippians, so we need to know how the children are going on in the Christian life. Like the Thessalonian Christians, these saved children need to be established and strengthened in their faith.
- **A great ministry to enjoy**
  Sunday School teachers, Good News Club teachers, hostesses and helpers and other Christians who are willing to be "Pauls" and "Timothys," and are ready to visit saved children in their homes will find this a most rewarding ministry—for the children and also for themselves. Visiting these children will also give you an opportunity to contact the children's parents, and to be a witness to them. These personal contacts with the parents can also help to dissolve any suspicion the parents might have about you and your relationship with their children.
- **A responsibility to undertake**
  - ✓ Ask the Lord to show you which saved children you can visit. Choose a few (no more than 10), and especially those from non-Christian homes who are in special need of personal help.
  - ✓ Have with you some wordless books, Bible correspondence courses for children, helpful booklets such as "The Wonder Devotional Book," Gospels and New Testaments when making these visits.
  - ✓ Be ready and willing to visit each child once a month, and to pray for him regularly. Each visit can last from 10 to 20 minutes. The early evening is best when the child and his parents are at home.
- **A procedure to follow** (for the first visit)
  - ✓ Introduce yourself (give your name and address).
  - ✓ Explain the aim of your visit to the parents by saying something like this: "Your little boy (or girl) has come to Good News Club (or Sunday School or 5-Day Club etc). I have called to bring him a little gift (show the New Testament or the wonder devotional book or the

wordless book), and to speak with him."

- ✓ Continue by saying, "May I take a few minutes to tell you what he (or she) has learned?"
- ✓ Give the message of the wordless book and leave one with the child (or a section of the Bible or a booklet).
- ✓ Try to have the parents present. In this way, they will hear the plan of salvation. It will also help to keep them from being suspicious of you and what you are doing.
- ✓ Encourage the child to pray, to read the Bible every day, and to come to Good News Club or Sunday School, if his parents allow him to do so.
- ✓ Tell the child and his parents that you would like to call again in a month's time.
- ✓ Then, for the second visit, take the child the first lesson of a Bible correspondence course and help him to answer the questions. Continue in this way once a month with the other lessons of the course.

6. Start Children's Prayer Bands

A children's prayer band is a group of two to six saved children meeting together once a week for ten to twenty minutes to pray for other children and for the lives and ministries of those who are working among children.

It has two purposes:

- ➢ To build up prayer support for unreached children and our ministry to them
- ➢ To help and follow up the children who participate

Prayer bands for children have been started and developed by a number of CEF directors. At one time, a local CEF director in the Tübingen area of Southern Germany had started over 200 children's prayer bands. Letters were sent to the children once every six weeks to help them in the Christian life and to give them specific prayer requests. Area rallies for these children were also held each year with 500 to 700 saved children attending.

Children's prayer bands are not difficult to organize or prepare, and can be of great value and help:

- The children can meet in your home or in some other convenient meeting place. Choose (or encourage them to choose) a place and time which is suitable to them.
- It is best for the children to meet together on their own, if at all possible. Otherwise, a Christian adult can lead the meeting. In both situations, the children need to have specific items for prayer. You can ask your local CEF Director to send to your group regular prayer requests as he does for the other prayer bands; or your local CEF director may produce a special letter at regular intervals to outline prayer requests for the children and, in addition, to give them some helps and guidelines for their Christian lives.
- Do not allow the prayer band to become too large. When there are more than six children, divide the group and have two prayer bands so that all the children can take part.
- The form of the meeting should be kept simple, with as much time as possible of the ten to twenty minutes being given to prayer requests. A verse or a short passage can be read at the beginning by one of the children.
- Encourage the prayer band to keep to time. They should start and finish fairly punctually.
- If possible, inform your local CEF director that you (or the children) are going to start such a prayer band. He can give you help and advice.
- A special promise which can be claimed in such a prayer band is Matthew 18 v19, 20:
  "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

7. Encourage Attendance at a Children's Camp

Bible camps are a wonderful opportunity to help Christian children—especially in the formation of good habits, in the planning of a daily Quiet Time, and in the area of Christian conduct. Many missionaries first heard the call of God to the mission field when they were in Bible camps as children:

- Encourage the saved children to attend a Bible camp.
- If you are a camp counsellor, prepare well before camp starts and make the most of your opportunities to help and teach the children.
- The camp counsellors should be ready and available to help children with problems in their personal lives. Children will ask questions at different times—at the table, during games time and during Bible study. Be ready to answer their questions. A very important time is after the evening meeting, and just before bed-time.
- Prepare the Christian child for going back to a home which may be hostile to the Gospel. Start him on a daily Bible study plan which he can continue after he leaves camp. "Wonder Devotional Books", produced by CEF Inc, are ideal for this.
- Keep in contact with the child and his home after camp is finished through personal visits and letters.

8. Encourage Attendance at a Weekend Camp for Saved Children

A shorter camp like this, and one which is specifically aimed at saved children can be of great help to them.

- It is possible to take a group of children to a nearby centre for a weekend camp at some other time, apart from the summer. Usually it is not too difficult to find a suitable place and to organize a weekend for a small group.
- Weekend camps can be especially helpful for saved children from non-Christian homes. Give them a special invitation to come. It may be necessary to reduce prices for them, or even to subsidize them and let them come without charge.
- The programme should include:
  - ✓ subjects such as Bible study, the daily Quiet Time,Christian conduct, witnessing and missions.
  - ✓ teaching sessions in small groups for greater effectiveness and more personal contact.
  - ✓ handwork based on the themes they are being taught.
  - ✓ recreation, sports and games together.

9. Enrol Them in a Junior Helpers' Course

Some Child Evangelism Fellowship groups organize courses in different areas for children from twelve to fifteen years old, who have been saved through the various ministries of CEF. The purpose of the course is to train those children to be "Junior Helpers" for Good News Clubs. (The outline which follows obviously varies from country to country).

- The course is held either on five Saturday afternoons, or on five consecutive days, during holiday time. Each class lasts one and a half hours.
- The course includes such subjects as:
  - ✓ the victorious Christian life
  - ✓ how to have a Quiet Time and how to read the Bible
  - ✓ how to use the wordless book
  - ✓ singing, teaching a memory verse and review in the Good News Clubs
    The young teenagers have the opportunity to make their own visualized song, memory verse and visualized review contest, and possibly to demonstrate these in front of the rest of the group.
- Each teenager receives a manual for the course. If he completes the full course, and has done the required work, he receives a certificate.
- As Junior Helpers in a Good News Club, they can:
  - ✓ help prepare materials
  - ✓ prepare the room for the arrival of the children
  - ✓ welcome the children and help take off coats etc.
  - ✓ mark the attendance record sheet, and listen to the children repeating their Bible verse before the Good News Club starts
  - ✓ help with discipline problems
  - ✓ lead the singing
  - ✓ lead the review time
  - ✓ teach the memory verse
  - ✓ help the children to put on their coats etc. as they leave
  - ✓ tidy and arrange the room after the Good News Club is over

- ✓ invite other children to Good News Club
- ✓ pray for the Club, the other children and the teacher

➢ After serving as a Junior Helper for one year, the child has the opportunity to take an advanced course to become a Helper for a Good News Club. In this course, he learns how to lead a child to Christ, how to teach a missionary story, and possibly how to teach a Bible lesson.

10. Encourage Them to Be Summer Missionaries

This programme is very helpful for saved children, especially in their middle and later teenage years. In most countries, Child Evangelism Fellowship provides a training course in the early summer for young people, and offers them the opportunity to help in an open-air Child Evangelism programme by teaching or helping in 5-Day Clubs.

➢ The local CEF Director often provides training in his area for 14 to 17 year olds—especially on the techniques of **helping** in a 5-Day club. Young people are then assigned to a 5-Day Club where they are fitted into the programme to help as far they are able.

➢ Child Evangelism Fellowship usually provides training on a national level for those over 16 who wish to serve as summer missionaries in 5-Day Clubs. The training school consists of classroom and study time, practice teaching, recreation and fellowship times. Following the training period, the young people go out in teams of two under the supervision and guidance of local CEF directors to teach 5-Day Clubs. For more details concerning this programme in your area, please contact your nearest CEF office.

11. Encourage Their Involvement in a Youth Challenge

The CEF Youth Challenge programme is designed to give challenge, training and inspiration to Christian young people interested in child evangelism through monthly, fortnightly or weekly meetings during the school year. It provides an excellent follow-up for saved children in their teenage years, and gives them

the opportunity to meet, to have fellowship with and to work with other Christian young people.

CEF of Ireland have commenced and built up a very large and very effective Youth Challenge ministry, which is under the leadership of full-time workers. (Youth Challenge is the name given by CEF of Ireland to this ministry. Other countries may use different names.)

Irish CEF have many Junior Youth Challenges (for 11-15 year-olds, and meeting every two weeks) and another group of Senior Youth Challenges (for 16-21 year-olds, and meeting on a monthly basis). Their main purpose is to follow up the children from the Good News Clubs—although they have also developed an evangelistic ministry to teenagers and young people. In addition they have rallies and weekend conferences for young Christians, throughout the year, and regular opportunities for young Christians to meet, from a wide area, for evangelism, teaching, recreation and fun.

- The programme in these regular Youth Challenge meetings is varied and is adapted to the age group of the young people attending. It includes topics, panel discussions, special speakers, a missionary emphasis, and systematic instruction in child evangelism. CEF of Europe has produced a series of manuals to provide a detailed 5-year plan for teaching and helping these young people.
- During the school year, the young people can have a practical outreach through Good News Clubs, special Christmas or Easter Clubs, or through helping with the addressing of envelopes in, and the sending of children's correspondence courses from, the local CEF office.
- In the summer time, they can take part in open-air children's work or Holiday Bible Schools.
- An annual weekend residential conference can be a great help to these young people.
- It is possible for the young people to spend holidays together, under the leadership of mature Christian adults. Time can be set aside each day for Bible study and for evangelizing children.

12. Enrol Them in a Bible Correspondence Course

Good correspondence courses can be a great help to saved children.

- Several fine Bible correspondence courses are available from most local and national offices of Child Evangelism Fellowship worldwide.
  A correspondence course for children with little or no Bible background, and entitled "See and Be," is available from European Child Evangelism Fellowship.
  Other correspondence courses are available in different countries and in languages other than English. The courses produced by the Mail Box Club are especially good, and you can receive information about them by writing to The Mail Box Club (404 Eager Road, Valdosta, Georgia 3l602, USA).
- The lessons are usually sent by post to the saved children to be completed and returned.
- Another method is that you, the teacher, distribute and collect the correspondence course lessons personally and by hand. A greater number of children complete the correspondence course if this latter method is followed. You give lesson 1 to the child; the next time you bring lesson 2 and collect the completed answer sheet of lesson 1; the following time you bring lesson 3 with the answer sheet of lesson 1 marked, and collect the answer sheet for lesson 2. You continue in this way throughout the course. Never, at any time, does the child have two lessons. He must return the lesson he has, before getting the next one.

13. Correspond Personally With Them

It is difficult for most children to write letters, but they enjoy reading letters which they receive.

- Write at regular intervals, as well as on special occasions, such as Christmas and birthdays. It is a good idea also to write to the children on their spiritual birthdays.

- The letter does not have to be long; a short note or postcard will do. Include in the letter answers to what they wrote in their letters to you, personal news, encouragement in Christian living, prayer requests, verses or simple thoughts from the Bible. You can also include a tract to help them in their Christian lives.

14. Give Them Books, Booklets and Tracts

Saved children who are old enough to read can be greatly helped through what they read.

- Reading good Christian literature will help the saved child to grow. You may give a suitable tract or follow-up booklet to the child when he receives Christ. Often it is better to give him one of these during a visit with him at his home a few days later, or you can send it to him by post.
- Follow-up booklets and tracts available from Child Evangelism Fellowship include:
  - ✓ "*Steps in Growing*" — answers from the Bible to questions concerning salvation and Christian growth.
  - ✓ "*First Steps*" — basic teaching on what a Christian is.
  - ✓ "*The Wonder Devotional Book*" - with daily Bible readings and explanation.

  Other follow-up booklets and tracts are available from other publishers in various countries.
- It is good for the saved child to have a Bible of his own. If he does not have one, you should give him a Gospel or a New Testament. Later he can buy his own Bible.
- A variety of good Christian books have been written which will help saved children to grow. Encourage him to read missionary biographies and other Christian literature. Some Good News Club teachers have developed the idea of a library to lend such Christian books to the children.

