

The Dawn Treader News

HELPING PARENTS DISCIPLE THEIR CHILDREN



AN ASLAN ACADEMY RESOURCE

THE DAWN TREADER NEWS ISSUE 1.12

Aslan Academy

HELPING PARENTS DISCIPLE THEIR CHILDREN

As we continue on our *Dawn Treader* discipleship journey, this month at the *Aslan Academy*, we will be talking about God's entire plan of salvation—from Creation, through the sin and suffering of the Fall, to Jesus' coming to earth to save us and His imminent return in glory.



Aslan Moments

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS ON PREPARING THE HEART

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

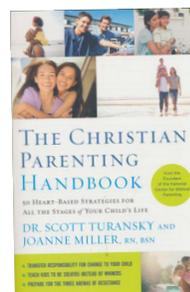
Understanding the Bible as One Story of God's Wonderful Plan to Rescue Us

For this month, we will be walking you through the essential elements of God's amazing story of His creation of the universe, man's fall into sin, God's plan for saving us from sin, and the eternal home God has planned for us. 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.

Aslan Resource of the Month

The Christian Parenting Handbook: 50 Heart-Based Strategies for All the Stages of Your Child's Life – Turansky, Dr. Scott, Miller R.N., Joanne; Paperback / Sold by Amazon.com LLC

Nuggets of parenting wisdom condensed into 50 short chapters, each one biblical, practical, and relevant for parents of children ages 2-18. Learn appropriate ways to correct, instruct, and set limits. Glean wisdom for dealing with emotions, conflict, and developing closeness in your family... and much more. These 50 strategies provide you with hands-on tools for parenting children of any age.



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Aslan Moments (CONTD)

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS ON PREPARING THE HEART

Week One: Why did God create the universe and everything in it? (Genesis 1)
Out of His desire to share His love with us
God has an incredible imagination – different animals, colors, stars, natural beauty, etc.
God's power is obvious when we consider the enormous size and complexity of the universe, as well as the incredible complexity of even the smallest organisms and structures
God created man in His Own image and gave him a perfect home in the Garden of Eden. God provided man with everything he needed; there was no sin or trouble in the world

Week Two: What went wrong? Why are things no longer perfect? (Genesis 2:16-17 and 3:1-11, Romans 3:23 and 5:12)
Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God's command
When sin entered the world, decay and death began
Disorder, rather than order, began to rule the world because of sin
God started a new after the flood, but soon men became just as sinful
God sent His prophets to warn His people, but they wouldn't listen

Week Three: What was God's plan to save us from all this sin and chaos? (Romans 5:8 and 6:23, 1 Corinthians 15:20-26)
God sent His son, Jesus, to share His message of grace and mercy
Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life, and died in our place
If we put our trust in Jesus, God will see us just as He sees Jesus—with no sin at all
Jesus' coming to earth was the most important moment in world history—everything changed from that moment on
Jesus' message of love changed the world, and is still changing it

Week Four: Will the world ever end? (Matthew 24:27-31, Revelation 21:1-7)
The Bible tells us that one day Jesus will come again. Everyone on earth will see him—it will be clear across the entire sky!
God will create a new heaven and a new earth, perfect, but even better than those He first created
All those who trust in Jesus will have eternal life in this new heaven. We will have new bodies and we will spend eternity doing exciting and amazing things, while learning more and more about God's great power, love, creativity, and beauty
Those who do not trust in Jesus will be in the terrible situation of eternal, miserable separation from God, and that is why it is important that we share our faith in Jesus with others

Theologian Theodore Conversation Corner

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: **WHAT IS SALVATION, ANYWAY—WHAT DO I NEED TO BE SAVED FROM?**

Theodore: Hello there, Reginald! I've been hoping to see you.

Reginald: Yes, and I bet I can guess why.

Theo: Can you?

Reg: You're going to invite me to come to that Christmas carol service at your church again, aren't you? How many times do I have to politely refuse before you'll take me seriously?

Theo: I told you, I'm going to give you the chance to come with me every year. It would be dreadful if the one year you changed your mind and decided you might like to come, should be the one year I had finally given up and didn't invite you! Then you still might not go, even though you wanted to.

Theologian Theodore (CONTD)

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: **WHAT IS SALVATION, ANYWAY—WHAT DO I NEED TO BE SAVED FROM?**

Reg: I think it's very unlikely that that will ever happen, Theo.

Theo: But why? What do you have against the church, Reginald, especially at such a wonderful time as Christmas? You like Christmas celebrations as much as anyone, and you wouldn't have them if it weren't for the church.

