

IS MY CHILD READY TO ASK JESUS TO BE THEIR BOSS AND BEST FRIEND?

Use the following 5 questions to help you determine if your child is ready to ask Jesus to be the Lord of their life. Remember, there is no magic to the questions. The main goal is to determine if your child recognizes that their own sin separates them from God and that Jesus' death on the cross makes them right with God. You will also find some things to say if your child doesn't seem to be grasping these spiritual concepts. Make sure you read the suggested verses as tools to help you.

"Who is Jesus?" *Look Up Matthew 3:16-17.*

This is an easy question to answer and will get your child comfortable with answering questions. Their answer will be pretty simple. **"He's God's Son".**

"What is sin?" *Then ask: "Have you ever sinned?" Look Up Romans 3:23.*

Younger kids may not understand the word sin. We teach kids that sin is lying, cheating, stealing, angry outbursts, doing bad things, or even thinking bad thoughts, etc. The truth is... anything that is inconsistent with God's character is sin. Talk about these things with your child recognizing that all of us sin. Keep It Personal by talking about things that you may do wrong and how they get in the way of your friendship with God. Ultimately, you're looking for your child to identify specific things they do wrong. The goal isn't to rehash things in the past, but you're looking for a sense of ownership of their actions.

"What did Jesus do on the cross? Why did He have to die?" *Look Up 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.*

Again, these should be simple responses. **"Jesus died on the cross."** or **"Jesus died for our sins."** or **"So we could be forgiven."**

NOTE: *If you don't feel that your child understands either what sin is or that Jesus died to take our sins away, then simply table the discussion. You might say something like: "I'd like us to keep talking about this more over the next few months."*

"What happens to our sin when we ask Jesus to forgive us and we say our sins out loud?"

Look Up 1 John 1:9.

Most responses will be very simple. **"Jesus takes away our sins."**

"Do you want to ask Jesus to be the Lord of your life?"

If, yes, then great! This is the best part. Here is a prayer you may use as a guide. You can invite your child to repeat after you. However, remember! There is no magic in the words your child is reciting. It's the condition of their heart that matters most.

"Dear Jesus, I am a sinner and I need you to save me. Thank you for dying on the cross. Because of this, I am forgiven. I want you to be the leader of my life. Help me live my life for you. Amen".

CONGRATULATIONS! You've just led your child into a relationship with Jesus. There are few experiences as valuable as this!

IS MY CHILD READY FOR BAPTISM?

As a follower of Christ, your child may want to make their decision public by getting baptized.

Baptism is a picture of what Jesus did on the cross and He tells us to be baptized to show others that we follow Him. As you prepare for the Baptism Class, here are some things to talk about with your child. *(If at any point you feel your child has not made a firm decision to invite Jesus into their life, switch to our Salvation tool then return to this at a later time.)*

Share: Baptism is when we go under the water, symbolizing Jesus' death and resurrection — Jesus died and came back to life again on the third day.

Read Matthew 3:1-16, Matthew 28:16-20, John 3:1-21

Share your story of how you were baptized and what it meant to you to share publicly of the decision you made to follow Jesus.

Discuss: Have your child tell you why they want to be baptized.

It's important to only listen during this time. Refrain from the urge to finish their sentences or help them complete a thought. You want your child to articulate (*tell others*) their personal reasons for wanting to be baptized.

Ask: What happens when you sin again?

Most kids are more worried about getting in trouble by Mom or Dad when they do something wrong than asking God for forgiveness, so it's hard for them to not connect "getting in trouble" when we talk about God and sin. Make sure they understand that it's by the grace and love of Jesus that our sins are forgiven.

The answer is to confess or "say" your sins to God in prayer and sometimes to the person we may have done wrong to.

Ask: Does this mean you'll never sin again?

Read 1 John 1:8-10 and Romans 6:1-5

No. You do not need to live a life that chooses sin, but you will continue to make mistakes (sin). Only Jesus lived a sinless life.

Pray: Take this opportunity to pray a blessing over your child.

This is as simple as asking for God's favor in their life. As a parent, you have so much influence over your child and they need to hear what you think of them. Take this time to verbalize your thoughts about your child's decision in prayer.