15. Enrol Them in a Personal Bible-Reading Programme

It is important that the saved children read and study the Bible for themselves. You should therefore arrange for them to receive

the study materials necessary for such a programme and which will show them clearly what they should do.

Child Evangelism Fellowship has produced a series of *'Wonder Devotional Books'* with suggested Bible readings and devotional thoughts for each day of the month.

Bible Club Movement have produced Bible Study Helps for children which are designed to be given to the children on a weekly basis.

Scripture Union has been producing Bible Reading outlines and notes for children for many years.

Chapter 5:
Feed My Lambs
The Food They Need

The Word of God is the spiritual food for believers whether they are adults or children:

> *"But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4 v4).
>
> *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth"* (John 17 v17).
>
> *"As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby"* (1 Peter 2 v2).

It is of vital importance that you teach the Word of God to your saved children, and that you apply it very carefully and clearly to their everyday life, needs and problems—if you want them to grow.

This includes:

- Teaching the doctrines of the Bible
- Outlining the commands of the Bible
- Explaining the principles of the Bible
- Describing the examples found in the Bible
  - ✓ The example of the Lord Jesus
  - ✓ The example of men like Paul

Nothing can or should replace the regular and systematic teaching of God's Word. God will honour such a ministry of the Word, and will use it for the growth and sanctification of the children.

Use the Bible Lesson to Feed Them

The main part of every Good New Club/children's meeting/ Sunday School class is the Bible lesson. You should teach every Bible lesson with two goals or purposes in mind:

- To evangelize the unsaved children
- To feed the saved children

As you study the Bible passage on which your lesson will be based you should find and determine, first of all, the central truth of that passage. **That** is the truth you will want to teach to all the children as you present your Bible lesson. Then you need to ask yourself two questions:

- How can I use this truth to evangelize the children who are not saved?
- How can I use this truth to help the saved children to grow?

Consequently, in every Bible lesson you will teach one central truth thoroughly and, as the lesson develops, you will seek to apply that truth to the two different groups of children, challenging them to respond to their respective applications. The vast majority of Bible lessons can be taught and applied in this way. However, if the central truth, by its very nature, can only be applied to one of these two groups, the second group should receive teaching and application in some other part of the teaching programme apart from the Bible lesson.

Use the Other Parts of Your Teaching Programme

The Bible lesson is not the only place where you can, and should feed saved children and help them to grow. Some or all of these could be part of your programme.

- **Singing**

  Songs and hymns can be a vital part of follow-up work:
  - ✓ The child learns Bible truths through singing
  - ✓ He expresses his joy, his faith and his needs
  - ✓ He worships God

  Choose songs and hymns which the children will understand and which are true to the teaching of Scripture. Take time to teach each song thoroughly and to explain its meaning. The children should realise the importance of the words they are singing.

- **Prayer time**
  Children can be wonderful prayer warriors but they need to be encouraged and taught. Teach them about prayer—what it is and when and how they can pray. Encourage the Christian children to take part in the prayer time during the Good News Club hour.
  For example you could choose several from the group to come and stand in a row in front of the others. Give each of them a specific prayer item. Ask all the children to close their eyes and bow their heads, and allow the children who have been chosen to pray briefly, one by one.
- **Review time**
  One of the basic principles of teaching is review or revision. The children remember more through frequent review. At the same time, reviews remind them how to apply the truths they have been learning. It is also an opportunity for the teacher, through the use of well prepared questions, to find out what the children have learned and what they have not understood.
- **Missionary time**
  Use this time to communicate a missionary vision to the saved children. Ask God to call missionaries from among your saved children:
  - ✓ Teach what the Bible says about missions.
  - ✓ Keep the children well informed about the missionaries they are supporting.
  - ✓ Encourage them to pray for, and give to, the missionaries.
  - ✓ Give them encouragement, help and opportunities to be missionaries now—by witnessing for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Memory verse**
  Teaching and encouraging saved children to memorize Scripture is one of the most fruitful ministries of all:
  - ✓ Know the verse and reference yourself.
  - ✓ Teach the verse thoroughly to the children by means of repetition.

- ✓ Explain the meaning of the verse.
- ✓ Review the verses which they have learned.

- **Doctrinal Lessons**
  It is essential for saved children to be taught, and to understand, Bible doctrines. While the Bible lesson is the best place to do this, you can also include in your teaching programme short 5-10 minute presentations of doctrine.
  Another possibility is to teach a series of 15/20 minute visualized flashcard doctrinal lessons to the children to help them understand the great truths of the Bible in a logical and systematic way. We have produced a number of series of visualized doctrinal lessons. They are listed at the end of this book; and if you wish to have, and use, any of them write to the address given.

The Ten Key Themes to Teach Saved Children

There are at least ten subjects or themes which should be dealt with in your teaching of saved children—over a period of time so that they might grow.

- The Bible, the Word of God
- Assurance of salvation
- Prayer as a practice
- Bible doctrines (especially the doctrines of God—Who He is and what He does)
- Christian conduct
- How to deal with sin in the Christian life
- Witnessing
- Missions
- The Lordship of Jesus Christ
- Fellowship and the church

Each of these will be dealt with in the chapters which follow.

Chapter 6:
God Speaks to Me
The Bible is the Word of God

This is the **basic** truth to teach saved children because all other truths are founded upon it and find their source in it.

What Does It Mean?

The Bible is the Word of God, through which He speaks to us:

- He reveals in His Word what He is like and His works - past, present and future.
- He reveals what we are like.
- He reveals how we can become what He wants us to be.
  - ✓ By trusting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour
  - ✓ By becoming more like Him every day

The Bible is absolutely true, and without error. It can be completely depended upon. We believe in, and teach, the verbal inspiration of the Word of God, which means that every word in the original Scriptures was true and without error.

Why Should This Subject Be Taught?

There are three main reasons why we should teach saved children the Word of God, and the fact that it is without error.

- God has in many places in His Word commanded us to teach it (Deuteronomy 6 v7; Psalm 78 v3-8; Matthew 28 v19, 20; 1 Timothy 4 v13; 2 Timothy 4 v2; Titus 2 v1).
- The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God:
  - ✓ to show the way of salvation (2 Timothy 3 v15)
  - ✓ to give life (1 Peter 1 v23)
  - ✓ to give spiritual growth (1 Peter 2 v2)
  - ✓ to guide conduct (Psalm 119 v11)

- ✓ to give direction (Psalm 119 v105)
- ✓ to sanctify (John 17 v17)
- ✓ to conquer Satan (Matthew 4 v1-11)

➢ An understanding of, and belief in, the complete truthfulness of Scripture is basic to all other doctrines—as these doctrines are revealed in the Scriptures.

What Should Be Taught?

We should teach three main truths about the Bible to our saved children:

➢ **What the Bible is:**
- ✓ A book which is given to us by God. It is verbally inspired and it is completely true from beginning to end (2 Timothy 3 v16)
- ✓ A book which was written by men, who were guided by the Holy Spirit in all they wrote (2 Peter 1 v21)
- ✓ A book which has been preserved despite all its enemies (Matthew 24 v35)
- ✓ A book which is possessed and read by more people and printed in more languages than any other book

➢ **What the Bible does:**
- ✓ It will help them to see what God is like (Deuteronomy 7 v9,10)
- ✓ It will help them to see what they are like (Romans 3 v23)
- ✓ It will show them how to be saved (1 Peter 1 v23)
- ✓ It will help them to grow (1 Peter 2 v2)

➢ **What to do with the Bible**
- ✓ Read it
- ✓ Study it
- ✓ Memorize it
- ✓ Carry it with you

How Should This Subject Be Taught?

You and I need to know how to teach these truths about the Bible to our saved children:

- **You should teach what the Bible is and what it does** (as outlined above).
  These are truths you want the children to know and to understand.
  - ✓ This can be done, firstly, through a series of lessons specifically about the Bible which can be taught on a weekly basis over a period of time.
  - ✓ Another possibility is to teach truths about the Bible when they appear as central truths of the Bible lessons which are taught in your regular weekly teaching ministry
    e.g.
    - The walk to Emmaus (Luke 24 v1-35)
      Central truth: The prophecies God gave in His Word have been fulfilled
    - Josiah and the book of the law (2 Kings 22 v2)
      Central truth: The Word of God speaks to men's hearts
    - The temptation of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 4 v1-11)
      Central truth: The Word of God is powerful and helps us to resist the devil
  - ✓ An important way to teach this truth is through singing. Children like to sing and they can well remember the words of songs which have been thoroughly taught and often sung.
    Songs which help teach this truth include:
    - *"I believe The Bible"*
    - *"God's Word Is Like A Hammer"*
    - *"Thy Word Have I Hid In My Heart"*
  - ✓ The learning of Bible verses which teach this truth is very helpful:
    - 2 Timothy 3 v16
    - Psalm 119 v11
    - Psalm 119 v105
    - John 17 v17
  - ✓ The telling of missionary stories, which show the Word of God at work in the lives of the missionaries and in the hearts of the people to whom they go, can illustrate what God's Word can do.

- **You should teach the children what to do with their Bibles.** We have already seen that they have four main responsibilities with regard to the Bible and you should teach and encourage all four of them.
  - ✓ Encourage them to **read** their Bibles on a regular basis. Three main steps are involved here:
    - Make sure each child has a Bible. If he doesn't have one and is not able to buy one, you should give him one.
    - Provide him with a simple Bible-reading plan or system.

    This could be one which you produce yourself, but if so it should be written or typed, and easy to follow. It is best to commence such a plan with books such as Mark and Acts which are easier to read.

    However it is usually better to purchase a printed Bible- reading plan—preferably one with simple notes of explanation.
    - Give the children some suggestions about Bible-reading and Bible study:
      - "Don't try to read too much."
      - "Don't worry if there is something you cannot understand. Concentrate on what you can understand."
      - "If you are too young to read the Bible by yourself, ask your parents to read it with you."
      - "Try to plan a short time each day to read your Bible and to pray. This is called your Quiet Time."
  - ✓ Help the children to **study**, know and understand the contents and structure of the Bible.
    - Its contents

    Your regular weekly teaching of Bible lessons will help them to understand the contents of the Bible and what it teaches. Your teaching will be more effective if it is systematic and if the lessons are linked together - rather than teaching one lesson here, and another there, with no real relationship to each other.

There are two ways to teach Bible lessons in a systematic inter-related way:

- Chronologically.
  Work your way step by step through a book of the Bible (e.g. Genesis) or through the life of a Bible character (e.g. Paul).
  For example Child Evangelism Fellowship has produced a series of 24 lessons on "The Life of Christ".
- Thematically.
  Select a theme (e.g. "God") and teach a series of Bible lessons each dealing with one aspect of that theme.

• Its structure

It is a help for the children to know how many books there are in the Bible, the names and position of these books and the way those books can be grouped together in different sections.
This can be done:

- Through special visualized lessons which show the Bible books and their groupings.
- Through contests such as Bible sword drill. The children put their Bibles under their left arms at the command "Sheath your swords." Then at the command "Draw your swords" they pull them out with their right hands and hold them at arm's length. They repeat the Bible reference after the leader and at the word "Charge" start to look for the verse. The first child to read it aloud wins.
  An alternative type of sword drill which is more difficult but more profitable, is to read the words of the verse and let the children find it and give the reference.
- Through songs which incorporate the names of all the Bible books.
- By encouraging the children, during the meeting, to follow the Bible lessons in their

Bibles, and also to find the memory verse.

- ✓ Help and encourage the children to **memorize** the Bible.
  Childhood is the golden age of memory. Therefore the memorization of Scripture should be a vital part of every ministry to children. Time and effort should be given to make memorisation attractive, effective and competitive. Repetition (preferably repetition which is interesting) is the only way to learn a verse properly. In addition the verses should be continually reviewed.
- ✓ Encourage them to carry their Bibles with them to Good News Club and to Sunday School. You could, for example, have an award system which gives points to the child who brings one.
  - You should show him how to use the Bible in the meeting itself e.g. Bible sword drill. It is discouraging to the child to bring a Bible and not have the opportunity to use it.
  - You should show him that carrying a Bible is an act of witness.
- ✓ Above all remind the saved children of the three main reasons why they should read and study God's Word:
  - God's Word will help them to grow (2 Peter 3 v18)
  - God's Word will keep them from sin (Psalm 119 v11)
  - God's Word will guide them and show them what to do (Psalm 119 v105)

Chapter 7:
How Can I Be Sure?
Assurance of Salvation

This is one of the most important themes of all for a saved child to know and understand. A child finds it difficult to grow spiritually if he is confused about the truth of assurance, or if he does not have assurance of salvation, or if, having had it, he has lost it.

