

Parables

A creative guide for all ages to learn God's Word together.



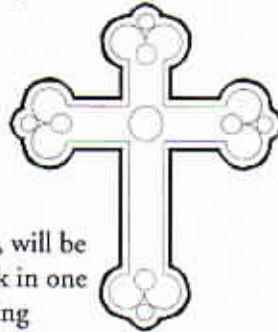
By MICHEAL C. HARRIS

Theme: Steps to the Kingdom / **Scripture:** Acts 2:37-41

— **Verse:** "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the Name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven." *Acts 2:38*

— **Concept:** There are certain things that need to be accomplished in your life if you are to live in the full blessing of Christ's salvation:

1. Acknowledge your life is empty and desire to change - Repentance.
2. Ask Jesus to forgive you and make you a new person - Born Again.
3. A public confession of your faith in Christ - Water Baptism.
4. Living in the power and effect of Jesus in the world - Holy Spirit.



— **Illustration:** The famous German inventor, Professor Schneezenhymer, will be showing us his newest creation - THE HURRY UP MACHINE. You simply walk in one side, tell it what you want to be, then walk out the other end changed without going through all the time consuming and painful steps usually necessary. (You can use a refrigerator box for the machine - Christmas lights and sound effects can be turned on when machine is operating). The Professor names all the steps being skipped as the following four kids go through the machine:

1. 2nd grader skips 3rd-6th grades and all that homework to be in Jr. High - she exits with a diploma in hand.
2. Boy wants to be a great soccer player and skips practice, learning rules, team work, etc. - exits with a soccer ball and ready for stardom.
3. Girl wants to be a diver in the Olympics and she skips learning to swim and practicing flips - exits wearing a swim cap and ready for the high boards.
4. Wants to be baptized so he can tell his friends he's a Christian, so thanks to the Hurry Up Machine, he skips repenting, asking for forgiveness, and being born again - exits all wet carrying a big Bible.

As Prof. S. is bragging about his machine, each of the above return with a sad story:

1. Got all F's on report card and had no friends in Jr. High.
2. Thought you ran ball for touchdown and no one wanted him on their team.
3. Did belly flop and sank to bottom of pool where she nearly drowned.
4. Even though he told everyone he was a Christian, he still behaved the same and remained empty and miserable on the inside.

As they all walk off saying his machine doesn't work and they are going to go back and do things the right way, the Prof. says all the bugs are now worked out and asks group if anyone would like to become an astronaut or sky diver.

— **Discussion:** Read today's scripture. Why can't you skip any steps to become a good student or soccer player? What happened to each of the kids in today's lesson? What are the steps into God's Kingdom? Discuss what each step means. What would happen if you tried to skip any of these steps? Could you be Born Again without repentance? Would being baptized in water forgive your sins? Make sure everyone understands all these steps are necessary in order to live a fruitful life for the Lord.



Family Review

Theme: Steps to the Kingdom / **Scripture:** Acts 2:37-41

— **Verse:** "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the Name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven." *Acts 2:38*

MOM and DAD HELP!

The directions for this activity are a little hard to follow, so have your parents help you. Here is what you do - using an NIV Bible, look up the following verses about salvation. The first verse has the number "9" after it. Counting from the first word in that verse, write the 9th word in the space under "WORD". For example, using today's memory verse, Acts 2:38 (12) would be the 12th word, Jesus. To get the number for the word in the next verse, use the number in the alphabet of the first letter in the word you find. In the example of our memory verse, the first letter in Jesus is "J" which is the 10th letter in the alphabet - so, you would write the number 10 in the space under "NUMBER OF NEXT WORD" and you would find the 10th word in the next verse. Simple huh? Continue through all the verses until you find the last word. Bring this word to church next week and get a prize! Don't skip any steps or it won't work. You can do it!

<i>Verse -</i>	<i>Word -</i>	<i>Number of Next Word</i>
1. Revelation 3:3 (9)	_____	_____
2. Romans 6:23	_____	_____
3. Romans 10:10	_____	_____
4. Matthew 3:15	_____	_____
5. II Peter 3:9	_____	_____
6. Ephesians 1:13	_____	_____
7. Romans 10:9	_____	_____
8. Hebrews 11:6	_____	_____
9. I John 1:9	_____	_____
10. John 3:3	_____	_____

— **Family Activity:** Involve the whole family in preparing dinner one night. On cards, write the parts of recipes for which each person needs to be responsible. After dinner, talk about the importance of following the steps of a recipe in cooking. Relate this to the steps in becoming a strong Christian in Acts 2:38.