

catalystKIDS

Parent Tools

SALVATION



cat · a · lyst
kad(ə)ləst

noun

that which evokes a transformative process

kid
/kid/

noun

a child or young person

cat · a · lyst kid
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noun

a biblically anchored, big dreaming, world-changing child or young person who evokes a transformative process in those around them



A Few Things to Consider

Before we get started, here are just a few suggestions to help prepare yourself for these conversations.

First, use this resource for what it is: a *guide*. There is no “one size fits all” approach to talking about these subjects with children, because there is no “one size fits all” child. You know your child best. ***You know how to best communicate with your child.*** Remember, God chose you and He did so for a reason. Be confident in that truth when talking with your children.

Focus on the relationship behind the rule... love will motivate in ways a law never could

Next, try to avoid saying things like “The Bible says...” when talking about scripture. Instead, say something like “God tells us in His word...”. This may seem like splitting hairs, but phrases like “the Bible tells us...” removes God from the focal point and can set the Bible up as a rulebook in the minds of our children. The most important thing to focus on when communicating scripture to your children is *the motivation behind the commandment*. Always remember, relationships are more important than rules. Sure we need rules, but ***love will motivate behaviors and beliefs in ways a law never could.***

Finally, ***be the example.*** Talking with your kids about prayer? Let them hear when you are praying. Talking to them about the Bible? Let them “catch” you studying God’s word. It can be difficult if we let it be, but ***the more they see these disciplines in us, the more they will begin to show up in them.***

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

salvation

/sal' vāSH (ə)n/

noun

- 1. preservation or deliverance from loss, ruin or harm*
- 2. a source or means of being saved from loss, ruin or harm*

noun (theology)

deliverance from sin and its consequences, believed by Christians to be brought about by faith in Christ.

What Is Salvation?

According to the definition, salvation is basically being saved from something, or the means of our being saved from something. Of course, we are focusing specifically on being saved (and the means of being saved) from our sins and the *eternal* consequences of them.

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Hebrews 7:25

Eternal is emphasized in that last statement because it is important to make the distinction between the eternal consequences of our sin and the temporal, or earthly consequences. God forgives our sins and clears the record on our behalf, however, there are still consequences we must face in the here-and-now. To illustrate, think of the criminals crucified on either side of Jesus. They were facing the earthly consequences of their actions, but to the one, Jesus provided salvation and the hope of being with Him in paradise. In a similar way, we cause harm to others as a result of our sinful attitudes and actions. God forgives those sins, but we must still face the damage we have caused and seek reconciliation with those we have hurt.

Why Do We Need Salvation?

This is a pretty simple answer; we need salvation because we have all sinned. Sin can be a tricky subject to explain to kids because there are so many misconceptions about what constitutes sin, and what does not.

There are several things called out in Scripture that are clearly sin, such as murder and stealing. Where it can be difficult is when we are dealing with emotions.

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 3:23

For example, anger in itself is not sinful. We see numerous references throughout the Bible of God's anger. Jesus expressed anger when He cleared the Temple of merchants and money changers, also when He confronted Pharisees by calling them hypocrites and a brood of vipers. Emotions like anger are simply part of being alive and around

other people. How we choose to *respond* in our emotions, and the underlying source of our emotions, is where a line can be crossed.

For example, if you are angry because you didn't get your way in a situation? The source of this is pride, or selfishness, which is the real issue that must be faced. Anger is simply a byproduct of that pride and the resulting actions will most likely reflect that pride.

Secondly, we need salvation in order to have the relationship with God we were created for. The simple truth is that sin separates us from God; and God is not willing to leave the relationship that way. God decided to take action to restore the relationship He intended for us from the beginning, which is what Paul was writing to the Corinthians about in the verse below.

What Jesus did for us on the cross provided salvation for our sins, but it also "reconciled" us to God, which is just a fancy, churchy way of saying Jesus provided a way for us to *have a relationship with God*.

How Do We Get Salvation?

There are not a lot of "black and white" things in the Bible, but this is one of those few. Paul gives us an excellent, straightforward answer to this question in Romans 10:9-10 shown at right.