What Is Assurance of Salvation?

Assurance of salvation means that the believer in Jesus Christ knows, and is sure of, two facts:

- He is sure that he is saved, a child of God and that he has eternal life.
- He is sure that he will always be saved, always a child of God, and always in possession of eternal life—not only now but throughout all time and eternity.

Teaching assurance of salvation to Christian children therefore should not just teach that they now have eternal life, but that, if they are **truly** saved, they can never lose it.

Why Should This Subject Be Taught?

If the saved child does not have assurance of salvation from the Word of God, Satan and others can easily tempt him into believing that his experience of trusting Christ, and being born again, was not real. Indeed, he himself finds it easy to doubt his salvation especially when he finds himself doing things which he knows are wrong. A child who sins often feels that he needs to be saved again.

If the saved child doesn't have assurance of salvation he may become a weak, struggling Christian. Or if he loses that assurance,

he loses, at the same time, much of the joy, peace and security which God wants him to have.

In addition, a Christian child who does not have assurance may have constant worries about the future:

- Will I lose my salvation if I sin?
- What will happen to me when I die?

The main reason for a child not having assurance of salvation (although it is not the only one) is because he has not been told that he can have it and has not been taught, or shown, how to have it.

So this places a great responsibility on you, as his teacher, to explain to him how he can know he is saved.

What Should Be Taught?

Your first goal should be that the saved child understands clearly his position in Christ. He should, over a period of time, come to know that the Bible teaches the following:

- He is justified (Acts 13 v38,39)
- He is regenerated (2 Cor 5 v17)
- He is baptised with the Spirit (1 Cor 12 v13)
- He is indwelt by the Spirit (1 Cor 6 v19)
- He is a child of God (John 1 v12)
- He is redeemed (1 Peter 1 v18)
- He has eternal life (John 10 v28)

The more he understands about his position in Christ, the more he will have assurance of salvation, and that is your ultimate goal.

You should teach him the following two truths:

- You can be sure, today, that you are saved and going to Heaven.
- You can be sure that you will always be saved, and that you cannot lose your salvation.

You should not try to give the child assurance of salvation. Nor should you seek to persuade a child who has doubts concerning his salvation that he is a Christian. He may not be, and the reason he has doubts may be because he had never trusted Christ in the first place.

It is your responsibility to show the child how he can have assurance and how he can know he is a Christian, and you then need to encourage him to come to his own conclusions.

There are three ways that a child, or any person, who has trusted Christ can know, for sure, that he is a Christian.

- **Through the Word of God**

  The child who has trusted Christ as his or her Saviour can know, that he or she is saved, and has eternal life, because God has said so in the Bible.

  "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5 v12).

  "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5 v12, 13).

  God has given many promises in the Bible so that we can know for sure what happens when we turn from sin and trust Jesus Christ.

  "So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16 v31).

  "For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Romans 10 v13).

  "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 v12).

  "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3 v19).

  God always keeps His promises. So if the child has done what God, in the Bible, has told him to do (trust/call/receive/repent) then God promises that he is saved/he is a child of God/his sins are blotted out. So you encourage the child to depend upon, and believe, the promises of God. He should not believe, or depend on, what others might say or even what his own feelings may indicate.

- **Through a changed life**

  The Bible says that a person can know he is saved because he can see a change in his life, and because he can see that he is a new person or creation.

  "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 v17).

This does not mean that he will never sin again. But it does mean that there is a new direction in his life, and that evidences of his new life will show themselves - even if slowly.

John in his first epistle clearly teaches that the believer can know he is saved by seeing certain specific evidences in his own life.

- ✓ If he wants to obey God's commands (1 John 2 v3).
- ✓ If his life starts to be like Christ's (1 John 2 v5, 6).
- ✓ If he wants to live a life which is true and right (1 John 2 v29).
- ✓ If he loves other Christians (1 John 3 v14).
- ✓ If he helps others who are in need (1 John 3 v16-19).

When he sees some change, no matter how small or how slow it may be, this will help him to know that he is saved. If there is no change whatsoever in a child's life it is probable that he is not saved.

- **Through the witness of the Spirit**

  As the child understands what God has promised in His Word, and as he sees some change in his life, the Holy Spirit gives him the assurance that he is a child of God, and that the Lord Jesus lives in him through the Holy Spirit.

  "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8 v16).

  "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" (Galatians 4 v6).

  "By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4 v13).

  "And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us" (1 John 3 v24).

The Results of Assurance

Through this witness of the Holy Spirit and the assurance, which He brings, the child can come to know a number of truths:

- All his sins (past, present and future) are forgiven (Acts 13 v39).
- He has eternal life (John 3 v16).

- He is absolutely sure of Heaven (John 14 v2-3).
- He cannot lose his salvation (John 10 v28).
- He is a child of God (John 1 v12).
- Jesus Christ lives within him through the Holy Spirit (Revelation 3 v20; 1 John 3 v24).

When Should This Subject Be Taught?

We now realize how very important this subject is and therefore we should make it our goal to teach it:

- **At the beginning of the child's new life.**
  Immediately after leading a child to Christ you should show him from the Word of God (and specifically from the verse you used when leading him to Christ) that if he has truly trusted Christ he is now saved and a child of God. Emphasize that the Bible, God's Word says he is.
  It is a good idea to have a large calendar on the wall on which you enter the child's name on the date he trusted Christ. Then you can point this out to him periodically. This helps to establish the date in the child's mind. Also you can ask him to point it out and ask what he did on that date. This gives him an opportunity to witness.
- **Regularly.**
  You should deal with this question of assurance from time to time as an important part of your regular teaching in Good News Club or Sunday School. If you make this a theme which appears regularly in your teaching ministry, the saved children will have fewer problems regarding assurance.

How Should This Subject Be Taught?

There are at least five ways in which this subject can be taught as a vital part of a regular ministry.

- **As the central truth of your Bible lesson**
  There are not many Bible lessons which would allow you to do this. But there are several possibilities:
  - ✓ The conversion of the Philippian jailor (Acts 16 v19-

34) with special emphasis on the promise of verse 31.
- ✓ Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2 v1-41) with special emphasis on verses 38 and 39.
- ✓ The Lord Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3 v1-16) with special emphasis on verses 15 and 16.
- ✓ The Prodigal Son (Luke 15 v11-32) with special emphasis on the father's welcome.
- ✓ The justified publican (Luke 18 v9-14). This parable helps to explain what justification means.
- ✓ Saul and Barnabas in Antioch (Acts 13 v14-52) with special emphasis on verses 38 and 39.

➢ **As the application of the central truth of your Bible lesson.** It may be that the passage on which your lesson is based does not teach assurance; but the application of the central truth does:
- ✓ "God is faithful" could be the central truth of the story of Noah in Genesis chapter 6-8. Therefore (and this is the application) "He always keeps His promises. If you have trusted Christ (John 3 v16) He has promised that you have eternal life. Therefore you can be absolutely sure that you will live eternally."
- ✓ "The Bible is God's Word and absolutely true" could be the central truth of the passage which describes our Lord's walk to Emmaus in Luke 24 v1-35. That passage shows how the Lord Jesus regarded and used the Scriptures, and it also shows that what the Scriptures said would happen, did happen. Therefore (and this is the application) when the Bible says that the person who trusts Christ is saved (Acts 16 v31) - he is! God's Word is always true.
- ✓ "Jesus Christ is praying for His people" could be the central truth of the fall and restoration of Peter (Luke 22 v31-34; Luke 22 v54-62; Mark 16 v7; John 20 v1-10; John 21 v1-17 and Acts 2 v14 onwards). "Peter was restored because the Lord Jesus was praying for him. He is praying for you. Therefore (and this is the application) you can be sure that you will never be lost."

➢ **As one special subject or theme which asks the question**

"How can you be sure that you are saved?"
This lesson could be based on eight flashcards each of which would have one of the following sentences plus an appropriate visual or picture:

- ✓ How can I be sure?
- ✓ The Bible is God's Word—completely true
- ✓ God always keeps His promises
- ✓ He promised to save those who trust Christ
- ✓ Trust Him—you will be saved forever (personal application to unsaved)
- ✓ You will see a change in your life
- ✓ Jesus Christ is praying for you
- ✓ The Holy Spirit gives you peace (personal application to saved)

- ➢ **When teaching and explaining individual Bible verses to children as they memorize them.**
  Several good examples are:
  1 John 5 v13. John 10 v27-29. John 5 v24. Romans 8 v1.
  Some of these could be memorized (and explained) over a period of weeks.
- ➢ **When explaining and singing songs and choruses which deal with, or touch on, the question of assurance like:**
  - ✓ *Faith is just believing*
  - ✓ *Gone, gone, gone—all my sins are gone*
  - ✓ *Great is Thy Faithfulness*

Conclusion

It is vitally important that saved children have a clear assurance of salvation; and, while this assurance comes from the Holy Spirit, He uses teachers like you and me to show children from God's Word, how they can know they are saved, and how they can be sure they will never lose their salvation.

So, don't shirk your task. Make sure that you keep coming back to the subject in your ministry—and teach it biblically, simply and regularly.

Chapter 8:
It's Good to Talk
The Practice of Prayer

It is most important that we teach our saved children how to pray. They should know how, when and where they can talk to God.

Why Teach Them to Pray?

The Bible makes it very clear that saved children should pray.

- **The Bible commands them (and us) to pray.**
  "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7 v7).
  "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18 v1).
  "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16 v24).
  "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4 v2).
  "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5 v17).
- **The Lord Jesus sets them (and us) an example** (Luke 5 v16 and 11 v1; Mark 1 v35). In the four Gospels there are at least 15 references to the Lord Jesus praying.
- **Godly men and women in the Bible give them (and us) a good example:**
  - ✓ Daniel (Daniel 6 v10)
  - ✓ David (Psalm 55 v17)
  - ✓ Paul (Philippians 1 v4; Colossians 1 v3)
- **Godly men and women throughout history bear witness** to the need to pray and the blessings received from their times of prayer. These include people like Martin Luther, the leader of the Protestant Reformation in Germany in the early 16th century; John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist

denomination; Robert Murray McCheyne, the Scottish pastor in the early 19th century who was greatly used by God; George Müller, the founder of homes for children in England in the 19th century; and Charles Spurgeon, the well known Baptist pastor in 19th century England.

- **Children can be very effective prayer warriors.** They often find it easier than adults to have the faith which is one of the essential conditions for prayer.

What Should Be Taught?

There are seven basic principles which we need to teach to our saved children. Each of these principles answers one of the following questions. You could print these seven questions on flashcards and then give the answers as you teach:

- **What is prayer?**
  Prayer is talking to God our Heavenly Father who is all-powerful, and who loves us.
- **When should you pray?**
  There are several answers to this question.
  - ✓ They can pray at any time. King David wrote: *"Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice"* (Psalm 55 v17).
    It is recorded of Daniel that he prayed three times each day (Daniel 6 v10). Paul wrote to Timothy that he remembered him in his prayers night and day (2 Timothy 1 v3).
  - ✓ They should set aside a time each day to pray and to be alone with God. This is called a Quiet Time and is dealt with in detail in the next chapter. There are 96 quarter hours in one day. They should be encouraged to give at least one of these to God.
  - ✓ They should thank God before every meal.
  - ✓ They should understand that they can pray "emergency prayers" or quick "telephone prayers" when faced with special problems. These can be very short and direct. Nehemiah often prayed like this when facing special difficulties (Nehemiah 2 v4; 4 v4; 5 v19; 6 v9; 6 v14; 13 v14,)

- **Who can pray?**
  You should teach very clearly that prayer is the privilege only of those who are in God's family. God promises to hear and answer the prayers of those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and who know and love God as their Heavenly Father. God is the Father only of those who have trusted the Lord Jesus (John 1 v12), and it is only they who can therefore address Him as Father (Matthew 6 v9).
- **Where should they pray?**
  Saved children should be taught that they can talk to God anywhere and at any time:
  - in church
  - in Good News Club
  - at their bedside
  - anywhere

  This is a wonderful truth for the children to understand and they should be especially taught the value of the short "emergency prayers" mentioned earlier.
- **How should they pray?**
  - ✓ To God their Heavenly Father (John 16 v23).
  - ✓ In the Name of the Lord Jesus (John 14 v13, 14).
  - ✓ As guided by the Holy Spirit (John 16 v13).
  - ✓ In faith (Mark 11 v24).
  - ✓ Recognizing the Father's will (1 John 5 v14, 15).
  - ✓ With definite requests (Philippians 4 v6).

