



## **Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide**

### **Devotional**

We have been seeking the biblical way to solve the many problems we face. Last month we saw that if we focus on our problems and keep worrying about them the result is failure. Indeed, the more we do so, the greater the problems become. We also made the great discovery last month that when a problem arises, we should immediately focus our thoughts and minds on God, and not, as we invariably do, on the problem. We need to learn how to react in this way, because it is contrary to how we usually react when problems come. But we also need to understand and learn what it means to **FOCUS ON GOD**. We don't just focus on God. We focus on a God Whom we know and understand.

We need to know and understand the God on Whom we are focussing. We should go back to the early issues of Mini Mag and remind ourselves of what God is like and understand His attributes. This is

## **KNOWING GOD IS THE KEY**

what happened to David in Psalm 13 when faced with his problems. He asked God to enlighten his eyes and God reminded him of His mercy, His power and His

goodness. When David now focussed on a God Who was merciful, Who had the power to defeat his enemies, a good God Who loved him, he had peace. The problems did not necessarily disappear; but he could now sing and be joyful. He no longer focussed on his problems. His focus was now on a God Whom he knew, a God Who was merciful, powerful and good.

An understanding of at least three of God's attributes will help you when you face a problem. As you focus on God Whom you know, He will bring one or more of these attributes to your mind. Your focus will then be an intelligent, thoughtful focus and not a blind focus.

**GOD IS SOVEREIGN:** He either sent the problem or He allowed it. The important truth is that this problem is under His control. Why should I worry?

**GOD IS WISE** He knows what He is doing. Everything is part of His great plan. We may not understand why something has happened, but He does, and He has a purpose in all He does or allows. Why should I worry?

**GOD IS GOOD** He will never do or allow anything which would harm me.



Do you ever feel a need for HELP in your life and in your ministry to children? Do you feel like the Macedonian who urged Paul to "come over into Macedonia and HELP us." (Acts 16:9) The Macedonian felt a need for HELP. Or are you like the 9 ½ tribes of Israel who needed HELP to occupy the land of Israel and God spoke to the other 2 ½ tribes and told them to come over the river Jordan and HELP their brothers in their hour of need? (Joshua 1:14) It is both normal and healthy to feel a need for HELP. The children's worker who needs NO HELP is a rarity and to be admired or pitied! It is interesting to realise that HELPS (the ability to help others) is a gift of the Spirit and is listed with the more "spectacular" gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:28. It is good to receive HELP and it is also good to give HELP.

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**We want you to HELP US by introducing others to Mini Mag and encouraging them to download them.**

He is my Father and He has said that "all things work together for my good." (Romans 8:28) Why should I worry?

**When a problem comes, and we focus on God and His power, His wisdom and His goodness HE WILL GIVE US PEACE. He will either remove the problem, or, more often, He will give us the grace and strength to live with it or overcome it. (2 Corinthians 12:8,9)**

Since the first issue of Mini Mag, we have devoted this section to a study of what the Bible teaches us about children and our ministry to them. We started by studying, in great detail, the four main passages about children in the Bible (located in Deuteronomy, Psalms, Matthew and Mark.) and we learned so much about their spiritual need and their great potential. We then studied, issue by issue, each of the 19 children or groups of children, who are portrayed in the Bible, and we learned many valuable lessons from these studies. We are starting to-day to scrutinise and look through the Bible to see if we can find any more isolated verses or passages about children and our ministry to them. I will give you the Bible references for each discovery I make, and you can locate them and follow them in your Bible. I will also suggest what lessons we can learn from each of these references, to help us in our ministry to the children.

► In Exodus 10:1,2 God requested that the signs He performed for Moses before Pharaoh should be used to **demonstrate** His power to “their sons and their sons’ sons.” (the children).

► In Exodus 12:24-28 God explained that one of the reasons He wanted them to celebrate the Passover was that the children **should see them doing so**, ask questions about it and be taught that it was a celebration of the power He had displayed in freeing the Israelites from Egypt and the Egyptians.

► In Exodus 13:7-9 God explained that the eating of unleavened bread for seven days to celebrate their departure from Egypt should be used as **a visible sign** to the children that He had freed them from Egypt.

► In Deuteronomy 6:20-25 God told them that, when the children **saw** the law and commandments being read, and asked what they meant, they should take the opportunity to teach them that God had led them out of Egypt and given them these commandments, which are a help and blessing to all who obey them.

► In Joshua 4:5-9, 20-23, God asked them to take 12 stones from the bed of the river they had crossed. They should then erect a monument with them on the riverbank to celebrate the crossing of the river Jordan on dry land. One of the reasons He did this was because He knew that children would **see them** and ask them why they were there., This would give them the opportunity to teach them about His great power in providing a dry walkway through the river into the promised land. Joshua also set up another 12 stones in the middle of the riverbed before the waters started flowing again.