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19



Paul states that if we declare and believe that Jesus is who He said He is, then we are saved. The key to this statement is believing in our hearts. Anyone can say whatever they want, but it is what we truly believe that shows God the state of our heart and our willingness to accept Him as Lord.

ALL that is required is to believe in our hearts that Jesus is Lord and to tell others about that belief. Some people may try to put further qualifications on our salvation, however, there is no

*In your anger
do not sin...*

*Ephesians
4:26*

need or purpose to complicate what is a simple, straightforward path. This leads to our next point...

How We Do NOT Get Salvation?

We do not earn salvation. Nothing we can do, no amount of good behavior we can show can save us. There are some denominations and religions that would have you believe our own efforts are directly tied to the level of your salvation, but they do this in direct opposition to what God tells us in His word. God tells us through Isaiah that our good works will be exposed, but they will not benefit us. God sees the good things we do, and He is pleased when we treat others the way we would like to be treated, but He wants us to know these good works are not what save us.

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Romans 10:9-10

God also make this point very clear through Paul and his letter to the Ephesians, stating that it is only by God's grace that we are saved, *not* by any thing we can do (works).

I will expose your righteousness and your works, and they will not benefit you.

Isaiah 57:12

As if this weren't enough evidence to prove this point, we can take Jesus' word for it as well: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me". Jesus makes it very clear that the only way to a restored relationship with God is through Him. Nothing we can do *on our own* will work, it is only through God's grace shown

in the sacrifice of Jesus that we can have a restored relationship with God.

Can I Lose My Salvation?

There are two different ways of addressing this question: 1) Is there something I have to do to 'keep' salvation and, 2) If I mess up and do something really bad, will God take away my salvation?

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

1) To think there is some formula we must follow in order to maintain, or keep, our salvation is similar to thinking there is something we can do to earn it in the first place. Believing in our heart and confessing with our mouth that Jesus is Lord does not require any further action. That being said, the point of salvation is a restored relationship with God.

Spending time with God, in prayer, in worship and in studying His Word won't earn, or guarantee salvation, but they are great ways to engage in that relationship.

2) God tells us in His Word that nothing can separate us from His love, and that nothing can snatch one of His children from His grasp, not even ourselves.

We are not going to be perfect, we will make mistakes, however, God forgives our sin as part of that restored relationship. A common question asked along these lines is “What if someone was a Christian but then rejects Jesus?” This is a difficult question, with a simple answer provided, once again, by God in His word. As John points out, those who would abandon their restored relationship, likely never had it to begin with. They may put on a good show, and as stated earlier, anyone can say whatever they want; it is what we truly believe that shows in our actions.

They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

1 John 2:19

If stumbling is a concern, remember God is faithful and He is good. He will be ever present to help us walk in the restored relationship He called us to, as one of Jesus' brothers states in Jude 24-25: “To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.”



OK, Now What?

We've probably all heard some variation of what is referred to as "The Sinner's Prayer". It is important not to think of this as some sort of ritual or set of magic words that must be said in order to be saved. The prayer is just a way to engage with God in that moment and verbally express what is happening in the heart. Basic elements to this prayer are gratitude for what Jesus has done for us, seeking and accepting the forgiveness of God and inviting the Holy Spirit to come.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

A common question when leading this for kids is, "Do they really understand what they're doing?" The simple answer to this question is, I don't know. We can't know what they are feeling in their heart. We can talk about it with them, ask some questions, but there is really no good way of fully knowing what they are feeling. In this case, trust in God to lead them further into the truth, just as He leads adults further into the truth. One thing I have found to be true in working with kids: they are far more capable of understanding truths than we sometimes give them credit for.

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:4-10

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Why Provide These Tools?

We are providing these tools because we believe in you and because we need you.

God sovereignly chose **you** as the parent of your kid. **God believes in you, so we believe in you.** By equipping you with some simple resources you can use in the difficult discussions that come up, we want you to feel confident in your role as the primary spiritual influence in your kids lives.

It is easy to think of the Kid's Pastor, or some other Kid's Leader as the person with the most spiritual influence in your kids lives, but those people are only around your kids for a couple hours every week. You are the ones that are doing life with your kids and **you have more impact on their spiritual development than anyone else ever could.** We want to partner with you in raising a generation of CATALYST KIDS!

... so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands...Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:1-7



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