  The children should also be encouraged to speak naturally when they pray. They do not need a "special voice" or a "special language," and you as the teacher should set them a good example!
- **How does God answer prayer?**
  He answers prayer in three ways:
  - ✓ He can answer "Yes." Hannah asked God for a son and He gave her Samuel (1 Samuel 1v27).
  - ✓ He can answer "No." Paul prayed three times that God would remove his thorn in the flesh but God answered "No" each time (2 Corinthians 12 v8, 9).
  - ✓ He can answer "Wait". Mary and Martha asked the

Lord Jesus to come and heal their brother Lazarus (John 11 v3) but the Lord Jesus did not come immediately (John 11 v17).

You also need to teach that sin can cause prayers to be unanswered; but that God's Word teaches that:

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1 v9).

- **What should they say?**

  They should be taught to start their prayers with words such as "Dear Heavenly Father," and end it with words such as "In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

  There are four kinds of prayer and the children should learn to include each in his prayer time:

  - ✓ Adoration—"I love You." (e.g. Peter's response to the Lord Jesus in John 21 v15-17)
  - ✓ Confession—"Forgive me." (e.g. The publican's prayer in Luke 18v13)
  - ✓ Thanksgiving—"Thank You." (e.g. The healed leper in Luke 17v16)
  - ✓ Supplication—"Please." (e.g. Bartimaeus in Mark 10 v47,48)

If older children remember the acrostic ACTS it will help them. (Adoration—Confession—Thanksgiving—Supplication). Nehemiah's prayer in Nehemiah chapter 1 contains these four elements—adoration (v5), confession (v6, 7), thanksgiving (v10), supplication (v8, 9, 11).

How Should Prayer Be Taught?

There are a number of "rules" which we should aim to follow when teaching our saved children to pray:

- **Teach them the principles of prayer** (as outlined under "What should be taught" on the previous pages)

  These principles should be taught on a regular basis to the children, in your weekly ministry and as opportunities arise.
- **Use Bible lessons which teach about prayer**. As you teach the children regularly from the Word of God you will find many Bible stories which can be used to teach one or several

of these principles—and also other principles which have not been mentioned so far.
For example:

- ✓ "The birth of Samuel" (1 Samuel chapter 1) teaches the following:
  - Prayer includes definite and specific requests (verse 11)
  - We need to persevere when we pray (verse 12)
  - We should pray in faith and trust God for the answers (verse 18)
  - God answers prayer (verse 20)
- ✓ "Elijah and the weather" (1 Kings 17 v1, 1 Kings 18 v41-46 and James 5 v17,18). Here we learn that:
  - Prayer should be serious and earnest (James 5 v17)
  - God answers the prayers of all His children and not just the prayers of "supermen" (James 5 v17)
  - God can do miracles in answer to prayer (James 5 v17 and 18)
  - We must persevere in prayer (1 Kings 18 v43 and 44)
  - We should pray according to God's Will (1 Kings 17 v1)
- ✓ "Peter's release from prison" (Acts 12 v1-19) teaches us:
  - God is able to answer prayer requests which seem impossible (verses 7-11)
  - We should persevere in prayer (verse 5)
  - It is good to pray along with other Christians (verse 5 and 12)
  - It is good to pray specifically and definitely (verse 5).
  - We should not doubt God's ability to answer our prayers (verse 15)
- ✓ "Daniel was a man of prayer" (Daniel chapter 6 and 9):
  - We should pray at regular times each day (Daniel 6 v10)
  - Prayer should include thanks (6 v10), supplication (6 v11; 9 v16, 17), confession (9 v5-15) and adoration or worship (9 v4, 9, 15)
  - Prayer may involve a cost and sacrifice (6 v12-17)

- ✓ "Elisha and the dead boy" (2 Kings chapter 4):
  - We need to persevere in prayer (verse 34, 35)
  - Having prayed we need to take action (verse 34, 35)
  - Prayer needs to be backed by a holy life (verse 9)
  - There are times when we need to be alone with God in prayer (verse 33)
  - Nothing is too hard for God (verse 35)

- **You could teach individual lessons which have been written to concentrate on the subject of prayer.**
  For example "Prayer is exciting—you talk to God" (Published by CEF Inc.)
  It is also possible to teach a series of lessons on prayer over a period of weeks.
  For example: We have produced a series of visualized lessons entitled *"God listens to His Children"*
- **When you are teaching missionary stories to the children you can often teach one or more of the principles of prayer.**
  There are at least three excellent series of missionary flashcard lessons which would help you do this:
  - ✓ *"Hudson Taylor"* (published by CEF Inc.)
  - ✓ *"John Paton"* (published by CEF Inc.)
  - ✓ *"C. T. Studd"* (published by European CEF)
- T**here are songs and choruses which would help you teach the principles of prayer:** e.g.
  - ✓ *"Daniel Was A Man Of Prayer"*
  - ✓ *"Whisper A Prayer In The Morning"*
  - ✓ *"Have You Ever Talked To God Above?"*
- **There are many Bible verses which incorporate commands to pray or promises of God on which prayer can be based**.
  When the children memorize these verses they will be greatly helped in their prayer lives.
  For example:
  Mark 11 v24. Luke 11 v9. Luke 11 v10. 1 John 3 v22.
- **Teach them how to pray in private**.This subject is dealt with in the next chapter.
- **Teach them how to pray in public.**
  It is good to encourage the saved children to pray openly and publicly at some time during the Good News Club or

Sunday School class (or in a family context, during family worship time). However, no pressure should be brought upon them to do so, as this could cause more harm than good.

There are several simple but helpful steps which you could follow:

- ✓ Set aside several minutes in each weekly meeting for the children's prayer time.
- ✓ Remind the children of some of the principles of prayer which you have been teaching. Emphasize, especially, that the privilege of prayer to our Heavenly Father is really only for those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and have, therefore, God as their Heavenly Father.
- ✓ Select some prayer requests for the children:
  - By asking the children to give prayer requests.
  - By suggesting prayer requests to them.
  - By reading prayer requests from a missionary letter.
- ✓ Illustrate prayer requests, visually, from time to time.
  - By writing them on sheets of paper for the children to hold.
  - By using pictures to illustrate the prayer items e.g. a picture of a children's meeting, a child eating, a family, an old person, a child at school. Saved children can hold the pictures and each can pray for the subject represented by the picture.
- ✓ By using the fingers of the hand:
  - The thumb represents those near and dear to me.
  - The index finger (the "pointer") represents my teachers.
  - The tallest finger represents those in authority over me.
  - The fourth finger, which finds it difficult to stand erectly on its own represents those who are old or sick.
  - The little finger represents little children like me— or little children in other countries.

  Each of five children could choose one of their fingers,

hold that finger with their other hand, and then pray for what it represents.

- ✓ By showing photographs of missionaries, children etc. for whom they can pray.

- **Encourage the children to pray.**
  - ✓ By leaving the prayer time open for anyone who wishes to pray to do so.
  - ✓ By asking for volunteers beforehand. If you are using illustrative visual aids, these volunteers could hold the visual as they pray.
  - ✓ By teaching the Lord's Prayer to the children and encouraging them to pray it together.

  Do not expect too much, too soon. Children are shy. Be patient. It will be worth it. Children can be wonderful prayer warriors.
- **Encourage the children to "pray along" with whoever is praying audibly.**

  As someone else is praying he can share in prayer fellowship by thinking the words being said aloud, or even saying the same words silently. In so doing, he is following the thoughts of the other person and praying along with him.
- **Sometimes prayer is not enough!**

  Remind the children that when they pray to God for Him to help others or to save others, their prayers should be followed up with a willingness to help bring about the answer.

  "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10 v17).

  People are not helped or saved in a vacuum. God uses people—especially those who are praying—to accomplish His purposes in other people's lives.

Chapter 9:
Alone With God
How to Have a Daily Quiet Time

This chapter is a follow-up to the two previous chapters on Bible reading and prayer. From time to time you should take the opportunity in your weekly meeting to encourage the saved children to have a "Quiet Time" each day. This is a time which they should set aside to be alone with God, reading His Word, and talking to Him in prayer. You also need to show them how to do this and, in doing so, you will need to answer the following questions for them.

What Is a Quiet Time?

It is a time every day which a saved child should set apart for, and devote to, Bible reading, worship and prayer.

When Is the Best Time For It?

We must be careful not to be dogmatic in our answer to this question. So much depends upon the individual circumstances of each child. But we can give advice and some guidelines:

- It should be at the same time each day if at all possible. Regularity makes it surer and more definite.
- The morning is the best time. It is a good way to start the day, and the mind is also freshest (after the child is washed and dressed). But having a quiet time in the morning can sometimes be difficult for a child from a large family, especially if his parents are unsaved. If so, encourage him to find another time which is more suitable—for example in the afternoon after he returns from school, or even in a public library on his way home from school!

- An evening Quiet Time could be an alternative to a morning quiet time. It is good to look back over the day, to thank the Lord for what He has done, to confess sins which have been committed, and to pray for people met during the day. Also the child who has his Quiet Time in the morning could be encouraged to have a very brief Quiet Time in the evening to thank God for a good day, and to commit himself into His Hands for the coming night.

How Long Should It Last?

It is not possible to give a simple and direct answer to this question. The quality of the Quiet Time is more important than the length! The child should be encouraged to take as long as he needs to hear God speaking to him through His Word, and to talk to Him.

His Quiet Time could therefore last from 10 to 15 minutes (or longer). But he should be encouraged to start with a short Quiet Time which will probably become progressively longer as he sees the need to lengthen it. This is better than aiming too high, and then feeling guilty because his Quiet Time has become shorter and shorter—often for practical reasons.

Where Should They Have It?

The child needs to find the place which is most suitable—a place which is quiet and where he can be on his own.

If it is not possible at home, it may be outdoors, in an empty classroom or even, as has already been suggested in the reading-room of the local public library.

What Should They Do In Their Quiet Time?

A Quiet Time should have at least three main parts:

- **A time to read the Bible**
  The passage read should be short. It is good, over a period of time, to read systematically, and verse by verse, through a book of the Bible. A good place to start is Mark's Gospel

because it is full of action and easy to follow. Then the Acts of the Apostles which is also easy to read. And then perhaps some of the Psalms.

It is good and helpful to give him a Bible-reading plan to follow. This plan could also include some thoughts or comments on the passage he reads. The Wonder Devotional Books published by Child Evangelism Fellowship are very helpful.

Or you can show him how to find something for himself from the passage he reads. He could ask himself three simple questions (which you could write or print for him on a little card):

- ✓ Is there a truth about God?
- ✓ Is there a promise from God?
- ✓ Is there a command from God?

- **A time for worship**

  This would be quite brief. You will need to explain what worship means. Worship is not asking for something, it is telling God how much we love Him, why we love Him, and thanking Him for what He is.

  - ✓ If he has seen a truth about God in his Bible reading he should thank God for what he has seen and worship God for it.
  - ✓ If he has seen a promise from God in his Bible reading he should ask God to help him claim it that very day.
  - ✓ If he has seen a command in his Bible reading he should ask God to help him obey it throughout the day. This might also involve confession if he realizes that he has not been obeying that command.

- **A time to pray for himself and others**

  You should encourage the child to produce, and then to use, a little hand written prayer book. You could give him a book which would be suitable for this purpose and in which he could write his prayer requests.

  In this book he could write:

  - ✓ Some prayer requests for himself e.g. that God would help him with his school work.

- ✓ The names of those people he will pray for every day. These would probably be, for the most part, members of his family.
- ✓ The names of those he will pray for once each week. He would then need to write seven short lists of names – one for each day.

These nine lists will help him to be systematic in his intercession.

Conclusion

A daily Quiet Time is a great help and blessing to every believer. I trust that you have one yourself, following the lines given in this chapter. And then you need to show your boys and girls why, when, where and how to have one—and you need to do this on a regular basis.

Chapter 10:
Sound and Secure
Teach Them Bible Doctrines

It is essential that our saved children know what they believe, and that they are well established in the main doctrines of the Word of God so that as they grow older and are subjected to all kinds of influence and teachings they will not be *"tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting"* (Ephesians 4 v14).

