

The Bible For Every child.

Children relate to the Bible in different ways at different ages.

Young children (3-6 years) accept literally what they are told and they enjoy the story. They do not expect the story to be logical. They do not fit it into a real or historical framework.

They enjoy:

- Repeating a familiar story
- Rhymes and actions which reflect the story
- Pretending to be people in the story
- Comparing the story with their life and friends

They can identify with the people in the story with sympathy or indignation.

They need guidance to help them discover what they could do to apply the story.

Junior children (7-10 years) are rooted in literal factual thinking. They want to know if things “really happened” and when and where. They soak up background detail like a sponge and they like to compare life then with life today. They find it difficult to understand abstract ideas unless they are explained through factual illustrations. E.g. The Trinity is like ice, water and steam.

They like to know:

- How Bible events affect life today
- How unseen and spiritual things can be real
- That God is the Lord of computers and science as well as the church
- That Bible people had similar problems to ours.

They like to discuss what they would have done if they had been there and to work out for themselves what the message is. They like to have their questions answered. They like to make plans about putting the message into action. If they get involved with the planning they will run with it.

Older children (11-14 years) are emerging out of the world of facts into the world of ideas. They want to prove they can think for themselves and make their own decisions. They are working out the issues which lie behind the facts and they are sometimes impatient with adults for not seeing the “obvious solutions” to problems.

They ask questions like these:

- How do you know the Bible is true anyway?
- Why is Christianity better than other religions?
- Why must I believe just because you do?
- Why don't you do something about the world?

They need a leader who is not afraid of their doubts and questions and who will not condemn them for thinking. They want living role models that they can admire because good friends hold them where good teaching will not.

They should see the truth of the Bible working out in their own lives, sometimes in ways that they cannot explain.