

NOTE TO PARENTS from Ps Luke Aiasecca

Thank you for the privilege of ministering to your family through Kidmania Online. Today's Kidmania Online episode was *God's Grace!*

This parent info sheet can be used by you at home to support your Kidmania experience WITH your children and help them to get the most out of it.

The 'main ideas' section of this parent info sheet has been designed especially for you to enter into meaningful discussion with your children. This week the questions build one on another.

To help your children really share what is in their hearts and minds with you, and so YOU can actively build faith and wisdom into them, when it comes to the 'Ask' points, take care to not rush them... give them time to think and respond and really show them you are listening and that you understand.

We are here to support you! If you have any questions you would like to discuss please contact your location Kidmania co-ordinator or email me at luke.aiasecca@enjoy.church

God bless you!

Family Ice Breaker – Snakes and Ladders!

This is a fun way to introduce what you will be talking about as a family.

Today we watched as Zoe and Alex played snakes and ladders.

You might like to play snakes and ladders at home.

If you don't have a snakes and ladders board game, you could make your own, by drawing up a grid and deciding where your snakes and ladders will be. You could use any small item you have as tokens (to move around the board/grid). If you do not have dice, you could use a dice rolling app on your smart phone. Talk about how disappointing it is when you slide on a snake, and what an unexpected blessing it is to land on a ladder and skip ahead. The designer of the game is not surprised that players climb and slide. Eventually, everyone makes it to the end, and our attitude while playing the game is what determines whether we have fun.

Whatever you do, have fun!

Scripture memory verses - to read and memorise at meal times

[use any version you like; we have provided the Amplified Version (AMP) in the Scripture readings in the family discussion notes as it has built into it much explanation. For memorisation (below) we have provided the simpler New Living Translation (NLT)]

Ephesians 2:8-9

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

Genesis 15:6

And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith.

Matthew 20:15-16

Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my money? Should you be jealous because I am kind to others? So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last.

Romans 9:16

So, it is God who decides to show mercy. We can neither choose it, nor work for it.



The Main Ideas for Family Discussion

Discussion introduction:

Ask: Do you remember what a parable is?

Say: A parable is a simple earthly story with a Heavenly (deep spiritual) meaning. Jesus often taught in parables. He did this because He wanted only the people who were really seeking the truth to understand what He was teaching; about Himself, and the Kingdom of God. When we love Jesus, the Holy Spirit helps us to understand the stories that Jesus told. The parables were made up stories, but the meanings they revealed were very true, and are still true today.

Scripture: *Matthew 20:1-16*

Say: Today's Parable is from Matthew 20:1-16. It is sometimes called 'The Generous Master/Landowner'

For the kingdom of Heaven is like the landowner who went out in the morning at dawn to hire workmen for his vineyard. When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour (9am) and saw others standing idle in the market place; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right (an appropriate wage).' And they went.

He went out about the sixth hour (noon) and the ninth hour (3pm), and did the same thing. And about the eleventh hour (5pm) he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' They answered him, 'Because no one hired us.' He told them, 'You go into the vineyard also.'

When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last to be hired and ending with the first to be hired.'

Those who had been hired at the eleventh hour (5pm) came and received a denarius each (a day's wage). Now when the first to be hired came, they thought they would get more; but each of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they protested and grumbled at the owner of the estate, saying, 'These men who came last worked only one hour, and yet you have made them equal in wages to us who have carried most of the burden and worked in the scorching heat of the day.'

But the owner of the estate replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no injustice. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go, but I choose to give to this last man hired the same as I give to you. Am I not lawfully permitted to do what I choose with what is mine? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?' So those who are last in this world shall be first in the world to come, and those who are first will be last.

Ask: In this parable all the workers received their wages (pay); did they receive different amounts, or the same amount? [they all received the same amount!]

Ask: Did they do the same amount of work, or different amounts of work? [different amounts of work at different times]

Ask: Is this fair? Why/Why not? [allow different perspectives to be expressed – after all, this is a very hard thing to understand - discuss how some of the workers labored for many hours in the hot sun and some labored a short time while it was not so hot, but they were all paid the same amount.]

Ask: Have you ever received anything you did not fully earn?

If YES, ask: Who was generous to you? Tell me what happened. [if they cannot think of anything, remind them of when they received pocket money early or without fully earning it, or received seconds of a meal they really liked, received dessert on a non-dessert night, received something from you they never asked for and never even knew they wanted until they received it...and tell a story from your own life of unexpected generosity from an employer/teacher/person in authority that you would usually have to earn]

Ask: Wouldn't you hope for the same for everyone else? [Yes, we want everyone else to receive what we would be happy to receive, including what we don't deserve, and that we have not earned.]

...continued - the Main Ideas for Family Discussion

Let's go deeper!

Say: To really understand what Jesus is talking about we need to understand that Jesus is speaking in code. We need to know this special code to understand the meaning of the story. [ask your kids if they know what each element of the story represents before telling them – they may surprise you!]