What Is Doctrine?

Doctrine is what we believe and what we want the children to believe about God, about Jesus Christ, about the Holy Spirit, about the Bible, about sin, about themselves, about the way of salvation, about sanctification, about the church, about death, about Heaven, about the devil, about angels - and so on.

Doctrine is not what we do. It is what we believe. But what we do, and what we are, is based upon what we believe and that is why doctrine is so important.

Why Teach Doctrine?

- **The Bible makes it clear that we should teach doctrine**.
  - ✓ Our Lord's command to do so (Matthew 28 v20).
  - ✓ Our Lord's example. He continually taught doctrine. For example His teaching about the Holy Spirit in John chapters 14, 15 and 16.
  - ✓ Paul's commands. Writing to Timothy and Titus he underlined the importance of:
    - Believing sound doctrine (1 Timothy 4 v6, 16; 2 Timothy 1 v13; 3 v10; Titus 2 v7).
    - Teaching sound doctrine (1 Timothy 1 v3; 4 v13; 5 v17; 2 Timothy 3 v16; 4 v2,3; Titus 1 v9; 2 v1).

- Living according to sound doctrine (1 Timothy 1 v10; 6 v1, 3; Titus 2 v10).

✓ Paul's example in his letters. Each of his epistles is a combination of doctrine and application. His letter to the Romans for example consists of eleven chapters of doctrine and then five chapters of practical application.

✓ The practice of the early church:

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2 v42).

➢ **The character and actions of the saved children should be based, as we have already seen, on a sound doctrinal basis.** They are what they believe. Paul makes this clear in his second letter to Timothy.

"And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for ***doctrine****, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work"* (2 Timothy 3 v15, 16 and 17).

➢ **It should be remembered that the teaching of doctrine should also play a major role in evangelism.** The Gospel which we teach unsaved children is based upon a series of simple and logical Bible doctrines.

How Should We Teach Doctrine?

There are five main rules to follow:

➢ Teach it **simply**. The language used must be understandable to the children.

➢ Teach it **attractively**. Attractive teaching, including the use of visuals, will encourage attention and help understanding.

➢ Teach it **specifically**. Don't try to teach too much. Concentrate on that one doctrine you have chosen, and teach it well.

➢ Teach it **logically**. The doctrines of the Bible all fit together into a wonderful logical system, and each one should be taught in a systematic way—with each truth linking into those already taught.

- Teach it **practically**. Doctrine should not be taught on its own. The teaching of doctrine comes first but it should always be applied. The application is the "therefore" which follows the doctrine and shows how it should be put into practice in everyday life.

Where and When Should We Teach Doctrine?

Because doctrine is so important, we should always be looking for opportunities to teach this subject to the saved children.

- The obvious—and best—place to teach doctrine is through the regular systematic expository teaching of the Word of God, teaching the children the truth(s) or doctrine(s) which is (are) in the particular passage concerned.
  Consequently, when preparing your Bible lesson you need to ask yourself the question—"Is there one truth or doctrine in this passage which I would like my children to understand and believe?" That, then, becomes the central truth of your lesson. You will teach it throughout the lesson and also apply it to evangelize the unsaved children and to help the saved children to grow.
  For example if you were teaching the Creation story you could use the following as the basis of your lesson structure:

  Central truth (a doctrine for all the children to understand and believe)—God is all powerful and can do anything.
  Application to saved children: Therefore He can help you to overcome your bad temper.
  Application to unsaved children: Therefore He is able to save you no matter how bad you have been.

  There are two ways you can develop your teaching of doctrines in and through your Bible lessons:
  - ✓ By teaching your Bible lessons in chronological order and just teaching whatever doctrine is in each lesson. This will mean that the lessons are in a logical, chronological sequence but the doctrinal truths are probably not.

- ✓ By selecting a doctrine (e.g. the doctrine of God) and choosing a series of Bible lessons to teach different aspects of that doctrine. This will mean that your lessons are logical and systematic with regard to their doctrinal theme, but the passages on which the lessons are based will not be in logical sequence.

There is much more information on how to teach Bible doctrines to children through your Bible lesson in the book "*How to Teach Bible Doctrines to Children*." If you do not have a copy of this book write to the address given at the front of this book, and a copy will be sent to you.

- ➢ You can teach specific Bible doctrines clearly and logically without basing them on any one specific Bible passage. These could be visualized by preparing and using a series of flashcards each with several words and a relevant picture. These specifically doctrinal lessons could either take the place of the Bible lesson and become the lesson itself; or they could be taught weekly using one flashcard at a time—for, say, five minutes—in addition to the Bible lesson.
  These lessons could be separate and unconnected lessons; or they could be taught in relation to each other in a series. The "CEF Specialized Book Ministry" has produced several series of visualized doctrinal lessons as listed at the end of this book. These lessons are available to all who can use them to teach children.
- ➢ You can teach Bible doctrines through the teaching and singing of hymns and songs.
  For example:
  - ✓ "*Love, Love, L-O-V-E*" (doctrine—God is love).
  - ✓ "*One Way*" (doctrine—there is only one way of salvation—through Jesus Christ).
  - ✓ "*Do You Know That You've Been Born Again*" (doctrine—regeneration).
  - ✓ "*Our God Is So Great, So Strong and So Mighty*" (doctrine—God is all powerful).
- ➢ You can teach Bible doctrine through the explaining and memorizing of Bible verses: For example:
  Romans 3 v23. Acts 16 v31. Isaiah 6 v3. John 1 v1.

Chapter 11:
"Let Your Light Shine"
Christian Conduct

The child who has truly trusted Jesus Christ is born again (John 3 v3-5) and a new creation (2 Corinthians 5 v17). The new nature he has received must show itself—perhaps slowly and almost imperceptibly; but it is your responsibility to help the child to understand what God expects from him in his Christian life and how he should now live. So it is absolutely essential to teach him what God's Word says about "Christian conduct".

Why Should This Subject Be Taught?

There are four reasons why you should teach Christian conduct to saved children:

- **Christian conduct is commanded in the Bible**—in many places.
  "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (Ephesians 4 v1).
  This verse is followed, in the last three chapters in Ephesians, by more than 50 statements on Christian conduct.
- **Christian conduct glorifies God**.
  "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5 v16).
- **Christian conduct is a witness to the unsaved**:
  "That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2 v15).
- **Christian conduct brings blessing to the saved child himself**.
  "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with

promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6 v2 and 3).

What Should Be Taught?

There are two basic rules which should be taught to the children and which should underline all of our teaching:

- You should do what is helpful to your spiritual life
- You should avoid what is harmful to your spiritual life

We ourselves, first of all, need to understand the details of what we should teach them concerning Christian conduct so that it will help the children to do what is helpful and avoid what is harmful.

- Your first responsibility is to teach the children their duty to God.
  This involves and includes:
  - ✓ Love to God (Matthew 22 v37).
  - ✓ Faith in God (Proverbs 3 v5).
  - ✓ Obedience to God (Acts 5 v29).
  - ✓ Reverence in God's Presence (Habakkuk 2 v20).
- You also need to teach children their duty to others. Teach them to respect and obey those in authority over them at home, at school, in the church and in the nation. This is clear biblical teaching to **all** believers (Hebrews 13 v7, 17; Romans 13 v1).
  The Bible especially emphasizes the importance of children obeying their parents (Exodus 20 v12; Ephesians 6 v1-3; Colossians 3 v20).
- You need to teach the children positively and show them the qualities God wants to see in their lives—love, humility, patience etc.
  At the same time you need to teach the children negatively and show them the things God does not want to see in their lives—pride, lies, stealing etc.
- You should help the children to form habits:
  - ✓ Daily Bible-reading and a regular Quiet Time
  - ✓ Giving thanks before meals

- ✓ Giving money to the Lord's work
- ✓ Regular attendance at church and Sunday School

Habits formed in early years have a way of sticking—whether they be good or bad. So try to help them out of the latter and into the former.

- You need to explain that Christian conduct is the fruit of the Holy Spirit Who has come to live in them.

  "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5 v22, 23).

  Consequently, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit will help them to live in a way which pleases God.

  "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5 v16).
- You should emphasize that the rules and standards for Christian conduct are clearly outlined in the Bible. They should be guided by the Bible in everything they do, and not just by what they feel is right or wrong, or by what other people say.

  "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word" (Psalm 119 v9).
- You should show, from the Word of God, that obedience to God's rules concerning Christian conduct results in blessing and that disobedience results in chastisement.

  "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6 v2, 3).

  "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep" (1 Corinthians 11 v29, 30). The second verse would require some simple explanation if it were quoted or used with children.
- It is absolutely essential that you teach, at all times, that the keeping of God's commandments does not result in salvation and that we are not saved by good works. Good works are the result of salvation, not the cause.

  "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and

renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3 v5).
"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2 v14).

How Should This Subject Be Taught?

Teaching on Christian conduct should be interwoven into practically every part of the weekly meeting or Sunday School class. It can be taught through the singing of choruses and hymns, the memory verse, the missionary stories, and especially the Bible lesson.

You must, at all times, emphasize that what you are teaching is from the Word of God (and make sure that it is) and that you are not giving your views or ideas, or those of anyone else.

- **The best way to teach Christian conduct is through your regular Bible lesson presentation**.
  - ✓ When you teach lessons concerning the Lord Jesus Christ point out that the Bible teaches that He is our model and that our goal must always be to be like Him. For example:
    - The birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 2 v7) shows us His humility and the Bible teaches us that we should be humble like Him (Philippians 2 v5-8).
    - When the Lord Jesus washes His disciples' feet (John 13 v1-17) He shows His thoughtfulness and love for others, and He teaches us that we should also be thoughtful and loving to others (John 13 v14-17).
    - When the Lord Jesus was mocked and beaten before His Crucifixion (Matthew 27 v26-31) He did not fight back nor say anything either to defend Himself or to hurt His attackers. Peter writes in his first epistle that we should react to criticism and attacks in the same way (1 Peter 2 v20-23).
  - ✓ When you teach lessons about the men and women portrayed in the Bible, you can use them as examples of Christian conduct to imitate or examples of non-

Christian conduct to avoid:

- **Positive examples:**

Joseph (Genesis 39)—moral purity
David (1 Samuel 26)—submission to authority
Daniel (Daniel 1)—self-control
Stephen (Acts 7)—forgiveness

- **Negative examples:**

Jacob (Genesis 27)—deceit
David (2 Samuel 11)—moral impurity
Saul (1 Samuel 18, 19 and 20)—a bad and uncontrolled temper
Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5)—lies

- **You can teach and explain Bible verses which relate to Christian conduct and encourage the children to memorize them.**

There are of course many, many Bible verses which clearly and authoritatively declare God's standards.
For example:

- ✓ Ephesians 4 v25 (Be truthful).
- ✓ Ephesians 4 v26 (Do not lose your temper).
- ✓ Ephesians 4 v28 (Do not steal).
- ✓ Philippians 4 v4 (Rejoice).
- ✓ Colossians 3 v13 (Be forgiving).

But special attention should be given to the Ten Commandments which are perhaps the clearest and most compact explanation of what God expects from His children. All of these (with the possible exception of the fourth one) are specifically repeated in the New Testament and the fourth is certainly implied there.

- **You can teach Christian conduct as you sing with the children**.

There are many songs which emphasize different aspects of Christian conduct:

- ✓ *"Rejoice In The Lord Always"*
- ✓ *"What About My Neighbour?"*
- ✓ *"This Little Light Of Mine, I'm Going To Let It Shine"*
- ✓ *"Work On Your Attitudes "*

- **You can teach Christian conduct as you tell missionary stories.**
  There are many traits of Christian character and examples of Christian conduct which can be illustrated from the lives of missionaries like Mary Slessor, Jim Eliot, Hudson Taylor, Bill Woods and William Carey.
- **You can teach Christian conduct by your own life both inside and outside class.**
  Every Christian should himself be an example to the children and should be careful not to cause them to stumble.

"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18 v6).

Chapter 12:
"V" Is for Victory
How to Deal with Sin in the Christian Life

The two main problems faced by a Christian child and the questions he most frequently asks, are:

- How can I be sure I am saved?
- What can I do with the sin in my life?

The first of these questions has been dealt with in chapter 7, and we will examine the second in this chapter.

We need to see that this question about sin usually involves four other questions (spoken or unspoken), and we will deal with each question separately:

- Will I, as a Christian, still sin?
- What are the results of sin in my life?
- What should I do when I sin?
- Is it possible to have victory over sin?

