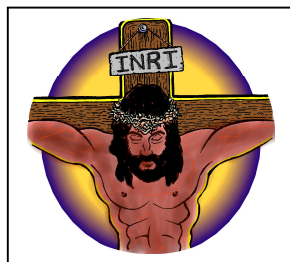


3.4.d A Bible Lesson— The Invitation for the Unsaved Student

The teacher should always remember that some children have not yet received Jesus as the Savior. They are not yet Christians, even though they may have been born into Christian families and may come regularly to church. There is one thing God seeks **FIRST, ABOVE ALL ELSE** from each of us. The very first thing God desires of us is to repent of our sins, making a complete turnaround or “about face” in our lives and putting all our trust for salvation in His Son Jesus Christ, welcoming Him into our hearts and lives.

If the children have not yet received Jesus into their hearts, at the close of the Bible lesson, it is important that the teacher call them to repentance and faith in Christ. Often we call this “giving the invitation.” It is indeed inviting our students to leave their lives of sin and self-centeredness and put their trust alone in Jesus.

We want to invite the children who need Jesus in such a way that they will stay after Sunday school or they will go to some designated place so we can help them and pray with them and record their decisions. We want to meet with them so that we can make sure they understand, we can give additional teaching, and we can pray with them. In the invitation the teacher should tell the children where to go or what to do in order to receive this help. The invitation can be simple and short, like this: *“Maybe you haven’t yet received Jesus into your heart. If you would like to receive Him today, you may stay behind after Sunday school is over. Come sit over here (show where you want them to sit). I will come and help you.”*



Come to Jesus!

If the Bible lesson did not tell how a person can be saved, it might be wise to add a little teaching and a Bible verse that shows the way of salvation. It could be something like this:

“Maybe you have not yet put your faith in Jesus. God loves you. He wants to save you. He has promised, “Every one who comes to Me, I will never ever cast out” (John 6:37b). If you are ready to put your faith in Jesus today, then after Sunday school is over, just get up and come sit here (show where, maybe patting the seat). I will come and help you.”

This kind of invitation is only for those who have never received Jesus as their Savior. If they have understood clearly, each child will respond to this invitation one time only.

If the teacher knows for sure that every last child in his class has received Jesus as Savior, he need not go through the invitation each week. However, if all the children in the class are believers, he should be looking and the children themselves should be looking for others who are not yet saved, because God desires all to be saved (2 Peter 3:9). **Also, even if the teacher does not give the invitation every week because he is sure all the children are already saved, he should always be ready to give an invitation in case there should be visitors to the class. Otherwise he may miss his opportunity to lead those visitors to faith!**

Also note: If Sunday school is being held outside in the open, or if there is not much space in the church, the teacher may have those who want to respond to the invitation go to a shady place outside. For example: “Maybe you do not yet know that you are saved, but today you want to know that. You want to turn away from your sins and receive Jesus as your Savior. I want to help you. After Sunday school is over, go outside and meet me under the shade of that tree over there (point to the tree). I will be glad to meet you there.”

The teacher should be sure to meet the children in the place he has designated. Even if none respond, he may show them that he is serious by going to that spot himself and praying there briefly. If no children come, he may then leave.

To understand the teaching that the teacher will give those who respond to the invitation, see Chapter 21.

LET’S PUT IT INTO PRACTICE:

Try writing an invitation. Use the exact words you would use to speak to the children.

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From your own Bible study, find at least five verses that show the way of salvation clearly. These are verses you may use in giving an invitation. Write the five references below. Then choose one you would like to use right away. Copy it carefully from your Bible, word for word. Then memorize it so you can say it easily.

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Some Concerns about the Invitation

What is the goal of the invitation?

 Get children to repeat the sinner’s prayer for salvation?

 Call children to turn to Christ in their hearts?

Act out skit of children repeating the sinner’s prayer, even repeatedly, but not turning, not choosing God’s way afterwards.



If the repetition of the prayer is just done automatically or just because you told them to do it, does it bring real salvation?

Answer in writing & write three or more sentences telling why or why not.

What methods tend to encourage rote repetition?

What methods encourage children to make a real decision for Christ?

It's not just a prayer. It's a DECISION.