

He is Real!

The brief conversation with a child began with the question from the grandparent: Whose birthday is coming soon? Even though the child had just finished singing in a Christmas musical entitled “Someone is having a birthday,” the 4 year old was stumped. After many guesses and with much coaxing the child finally came up with the name Jesus. She then gave her reason why she didn’t think of Him sooner: “Jesus wasn’t a real person.” That hit us “between the eyes.” We’ve got work to do on that one.

Children have it tough. They haven’t (fortunately) met Jesus face to face. They haven’t seen Him on TV. They haven’t seen actual photographs of Him. They have only heard people talk about Jesus. They may have never felt they were personally in the presence of Jesus. To a child, reality without seeing, feeling or touching is a difficult concept to grasp.



Adults have it easier only if they accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Believers have learned that the Bible describes Jesus and his interaction with people who lived in His presence. The Bible records eyewitness accounts of the people and events of Jesus’ earthly life. Archeology has unearthed artifacts that verify what we have read in the Bible. Ancient ruins in the Holy Land also confirm what we read in the Bible.

The Bible assures us that Jesus was real. *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us (John 1:14)*. God came down to earth and lived among us in the person of Jesus Christ. We know that Jesus was crucified, died and was buried. Our Apostle’s Creed tells where Jesus is now: He was resurrected and “sits on the right hand of God, the Father.” Jesus is alive today and very real, but His residence is in Heaven. But how do you teach that to a child?

As wild as the imaginations of children are, the supernatural is difficult to grasp unless there is a first-hand experience. We recently took our grandchildren to see a Paw Patrol “live show.” The cartoon characters they see on TV were right there on the stage as real people. Seeing the live show transformed the cartoon characters into real people. Most children have sat on Santa’s lap or seen him in parades and around town. At an early age children think it is logical that Santa Claus will visit their home on Christmas Eve because they have been face-to-face with the character.

Children rarely see movies of Jesus in the flesh. We shield them from shows depicting the passion of the Christ and Christmas time celebrations of the birth of Jesus don’t connect children with the ministry of Jesus – He is younger than they are. They simply don’t see Jesus portrayed by human beings. No wonder it is difficult for children to connect to Jesus being real. We need to help children visualize Jesus as having lived among us.

As grandparents we accept the challenge of assuring our grandchildren that Jesus is very real. Those conversations have already begun, with progress being made. We need to find a thought process children can understand. Someone is having a birthday. We don’t have to guess who that person is. Let’s celebrate the birthday of a very real Savior we all hope to eventually meet face-to-face.

Questions: How about you? Is Jesus real in your eyes? How do you know? How do you make it understandable to a 4-year old?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. We tend to think of things that are real to be restricted to what we can see, feel and touch. Yet, we know that Jesus lived on this earth long before our life began. We know that He will come again. But our life is in between. Help us to understand that we feel His love and His Mercy and Grace touch us. Give us the words to communicate that Jesus is alive today to the children in our midst. Amen.