The answers to these questions are not generally known by saved children and often there is no way for them to know these answers except through your teaching. If the saved children are not given, and taught, these answers they will be confused, discouraged and may even lose the joy of their salvation.

The Reality of Sin in a Christian's Life

Some children believe that when they trust Jesus Christ as their Saviour they will never sin again. This conviction is often the result of incomplete or faulty explanation on the part of the teacher, or because the latter has used phrases which, without clarification, might encourage the children to believe this. If a teacher says, but does not explain, the sentence "If you trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour you will be saved from sin" the children

might come to the conclusion that they will never sin again!

What Should You Teach The Children?

There are three truths which you should especially teach your saved children:

- You should explain, clearly, that when a child has trusted Christ he does not become perfect. It is still possible for him to sin, even though he may not want to (1 John1 v8, 10).
- While he has now a new nature, there is still an old nature which battles with the new nature (Ephesians 4 v22-24; Galatians 5 v16-17).
- When the child sins the Lord Jesus will not leave him and he will not need to be saved again (John 10 v28).

How Should You Teach This?

There are two main ways to teach these truths:

- By teaching Bible lessons which illustrate these truths in the life of godly characters in the Bible:
  - ✓ The apostle Peter sinned grievously (Mark 14 v53-72).
  - ✓ David, a man after God's own heart, fell into sin (2 Samuel 11).
  - ✓ Abraham, the great man of faith, was guilty of deceit (Genesis 12 v14-20).
  - ✓ The Apostle Paul spoke of the struggle he had with sin (Romans 7 v14-25).

  Yet none of them lost his salvation or was deserted by God. Instead, God the Holy Spirit worked within their hearts; and the Bible teaches that He restored them to a place of communion and blessing.
  - ✓ Peter (Mark 16 v7; Luke 24 v12,34; John 21 v15-17).
  - ✓ David (2 Samuel 12 v1-13).
  - ✓ Abraham (Genesis 13 v1-4).
  - ✓ Paul (Romans 8 v1).
- By explaining Bible verses which clarify the truth being taught—and by encouraging the children to memorize these verses.

- ✓ It is still possible to sin:
  "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 John 1 v8, 9, 10).
- ✓ We now have two opposing natures
  "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish" (Galatians 5 v17).
- ✓ The Lord Jesus does not leave us when we sin.
  "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. So we may boldly say: The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (Hebrews 13 v5, 6).

The Results of Sin

It is vital for children to understand what the consequences of deliberate sin are**.**

What Does Not Happen?

He should first of all know what does not happen when he sins deliberately.

The saved child will not lose his salvation. When he sins he does not need to be saved again. Saved children often feel that sin in their lives results in a loss of salvation, and this can cause confusion and distress.

- ➢ The Bible makes it clear that if a person truly trusts Christ as his Saviour there will be a number of results:
  - He is justified (Acts 13 v39)
  - He is regenerated (2 Corinthians 5 v17)
  - He is a child of God (John 1 v12)
  - He is baptised with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12 v13)
  - The Holy Spirit comes to live in him (Acts 2 v38)
  - He is sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1 v13,14)

- He is redeemed by the Blood of Christ (1 Peter 1 v18)
- He receives eternal life (John 3 v16)

An understanding of what happens to the child when he trusts Christ makes it obvious that he cannot lose his salvation—provided of course that he has truly trusted Christ, and has not just made some kind of human decision.

- The Bible also makes it clear that the Lord Jesus is praying for believing children (John 17 v9,20)—that they will be kept from the evil one (John 17 v11,15), that they will be with Him (John 17 v24) and that their faith will not fail (Luke 22 v31-32). We know that all His prayers will be answered.
- In addition there are many verses and passages which underline the fact that, no matter what happens, if he is truly saved, God will keep His hand upon him and help him to persevere.

  Those verses and passages include John 5 v24, John 6 v37-40, John 10 v27-29, Acts 13 v38-39, Romans 5v1-11, Romans 8 v1, Romans 8 v31-39, 1 Corinthians 1 v8, Philippians 1 v6, 1 Thessalonians 5 v23-24, 2 Timothy 1 v12, 2 Timothy 4 v18, 1 Peter 1 v5.

  This, then is the general teaching of Scripture. There may be verses which **seem** to contradict that general teaching. But they cannot do so. There are no contradictions in Scripture, and there must be some other explanation of those verses. I have gone into this subject in much more detail in the book "*How to Teach Bible Doctrines to Children*" (pages 132-143) and in another book "*100 Questions and Answers Concerning a Ministry to Children*" (pages 108-110). If you don't have these books write to the address given at the front of this book and we will send them to you.

What Does Happen?

If the saved child sins deliberately and continues in that state without confession and repentance there are a number of possible results:

- The child will lose his joy. How can he be really happy when he knows he has sinned?

- The child will lose his fellowship with God (Isaiah 59v2). That is completely different from losing his salvation!
- The child will usually lose his assurance of salvation.
- The child will be open to the possibility of God's chastisement—not God's condemnation. There is no condemnation for the believer (Romans 8 v1) but there is the possibility of chastisement. God the Father chastises and disciplines His children for their good and for their growth. This is clearly taught in Hebrews 12v5-13 and is illustrated by what happened to Jonah in the first chapter of the book of Jonah.

Most, if not all, of these four results can be seen in the experiences of both David and Peter. Their experience of backsliding is outlined in a number of places in the Bible, including Psalm 51 and Luke 22 v54-62. They lost a lot—but not their salvation. Both of them sinned grievously, and suffered the consequences outlined above. But God kept His hand upon them and restored both of them.

What Should You Teach The Children?

You need to teach two simple, yet important, truths.

- If you are truly saved, and you sin, you do not lose your salvation. You will lose your joy and fellowship with God—but you do not need to be saved again.
- God loves you and if you continue deliberately in sin it is possible that God will correct (or "smack") you—for your own good.

How Should You Teach These Truths?

- By the simple explanation of Bible verses (such as those quoted on the previous page) which make these truths clear.
- By referring to illustrations of these two truths in the lives and experiences of Bible characters.
  - ✓ Loss of fellowship and joy—David and Peter
  - ✓ Chastisement and correction—Jonah and the children of Israel.
- By giving illustrations from missionary stories and church

history.
- By referring to your own experiences.

Reactions to Sin

What should the saved child do when he sins? We need to teach him the answer to this question regularly and simply, because if he doesn't know the answer, confusion and discouragement will result.

What Should You Teach The Children?

The Bible makes it very clear that the believer who sins needs to confess his sin to God, and that, if he does so, his sin is forgiven (1 John 1 v9). The child should know that it is better to confess his sin as soon as possible after it was committed—and not keep postponing it.

Obviously confession of sin is preceded by conviction of sin. It is the Holy Spirit Who convicts (John 16 v8-11); it is the believer who confesses (1 John 1 v10).

The children need to understand that such confession is not just a general confession of sin ("Please forgive me for all the wrong things I have done"), but a specific confession (Dear Heavenly Father, I told a lie to my mother this morning. I was wrong. I am sorry. Please forgive me—and help me not to do it again").

He also needs to understand that confession is not a licence or excuse for sinning. You don't want to give him the impression that he can keep on sinning and sinning, doing the same thing over and over again—provided he confesses it. Confession also means that he purposes in his heart, at the same time, to do his best not to do this wrong thing again.

How Should You Teach This To Children?

There are two main ways to do this:

- By teaching Bible lessons which portray a believer who has fallen into sin, and who is restored through confession of that sin to God.
  The best example is that of David:
  - ✓ He sinned grievously (2 Samuel 11).

- ✓ He was convicted of that sin (2 Samuel 12 v1-12).
- ✓ He confessed his sin to God (2 Samuel 12 v13a).
- ✓ He was forgiven by God (2 Samuel 12 v13b).

David's confession and God's forgiveness are outlined in Psalm 51 which David wrote at this time.

Good examples of the confession of sin by believers can also be found in:

- ✓ Nehemiah 1 verses 4-11 where Nehemiah identifies himself with his people and confesses their sins (including his own).
- ✓ Daniel 9 verses 3-19 where Daniel confesses his own sins and those of his people.

- ➢ By explaining Bible verses which teach confession of sin and encouraging the children to memorize them:
  For example:
  "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1 v9).
  "He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (Proverbs 28 v13).

Victory over Sin

This is, in some ways, the most important aspect of this subject which you can teach to saved children. Sin, and a failure to be able to deal with it, or conquer it, is probably the greatest problem faced by saved children. It is your responsibility as the teacher to help them as much as you can.

Why Should This Subject Be Taught?

There are several reasons why you should make this an important part of your ministry.

- ➢ It is God's Will that believers be holy.
  "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality" (1 Thessalonians 4 v3).
- ➢ This possibility is presented and taught in the Bible as something to be aimed at and achieved.
  "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6 v14).

This second verse and the surrounding verses teach that the tyranny and dominion of sin over believers has already been broken, and that by yielding themselves and their individual members to God, they can experience victory over the particular sin which wants to enslave them (Romans 6 v16-23). The war has been won, but many battles still need to be fought and won. The enemy has been defeated, but a guerilla warfare continues "behind the lines."

- Two extremes need to be avoided in our understanding and in our teaching:
  - ✓ That Christians should live lives which are permanently defeated
  - ✓ That Christians should live lives which are permanently victorious

  The average and typical Christian life has its ups and downs, its times of victory and its times of defeat. Sanctification and growth in holiness are simply a matter of having more and more 'ups' and fewer and fewer 'downs'. It is clear from both Bible teaching and personal experience that the Christian life is a life of warfare and struggle—and that there is no simple, ready-made solution to the question of sin.
- Saved children do not generally know these truths; and if they are not taught to them they will become defeated and discouraged—and lose the joy of their salvation.
- On the other hand if they are taught these truths and if, as a consequence, they are able to control, or be victorious over, some specific sin in their lives (even if temporarily) it will bring joy to the child, and this will be a good witness to others and it will glorify God.

What Should Be Taught?

There are several important aspects of this theme which children need to understand:

- No Christian is perfect. Sin is still a reality in the Christian life—and always will be. Some children think that when they trust Jesus Christ and are saved they will never sin

again. They need to understand that this is not so:
"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1 v8).
"If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 John 1 v10).

- Every born again Christian has two natures. These are called "the old man and the new man" in Ephesians 4 v22-24. These two natures are in constant conflict with each other.
  "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish" (Galatians 5 v16, 17).
- Deliberate sin in a Christian's life has consequences (as we have already seen):
  - ✓ It does not result in the loss of salvation (John 10 v28).
  - ✓ It does break his fellowship with God and creates a barrier between the child and Him (Isaiah 59 v2).
  - ✓ It can cause a loss of joy, and a real sense of guilt.
  - ✓ It can lead, if persisted in, to chastisement from God (Hebrews 12 v5-11).
- God the Holy Spirit Who lives inside the saved child is ready, willing and able to give the saved child strength to overcome whichever sin is causing problems to the child:
  "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5 v16).
  "As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1 v3a).
  The strength and power are there and available to the child who truly wants them.
- The child needs to know what he should do to handle, control or be victorious over any sin or sinful habit in his life.
  - ✓ He needs to recognize the sin in question, confess it specifically to the Lord, and ask Him for forgiveness.
    "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1 v9).
  - ✓ He should then understand and believe that God has forgiven him.

- ✓ He needs to realize that he himself does not have the ability to overcome this sin.
  "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7 v24).
- ✓ He needs to ask God to give him the strength to overcome it.
  "Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips" (Psalm 141 v3).
- ✓ He needs to do his part by exercising a measure of self- discipline and self-control.
  "I said, "I will guard my ways, Lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, While the wicked are before me" (Psalm 39 v1).
  He also needs to learn to flee from this sin when he is faced with it.
  "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness" (1 Timothy 6 v11a).

- ➢ He needs to take time each day.
  - ✓ To read God's Word.
    "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (John 17 v17).
  - ✓ To talk to God.
    "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5 v16b).
  - ✓ To fellowship with other Christians.
    "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10 v25).

How Should This Subject Be Taught?

- ➢ It can be taught as the central truth of a number of Bible lessons such as:
  - ✓ David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17).
  - ✓ Daniel's friends in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3).
  - ✓ Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18).
  - ✓ Moses and the twelve spies (Numbers 13).
  - ✓ Peter after Pentecost (Acts 2).
  - ✓ The temptations of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 4).
  - ✓ Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39).

