



Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide

Devotional

We have been studying God's wonderful plan for our lives as believers. He wants us to be like His Son Jesus Christ. So, He has chosen (predestined) us, regenerated us, is sanctifying us, and will one day glorify us until we truly and totally become like Him. But He wants us, in the meantime, and day by day, to become more and more like Him. God's desire for us is that we imitate the Lord Jesus (as He is portrayed in Scripture) in our everyday lives. We have already seen that we should become humble like Him and love others, (Philippians 2:1-11) and that we should become thoughtful like Him and meet the needs of others. (John 13:1-7) These two passages

BE QUIET AND CONFIDENT LIKE THE LORD JESUS

portray the humility and the thoughtfulness of the Lord Jesus, and instruct us to imitate the example He sets in them, and become more humble, more thoughtful and more like Him.

The problem faced by the readers of Peter's first epistle (and many more readers since then) was the problem of suffering, especially when it was not deserved or justified. (1 Peter 2: 19,20, 4:14-17). What should be the reaction of the believer who "does good" and suffers through misunderstanding, criticism, persecution, mockery or even physical suffering? 1 Peter 2: 20 tells us firstly that we should "take that suffering patiently." In the next verse, God's Word tells us, secondly, that the Lord Jesus "left us **AN EXAMPLE** that we should **FOLLOW HIS STEPS**". We are to imitate Him and react to suffering as He did.

- He was **INNOCENT**. (1 Peter 2:22) He had done nothing to deserve the suffering inflicted by His tormentors.
- He **SUFFERED** from the hands of wicked men and was reviled by them. (1 Peter 2:23) Matthew and Mark tell us that they mocked Him, reviled Him, stripped Him, struck Him, spat on Him, pressed a crown of thorns down on His head and made fun of Him. How did He react to them and their cruelty?
- First of all, He was **QUIET**. (1 Peter 2:23a, Isaiah 53:7) He did not revile in return; He did not threaten. He said nothing. We stop here and ask ourselves the question "How do we react when someone criticises us, says something nasty to us or makes fun of us." Can we learn to be **LIKE HIM** and say nothing.? Can we learn not to retaliate, not to avenge ourselves or to be angry, as we are commanded in Romans 12:14-21. Did you know that God promises in 1 Peter 3:9 that those who do so "will inherit a blessing?"
- But the Lord Jesus did do something. He **COMMITTED** Himself and the situation to His Heavenly Father and He was **CONFIDENT** He could leave the results with Him. (1 Peter 2:23b) Can we not do the same?



I believe that the greatest privilege for a believer is to be called by God to be a teacher, and especially TO BE A TEACHER OF CHILDREN, that section of mankind which is most needy, most open and with the greatest potential.

The Bible tells us that teaching is a spiritual gift. (Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11) When God calls us to be teachers of children He gives us the ability to teach them and to explain the truths of His Word to them who know so little. If He has called you to teach children, He will enable you to do so, and He will "teach you what to say." (Exodus 4:12 Luke 12:12). You can also trust Him to open their minds and their hearts. But the ministry gifts which God gives His servants need to be "stirred up" or developed. (2 Timothy 1:6). We believe that God called us to write and publish this little magazine, Mini Mag, to help you develop the gift of teaching which God has given you. We invite and welcome you to read it and study it each month.

In this difficult situation the Lord Jesus, as our example, was QUIET and CONFIDENT. And He wants us to be QUIET and CONFIDENT when faced with suffering of any kind. God gives us a promise in Isaiah 30:15 "IN QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE SHALL BE YOUR STRENGTH." The believer who is QUIET and CONFIDENT in every situation will be STRONG. Always remember that quietness plus confidence equals strength.

THE CHILDREN WHO PRAISED THE LORD JESUS

At the beginning of Passover week, the Lord Jesus and His disciples entered Jerusalem. Crowds of people spread their garments and branches of trees on the road and cried "Hosannah to the Son of David; blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 21:9). Both parts of their cry indicate that they were, in some way, thinking of Him and praising Him as the Messiah, the One Who would deliver them from the hated Romans and from sin and its consequences. The Lord Jesus then entered the temple and cast out the merchants and money lenders who were there. He also healed many people who came to Him.

Then something very wonderful happened. A number of children, who were there in the temple, started to praise the Lord Jesus. They cried out ("lifted up their voices with strength") saying "Hosannah to the son of David." (Matthew 21:15) The Greek word PAIS used for them was a general word for children between the ages of 7 and 14. They must have had some knowledge of, or even belief in, Him as Messiah. The word "Hosanna" means "Save now" which is a Messiah-directed plea, and the words "Son of David" were recognised as a Messianic title. The priests and scribes were very angry, not just at their singing,

but at the truth they were singing, and came to the Lord Jesus and asked Him "Do you hear what they are saying?" The Lord Jesus replied "Yes," and told them that this was the fulfilment of a promise given by God in Psalm 8:2. "Out of the mouths of babes and nursing infants you have perfected praise." (Matthew 21:16) The words "babes" and "nursing infants" indicate that the children concerned were young. They would probably include a number of 12-year old boys there for their first Passover.

