

STEPS TO LEAD YOUR CHILD INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

As a parent, you have the opportunity to introduce your children to Jesus and the difference He can make in their lives. Here are simple steps to guide your conversation about what it means to become a Christian. (If you have not yet placed your faith in Jesus, you can follow these steps for yourself!)

- To become a Christian, you must first **acknowledge that there is a God who created you and loves you.** He has a perfect plan for your life. “Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him” (Hebrews 11:6, nlt).

- You must **confess that you are sinful and separated from God.** Before we begin a relationship with God, we are all separated from Him, dead in sins and trespasses (see Ephesians 2:1). We all are sinners by nature and by choice. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 3:23; 6:23). There is nothing we can do in our own power to pay for our sins or to become holy.

- But Jesus loves you so much that He chose to pay the price for your sin and to give you true life. As Romans 5:8 says, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (nasb). Jesus then rose from the dead! “Christ died for our sins . . . he was buried . . . he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). His life gives us perfect righteousness, His death makes full payment for our sin, and His resurrection gives us the victory and promise of the future.

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➤ We become Christians and begin a relationship with God when we **believe and receive Jesus's gift as payment for our sins**. "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12, nasb). What a beautiful invitation: believe in God; receive His gift of righteousness, forgiveness, and victory; and then live into your identity as a new creation of Jesus Christ.

You or your child can accept Jesus's gift and become a Christian by talking to Him right now. There is not a formula for prayer—God hears your heart! We simply receive Jesus's gift of salvation by putting our faith in what He did for us. We make a decision to follow Him, and when we do, He gives us His Holy Spirit to help us understand the Bible and grow in faith.

Here is an example of what your child (or you) might pray: *Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my heart now and surrender to You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Please lead me now to grow in a relationship with You, and please make me the person You want me to be. Amen.*

If you have prayed this prayer sincerely, you can trust that God heard it and that He welcomes you with open arms. I would love to hear about it! You can email me at aloha@monicaswanson.com to tell me the great news! Be sure to get a Bible and begin reading the book of John in the New Testament to learn more about Jesus! Then find a Bible-teaching church and get involved. We need each other, and it is so great to grow in relationship with other Christians.