These lessons are all illustrations of those who were victorious in one way or another. There are also Bible lessons which could be used to teach the same truth but from the point of view of those who were not victorious:

- ✓ Samson (Judges 14-16).
- ✓ Saul (1 Samuel 15).
- ✓ Peter before Pentecost (John 18).
- ✓ David and Bath-sheba (2 Samuel 11).

➢ This truth could be taught through a series of Bible lessons. For example you could, over a period of six weeks teach six lessons on the life of Joshua (as published by Child Evangelism Fellowship) each emphasizing one aspect of victory as follows:

- ✓ The basis of victory—the Word of God (Joshua 1 v1-18).
- ✓ The first step in victory—salvation (Joshua 2 v1-24).
- ✓ The realization of victory—faith (Joshua 3 v1 – 5 v1).
- ✓ The condition of victory—obedience (Joshua 5 v13; 6 v25).
- ✓ The danger to victory—disobedience (Joshua 6 v17-19; 7 v1-26).
- ✓ The continuation of victory—prayer and openness to God's voice (Joshua 8 v1-2;8 v30, 31; 9 v14).

➢ You could explain, and encourage the children to memorize Bible verses which touch on this theme:
Psalm 119 v11; Romans 8 v35,37; 1 John 2 v1; 1 John 5 v4; Hebrews 12 v1:

➢ You could explain and encourage the children to sing songs and choruses which deal with this theme:

- ✓ "*Thy Word Have I Hid In My Heart*"
- ✓ " '*V*' *Is For Victory*"
- ✓ "*There Is Victory For Me*"

➢ You need to demonstrate in your own life what it means to have a life which is victorious and pleasing to God—before trying to communicate this truth to the children.

Chapter 13:
"How Shall They Hear Without a Preacher?"
Witnessing

Saved children need to be taught how to witness to others concerning their salvation. They should be encouraged to witness to their parents and relatives first of all; but you need to be careful and use your wisdom and discretion here, because this could cause problems and close doors. You especially need to encourage them to witness to other children. Children are the best children's evangelists of all. They can witness where we cannot witness, and reach children we cannot reach. Also their way of witnessing can be very simple and natural, and will often be listened to better than any efforts we ourselves would make.

Why Should We Teach Children to Witness?

We need to see how important it is to teach saved children to witness to others about their salvation:

- The Bible commands all believers to witness (Acts 1 v8; Mark 16 v15).
- The Bible gives many examples of believers who witnessed. These include Paul, Stephen and Naaman's maid.
- God promises to bless and reward those who witness (Proverbs 11 v30; Daniel 12 v3).
- Witnessing will strengthen the saved child and help him to grow.
- Many other children need to hear the Gospel and saved children themselves are the best witnesses.

What Should We Teach Saved Children About Witnessing?

There are five basic principles to keep in mind when teaching your children about witnessing:

- **Teach them to witness by their lives:**
  "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5 v16).
  This is the **most** important aspect of witnessing. If the children are not living for the Lord, and are not demonstrating their faith in Him in a practical way, any spoken testimony will be of little value and have little effect.
- **Teach them to witness with their lips.**
  "And always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3 v15b).
  They should be encouraged to take every opportunity to tell others about the Saviour. They should pray that their lives may shine for Christ, and that they will then have the opportunity to tell others how Christ has made the difference.
- **Teach them to witness by giving thanks before each mealtime.**
  "And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks. He distributed them to the disciples" (John 6 v11).
  In most cases this will not be done audibly, but the children will just bow their heads, close their eyes and, in their hearts, give thanks to God.
- **Teach them to witness by attending church, Sunday School and Good News Club** and by carrying their Bibles with them when they do so.
  "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10 v25).
- **Warn them that witnessing for Christ is not easy:**
  "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3 v12).
  Others may laugh and make fun of them for being Christians and may even want to hurt them.

How Should the Children Be Taught to Witness?

Your teaching concerning this subject should be as simple and as practical as possible:

- The first step is to encourage children who have trusted Christ to witness, or give a testimony, right after you have counselled them for salvation (Matthew 10 v32). You could encourage them to tell a Christian adult who is present, or another Christian child, that they have trusted Christ.
- Then encourage them to witness, and teach them how to witness, through your regular weekly ministry to them.
  - ✓ There are Bible lessons which could have as their central truth the need to witness to others about Jesus Christ, and how to do so:
    - Naaman's maid (2 Kings 5).
    - The life, witness and death of Stephen (Acts 7).
    - The four lepers at the gate of Samaria (2 Kings 7).
    - The healed and converted maniac of Gadara (Mark 5).
    - Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8).
    - Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10).
  - ✓ Missionary stories can be used to encourage saved children to witness. You need to help them see that they themselves are now missionaries—missionaries in their home, in their locality and in their school. Flashcard lessons on the lives and ministries of missionaries like William Carey, C.T. Studd, Jim Eliot and Hudson Taylor (all produced by Child Evangelism Fellowship) can be a real challenge to the children.
- By explaining and singing together choruses which touch upon the theme of witnessing.
  - *Go, go, go, the Bible says to go.*
  - *Go tell He is risen.*
  - *Stop and let me tell you.*
- By explaining and encouraging children to learn memory verses which deal with the theme of witnessing e.g.
  - Mark 16 v15
  - Luke 24 v47,48
  - John 20 v21
  - Acts 1 v8
- You should also teach the saved children how to use the wordless book, how to give out Gospel tracts and also how they can actually lead other children to Jesus Christ.

It is important that you include demonstrations of all three of these activities. You should not just tell the children what to do; you should show them how to do it.

- You should give the saved children the opportunity in Good News Club to share with the other children their experiences in witnessing during the previous week.
- You should also give the saved children the opportunity to witness in Good News Club:
  - ✓ By asking them questions about what the Lord Jesus means to them or has done for them.
  - ✓ By allowing them to give their testimonies.

Chapter 14:
Across the Street . . . Across the Sea
Missions

One of the most important responsibilities for the teacher of saved children is to expose the children to the subject of "Missions," and the necessity of reaching, with the Gospel, people (and especially children) in other lands which are less favoured spiritually than their own. Therefore you should plan to devote 5 or, better still, 7 minutes each week in your meeting to "Missions."

Why Teach Missions?

It is important that you yourself "have a heart" for Missions, and that you understand why you should teach Missions to your saved children:

- The Lord Jesus Christ commanded that the Gospel be preached everywhere (Mark 16 v15), and that **every** Christian should share in this responsibility.
- This teaching will help and strengthen the saved child in his Christian life.
- By teaching missions you are preparing and training future missionaries.
- You are also challenging the children to be missionaries NOW.
- Missionaries on the field need the children's prayers and gifts.

What Should We Teach?

You also need to know what to teach about Missions:

- Teach what the Bible says about Missions.
- Present the great need of the world, so that the children

will see why missionaries are needed, and will become interested in and burdened for missionaries.

- Show the children what they can do to help missionaries by their prayers and gifts.
- Challenge the children to be missionaries now—in their home, in the area where they live, and at school.

How Should We Teach Missions?

You need to find, and use, effective ways to teach Missions to the children:

- **Ensure that teaching about Missions is a regular part of your weekly ministry to the children.**
  - ✓ Through Bible lessons which have a missions theme as their central truth:
    - Naaman's maid (2 Kings 5).
    - Jonah (Jonah 1-4).
    - Philip, Samaria and the Ethiopian Eunich (Acts 8).
    - The ascension of Jesus Christ (Luke 24 v36-53 and Acts 1 v1-9).
    - The four lepers at the gate of Samaria (2 Kings 7).
    - Paul at Philippi (Acts 16).
  - ✓ Through the explanation and memorizing of Bible verses which teach and challenge concerning Missions: For example: Matthew 28 v19,20; Mark 16 v15; John 10 v16; John 4 v35; Acts 1 v8; Acts 4 v12; Romans 10 v11-15.
  - ✓ Through the teaching of missionary biographies to the children. These will show the children how God prepares and calls His servants and they will help them to see what is involved in missionary work.
  - ✓ There are many good visualized presentations which can be used to do this. For example:
    - "*I Dare" (The story of Amy Carmichael)*
    - "*Hudson Taylor"*
    - "*C.T. Studd*"

    These, and many more, are available from Child Evangelism Fellowship.

- ✓ Through the singing of missionary songs and choruses e.g.
  - *"Far, Far Into China"*
  - *"For God So Loved The World"*
  - *"Children All Around The World"*
  - *"Go, Go, Go, The Bible Says To Go"*
  - *"I'm A Missionary's Helper"*

➢ **Introduce the children to "real live" missionaries, their mission fields and their work**:

- ✓ Choose one or more missionaries in whom the children can have a special interest.
- ✓ Give as much information as possible about them, their work, and the need of their field. Use maps, pictures, photographs, powerpoints, etc.
- ✓ Invite the missionaries, in whom the children are interested, to visit your meeting.
- ✓ Ask the missionary (if he cannot come) to send a short message on tape.

➢ **Encourage the children to become involved, in some way, in missionary work**:

- ✓ By making a missionary scrap book or table display about their missionaries and the country where they are working.
- ✓ By praying for the missionaries—at home, in their own Quiet Time, and in the Good News Club. Read news letters from the missionaries to give the children specific items for prayer and praise.
- ✓ By writing letters to their missionaries.
- ✓ By giving money to help in the work of their missionaries (2 Corinthians 9 v7):
  - Explain to the children why the money is needed and how it will be used.
  - Send a note of explanation to the parents in case they think that **you** will receive the money.
  - Encourage the children to give from their own money as the Lord helps them to do so.
  - Set goals for the group of children to reach by their gifts. Set a target figure which they could aim at

over a period of weeks or months.

- The amounts given by the children do not need to be large. Often, and indeed usually, they will be **very** small. However, it is not the size of the gifts which are important; it is the principle involved, and the fact that they are giving **something** to help reach other children with the Gospel.

✓ By teaching the children how they can be missionaries NOW—at home, at school, and wherever they go—by telling others about the Lord Jesus Christ. Challenge them with the fact that they do not have to wait until they are grown up to become missionaries.

✓ By presenting the challenge of future full-time missionary service to the children. Many of today's missionaries received their call from God to the mission field when they were young. Pray that God will call some of your saved children to enter, one day, into full-time service in their own country or another country—as missionaries, pastors, evangelists, teachers, nurses or doctors.

✓ By ensuring that you, yourself, as a Christian parent or teacher have a missionary vision. Otherwise you cannot teach missions effectively.

Chapter 15:
A New Master
The Lordship of Jesus Christ

This is one of the most important themes of all—if not the most important—for the Christian child to understand and to apply to his everyday life. We are dealing with this subject towards the end of this section outlining the main themes to teach Christian children, not because it is less important than the other themes—but the opposite. In many ways it ties up, summarizes and climaxes this section and its contents.

The word "Lord" means "one with power and authority," and the words "Lordship of Jesus Christ" describe that position of power and authority now occupied and exercised by the God/man Jesus Christ. HE IS LORD. The absolute and complete Lordship of Jesus Christ is not future. It is actual and operative today.

Why Teach This Subject?

It should be obvious to every children's worker that this is one of the most important subjects he could, and should, teach to all the children under his ministry—and especially to the saved children:

- **Because it is one of the main themes of the New Testament.** The Bible lays great emphasis upon the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord. This can be seen in many passages including the following:
  - ✓ Matthew 28 v18
  - ✓ Acts 2 v36
  - ✓ Ephesians 1 v20-23
  - ✓ Philippians 2 v9-11
- **Because the apostles preached the Lordship of Jesus Christ**

when they were evangelizing.
For example—Acts 2 v33-36; 3 v20-21; 5 v31; 10 v36.

- **Because the apostles emphasized the Lordship of Jesus Christ when writing their epistles to believers**, and made clear the responsibility of believers to acknowledge Him as Lord and submit to His authority.
  For example—2 Corinthians 4 v5; Romans 10 v8-10; 1 Corinthians 12 v3; 1 Corinthians 8 v5,6; Ephesians 4 v5.
  Someone has said that the confession "Jesus is Lord" was the single most predominant Christian confession in the New Testament and in the early Church. So it behoves us as teachers of saved children to show them what this means and how it applies to them.
- **Because the saved children need to recognize that they have a new Master to Whom they are responsible**.
  Of course they should already be aware of this fact, at least to some extent, before they trust Jesus Christ as their Saviour. They should have been informed already that when they trusted Jesus Christ He would be both their Saviour and their new Master and Lord.
- **Because an acknowledgement of the Lordship of Jesus Christ and a submission to His will give to the child a life of unselfishness, and joy;** and the only kind of life which pays and is worthwhile.