■ WHAT CAN WE SAY?

- > The children saw what others did not see, - even the priests and the scribes.
- > The children sang their praises to the Lord Jesus while the priests and scribes rebuked Him.
- > The Lord Jesus commended the children for their praise while the religious leaders criticised them.
- > The Lord Jesus wants children to praise Him.

■ WHAT CAN WE DO?

- > We can believe that children, even little children, can praise the Lord Jesus.
- > We can teach them how to praise the Lord Jesus and encourage them to do so.



KEY QUESTIONS ASKED

BY CHILDREN'S WORKERS

Question: Why should we evangelise children?

Answer: In our last issue the question asked was "What does it mean to evangelize children?" To-day's question follows on from there, and it is good that we can have a series of questions on evangelising children in each issue, to go along with our series on how to help saved children grow spiritually.

There are many good answers to this question—so many indeed that I wonder why more Christians are not engaged in a ministry of children's evangelism. Here are eight of those good answers:

- 1) We evangelize children because the **FUTURE** of the church and of the country is in their hands. We are investing in the future.
- 2) We evangelize children because we know from the Word of God that many of them are **ABLE TO RESPOND** to the gospel message and trust the Lord Jesus their Saviour. Statistics tell us that most people are saved when young, many of them as children.
- 3) We evangelize children because they have a **SPIRITUAL NEED**. They are all spiritually dead and can only become alive and enter God's kingdom by trusting Jesus Christ. If they have reached the age of accountability (which is earlier than many people think), and have not trusted Jesus Christ, they will, if they die, be lost forever.

4) We evangelize children because they **NEED STRENGTH** to overcome the sin and pressures facing them in the world. Only Jesus Christ can give them that strength, if they respond savingly to our gospel message and the Holy Spirit comes to live in them.

5) We evangelize children because they are so **OPEN** to our gospel message. Later in life their hearts and lives will be hardened and there will be less possibility for such a response.

6) We evangelize children because they have their whole lives to live. A child saved is not just a soul saved; it is also a **LIFE SAVED**, a life which glorifies God, with time to develop good habits and a good way of life.

7) We evangelize children because, through them and their salvation, we can **REACH PARENTS** and families who could not be reached in any other way.

8) We evangelize children because the Lord Jesus in His Word **COMMANDED US TO DO SO**. Before He returned to Heaven He commanded us "to preach the gospel to **EVERY CREATURE**" (Mark 16:15) and that "everybody" includes children. This is the most important reason why we should evangelize children. We do not really need any other reason. We are doing what He tells us, and wants us, to do

TEACH THEM BY HOOK AND BY CROOK

In the first issues of Mini Mag, and many times since then, we have studied the most important lesson for teachers of children to understand and put into practice. **THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF CHILDREN -THOSE WHO ARE SAVED AND THOSE WHO ARE NOT SAVED.** We have, therefore, two ministries. We are called to evangelise the unsaved children and we are called to feed the saved children. We see in the Bible that the Lord Jesus called Peter to be a "fisher of men," (Matthew 4:19) and that He also called him to "feed His lambs and His sheep." (John 21:15, 16) He called him to fish and to feed, to evangelise and to edify, to be a fisherman and a shepherd. We, as teachers of children, have, like Peter, two responsibilities in our ministry. We are to **"FISH"** for unsaved children and to **"FEED"** saved children. We are to win them for Jesus Christ, "by hook, like a fisherman or fisherwoman, and by crook, like a shepherd." Most of the emphasis in all our previous issues of Mini Mag has been on fishing, but in this issue, and the ones which follow, we will concentrate on how to feed saved children and help them to grow spiritually.

THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE SHEPHERD

1) Be sure, in your evangelistic fishing ministry, that you do not put any pressure on the children



to trust Christ by asking them for an immediate, physical response to what you have taught or by using protracted emotional appeals to get a response. Trust the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts and lead them, in their hearts, to come to Christ and trust Him. You cannot help children to grow spiritually if they have not truly trusted the Lord Jesus.

2) Accept as a Christian the child who seems to have truly received the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, unless, or until, he shows conclusively that he is not. If you initially express doubt about his salvation, you could discourage him and stunt his growth.

3) Do not expect too much from the child who has trusted the Lord Jesus. He is a baby who needs to grow, and it will take time for his growth to be evident. Don't judge him by adult standards. Above all, be patient, and keep an eye out for those little gleams of new life which, we trust, will appear.

HELP!



ACEW CAN HELP YOU

Has God has spoken to your heart and given you a burden and a desire to evangelize the children you are teaching, or the children who live in your locality? Are you not sure where to start and what to do? I understand your position because I was in the same position many years ago. God had laid it upon my heart to evangelize children, but I had no one to talk to or to show me what to do. I contacted Child Evangelism Fellowship and received some visual aids from them and detailed teaching outlines. They were a great help and I invited the local children to

come to our home once a week for a Good News Club. I followed the bible texts I had been given and used the visual aids and everything went well.

