

The Dawn Treader News

HELPING PARENTS DISCIPLE THEIR CHILDREN



AN ASLAN ACADEMY RESOURCE

THE DAWN TREADER NEWS ISSUE 1.2

Aslan Academy

HELPING PARENTS DISCIPLE THEIR CHILDREN



The *Aslan Academy* is designed to help parents teach and equip their children to become effective disciples of Jesus. Parents have the responsibility and joy of discipling their kids, and we believe that discipleship is vitally important at every stage of life, and particularly with children. The *Aslan Academy* program is organized to be a journey that parents go on with their children. The *Dawn Treader Newsletter* is a supplement to the *Aslan Academy* curriculum available on our website. This issue of the *Dawn Treader* will focus on the Nature of God, His greatness, and how we are to honor him (Psalm 24).



Aslan Moments

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS ON PREPARING THE HEART

Aslan Moments are purpose-driven opportunities to engage children with important topics. We offer one key question per week, the answers to which parents can then explore with their children throughout the week.

Preparing the heart

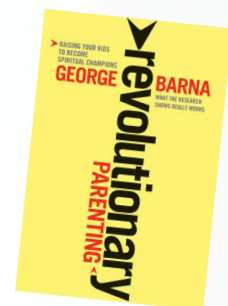
For week one, ask the first question over an unhurried meal. Let the children think about it and then offer their own answers. The children should talk more than the parents. Throughout the week, offer the different reasons highlighted and let the children discuss them. (Parents, read through the relevant bible passages in advance.) Challenge the children to look up other verses addressing the question. Do the same for the following questions each week for the month.

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Aslan Resource of the Month

Revolutionary Parenting – George Barna

Revolutionary Parenting – George Barna
By studying spiritually mature adults, prominent researcher George Barna examines essential steps that their parents took to help them grow to spiritual maturity. He also looks at why current parenting styles are not working. This book will give parents great insight into what goes into a transformed heart.



Aslan Moments (CONTD)

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS ON PREPARING THE HEART

Week One: Why should we honor God and trust Him? (John 3:16, 1 John 4:19)
Discuss God's character
Discuss God's love
Discuss God's desire to rescue us

Week Two: How can we honor God? (1 Chronicles 16:23-31, esp. v. 29)
Praise Him
Talk to Him in prayer
Obey Him and His teachings

Week Three: How can parents of young children honor God? (Deuteronomy 11:18-22)
Teach them about God
Be ready to answer tough questions
Pray for their children

Week Four: Why should children honor and trust their parents? (Ephesians 6:1-3)
God commands it (Fifth Commandment)
God has given parents the responsibility to raise Godly children
Parents love their children and want them to know and understand the truth

Theologian Theodore Conversation Corner

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: HOW CAN YOU KNOW A GOD YOU CAN'T SEE?

Theodore: Good morning, Douglas. Where are you off to?

Douglas: The library. I didn't expect to meet you here by the church. What are you doing here on a Wednesday?

Theo: I had a prayer meeting with a few friends, and I stayed afterward to be alone for a couple minutes. I like to pray by myself in church sometimes; the quiet surroundings make me feel more reverent and attentive.

Dou: Oh. Well, I wouldn't know anything about that; I never pray myself.

Theo: Why not, Douglas? Don't you believe in God?

Dou: Honestly, Theo, I don't know. I wouldn't say that I don't believe in God, because I don't think it would be honest. It would bother me to go around calling myself an atheist, as though I could prove His non-existence, which of course I can't. But I don't have any way of proving His existence to myself, either. I try not to think about it too much.

Theo: But don't you think that this is too important of an issue to overlook? I mean, if God does exist, you're missing out on the most important fact of life by ignoring Him. C.S. Lewis once said: "One must keep on pointing out that Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance, and, if true, of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important" (*God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*). You have to take it or leave it.

Dou: Yes, but what if you want to believe but can't—I mean, if you can't find any proof for the existence of a God?

Theologian Theodore (CONTD)

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: HOW CAN YOU KNOW A GOD YOU CAN'T SEE?

