

Talking To Your Kids About Death

An older woman once approached me to tell me why she liked the Children's Object Lesson in the worship service. Her reason surprised me. "You frequently talk about death, and that's important," she said. "It is not good when parents try to insulate their kids from the reality of death. It happens, and they need to know how to deal with it." She said that as someone who had a hard time coping with her mother's death when she was a girl, in part because death was a forbidden subject in their home.

Do you talk to your kids about death? They hear the news reports of coronavirus fatalities each day. They know that the isolation, social distancing, and personal hygiene recommendations are about preventing infection from a virus that can kill people. And they likely are anxious or afraid.

But what do you say? Well first, please don't lie to them. Don't tell them, "Don't worry, Honey. I won't let anything bad happen to you." If they express concerns that you might die, don't say, "I'm not going anywhere. I will always be here for you." Those are promises you can't keep. Bad things like illness and death can and do happen to children and their parents.

So tell them the truth about death. The first part of the truth about death is not pleasant. But you have to tell them. You have to tell them that how bad death is. That it is not only a natural part of the "circle of life." It was never supposed to happen. Adam and Eve introduced death into the world by their sin in the Garden Of Eden (Genesis 3:19) We all will die because we are all sinners who do wrong and **"The wages of sin is death,"** as Paul says in Romans 6:23. Even worse, our sin should result in eternal separation from a holy God in hell. Isaiah 59:2 tells us, **"But your iniquities have separated you from your God."** That is the harsh truth about death...

...But it is harsh truth that God addresses with amazing comfort in Christ, the only comfort that can truly ease their and your fear of death. So share with them the comforting truth that God loved them and you so much that he changed death from the scary door that opens to hell to the welcoming door that opens to heaven. He did that by sending his Son to die for all the bad things we do on the cross. By his death for us, Jesus forgave our sins. Then he rose again from the dead. Now, when we die, we get to go heaven. Jesus promised that when he said, **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."** (John 3:16)

And heaven will be great. Tell you kids that Heaven is a perfect place, where we will be with each other and never be separated again. Jesus will be there too, and make sure nothing bad ever happens to us again.

So talk to your kids about death. If you feel you need to build up your own faith and confidence in Jesus before doing that, contact us and we can help with that. Because we want your kids and you to face death with the comfort and confidence that is found alone in Jesus Christ.