If you want to start your evangelistic ministry to children we in ACEW can provide you with visual aids and Bible lesson texts free of charge. These lessons are available as PowerPoint presentations for use on your laptop or tablet. You will see what is available by going to our website

www.cefbookministry.com.

My personal recommendation would be to start with the series of ten lessons on "Who is God?" Each lesson has a full teaching text to follow as you show the pictures one at a time. You could also encourage the children to learn a memory verse, and if you know any children's choruses, you could teach them to sing them with you. After you have taught these ten lessons, you could continue with another ten entitled. "What is God like?" And then continue with a series of twenty good evangelistic lessons entitled "Salvation the Gift of God."



THE POWER AND THE GREATNESS OF GOD

3 Illustrations for
children

1. “I was given this watch as a present several years ago. It’s a good watch, and it keeps perfect time. What would you say if I told you that it was not made by anyone but that it just happened when all the pieces came together? You would say “Don’t be silly. A watch can’t just appear from nowhere. A man who knows all about watches must have made it.” You would be right. It would be impossible for a watch to make itself or to come together by itself. Yet many people are ready to believe that our great and wonderful world just happened, and that the pieces just came together by themselves and that there was no-one who made it or created it. It just does not make sense. Our world, indeed the whole universe, must have been created by Someone Who is more powerful and greater than we simple human beings can imagine, and that Someone is GOD.”

2. “Does anyone know which star in the heavens is nearest us? Yes, it is the sun. Does anyone know what we call the sun and the planets which circle around it? Yes, it is called the solar system. Does anyone know which galaxy the solar system is a part of? Yes, it is called the Milky Way. But

did you know that the Milky Way is only one of millions of galaxies. It is possible, with powerful telescopes, to see a number of these galaxies. Our little human brains find it difficult to understand that there are millions of galaxies, each galaxy containing millions of stars (like, but mostly bigger than, our sun), and many of these stars have their own solar system and our world is only part of one of those systems. It makes us feel very small, doesn’t it? But it also helps us to know and believe that the One Who created this whole universe with all its stars and planets is VERY GREAT AND VERY POWERFUL. God made all these stars, He knows how many of them there are, and He knows each of them by name. The Bible tells us “He counts the numbers of the stars; He calls them all by their names. GREAT IS OUR LORD AND OF GREAT POWER.” (Psalm 147:4,5) He truly is GREAT and we worship Him.”

3. The Good News Club teacher had just finished the Bible lesson on Moses and the Children of Israel crossing the Red Sea. She wanted to know if the children had understood the lesson. As the children were leaving, she asked Johnny “If you can tell me something that God is able to do I’ll give you a piece of my chocolate bar.” Johnny smiled and replied “If you can tell me something that God is not able to do I will give you a whole chocolate bar.”

72 Years and Still Learning:

Personal advice from the author

DON’T FORGET TO THANK THEM

Our Christian life and service depend a lot upon teaching. We are taught what to believe; we are taught how to live; we are taught how to serve. It is the teacher who is the key person. He is the one whom God uses to help us to trust Him, to live for Him and to serve Him. The Bible underlines time and time again the importance and value of teaching. I have been looking back over 72 years of Christian life and ministry and I have been recalling the teachers who have helped me, firstly, in my Christian life, and secondly in my ministry to children. I thank God for them, and the way He used them in my life and ministry.

Fred Orr and his wife Ina were preparing to go to Amazonas in Brazil as missionaries. I was a young 22 year-old in my first year as a school teacher. I did not believe in creation and had no understanding of

salvation. Fred took me and my wife “under his wing” and patiently taught us from the Word of God. God opened our eyes, and through Fred’s teaching, led us both to trust Jesus Christ as our Saviour. He was our first spiritual teacher and our spiritual father. He continued to teach us until he left for Brazil and his ministry there. I wish I could thank him again for his teaching, but he is now with his Lord. I am grateful for others whose teaching and encouragement were a great help in the early days of my Christian life and ministry.

MY ADVICE TO YOU IS TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE TAUGHT YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY AND THANK THEM NOW WHEN YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY. THEY WILL REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR THANKS.

The Mini-Mag is published by Assisting Children’s Evangelists Worldwide and written by Sam Doherty with the assistance and advice of Terry Flannigan, Administrator of the ACEW Trust, and Kenneth Martin, Chairman of the ACEW Trust.

All of them have occupied leadership positions for many years in the worldwide ministry of Child Evangelism Fellowship®. The contents of each Mini-Mag are based upon the author’s 70 years of experience working with Child Evangelism Fellowship, successively as national director of Irish CEF, as European CEF regional director and as founder of the CEF Specialised Book Ministry. Contact can be made at www.CEFBookMinistry.com.

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