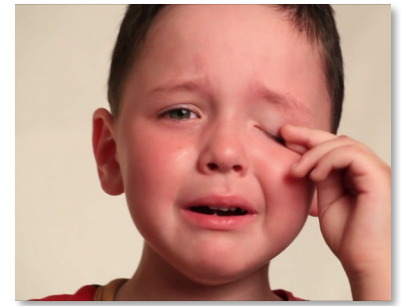


How to Handle the Ugly Side of Life



As parents we try to keep our children safe and protected. But life has a way of bringing the unfair, the cruel and the harsh realities to our doorsteps. Children are born with handicaps. Some get cancer at a young age. Some have surgeries before they can walk. Some die.

On top of that, the sinful world finds a way of reaching the innocent. The sins of the parents many times bring pain to children. Some have experienced verbal, emotional and sexual abuse. Some have been introduced to pornography, drugs and alcohol not only by kids from school, but also from kids at church. Some have known friends who died. Grandparents pass away and you must prepare your child for what he will witness at a funeral.

How do we prepare our children for the painful side of life?

- Pharaoh ordered all boys born of the Hebrews to be thrown into the Nile River (Ex 1:22)
- Elisha predicted that the Syrians would kill the young men with swords, dash the little ones in pieces and rip the unborn from their mother's womb (2 Kg 8:12)
- Corrupt kings of Israel sacrificed children to their idols (2 Kg 17:17)
- Herod put to death all the boys two years and under (Mt 2:16)

A. Begin with a proper understanding of _____ and _____ in our world

1. A distorted view of these things has ruined the faith of many
2. Your child may have many questions. Be gentle in the way you answer them. Stay Biblical.
3. God has never promised a problem free life (Mt 7:24-27)
4. Difficulties is the classroom in which God teaches us lessons about trust, faith, patience (Jas 1:2-4)

B. How Parents _____ sorrow, grief and injustice will be _____ in the heart of the child

1. It is essential that keep our heads when we see our children suffering from the wrongs of others

C. A cold reality is that not everyone loves Jesus and that there is evil in the world (Jn 3:19-21)

Questions

1. Grandpa dies. How do I explain this to my child?
2. How do I answer my child's question about why he is handicapped and his brothers and sisters are not?
3. My child's cousins are mean kids. They are always making fun of my child and putting him down. We will be together for the holidays. What can I do?
4. How do I explain to my child that his aunt and uncle are getting a divorce and that he probably won't be seeing his uncle any more?
5. My child's little dog died. He asks if the dog is in Heaven. I don't have the heart to tell him "no." What should I do?
6. What has helped you to deal with the "ugly side of life?"

How Can We Help Our Children?

1. Don't _____ them from the unpleasant things in life
 - Take them to the funeral home (explain what they will see; talk about how they are to behave; talk with them afterwards)
2. Use occasions like this to _____ specifically for others who are hurting
3. Use _____ to answer their questions
4. Show them how Jesus was mistreated, yet how He _____ (1 Pet 2:21-25)
5. When necessary, seek competent _____. Find good books to help you.