


A Window of Opportunity

Think **It** Over




It has been called the 4/14 Window (a comparison to the 10/40 Window where 40 percent of the world's unreached people live in a 1-degree latitude at the equator stretching around the globe). The 4/14 Window is the period between the ages of four and fourteen when 60 percent of Christians come to a saving faith.



A survey by Barna Research reports that “Most of the people who accept Jesus Christ as their savior do so at a young age. The median is age 16. In total, six out of ten people say they made their decision to accept Christ before age 18.”

As a teacher, there can be no greater joy than to see a young person say yes to Jesus' gift of eternal life.

For some, this is as easy as the most natural conversation.

For others, it is a dreaded talk that rivals our deepest fear. What do you need to succeed in helping a child become a Christian?

Like so many things in God's kingdom, helping others find Christ starts with love. Love those who do not know Christ! There is a children's ministry leader in Florida who, prior to praying for the meal, asks the waiter or waitress if there is anything special the church staff could remember in prayer. A church in Texas takes one Sunday a month to present a clear call for children to become Christians.

It's important to understand that we don't save; God does. It is not the cleverness of our words that produces results; it is the work of the Holy Spirit! We can't take credit when our lessons help children grow or when they lead the unchurched to faith in Jesus. It is God at work in us, working for his good pleasure. With that said, try to share Christ's love in *every* lesson. You will find that children can make Jesus their *forever friend* at the end of a lesson on David and Goliath just as easily as after a lesson on Christ dying on the cross.

Finally, understand how God saves us. God created a sinless creation for his good pleasure. But all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Since God cannot have sin near him, we are separated from God. But the good news is that God sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to die on our behalf to pay for our sin. Children need to put their faith in Jesus to receive his forgiveness! ■



Come and Get It



I had the privilege of helping the evangelist Franklin Graham present the Gospel message to children around the world. In Kingston, Jamaica, Franklin was coached to

say to children at the crusade, “If you made a decision to make Jesus your forever friend, we want to talk to you. Come down here onto the field and a ‘big’ person will help if you have any questions.” I mentioned that we should definitely *not* say, “Come down here onto the field and a big person will *give* you something,” because the entire stadium would run onto the field. Well, that Saturday morning, sure enough, Franklin used the magic words that caused nearly 7,000 children to not just walk forward—they ran to get whatever the “big person” had to give them!



Reflect on your own faith journey. Write down the major events or circumstances that helped you become a Christian, and make note of the events that helped you continue in faith. Realizing that different Christians have different experiences that brought them to Christ, think about how God can use your experience to help non-Christians.

It's time for a CHANGE

Lord, bring one person into my life this week with whom I can share my own faith story.
Help me begin by...

SCRIPTURES to Study

Commit it to MEMORY

“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

- How is your belief today different from when you first became a Christian?
- How would you describe eternal life?



“For the greatest and most regal work of God is the salvation of humanity.”

—Saint Clement of Alexandria, Paedagogus