

# SALVATION



## CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR KIDS

**This is an exciting time in a kid's life.** They're starting to ask questions about faith. They're wondering about God and His love for them. And they may be asking a lot of questions—ones that don't have a simple answer. But that's okay. This is a starting point for your few to begin a lifelong conversation about faith. And if possible, make sure that parents and guardians are around if and when a kid chooses to accept Christ. It's a life-changing decision, and they should be involved as well. If you're looking for a place to start, we suggest John 3:16. It lays the foundation for God's love for us that sent Jesus to be our savior.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 NIV

### WHAT TO SAY:

#### GOD LOVED

- God loved you before you were even born. He created you in His Image. And He loves you right now. God has a plan for your life—like a story.
- But there is something that separates us from Him, something that keeps us from being with Him forever. It's called sin. Sin is the stuff we do wrong. Sin keeps us from living out the story that God wants for us.
- On our own, we can't do anything about this. We need God to step in and help. And because God loves us, He made a way for all of us to live with Him forever.
- **ASK:** What is sin? Have you ever sinned? When? What is the problem with sin?

#### GOD GAVE

- God knew that our sin would keep us from living with Him forever. But because God loved us, He gave the most important, valuable, and perfect thing He had for you.
- God gave His Son to fix that relationship. Jesus came to make a way for you to be with Him.
- That's why Jesus gave up His life on the cross to pay for our sin. Three days later, Jesus rose from the dead! His resurrection defeated death and makes a relationship with God possible again.
- **ASK:** What did God give us? Why did God give this gift? What did Jesus do for us?

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- **ASK:** What did God give us? Why did God give this gift? What did Jesus do for us?

## WHOEVER BELIEVES IN JESUS

- When you receive a gift, what do you do? You open it. God said you could open His gift of salvation by believing Jesus died and rose again.
- Believing simply means to trust. It's a lot like sitting in a chair. When you sit in a chair, you put all your weight in it. You trust that it will hold you up. That's what it's like to believe in or to trust in this gift.
- To open the gift that God gave you, you trust Jesus with your whole life and rest in the fact that He died and rose again for you.
- **ASK:** How can you take part in God's big story? What does it mean to trust in something? How do you know God loves you?

### WHAT NOT TO SAY:

#### 1. "Invite Jesus into your heart."

For kids, the phrase "inviting Jesus into my heart" can be confusing. They're such concrete thinkers that it can worry them to think that someone is living inside their actual heart.

#### 2. "You have to pray like this . . . "

Kids are going to express their faith with how they understand it at their age. Don't get hung up on the "right words" but rather the heart with which they pray.

#### 3. Any answers you make up

Don't make up answers to questions that you don't know yourself. "I don't know" is a legitimate answer to questions that your kids have about faith. There's so much that we don't understand about how God works and how the Holy Spirit enters our life. And that's okay.

Preparing for and having this conversation with the kids in your group might raise some of your own. If so, don't hesitate to reach out to a ministry leader at your church to chat about these things further.

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## CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

**There may be one word that best describes teenagers** and the phase they're in right now: ownership. They're looking at the world around them and the things they've inherited from their family—the traditions, morals, values, and faith. And they're making decisions about whether what they've observed is something they want for themselves. The decisions that students make now about salvation and a relationship with Jesus carry a lot of weight because they're old enough to understand what that means for their future. The best thing for a student to understand at this point in their lives is that *God is for them*. And that, in all things, His grace is real, and it covers all of their sin—past, present, and future.

### WHAT TO SAY:

#### GOD LOVES YOU

- You were made in the image of God. God sees you, He accepts you, and He loves you.
- But we're broken. We behave in a way that's harmful to ourselves and separates us from God. That's called sin. Sin convinces us to focus on ourselves—that we matter most and we know best. While God isn't mad at us, He does know our sin will hurt us—it harms how we understand ourselves, how we treat others, and how we view Him.
- Our sin keeps us from seeing what's true about God, ourselves, and others. Sin convinces us that we know best, that God is against us, and that we matter more than those around us. Ultimately, sin keeps us from God Himself.
- **ASK:** How have you seen sin hurt you? How have you seen sin hurt others? What is the biggest problem of sin?

#### GOD IS FOR YOU

- God knew our sin would make us want to hide from Him and look out only for our best interest with no regard for others.
- God also knew that when we sin, we'd think God would want to come after us to punish us. And that we'd be tempted to distance ourselves from Him to avoid His punishment. But God isn't interested in punishing our sin as revenge. Instead, He wants to free us to live for something better.
- To prove how committed God was to life with us and for us, God sent His Son, Jesus, to go to the greatest length possible to demonstrate His love. Jesus died on the cross for us to show us God is for us. Jesus paid the price of our sin with His death.

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- After three days, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, proving He has ultimate power, and that He can do what He says He'll do. And we can know that nothing—not even death—can separate us from Him. When we put our faith in Him, He has the power to transform our lives and to make us new.
- **ASK:** What was the purpose of God sending Jesus to die? How do you feel about someone who is willing to die for you? How did sending Jesus deal with our problem with sin?

## WHOEVER BELIEVES IN JESUS

- Believing in what God demonstrated through Jesus is like accepting a gift.
- We accept the gift when we decide to trust that the God who made us is for us—that He is willing to do anything to prove His love and He wants what's best for us. We show trust by living in a way that reflects our confidence in what God says is best.
- We know that God loves us and nothing we do could ever jeopardize our standing with Him. No amount of good behavior and no amount of sin will change the way He feels about us.
- We open the gift when we use our lives to give the same love to others that Jesus showed to us.
- **ASK:** What does it mean to trust what God did for us? How does knowing about God's love change the way we see Him? How does someone live differently when they trust that God loves them?

### WHAT NOT TO SAY:

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