

# 1, 2, 3, Jesus Loves Me

(Helping Children Understand the Message of Salvation)

## I. Why lead children to Christ

A. God commands it (Matt. 28:18, 19).

B. Spiritual condition demands it.

1. He is a \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 3:23).

2. He cannot understand \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ truths (1 Cor. 2:14).

## II. A brief overview of the message of salvation

### A. The foundational truths

God is

1. Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1).
2. Love (1 John 4:7-8).
3. Holy, without sin and just—He is perfect (Acts 3:14).

Man is

1. A sinner by nature and by act (Rom. 3:23).
2. Separated from God because of sin (Isa. 59:2).
3. Unable to save himself (Titus 3:5).

### B. The Gospel

1. The person of the Lord Jesus
  - He is God, the Son (Acts 9:20).
  - He is perfect man (2 Cor. 5:21).
2. The work of the Lord Jesus
  - He willingly died on the cross, giving His blood as payment for your sin (1 Peter 1:18-19; 3:18).
  - He came back to life again and was seen by many people (1 Cor. 15:4, 5a).
  - He lives in Heaven with the Father, honored above all.

### C. The appropriation

1. God's invitation is to come to Christ (Rev. 22:17)
2. Man's responsibility (John 1:12)

### III. Presenting the message of salvation on a child's level

#### A. Gold circle



1. God made all things (e.g., trees, animals, stars)—He made you.
2. God loves you very much (John 3:16a).
3. God is perfect—He never does anything wrong.
4. God lives in a perfect place called Heaven.

**Link: “There is one thing that can never be in Heaven. That is sin.”**

#### B. Dark heart



1. Sin is anything that displeases God—It is wrong things that you think, say or do. It is *not* doing what you know you should.
2. Give specific examples that a child can relate to.
3. Everyone has sinned (Rom. 3:23)—You were born with a “want to” to do things your own way.
4. Sin separates you from God and keeps you from going to Heaven—God’s perfect place for you.

**Link: “But God has a wonderful plan so that you can have your sins forgiven and go to Heaven some day.”**

#### C. Red cross and tomb



1. Jesus is God, the Son.
2. He lived a perfect life.
3. He willingly took the punishment you deserved. He is the only one who could do that for you.
4. He bled and died on the cross so your sins could be forgiven (Heb. 9:22b).
5. He died and came back to life again and was seen by many people (1 Cor. 15:3-5a).
6. He is now in Heaven with His Father, ruling as King.

**Link: “Now because of what the Lord Jesus did, you can have your sins forgiven and be ready for Heaven.”**

#### D. Clean heart



John 3:16

1. Explain this verse phrase by phrase:

For God so loved the world (*The One True God loves you*)

That He gave His only begotten Son (*His one and only Son*)

That whosoever (*if you*)

Believeth in Him (*trust completely that Jesus was the only one who could die for your sins, taking the punishment you deserve*)

Should not perish (*Will not be separated from God forever*)

But have everlasting life (*God by His Holy Spirit will come to live in the real you. He will help you to live a life that pleases Him and someday you will be able to live with Him in His home in heaven forever.*)

2. After explaining the verse, remind the child of the seriousness of the decision. Then ask, "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus as the only Savior from your sins?" If the child responds, "yes," review the truths taught on each flashcard by asking some thought-provoking questions, letting the child tell you what he understands.\* You may then ask the child, "Would you like to tell God you believe the Lord Jesus was punished for the sinful things you have done?" Then let the child pray, expressing his heartfelt belief in Jesus.
3. After the child prays, give him the assurance of salvation based on the Word of God.
  - a. Ask: "If you truly believe in the Lord Jesus, what did He do for you?" and "How do you know?"
  - b. Return to John 3:16.
  - c. Insert the child's name in the verse.
  - d. Show and explain \_\_\_\_\_
    - The Bible says that Jesus comes into your life when you believe in Him. Jesus will never leave you! (Read Hebrews 13:5.) Where is Jesus now?  
Explain this verse means Jesus will be with him always, no matter what. Using the fingers of your own hand, demonstrate how the child can remember the words, "I will never leave you." Have him try it on his own hand.
    - (Read Hebrews 13:6) Who will help you say NO to sin?  
Show him verse 6a, helping him see Jesus lives in him to help him do what is right and say No to sin. He can remember the phrase, "The Lord is my helper" on the fingers of his other hand.



