

Having Gospel Conversations with your Children

What is the hardest thing about talking to your children about spiritual things?

3 Goals for This Session

1. Be Reminded How Much We Need the Gospel And So Do Our Children.

A Look at the Gospel in the Gospel of Mark

- Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God
-The centrality of the gospel and God's Story is the ministry and message of Jesus.
- Mark 1:14-15 ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
-Believing in the gospel was and still is the primary purpose of Jesus ministry.
- Mark 8:34-36 ³⁴ And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?
*-Faithful followers of Jesus leverage their lives for the sake of Jesus **and** the gospel.*
- Mark 10:28-31 ²⁸ Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." ²⁹ Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. ³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first."
- Faithful followers of Jesus reorient their lives around the gospel as they live for the eternal and not just the earthly.
- Mark 13:3-10 ³ And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?" ⁵ And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray...¹⁰ And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.
-The spread of the gospel to all nations is God's purpose for this time in redemptive history. Shouldn't it be our purpose for our time on earth?
- Mark 16:15 And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.
-The last words of Jesus on earth were a command to proclaim the gospel to all creation. We don't have to search for some other purpose for our lives. The best place to start is at home. Then in your neighborhood, at work, and to the nations.

What is the Gospel?

- Specific Definition – good message or good news

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. 1 Cor. 15:3-5

- The broad message of the gospel is **God's Story** of the creation of everything, the fall of humanity, our redemption from sin by faith in Jesus, and the restoration of all things in eternity in heaven for believers.

What are the implications of the Gospel?

1 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else. 4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. 7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus. 8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2

Are we daily living grounded in the gospel?

How do children learn to talk? By primarily listening to you! How will our children learn the priority that the gospel should take in their life? By watching and listening to you!

Does the gospel make in your daily life in how you think? How you talk to yourself and others? How you make plans about the future? What the biggest goal for your children right now?

What may need to change in your life to begin to better orient your life around Jesus and the gospel?

2. Understand Clearly What Are Gospel Conversations.

⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates...²⁰ “When your son asks you in time to come, ‘What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you?’ ²¹ then you shall say to your son, ‘We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. Deut. 6

- What a Gospel Conversation is **NOT**:
 - General God-talk (Facebook post; country music)
 - Talk about Church
 - Talk about Morality or being Good. “Do better so God will accept you.”
 - Do you parent that way? Act better so that I will accept you
- **Gospel Conversation** – An intentional, Spirit-led, **DIALOGUE** aimed at engaging unbelievers to consider the **TRUTH** of the gospel or encouraging believers with the **IMPLICATIONS** of the gospel.
- **A Gospel Conversation may not include all the COMPONENTS of the gospel. The goal is to partner with the Spirit in ENCOURAGING the person to move CLOSER to the Lord in their understanding or actions.**

What is the biggest obstacle in having conversations

3. Commit To Learning To Have To Gospel Conversations

³ His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire...¹² Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. ¹³ I think it right, as long as I am in this body,^[b] to stir you up by way of reminder, ¹⁴ since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. ¹⁵ And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. 2 Peter 1

I remember that my Grandfather used to always say, “Remember who you are.” What will your kids and grandkids remember that you talked about or said the most?

Getting Better at Gospel Conversations

4 Types of Conversations (*Conversational Evangelism* by David & Norman Geisler)

1. Hearing Conversation– We take the role of a **Musician**
 - a. Listen more carefully
 - b. Learn their story
 - c. Hear the sour notes people are singing to us
2. Illuminating Conversation – We take the role of an **Artist**
 - a. Paint a picture using questions to help others see themselves in a more true light.
3. Uncovering Conversation – We take the role of an **Archaeologist**
 - a. Dig up their history and find the real barriers that are chaining them down.
4. Building Conversation – We take the role of a **Builder**
 - a. Find common ground
 - b. Build a bridge to the gospel
 - c. Remember the Goal
 - d. Transition to the Gospel

The **foundation** for having regular and meaningful gospel conversations with your children is a **strong personal relationship with Jesus** and a **strong relationship with your child**.

Tips for Gospel Conversations

- **Enter your child's world.** Have fun with your child! Be interested and excited about what they are excited about. Spend time doing things they like to do. Value their friends. Look for ways that things they are interested can lead to gospel conversations.

How can I make a gospel analogy or point out a sliver of truth in what we are doing?
Example: Movies (Star Wars; Toy Story 4; Encanto); Song Lyrics; YouTube Videos; Cultural Moments; Creation.

- **Open your world to your child.** Regularly invite your child into your interests, hobbies, work, conversations, dreams, etc.

How can I show my child how Jesus and the gospel informs my daily life?

- **Don't hide your mess.** Share your mistakes and answer your child's questions with honesty (age-appropriately). We all have a past.

How can I humble myself and share how I could have avoided mistakes if I had allowed Jesus and the gospel message to impact my decisions?

- **Share your spiritual life.** Your children will view how important your relationship with Jesus is by what they see you do and hear you say. Leave your Bible out on the counter. Post a Bible verse on the fridge or your car dashboard. Share at mealtime what the Lord is teaching you.

How can I show my child that my relationship with Jesus influences my daily life?

- **Be intentional about SHEPHERDING your child's spiritual life in view of the Great SHEPHERD.** Cowboys get behind and drive cows to go places they may not want to go. Shepherds spend time with their sheep and model the way to go. Jesus loves your child even more than you do. When bad things happen, we go to someone we trust who cares about us. A child will be more prone to come to Jesus with challenges and for decisions if they have learned to trust Him.

How can I lead my child spiritually instead of trying to drive them spiritually to where I want them to be?

- **Find encouragement from other believers/LifeGroup.** Get others to help you pray for your children during challenging seasons.

Am I allowing others in the body of Christ helping to invest in the spiritual life of my family?

Tips from Question/Answer Time:

Recommended Resources

Consistent prayer and Bible reflection. John 4 models a gospel conversation.

The Jesus Story Book Bible – Sally Lloyd Jones

The Biggest Story: How the Snake Crusher Brings Us Back to the Garden – Kevin DeYoung
The Biggest Story ABC (1-3 year olds)

The Ology: Ancient Truths, Ever New – Marty Machowski
Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God
Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God

This Is the Gospel: A Kids Read Truth Story & Scripture Book

The Purpose Driven Life Devotional for Kids – Rick Warren

YouVersion Bible App. Your family can all join a Bible reading plan.

Gospel – JD Greear

Turning Everyday Conversations into Gospel Conversations - Jimmy Scroggins

The Gospel Conversation: Engaging the Lost in Everyday Life – Sam Greer

Conversational Evangelism - David & Norman Geisler

Questioning Evangelism - Randy Newman