Reg: Yes, I know. . . and I'm very grateful for all the community service work the church does that no one else would do otherwise—but I don't see that I need anything for myself, personally, from what they have to offer. I'm not poor, or suffering, or lost all my friends and family, or a criminal. The church seems to just be around to preach "salvation" from everything negative, and I don't really have any problems that I need to be saved from.

Theo: Well, wait a week! Actually, don't; you might be too late if you start experiencing the problems that this world causes before you could get to the church for help. That's one reason it's important to be in there already. You don't wait to insure your car until after you get in an accident. But that's not the real reason for coming to church, Reginald.

Reg: What is, then?

Theo: You just said that the church preaches "salvation from everything." That's not quite accurate. The church preaches God's message of salvation from *sin*. And everybody has that problem.

Reg: Oh, Theo. Don't start that line with me! How can everybody be a sinner? Not everybody's bad. If we were, how could we tell that others *were* bad? We recognize that people like Nero and Hitler and modern-day terrorists are evil because they do bad things. Normal, law-abiding people like you and me are the good people, because we don't do those kind of things.

Theo: That sounds nice and simple, but life isn't that simple, Reginald. "Real things are not simple. They look simple, but they are not," (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 50th Anniversary ed. (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), p. 40); and so the issue of what makes someone good or bad isn't as basic as being simply connected with what they do, although of course that's part of it. "There is only one who is good—God" (Matthew 19:17). Jesus said so; and, as He is God, He seems likely to know.

Reg: But you haven't answered my point about how we can then know the difference between good and evil . . .

Theo: Because we are made in the image of God, and He has given us that knowledge from His Own Nature. If good and evil were terms that we had invented for ourselves, without an outside standard, they would be completely relative—whatever was convenient for us we would call good; whatever was inconvenient we would call bad. But that isn't the case. I know you agree with me that, no matter how much people may try to twist the circumstances, good remains good and bad remains bad, even if in the particular situation the right thing is costing us more trouble than the wrong thing would. "So you cannot say that what we call decent behaviour . . . is simply the behaviour that happens to be useful to us" (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 50th Anniversary ed. (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), p. 18). We have to have an outside standard of good, and that is God alone.

Reg: Okay, but why do you and all the rest of the people I know who claim to follow Christ act as though there's more to it than that? I can accept the idea of a creator God Who provides us with the standard we need to follow to be good—why can't we just follow His teachings and be good like Him, without bothering with salvation? That seems lazy, to make Him do all the work for us.

Theo: The fact is, we're not capable of being good on our own. We're all sinners. A lot of people today, like you, Reginald, think that all "sin" means is "doing the wrong thing." So as long as you do the right thing, you're not a sinner. But that's not really what sin is at all. In the Greek language in which the New Testament was first written, the word we translate as "sin" means "missing the mark," being something different from what we were created to be. Now, we were all created to live in relationship with God. As long as we reject Him, we are not being what He made us to be, and therefore we are sinners. And that is what then leads to all the individual "sins" or wrong actions in the world. But "people are not sinners because they sin; they sin because they are sinners." Jesus came into the world to restore our relationship with God, that's the

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salvation we all need. If you reject His offer of salvation, that's the worst sin, the worst disobedience, the worst opposition to what God intended you to be, that you could possibly do! So it's no wonder that the dire consequences to that rejection are eternal.

Reg: Hmm. I don't quite understand all of that, but I think I'm starting to see all this from an angle I never thought about before. Maybe—maybe, Theo, I'll come to that carol service with you, after all.

Theo: Six P.M. on Christmas Eve; I'll come by and pick you up early so we can get a good seat!



Ask your children: What do you think about Theo's answers to Reginald's 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 Reginald's.

Prayer

THANKSGIVING

This month we are going to be reading an everyday thanksgiving and confession prayer, one that acknowledges our sinfulness and our need and gratitude for the salvation which Jesus came to earth to bring. This prayer could be said either in the morning or at bedtime, by a parent and child together or the child on his or her own.



Dear Lord,

I thank You that I can talk to You in prayer.

Thank You that You care about me and want what is best for me.

Thank You for loving me even when I'm not very lovable.

Help me, Lord, to live each day as You would have me live, loving my family, my friends, even those who are not kind to me.

Please forgive me for when I've disobeyed You. Please forgive me for my unkind thoughts.

Please change my heart, Lord, so I can love You the way You want me to love You.

Open my eyes so that I may see things the way You want me to see them.

Control my words, Lord, that I may say only what would please You.

Give me strength to follow You, even when it is hard.

Give me wisdom, so I can make good choices that will please You.

Help me to be a good friend to others, and let them see the light of Jesus in me.

Thank You again for Your blessings, and for Your love.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.