What Should We Teach?

We should teach the children the basic truth that Jesus Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and that He is in a position of complete and absolute supremacy and sovereignty.

As we teach this truth, in detail, we want to see three results in the lives of our saved children:

- **We want them to understand this truth**
  The children need to see and understand Jesus Christ as He really is—the Lord and Master of the universe. So often children have a picture of Jesus Christ as One who is pleading and asking, rather than One who is commanding

and demanding. The apostles were concerned that their hearers would see Jesus Christ in His power and glory.
Jesus Christ has been God from all eternity. Then He became man. The incarnation meant that He was both God and man. After His atoning death for our sin, He was raised from the dead and exalted to a place of complete lordship as the God/man (Matthew 28 v18: Philippians 2 v9-11).

- **We want them to agree with this truth**
  The children need to acknowledge and agree personally and increasingly that Jesus Christ is Lord.
  God the Father has made Him Lord. He is Lord. The children should not be encouraged to make Him Lord. They cannot do so. God the Father has already made Him Lord. They should therefore be taught and helped to acknowledge and agree that He is already their Lord—and they should be shown what this means and involves.
  There are those who teach that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of those who have trusted Him but not yet their Lord; and that, at a later time and as a second step, they must "make Him their Lord". This is not Bible teaching. The child who has trusted Christ has already in some way bowed his knee to Jesus Christ. The child has obeyed the command of Jesus Christ and the Word of God to trust Him (Acts 16 v31). It is only a first step but it is a real step and it is the beginning of a life of obedience. The responsibility of the child is more and more to acknowledge and agree that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and that He is his Lord. In this way the fact of Christ's lordship which he has already acknowledged at conversion will be worked out gradually in practice after his conversion and will result in his sanctification.
- **We want them to submit, more and more to the Lord Jesus Christ**
  They need to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ as Lord on a day-to-day basis and as part of a life of gradual and increasing understanding of His Lordship. It is your responsibility as the child's teacher and mentor to teach him, to show him and to encourage him to submit to Jesus Christ on a regular and daily basis.

This should have three results in the child's life:

- ✓ He should study the Word of God to know what God's commands are.
- ✓ He should obey those commands, in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- ✓ He should realise that the Lord Jesus wants him to yield his body to Him for service (Romans 12 v1-3), that He wants him to give every part of himself to Him—eyes, lips, ears, hands and feet—to do only what He wants him to do.

How Should We Teach It?

It is most important that we teach, and keep coming back to, this vital subject in our ministry to saved children:

- ➢ The best way to teach the Lordship of Christ is by teaching Bible lessons which show His Lordship obviously and clearly as the central truth:
  - ✓ The ascension and exaltation of Jesus Christ (Luke 24; Acts 1; Philippians 2).
  - ✓ His control over demons, disease and death in Mark chapter 5.
- ➢ His lordship and its application can be taught through portraying and describing the lives of Bible men and women who obeyed and submitted to Him:
  - ✓ Paul's conversion and his call to ministry (Acts 9).
  - ✓ The obedience of the disciples in response to Christ's call (Mark 1 v16-21).
  - ✓ Stephen's ministry and courage in the face of opposition (Acts 6 and 7).
- ➢ The challenge of His Lordship can also be illustrated by showing that there were those who refused to agree with and to submit to Christ's Lordship and suffered for it.
  Some did so permanently and suffered eternally:
  - ✓ The rich young ruler (Matthew 19 v16-22).
  - ✓ Agrippa (Acts 26).

  Others did so temporarily and lost their joy and fellowship with Him:

- ✓ Peter (Matthew 16 v21-28)

The words "not so" and "Lord", which Peter uses in this passage, contradict each other. A true acknowledgment of Christ's lordship will exclude the words "Not so."

- ➢ Through the presentation of missionary stories and biographies which show that these men and women were obedient to the call of Jesus Christ to leave their homes and tell the Gospel message to others—despite the cost involved:
  - ✓ Hudson Taylor
  - ✓ William Carey
  - ✓ Amy Carmichael
- ➢ Through the explanation and memorization of Bible verses which emphasize His Lordship:
  - ✓ Matthew 28 v18
  - ✓ Acts 16 v31
  - ✓ Romans 10 v9
  - ✓ Romans 10 v13
- ➢ Through the singing of hymns and choruses concerning His Lordship:
  - ✓ *"He is Lord"*
  - ✓ *"His Name Is Wonderful"*
- ➢ Through the practical demonstration of the lordship of Jesus Christ in your own life. The saved children usually learn more from your example than from your exposition!

Chapter 16:
Strength and Safety in Numbers
Fellowship and the Church

It is God's plan for believers that they meet and have fellowship with other believers in the context of a local church. It is also part of God's plan for each of us that we set aside the first day of the week as His special day. This day should be different from all other days and it is on this day especially when we meet with other believers in the local church. These are truths which we should teach to our believing children.

God Wants Believers to Meet Together

The biblical command *is* "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10v25). So in your follow-up programme you need to show the children that God does not want them to live the Christian life alone – but to do so in association with others. You should explain that a Christian is like a piece of coal in a fire. When it burns with other pieces of coal in the fire it stays hot, gives out heat and is useful. But when it falls out on the hearth alone, it soon becomes cold and is not able to warm others. Christians help each other to keep warm towards God, and other people, by meeting together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Plan Centres on the Local Church

The Acts of the Apostles shows us that when the apostles started to preach the Gospel, and people trusted Jesus Christ as their Saviour, they made it their goal to encourage these people to meet together in an organised group which was called a church (Acts 2v47, Acts 8v1, Acts 20v28). The Greek word for church is "EKKLESIA"—or "called out ones". The biblical concept was that believers in each area should meet together regularly—and

especially on the first day of the week—with other believers, and that together they should appoint men who would be their leaders. At first there were no church buildings and the churches met in homes.

These local churches were to be centres for fellowship, worship, work, witness and outreach to the community. All believers were expected to become involved, immediately, in a local church.

The situation is somewhat different and more complicated today because there is a multiplicity of churches and denominations in each area. But the principle remains the same. Every believer should be part of a local church—and it should be a church where the Bible is completely believed and faithfully taught.

This should all be explained in a simple way to the saved children with frequent reference to the ministry of the apostles in the Acts as they set up local churches, and with explanation of the fact that Paul wrote most of his letters to local churches.

What Kind of Church Should Children Go To?

It is good to explain to children the "ideal" kind of church, that is, the biblical picture of a church. You should not of course name a church or a denomination. You just want to outline the qualities which the children, and we ourselves, should look for in a church.

- A biblical church is a church attended by REAL Christians. You need to explain to the children that there are many people in the world who call themselves Christians but are not so. How can children identify REAL Christians, who meet together in a good, biblical church?
  - ✓ They love the Lord, and love to talk about **Him** (Malachi 3 v16).
  - ✓ They love the Lord's people (John 13 v35). Love for other believers is the badge every real Christian wears (1 John 3 v14).
  - ✓ They love the Lord's Book—the Bible (Psalm 119 v97). They believe that it is the Word of God without mistake

or error.
- ✓ They love the Lord's work and they want to seek and to save that which is lost (Luke 19 v10).

- ➢ A biblical church is a church with a pastor/minister and leaders who are born again.
- ➢ A biblical church is a church whose ministry is centred on, and based completely upon, the Bible.

How Can We Encourage Children to Attend a Church?

The answer depends upon the background of each child:

- ➢ **There are children who already attend a church which we would not look upon as an ideal church.**
  Many churches are not biblical or fundamental. You need to be very careful about what you do in this case. If you try, in any way, to take those children away from that church to attend, say, your own church, you may lose them altogether.
  In this case it is better to see your weekly Good News Club as a substitute for a biblical church, and to encourage them to keep attending it. They can enjoy fellowship and receive help in it.
  Then later, when they are old enough to make their own decision, they could, on the basis of your teaching, move to another, more biblical church.
- ➢ **There are children who already attend a good church.**
  You want to encourage them in that attendance and also give them some ideas as to the part they can play in their church.
  - ✓ "Be faithful in going to as many meetings as possible—especially the Sunday morning service and Sunday School."
  - ✓ "Join in the worship of the church—by singing, praying and listening, along with the others present."
  - ✓ "Ask God to give you a work to do in the church. You can invite other children to come, you can give out tracts, you can sing solos or join a choir, and you can, later on, teach in Sunday School."

- **There are children who don't attend any church.**
  You should make it your goal to bring them, if possible, to your church. But first of all you need to speak with their parents and ask them for their permission. If you have already built up a good relationship with their parents, they might well be open to your request. But don't force it. Make sure you do not cause offence to the parents and perhaps lose the children from your Good News Club.

Your Example Is Important

You cannot speak to children about involvement in a good local church if you yourself are not involved in one. Every children's worker should be a member of a church where the Bible is faithfully taught, should be a regular attender at that church, and should be involved, as much as is possible, in the activities of that church.

Conclusion

I trust that God will enable you to help Christian children to grow as you feed and nurse the new born babes He has committed to you.

- You are the **nurse**. Nursing a child (both physically and spiritually) is often difficult and frequently inconvenient, but it can be very worthwhile and rewarding both in this world and the next.

  "Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed him. And the child grew. . ." (Exodus 2 v9, 10a).

- The Bible is the **food** or milk which helps the child to grow. But it needs to be given in an attractive and drinkable form.

  "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2 v2).

- The Holy Spirit is the **supervisor**, the helper, "the doctor" and the One who gives power and ability to the "nurse."

  "*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*" (Acts 1 v8).

And we pray that the result will be—**growth**.

"*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* (2 Peter 3 v18).

- The **danger** is that if the child is not nursed properly he might "stumble and fall" and become, spiritually, like Mephibosheth, the child who was dropped by his nurse and was crippled in both feet for the rest of his life.

  "Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five

> *years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.*" (2 Samuel 4 v4).

As we pray and work we trust God that the children will grow up in Christ and become mature believers. Let us join Paul in saying -

> *"Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily." (Colossians 1:28,29)*

Publications available for children's workers who will make good use of them in a Biblical ministry to children

- **A series of devotional books for children's workers:**
  "The Problems of a Children's Worker - and God's Solution"
  "Obedience to the Heavenly Vision"
  "Smooth Sailing in Personal Relationships and Leadership"
  "A Life Worth Living" An Autobiography
  "Salvation by Faith Alone"
  "Truths for Teachers"
  "God's Word for God's Workers Vol 1"
  "God's Word for God's Workers Vol 2"

- **A series of training manuals for children's workers:**
  "First Steps"
  "How to Lead a Child to Christ"
  "How to Teach Bible Doctrines to Children"
  "Why Evangelize Children?"
  "The Principles of Teaching"
  "100 Questions and Answers Concerning a Ministry to Children"
  "How to Evangelize Children"
  "Bible Talks for Children Vol 1"
  "Bible Talks for Children Vol 2"
  "Now I See It"

- **A series of visualized lessons to teach Bible doctrines to children:**
  "Questions Children Ask" (5 lessons)
  "Who Is God? (10 lessons)
  "What Is God Like?" (10 lessons)
  "The Bible" (5 lessons)
  "The Lord Jesus Christ" (5 lessons)
  "What Is Wrong With the World?" (5 lessons)
  "Salvation – The Gift of God – Part I" (10 lessons)
  "Salvation – The Gift of God – Part II" (10 lessons)
  "Growth - The Plan of God" (20 lessons in two parts)
  "The Holy Spirit" (10 lessons)
  "God Listens to His Children" (11 lessons)
  "Creation & Evolution" (10 lessons)

For information on the availablity of these publications please contact -

CEF Specialized Book Ministry,

PO Box 308, Lisburn, BT28 2YS, N Ireland, UK

or online www.cefbookministry.com

Child Evangelism Fellowship®

The CEF Specialized Book Ministry is an integral part of the worldwide ministry of Child Evangelism Fellowship. CEF is the world's largest mission dedicated to the evangelism of children. CEF trained workers are to be found in over 165 countries and each year over 10 million children are reached with the Gospel. CEF workers provide training opportunities from a 1 hour course to a three month institute. A full range of visualized Bible lessons and additional tools for the evangelism of children are produced in many languages.

For further information on CEF either contact your National Office or write to

CEF Inc, PO Box 348, Warrenton, MO 63383 USA

www.cefonline.com