I linked these five passages together because they all teach the same two lessons about children.

- 1) The openness of children and their desire to ask questions about spiritual things.
- 2) The wisdom of using visual aids (like the snake in the hand of Moses, the Passover lamb, eating bread and two piles of stones) to attract their attention, and to be the basis of what you want to teach them. Be sure to welcome their questions. We should always remember that it was God Who first used visual aids to teach children.



## KEY QUESTIONS ASKED

## BY CHILDREN’S WORKERS

**Question:** When a child comes to me after a meeting and tells me he wants to trust the Lord Jesus, what steps should I follow?

**Answer:** I gave an answer to this question in an early issue of Mini Mag; but because it so important I am glad to repeat it.

**Step 1** Set the child at ease. He might be nervous. Smile. Ask him for his name. (if unknown)

**Step 2** Find out his problem by asking him simple questions. Why do you want to talk with me? Have you ever sinned? Have you trusted the Lord Jesus before? If the child is sincere, seems to understand and was not saved before, go ahead with the next step.

**Step 3** Use simple questions to help you see if he has some knowledge of the main gospel truths like “What is God like?” “What did the Lord Jesus do on the cross” “What does He want you to do?” You could use a wordless book to help you do this.

**Step 4** Choose ONE Bible verse like Romans 10:13 (or Acts 16:31 or John 1:12) which shows the child what he needs to do to be saved (“Call on, or ask, the Lord Jesus to save him”) and what God will do if he does that. (“He will save him”).

Emphasise that this a promise from God and that He always keeps His promises.

**Step 5** Ask the child if he really wants to be saved, or if he wants to go home and think about it. Explain that if he wants to go ahead, he needs to understand that God will expect to see a change in his life.

**Step 6** The child prays and asks the Lord Jesus to save him.

**Step 7** Go back to the verse used in step 4 and explain that this is God’s promise that if he called, if he asked the Lord Jesus to save him, He promised to do so. God always keeps His promises.

**Step 8** Encourage the child to say “Thank you” to the Lord Jesus for saving him.

**Step 9:** If you have time, do a little “follow up work”. You could use the fingers of one hand to give five short points. Read your Bible. Talk to God. Tell others what you have done. If you sin confess it. Meet with other Christians.

**Step 10** Give him a promise from the Lord using the fingers on your other hand “ I—will--never--leave --you” (Hebrews 13:5)

## Your Ministry to Children:

### TEACH THEM ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

We want our saved children to grow spiritually. One of the very first themes or subjects you should teach them is the assurance of salvation. Spiritual growth is difficult for the saved children if they are not sure they are saved or if they are confused about it.

**WHAT IS ASSURANCE OF SALVATION?** It means that a saved child is sure he is saved and that he has everlasting life, and sure that he will always be saved and have eternal life. He will never lose his salvation.

**WHY TEACH ASSURANCE OF SALVATION?** If a saved child does not have this assurance, he finds it easy to doubt his salvation, or to feel, at times, that he needs to be saved again. As a result, he might become a weak struggling Christian. He also might have constant worries about his future. Will I lose my salvation? What happens to me if I die when I am not living right?

**WHAT SHOULD I TEACH?** The main reason many saved children do not have this assurance is because they have not been taught that they can have it and how to have it.

1) Take time to teach them what happened when they trusted the Lord Jesus. They were justified; they were regenerated, the Holy Spirit came to live in them, they became children of God, and they received eternal life.

2) Show them that these great truths guarantee their salvation. What happened can't be lost or taken away. For example, if the eternal life they received could be lost, then it wasn't eternal life!

3) Use the Word of God to show them that they are saved. When God says it, it is sure. Use verses like



Acts 16:31, Romans 10:13, John 1:12 to show that GOD HAS PROMISED their salvation if they trust the Lord Jesus or come to Him or receive Him into their lives. And GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

4) Use the Bible (for example 2 Corinthians 5:17) to show that they can also be sure they are saved when they can see a change in their lives. They will be far from perfect, but they should, and will, be different.

5) As the children understand, firstly, that God has promised their salvation in His Word, and, secondly, as they see some changes (even if small) in their lives, the Holy Spirit will give them the witness or assurance in their hearts that they are saved. (Romans 8:16)

#### WHEN SHOULD IT BE TAUGHT?

a) It should be taught right at the beginning of their new lives.

b) You should continue to teach it regularly, and from time to time, as a part of your ministry.