4. Teach confession of sin. Ask: *If you do sin, what should you do? Let's see what God's Word says.* (Read and explain 1 John 1:9.)
  - a. Approach this subject of confession from a \_\_\_\_\_ perspective. *The Lord Jesus lives in you to help you do what is right! But, if you do sin, God's Word tells you what to do about it.*
  - b. Explain 1 John 1:9 phrase by phrase.
    - Confess—to agree that what you have done is sin, to tell on yourself to God.
    - He is faithful and just—God always does what is right and fair.
    - Forgive our sins and cleanse us—If you sin after you believe in Jesus as your Savior, He is still your Savior. But that sin affects your walk with Him. Sin makes you unable to fully enjoy God and live for Him. God the Holy Spirit will let you know when you have sinned because God wants you to walk close with Him. When you confess your sin to God and really mean it, He promises to forgive you.
    - All unrighteousness—the bad things you have done.
    - After you have confessed your sins, thank God for His forgiveness. Ask Him for strength to say *no* to that sin the next time. Ask Him if there is someone with whom you need to make things right.

**Note:** If using the *Gospel Flipper-Flapper™* or Gospel Turnaround, you will want to use the color green to teach some basic steps for growth.

Read and explain 2 Peter 3:18.



*Example: If you are a child of God, this verse says you are to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus. That means getting to know God better, wanting to live to please Him.*

1. G—\_\_\_\_\_ to church and Sunday school to worship God with others and learn more about the Lord Jesus and how He wants you to live.
2. R—\_\_\_\_\_ God's Word each day. As time allows, you may want to give the child some helps as to where and how much to read.

Example: Start in the book of Mark, which tells all about the Lord Jesus (show how to find Mark). Read as many verses as your age (8 years old read 8 verses, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_ about what you're reading in the Bible. You can **pray** other times, too. Prayer is talking to God. Talk to God about what you think and feel, asking Him to help you live how He wants you to live.

3. O—\_\_\_\_\_ God! God, the Holy Spirit, lives in you to give you the power to help you do what is right. (Hebrews 13:5b, 6a)

4. W—\_\_\_\_\_ to others, telling them about what the Lord Jesus has done for them so their sin can be forgiven. Also tell others what Jesus has done for you!

Encourage the child to tell another teacher or hostess of his decision.

**E. Before the Child Leaves**

1. Give him a tract, adding his name and the date. Also give him a *Truth Chasers Club* starter lesson to encourage him to grow to know God better.
2. Encourage the child to talk to God right now and:
  - a. Thank God for loving you and saving you from sin.
  - b. Thank God for helping you live for Him.
3. Pray for the child by name.

### **Teaching Aids Concerning Presenting the Message of Salvation to Children**

1. \*\*Gospel Flipper-Flapper™ or Gospel Turnaround (CEF Press®)  
[cefpres.com](http://cefpres.com)
2. \*\*Visualized songs (CEF Press)
  - “1, 2, 3, Jesus Loves Me”
  - “Faith Is Just Believing”
  - “Nothing but the Blood”
  - “One Way”
  - “That’s the Gospel!”
  - “The Seven Most Important Things” (MIT)
  - “Wordless Book Song”
3. Salvation lesson (CEF Press)
  - *Heaven: How to Get There*—available while supply lasts
4. \*\*Tracts (CEF Press)
  - “God’s Good News”
  - “First Steps”
  - “Heaven . . . How to Get There”
  - “How to Have a Very Special Friend”
5. *Children’s Ministry Resource Bible* (Thomas Nelson Publishers)
  - Full-page articles
    - ✓ Teaching Aids
      - “Message of Salvation Verses” (page 1428)
      - “Gospel and Resurrection” (page 1460)
      - “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Evangelism” (page 1508)
      - “The Promise Hand” (page 1541)
  - Chart: “The *Wordless Book*” (page xxvi)
6. Children’s Ministries Institute® [cefcmi.com](http://cefcmi.com)
  - Training opportunities on campus
7. CMI Online [online.cefcmi.com](http://online.cefcmi.com)
  - Training opportunities online

\*\*Check [www.cefpres.com](http://www.cefpres.com) for availability for these items.

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## Patterns for Symbol Flashcards

**Materials:** Make four 5½" squares from colored posterboard. Make one yellow, one black, one red, one white.

**Directions:** Color the circles yellow. Color the cross red. Color the tomb brown. Cut out each symbol leaving about 1/8" margin around each one. Glue each symbol on to the appropriate colored square. Laminate each square or cover with clear contact paper.

