

TOOLS FOR PARENTS



Grow Your Gifts

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

LESSON

Exercising our God-given gifts

KEY VERSE

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” (Eph. 4:11-12 NIV)

EAR CHECK (STORY COMPREHENSION)

Q: What is Miss Harbor dressed as?

A: *An astronaut*

Q: Why is Gooz disappointed after speaking to Miss Harbor?

A: *She thinks Miss Harbor is criticizing her*

Q: C.J. thinks he is helping a needy person, but to whom does he really offer his money?

A: *An angel*

Q: What does Paw Paw Chuck say C.J. used when he helped the needy person?

A: *Discernment*

Q: Now that she doesn’t want to be a painter, what does Gooz say she wants to be when she grows up?

A: *A singer-songwriter*

HEART CHECK (SPIRITUAL APPLICATION)

Q: **Is it wrong to want someone else’s gift?**

A: *It’s natural to admire and appreciate other people’s gifts. But don’t miss out on the gifts God has for you because you’re focusing on someone else’s. Remember, God gives spiritual gifts to all of His children—including you. And it’s your job to figure out what your gifts are and to practice using them whenever you have the opportunity. You see, God chose those specific gifts to match your talents, your personality, and the special plan He has for your life.*

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Q: I know that exercising my gift is important, but won't God be angry at me if I mess up? What will happen if I use my gift badly?

A: I guarantee that you will make mistakes with your gift. No one is perfect. But if you humbly learn from your mistakes, you can become better and better at using your gift in the right ways. So don't be afraid to try things you haven't tried before. That's how we learn. The most important thing is that you have the right motive—that you're doing your best to use your gifts in a way that brings glory to God. Don't use them for your own glory, leave that to God. In time, He will reward you for using them well.

"I" CHECK (PERSONAL APPLICATION)

1. Read the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25:14-30. What conclusions do you come to after reading this story? In this parable, the word talent is referring to a certain amount of money. To better understand Jesus' parables, sometimes it helps to substitute the terms used in the story with things that you can relate to. For example, think of God as the master in this story and think of yourself as the servant. Now think of the talents as spiritual gifts and natural abilities. What do you think God would expect of you if He gave you certain spiritual gifts and abilities? What do you think God's response would be if you chose not to use those gifts? What are some ways you can help your gifts grow?
2. Just as it is important for us to exercise for our physical health, God wants us to do exercises to improve our spiritual health (1 Tim. 4:8). What are some things Christians can do to get a spiritual workout? Ask people around your church what they do to stay spiritually fit.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This episode was inspired by *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture* by H. R. Rookmaaker. In this book, the author explains that art possesses meaning and describes how art communicates ideas in the minds of those exposed to it. The world has no reason to believe that one idea has more merit than another—herein lies the problem. As disciples of Christ, some ideas are not worthy of our attention (Phil. 4:8). (Can there be a more politically incorrect statement?) It is not good to be educated in the depths of human depravity.

Two things crystallized in my mind while reading this book. First, when we see disturbing art, we are better off feeling compassion for the person who made it than attacking him or her. Second, we should certainly protect innocent minds from this type of imagery, but going to war against “evil art” accomplishes little. Rather, we need to produce good art. However, it seems this is something believers rarely consider. Our children should grow up creating art. Smart, well-trained believers should be making secular movies that are fundamentally Christian in their outlook. We need talented believers producing songs that move our culture toward a biblical world view. The list goes on. Art moves us. So why is it that Christians are reluctant to utilize it for kingdom work?

What we don't need is more poorly conceived, badly constructed art from Christians, art that we are expected to embrace merely because a believer made it. We need to encourage our kids to use art to say the things that our culture needs to hear but very few are saying.

In this *Paws & Tales* episode, we learn that Gooz has a gift that was not given to her merely for her own enjoyment. It was given to her in order for her to share it with others. Now that she knows she has a gift, she needs to work at it, practice, and even fail. The same is true of C.J. and his perhaps more “spiritual” gift. While both their gifts come from the Lord, that doesn't mean they can immediately use them well. Places like seminaries and Bible colleges or even schools of art and design can help people develop their God-given gifts. C.J. needs to exercise his discernment so that he can learn to tell the difference between his preconceived notions and what he is really seeing and feeling. As he learns, C.J. will sometimes use his gift poorly and may even fail at times, but he will also grow into his gift and be able to use it better in time. In fact, one day all of Wild Mountain will need him to use it well. I think the same is true of each of our gifts and us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David B. Carl'.

David B. Carl
Creative Director
Paws & Tales