**HOW SHOULD I TEACH IT?** This will be our subject next month.

# HELP!



## ACEW CAN HELP YOU

If the teaching, in this Mini Mag, on counselling unsaved children and helping saved children to grow spiritually is quite new to you, I would suggest you go back to the early issues of Mini Mag at [www.cefbookministry.com](http://www.cefbookministry.com) for more details and download them. Others who would like a "refresher course" in these subjects, would also find these early issues very helpful. Actually, you could even download ALL the 42 issues of Mini Mag which have been produced so far, and put them together in a file which would, like a book, provide you with much help for yourself and your ministry,



We have also published two key books on these subjects "U-can Lead Children to Christ" and "U-can Help Christian Children to Grow" and we believe that you would find these two books very helpful. You can download them, free of charge on our website





## ILLUSTRATIONS OF SALVATION FOR CHILDREN

1. Tim trusted the Lord Jesus one evening after a special meeting which was held in his church. The preacher had counselled him and shown him the verse “Believe on (trust) the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.” (Acts 16:31) As he walked home, he was very happy that he had trusted the Lord Jesus and that he was saved.

But, later that evening, as he sat in the living room of his home, he began to have doubts. “Am I really saved?” he wondered. He even began to imagine that a little voice, from under the sofa he was sitting on, was saying to him, “You are not saved. That is all nonsense. There is nothing to it.” Of course, this was just his imagination. But Tim thought for a moment, and then he opened his Bible at Acts 16:31, and

held his Bible underneath the sofa and said “Look read it for yourself. God has said it, and it must be true.”

2. It was getting close to Christmas. Ben loved Christmas, and especially all the gifts he received at that time. “What would you like for Christmas this year?” his mother asked. “I would love to have a bicycle, Mum. All the boys have one, and if I had one, I would be very careful and have no accidents.” “We will think about it” replied his mother, “It would certainly be a great present. Tell me, what is the very best gift you have ever received?” Ben thought for a few moments and then said “I think the very best was the boxer dog puppy Buster which was waiting for me when I came down the stairs one morning. I take him everywhere and enjoy him so much.” “But don’t forget Ben,” replied his mother, “that 6 months ago you received a much better gift than either a bicycle or a puppy. The moment you asked the Lord Jesus to come into your life HE GAVE YOU EVER-LASTING LIFE, life that never ends, even after you die. What a gift! God sent His only Son to die for us and gives everlasting life to everyone, like you, who trusts Him. And the wonderful thing about this special gift is that it is EVER-LASTING. (John 3:16) You will always have it no matter what happens.” **Have you received this gift?**

### 72 Years and Still Learning:

## TRUST HIM

*The author's experience and the lesson he learned*

We had just moved into a new house, in the early days of our marriage, and in our ministry to children. Soon afterwards, we started a Good News Club in our new home. I visited all the parents in the housing estate in which we lived and invited them to send their children to our Good News Club. Over a period of several afternoons, I went from door to door telling the parents what we planned to do. All of them seemed positive and said they would like their children to come.

However, there was one home right opposite ours which I hesitated to visit. There were three children in that home, but the father was very hostile to the gospel. I knew this because I saw him trying to break up an open-air gospel meeting. I left this house to the very last, hoping that something would happen to make such a visit impossible. But nothing happened. I walked nervously up his pathway and knocked his door. He came to the door, glared at me and gruffly asked the question “Well?” Nervously I told him what we planned to do, and handed him an invitation leaflet for the children, suggesting they could come to the Good News Club. He glared at me, crumpled up the invitation, threw it on the ground and stomped back into his house. “Well, I tried and did all I could” I thought, as I walked away.

Can you imagine my surprise, when the Good News Club started the next week, to see all three of his children present and listening eagerly to the Gospel. I don’t know

what happened. God must have worked in some special way to make this possible. Those three children came every week to Good News Club along with the other forty or fifty who came. Eventually we had to divide the club into two clubs, a junior one and a senior one. One Friday afternoon, after the Club was finished, and we were tidying up, a knock came to the front door. I went to the door, and to my surprise it was the man from the house opposite with his three children. He was still gruff and barked at me “My three children have been coming to your meeting. I don’t approve of it, but I allow them to come. Now they are talking about becoming Christians, or something. They want to talk with you about it. I have told them they can” and he stomped away. The children came back into our home, and I had the joy and privilege of leading them to Jesus Christ. Some months later I heard that their mother had trusted the Lord Jesus and was attending an evangelical church. I know nothing about their father.

**The main lesson I learned is that God can do the impossible in our ministry if we trust Him. Is there something God wants you to do, and you are hesitating? Go ahead and do it and leave the results in God's hands. You might be wonderfully surprised at what will happen.**

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](http://www.CEFBookMinistry.com).

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