

4. Look for everyday life opportunities to make a bee-line for the Gospel.

Don't just wait for family devotions to talk about the Gospel. Look for opportunities to speak of the Gospel in your everyday life!

Deut. 6:6,7 "And these words I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

5. Look for spiritual transformation in your children and encourage them when you see it!

God has not called us to be root inspectors...but we can be fruit inspectors! Look for the same evidence of genuine, saving faith in your kids' lives that you would in your own:

Follow Christ (John 10:27)

Confession of sins (1 John 1:9)

Love for others (1 John 3:14)

Obedient living (1 John 2:3; John 15:14; Matt. 12:50)

Abiding in God's Word (John 8:31)

Keep God's Word (John 17:6)

Do Good works (Eph. 2:10)

6. Trust in the Sovereignty of God!

Remember—genuine faith and repentance are gifts from God. Only HE regenerates the heart. It's a work of Him and Him alone!

Eph. 2:8,9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. **And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works...**"

John 3:8 "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent Me draws Him. And I will raise Him up on the last day."

Soul Check

Are You Doubting or Delighting in Your Salvation?

Childhood Professions of Faith:

Avoiding Confusion When Looking for Conversion

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The Bible doesn't say much about children's professions of faith specifically...but it says a lot about children!

1 Corinthians 13:11 "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways."

Remember—children speak, think and reason in ways that are unlike adults. The younger they are, the more childish they are.

1 Corinthians 14:20a "Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature."

Remember—childlike faith is not the same as childish faith. Paul calls Christians to not think like children because their thinking is usually "off," particularly in their younger years.

When it comes to the way children think, the Bible says that children are...

...easily deceived...

Eph. 4:14 "...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."

...capricious...

Isa. 3:4 NASB "And I will make mere lads their princes, and capricious children will rule over them..."

...foolish...

Prov. 22:15 "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him."

As people who have great influence over children—chiefly parents—we need to be mindful of the "traps" we can fall into...good intentions and all!

Beware of Childhood Evangelism Traps

Trap #1: “Minimize the Message”

How does your childhood presentation of the Gospel measure up?

Essential elements of the Gospel

- Good & evil
- Sin & punishment
- God’s holiness and wrath against sin
- Christ’s substitutionary atonement for sin
- Christ’s resurrection and lordship

Be careful! Ask yourself: *Am I appropriately simplifying the Gospel or dangerously reducing it?*

Trap #2: “Press to profess”

As parents, we’re encouraged by immediate results. (Who isn’t?!)

Well-intended results often sought by parents or teachers might be...

- A show of hands – “How many of you believe this?” “Who wants to become a Christian right now?”
- Rote recital of the proverbial “sinner’s prayer” – “Close your eyes and repeat after me...”

Remember—our children want to be like us and liked by us. That’s why children will almost always respond in whatever way their parents ask...but that’s not necessarily indicative of a changed heart.

Trap #3: “Assume and Assure”

Remember what we covered in the series earlier...banking on a one-time positive response to a Gospel presentation is not a solid, scriptural basis for assurance of salvation.

Matt. 7:21 “Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.”

Trap #4: “Baptism Blitz”

Believers should be baptized...but how much better is it for children to wait until they can personally own it, know it, love it, **and remember it** for the rest of their life?

Two most common responses by adolescents when questioned regarding their salvation:

- (1) Yes, I’m a Christian. I was baptized back when I was _____.
- (2) Yes, I’m a Christian. I made a profession of faith when I was _____.

A “baptism blitz” oftentimes results in false assurance later.

So what do we do?!

1. Get the right perspective. We’re to please God in our process of parenting. Leave the product to Him.

1 Cor. 3:6,7 “I planted, Apollos watered, **but God gave the growth.** So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but **only God who gives the growth.**”

2. You can’t save your kids...so pray, pray, pray!

1 Cor. 2:14 “The natural person does not accept the things of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

Pray the Holy Spirit would open your child’s heart and mind to the truth of the Gospel!

3. Set a consistent example of a Christ-centered life.

More is caught than taught! God created the home and church to be consistent examples of our love relationships with Him (cf. Eph. 5:22-23).