Theo: Before we address this question, do you mind if I ask you another one?

Dou: Go ahead.

Theo: Are you sure that you can't find any proof for God's existence, or that you couldn't sensibly believe without the exact kind of proof you're looking for? I just want to make quite sure we understand each other here: you are saying that you would need to materially "sense" God, using at least one of your five senses, in order to prove His existence to yourself?

Dou: I guess that's what I mean. Don't you think that makes sense?

Theo: Well, I know that one of Jesus' disciples did—"doubting Thomas," they called him. You can read all about him in the book of John, chapter 20, verses 24 through 29. There's an important lesson for all of us in that story. Douglas, don't you ever email or text?

Dou: Of course I do.

Theo: Well, do you ever doubt that there is someone on the other end, even though you can't physically see or hear or touch them? And sometimes you contact people that you will never meet in this world other than through cyberspace, but you still believe they exist: why should you doubt spiritual forms of communication any more than technological ones? It's very strange, how most of us have no difficulty accepting physically demonstrated activities, no matter how really unbelievably miraculous they may be—take automatically opening doors and remote controls, for example—but we can't bring ourselves to believe in the existence of spiritual realities, even though it is things that belong to the spiritual world—like love and sense of community and self-sacrifice and justice—that really matter much more to most of us than advances in technology or objects made of metal or plastic!

Dou: Yes, I see your point, Theo, but you have to admit, that even if you can be certain that someone is on the end of your emails or text messages, you can't be certain who. You might be deceived completely by who they said they were, if you never actually met them and checked up.

Theo: Right, and that's why God came to earth as Jesus, to reveal Himself in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16), so we can be sure He is Who He says He is. Besides, wouldn't those people who deceive others over the Internet be wrong?

Dou: Of course! It's always wrong to deceive others.

Theo: I agree with you, but where do we get this sense of right and wrong? Certainly not because any of us live it out perfectly! There has to be a God, a Judge and Moral Lawgiver Who really knows right from wrong, in order for Him to give us this sense. We could never have developed it on our own. And look around you at the world: how beautiful and complex and glorious it is. Someone very great and powerful and loving must have made it for us—mere unthinking processes of science would not care whether the world was pleasing to us humans or not. And that's why prayer is so important: we need to thank God for all He has done for us, and because He is the only One Who can do everything best for us, He is the most sensible One to ask to meet our needs.

Dou: Maybe you're right, but I don't know how to pray, Theo.

Theo: Well, the best way to start is with the prayer Jesus taught His disciples. Come on into the church with me and I'll show it to you in the Bible . . .



Ask your children: What do you think about Theo's answers to Douglas' questions? Do you have any other questions of your own that this dialogue has brought up for you? Challenge them to think up more responses they could give, if someone asked them a question like Douglas'.

Prayer

THE LORDS PRAYER:

This month we are going to be reading the Lord's Prayer, the same one Theo showed to Douglas. It is a very special prayer, because it tells us exactly what Jesus knows we need, and what we need to talk to Him about.

Our Father, Who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy Will be done,
On earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the Kingdom,
And the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.



I always add in "please." The Greek and Latin cultures of Jesus' day generally did not express politeness through saying please and thank you, but by using titles of respect and behaving humbly in the presence of those of whom they made requests. But today, since good manners are demonstrated somewhat differently, I think it is a good idea to teach our children to pray using "please" and "thank you," just as they would do in talking to you, their parents, or others to whom they show respect. For of course God deserves our utmost respect of all!

Activity for the month

ONE ON ONE

Take your child on a one-on-one outing (a long walk, a trip to the ice-cream store, etc.). Find a relaxed moment and ask them, "When you think about God, what do you think He's like?" Ask your child to be expansive in his or her answer so you can fully understand their thoughts. The purpose of this activity is to find out whether your child sees God as a loving father, an angry judge or somewhere in between. As you seek to give your child a full understanding of God, it is important to know where your child is starting from.

In a quiet moment after this activity, write down your child's thoughts in a journal so you can see how your child will come to understand more fully over time.

