

TOOLS FOR PARENTS



Hold the Anchovies

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

Obedience

KEY VERSE

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Mic. 6:8 NIV)

EAR CHECK (STORY COMPREHENSION)

- Q: What event did C.J. not want to attend?
A: *A friendship dinner at the Shady Days Rest Home*
- Q: What did C.J. help Gus move?
A: *A lamp*
- Q: What happened to C.J. as he walked outside the rest home?
A: *He fell through the storm door into the pantry*
- Q: Where did Gus say he was living now?
A: *At the rest home*
- Q: What does Mrs. Nesbit chase Gooz around with?
A: *Her false teeth*

HEART CHECK (SPIRITUAL APPLICATION)

- Q: The way God acts in the story of Jonah seems to be completely unfair. What are some unfair things He did?**
- A: God wanted to reach out and save a very wicked city. That seemed unfair. He also forgave a rebellious man of God. That seemed very unfair. Fair treatment is what Jonah thought he wanted. Nineveh was a terribly sinful place that deserved total destruction, and Jonah wanted it to be destroyed. However when Jonah was shown an unfair amount of forgiveness by God, he was very open to a bit of fairness.

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Q: What surprised Jonah the most is that God wanted to do something that seemed to be the opposite of what He should want to do. What does this tell us about God?

A: God has plans that we do not know about, cannot expect, and that will surprise us when we are told. Jonah could not let go of his preconceived notions of how he thought God should behave, so he took things into his own hands. By doing so, he was not only being disobedient to God, he was wishing for the destruction of a whole city rather than trusting that God knew better. God is infinite and all-knowing; we certainly are not. If we keep this in mind, we should actually be ready and expect to be surprised by such a great and big God (Isa. 55:8-9).

“I” CHECK (PERSONAL APPLICATION)

1. Name some things that you knew you had to do but didn't want to do. Why did you do them in the end? Have there been some things you were supposed to do but didn't? What happened?
2. What are some things God has asked us as Christians to do?
3. Have you ever visited a hospital or retirement home? How did your visit make you feel? How do you think your visit made the people there feel? Why do you think it is important to spend time with the sick and the elderly?
4. Read the book of Jonah in the Bible. How many times did Jonah disobey God? How many times did he obey? When Jonah obeyed God, what did God do for Jonah?
5. Read Exodus 20:12. What is the promise that God makes to all who show obedience to their parents? Why do you think it is important to obey your parents?

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Jonah and the fish is one of my favourite Bible stories. One of the reasons is that it tells us a story you wouldn't think God would want to have told. It's bad for recruitment. It's bad marketing. A prophet of God who does not want to do his job is, well, embarrassing to the cause. For believers who are, at times, uncomfortable or even unwilling to obey God's calling (which includes all of us at one time or another), it is one of the most encouraging stories ever written. Jonah, you see, was not fired or stripped of his prophet's staff and sent into exile; he was given a precious and loving gift. He was allowed to see how deeply God loved him and how deeply God feels about those who have turned their backs on Him.

I was told some years back that when a champion chess player makes a move, it is always for at least two reasons. A good move would, for example, attack the opposing knight and protect your own bishop. Never make a move without at least two reasons. Pretty smart. When God leads us to do something for someone else, there are many reasons for it, not just two, and it's probably not just to help the person in need. There may be hundreds of reasons, thousands of reasons that God asks of us what He does. One of them, though, is always because it will be better for us after we obey. God wanted the city of Nineveh to change and He wanted Jonah to change, too. He had mercy on both a vile city devoted to sin and a rebellious prophet devoted more to his sense of justice than to his God. Both of God's goals were accomplished in this story even though Jonah started out running in the opposite direction. As an occasionally rebellious follower of Christ, I find that pretty encouraging.

The story of Jonah tells me that to obey God will accomplish things that I cannot imagine. The odds were that the people of Nineveh would kill Jonah before his first sermon was finished. Honestly, who knew that these desperately wicked people would listen to the Word of God? God knew they would. Who knew that this story would bolster the hearts of future believers because it would be recorded in Scripture for all of time? God knew. This is a good story for what it teaches us about ourselves, but it is a great story because of what it teaches us about the character and heart of God.



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