



Set the  
**STAGE** for  
**SALVATION**

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## You'd give anything for this.

It's part of nearly every heartfelt prayer, both spoken and unspoken. Sometimes it's hard to be patient.

Every Christian parent waits eagerly for the day when their precious youngster will take

that big, eternally important step of trusting Christ as Savior.

But sometimes, in the expectation of that special moment, we forget all the things we can do right now to "set the stage,"

or prepare the way, for that decision – a decision made only through the Spirit of God working in your child's heart. Think of the letters in the word *salvation* as your guide.

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# SALVATION

**Seasoned conversation.**

Talk about God in everyday interactions: "Look at the colorful fish God made" or "God answered our prayers for Grandma." Children need to know God is real and working in our lives.

**Love.** A parent is a child's first picture of God, and children often carry this picture, or at least pieces of it, with them into adulthood. Work hard to express God's fatherly compassion to your child at this impressionable age.

**Action.** Live your faith in front of your child. Take him with you on that service project. Let him watch you worship and also see your gracious response to the woman who cuts in front of you at the check-out line. In kid-friendly terms, share the story of when you trusted Christ.

**Verses.** Cubbies memorize key salvation verses in their handbook, such as John 3:16, Matthew 1:21 and Matthew 28:6. Explain these verses clearly to your child and keep reviewing them.

**Asking and answering.**

Take time to answer your child's spiritual questions in an age-appropriate way. If she asks a question about God that's not clear in the Bible, affirm the mystery of God: "God's not like us. There are some things we don't know!" Ask your child questions too, or prompt her to draw a picture, to see what she understands.

**Intercession.** Prayer's power is unmatched! Pray for your child and pray with him about his own concerns and fears. Start a bedtime routine of reading a Bible story and praying about daily situations together.

**Time-outs.** Discipline situations can create prime opportunities to talk about sin and God's forgiveness. Around ages 2 to 6, children develop a moral conscience that leads them to feel guilt when they have genuinely done wrong. As you lovingly correct your child's sin, you prepare her to understand God's grace.

**Observation.**

Watch your child for signs she is ready to trust Christ. Since children can easily be talked into doing almost anything an adult wants them to do, let the initiative come mostly from her.

**Neighbors.** Allow Christian neighbors, friends and church members to partner with you in this process, reinforcing what you teach at home.

Although most children trust Christ in the elementary years, children as young as 3 or 4 can and do trust Christ as Savior. These early bloomers usually come from homes and churches where the gospel is consistently and constantly explained. Whatever God's timetable is for your child, you can trust that He's using you to build and paint and prime the stage upon which the exciting drama of salvation will unfold in your young one's life!

**PARENTS** – you never want to pressure your child to make a salvation decision. But if your child seems ready for this step, you may want to explain the gospel using this outline.

(If you, the parent, have never trusted Christ as your Savior, please talk about this more with a Cubbies leader.)

**1. GOD LOVES YOU AND WANTS YOU TO BE HIS FRIEND FOREVER.**

*For God so loved the world ... (John 3:16)*

**2. BECAUSE WE ARE ALL SINNERS, WE CAN'T BE FRIENDS WITH GOD.** God never does anything wrong. But you and I do wrong things that make God sad (lying, hitting, disobeying, etc.).

*For all have sinned ... (Romans 3:23)*

**3. GOD HELPED US TO BE HIS FRIENDS.** He sent His perfect Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross and come back to life again, so we could be forgiven for our sins.

*... Christ died for our sins ... He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*

(Note: If death is a hard concept for your child to grasp, just say that Jesus came to earth to pay for the wrong things we did. He took our punishment for us!)

**4. IF YOU TRUST THAT YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN BECAUSE OF WHAT JESUS DID, YOU CAN BE GOD'S FRIEND FOREVER.**

*... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ... (Acts 16:31)*

Invite a child who trusts in Christ to say a simple prayer thanking Him for what He did.

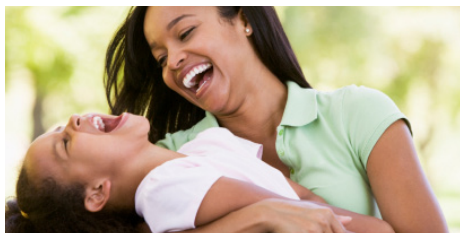
And remember, this is just the beginning! Your Cubbie will start to know God better by praying and learning more about the Bible at home and church.

## CURIOUS CUBBIES

Awana did a survey to find the biggest questions kids have about God and the Bible. We found that Cubbies saw God as a personal friend. Most of all, they wanted to know:



## LITTLE LAUGHS



Do you have a funny story about your toddler or preschool child? Send your stories via e-mail to [parentpause@awana.org](mailto:parentpause@awana.org).

"After I prayed with my son at bedtime, he asked, 'So, are there a lot of toys in Jesusland?' Jesusland! Now that is a good name for heaven!" – Jill, mother of a 5-year-old

"When I asked my preschooler to eat the rest of his cereal, he replied, 'But it's too fast!' 'What?' I replied. He responded, 'It's swimming too fast in the milk, and I can't catch it with the spoon!'" – Michelle, mother of two boys

"I guess I've been slack in my housekeeping – my soon-to-be 3-year-old, Kelly May, thanked me for cleaning the bathroom!" – Rachel, mother of four

# Awana Clubs™ Parent

P A U S E

September 2010

Inspiration and ideas for parents of preschoolers

## Our Club News

### GOT GOSPEL?

Awana Clubs center on the gospel. What's the gospel?

*It's the good news that ... Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).*