



Life of Christ

When and Where do I become a Christian?

Luke 23:32-43

Younger Verse

No one can snatch you out of God's Hand. John 10:28 paraphrased

Older Verse

I (God) give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. John 10:28

Lesson Goals

Know when you can become a Christian.
Explain where you can become a Christian.

Welcome Time

Have you ever wondered when and where you can become a Christian? Some people think that there is a certain time or place to believe in Jesus. Let's see what Jesus says.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Lots of people have ideas about when a person can believe in Jesus. Some people think you have to be 12 years old. Others think that you have to be an adult. The Bible does not say a certain time when we can trust Him. What it does say is that a person must really believe in Jesus with all his heart. It is easy to know about Jesus in your mind. That's not what God means. God wants you to believe in Jesus and trust Him with your heart.

For example, lots of people know **who** Emmitt Smith is. There are friends and family that really **know** Emmitt personally. You may know **who** Jesus is. However, He wants you to really **know** Him personally. You do that by believing Him and asking Him to come into your life.

Some people may think that a person has to ask Jesus into his heart at church or Bible study time. Guess what? The Bible tells us that there is no certain place that you have to do this. God is not so concerned about where you ask Jesus to come into your life. God is more concerned that you believe in Jesus and don't put it off. You could pray at Bible study, in your room, with a friend, or even in the bath tub! The main thing is that you are serious about trusting Jesus and you want Him to be with you forever.

There is a lesson in the Bible that gives an example of how someone believed in Jesus. It was at a very unusual place and at a very unusual time. Let's see what happened.

When Jesus was being taken to the hill to be crucified, two criminals walked with Him. They were being killed because they had done wrong.

When they reached the place called the "skull", they crucified Jesus and the two criminals by hammering nails in their hands and feet onto a wooden cross. One man's

cross was on Jesus' left side and the other was on His right. Jesus was in the middle.

Suddenly, Jesus said something that surprised everyone. He prayed and asked God to forgive everyone because they did not know what they were doing. Can you believe it? Even when Jesus was in so much pain and suffering, He was thinking about others.

People that were standing and watching started making fun of Jesus. They yelled insults at Him. They chuckled at Him and said, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is Jesus." They did not realize that Jesus had to die in order for us to be able to go to Heaven. He died for all people—even the people who were yelling the insults!

One of the criminals on the cross started insulting Jesus too. He wanted Jesus to save all of them! But the other criminal told him to stop. He said, "We are punished rightly for the things that we have done wrong. We are getting what we deserve. Jesus has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus told the criminal that he would be in Heaven. Why? It was because the man believed in Jesus and knew that Jesus was God's Son. He trusted Jesus and he became a Christian—even though he was about to die and he was hanging on a wooden cross.

Are you wondering what happened next? Well, soon after that, Jesus died. They laid Him in a grave and put a stone over the entrance. Three days later, on Sunday, something wonderful happened. Jesus came back to life! He was alive again! Because of what Jesus did for you, taking your punishment for your wrongs, you can go to Heaven, if you trust Him and ask Him to come into your life. Would you like to do this? Just like the thief became a Christian, you can too. Talk to me about it.

When can you become a Christian? The thief did not hear until he was about to die. But, he knew Jesus was telling the truth and he immediately believed. Some people are young when they believe and others are old. The point is that God wants us to trust Him when we understand and not wait or put it off until a later time. God wants us to trust Him and not make excuses. He promises to take care of us and help us always when we believe in Him. He will help us get through any hard times.

Learning Activities

Take time to help the children learn and respond to the lesson. Be sensitive to what they are thinking and feeling.

Memory Verse Activities

God promises that when we are in His family, no one can grab us or take us away from God. Try the game to take a ball or object out of your hand.

Prayer Time

Take prayer seriously. Make sure the kids are quiet and reverent during this time. If needed, tell the kids that they will only receive treats when the prayer is said. Explain the importance of respecting God.

Snack Time/CleanUp

Clean up and share some tasty treats with the kids. Encourage them to bring their friends next week.

Planning for March 10th
Does Jesus ever leave us?
The story of the lost son
Luke 15:11-27

Preschool Lesson For When and Where do I become a Christian?

There is a lesson in the Bible that gives an example of how someone believed in Jesus. It was at a very strange place and at a very strange time. Let's see what happened.

When Jesus was being taken to the hill to be put on the cross, two criminals walked with Him. They were being killed because they had done wrong.

When they reached the hilltop, Jesus and the two criminals were put on wooden crosses. One man's cross was on Jesus' left side and the other was on His right. Jesus was in the middle.

Suddenly, Jesus said something that surprised everyone. He prayed and asked God to forgive everyone because they did not know what they were doing. Can you believe it? Even when Jesus was in so much pain and suffering, He was thinking about others.

People that were standing and watching started making fun of Jesus. They yelled at Him. They laughed at Him and said, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is Jesus." They did not realize that Jesus had to die for us to be able to go to Heaven. He died for all people—even the people who were yelling the mean words!

One of the criminals on the cross started laughing at Jesus too. He wanted Jesus to save all of them! But the other criminal told him to stop. He said, "We are punished rightly for the things that we have done wrong. We are getting what we deserve. Jesus has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus told the criminal that he would be in Heaven. Why? It was because the man believed in Jesus and knew that Jesus was God's Son. He trusted Jesus and he became a Christian—even though he was about to die and he was hanging on a wooden cross.

Are you wondering what happened next? Well, soon after that, Jesus died. They laid Him in a grave and put a stone over the entrance. Three days later, on Sunday, something wonderful happened. Jesus came back to life! He was alive again! Because of what Jesus did for you, taking your punishment for your wrongs, you can go to Heaven, if you trust Him and ask Him to come into your life. Would you like to know more about Jesus?

Sing "Jesus in the morning."

Hands-On Activities For When and Where do I become a Christian?

Play a game to learn the importance of the memory verse. Pick someone to hold a ball or object. Now have the other kids try to grab the object out of the person's hand. Sometimes we can grab things out of someone's hand, but no one can grab anything out of God's hand. That means that when you believe in Jesus, God will keep you and nothing can take you away from His love.

Use your imagination to make Crosses. You may want to use uncooked spaghetti, pretzel rods, breadsticks, etc.

Bring a nail and talk about how Jesus suffered to help us. His death on a cross was very painful. Share how He took our punishment for the things that we have done wrong. This may be a wonderful day for someone to trust Jesus. Be sensitive to the kids and see if anyone is ready to trust Jesus. Ask questions like Who? What? Where? When? Why? to make sure they understand what is going on.

Have the kids trace their hand then write the verse on the hand. Or blow up a surgical glove and talk about how God never lets us go when we trust Him.