THE CODE

- * The landowner = Jesus
- * The workers/laborers = believers and followers of Jesus
- * The vineyard = people in the world
(believers and unbelievers)
- * The work = serving Jesus in the church and in the world
(caring for and helping other believers, and caring for and introducing other people to Jesus is the work Jesus wants us to do for and with Him)
- * The scorching heat (hottest part) of the day = hard times in life/struggles
(especially when it is hard to trust Jesus)
- * The wages = eternity in Heaven/the Kingdom of God
(a denarius was a coin that was a day's work worth of money which a worker would be paid at the end of the day so long as they had not been lazy and no mistakes were made that would cause the master/owner to profit less than he should - strict & mean masters might withhold some of a wage from a worker, paying them less than a denarius if they are not happy with the worker - like a fine)
- * The day = a lifetime
- * The amount of hours in the day each person worked = the amount of time in each person's life they followed Jesus

Ask: Now we understand the code, what do we think the deeper message/meaning in the story is? [Give the kids plenty of time to talk it through]

Say: Jesus is like the landowner who is generous and doesn't want anyone to miss out. He wants everyone to be able to enter the Kingdom of God. In this story the amount of time laboring means the amount of time believing in Jesus and serving Him. People who have believed longer will have had easy times and hard times while knowing Jesus. We might think that people who have not believed for very long should have to go through many hard times before they get to go to Heaven. Jesus wants us to know that some people will believe and follow Him early in life; while others will believe and follow Him later in life. But, the reward will be the same; to spend eternity with Jesus.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:8-9

Say: In Ephesians 2:8-9 it says: **For it is by grace (God's remarkable compassion and favor drawing you to Christ) that you have been saved (actually delivered from judgment and given eternal life) through FAITH. And this salvation is not of yourselves, not through your own effort, but it is the undeserved and gracious gift of God; not as a result of your works, nor your attempts to keep the Law, so that no one will be able to boast or take credit in any way for their salvation.**

Ask: Can we earn our salvation? [No, because we can't live our whole life perfectly/get a perfect score like Jesus did, and we can't pay the penalty and still be alive to go to Heaven – the wages of sin is DEATH. We have no spare lives or chances. We cannot do more good than bad, and even if we could, more good and less bad still includes bad. We cannot become perfect by doing good.]

Ask: Did someone else do the work for us? [Yes, Jesus did all the work for us and we get the pay/reward/salvation even though we did not fully earn it - we do our best to be good but we are not as good as He is. Only people with a perfect score can be in Heaven. Jesus has shared His perfect score with us, so long as we have something else that is very important...]



...continued - the Main Ideas for Family Discussion

Scripture: Genesis 15:6

Say: In Genesis 15:6 it says: **Then Abram believed in, affirmed, trusted in, relied on, and remained true to the LORD; and the LORD counted/credited it to him as righteousness (as if he always did right in regard to God and man).**

Ask: Was Abram's righteousness because of good works, or because of his faith? [his faith]

Ask: Is your righteousness because of good you do, or because you believe in Jesus? [believing in Jesus. It was his faith that made God happy.]

Say: Yes, we do better after we know Jesus, not before. The very important thing we needed is FAITH!! We are JUSTIFIED by FAITH. God chooses to see our faith in Jesus rather than our sins, so it is just-as-if-I'd never sinned! Get it? Just-if-I'd. Justified. It is the big word people who study the Bible use to talk about God's grace.

Scripture: Matthew 20:15-16

Say: Matthew 20:15-16 the master asked the jealous workers: **"Am I not lawfully permitted to do what I choose with what is mine? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?" Then Jesus tells His followers: "So, those who are last in this world shall be first in the world to come, and those who are first will be last."**

Say: Jesus is not wanting to be unfair. There is a big difference between being generous to everyone, and being unfair to some. The master paid a generous wage to those who worked the full day, while they earned their wage. The master was even more generous to those who worked less in that day. He was mean to none, and generous to all. God is like that. He is generous to all who come to Him, even while not everyone gets exactly the same from Him. And He gives everyone what they need without paying attention to what they think they should have and when. We think we are in a queue and that God will pay attention to us in order that we place ourselves. God does not need an order/queue. He can handle everyone at once.

Ask: Have you ever had to wait longer for something than someone else?

If YES, say: Tell me about it.

Ask: Have you ever been able to receive something earlier than someone else?

If YES, say: Tell me about it. [if they cannot think of anything, remind them of when they have not had to wait a fair amount of time, e.g. they might have been given a privilege at a younger age than an older sibling did - or tell your own similar story]

Ask: Which did you like best for yourself? Would you hope for the same for everyone else?

Say: We want everyone to receive as much as they can from Father God, as soon as possible. We don't care that we believed sooner, and are more like Jesus earlier. We want everyone to go to Heaven at the end of their life, whether they were a believer for 10 years or ten minutes, right? Right!

Sum up:

Say: Say after me: I am saved by God's grace!

Say: Say after me: It is just as if I'd never sinned!

Say: Say after me: Because God has been generous to me, I want to serve Him!

Say: Say after me: I want God to give His generous grace to everyone!

Let's Pray!

Dear Heavenly Father... Thank You that you have given me mercy so that I don't get the punishment I deserve, and grace so that I get MORE good than I deserve. Thank You that I will go to Heaven to be with You. I am so happy You love me so much that You sent Jesus to save me. Help me to show everyone Your love, as I follow and serve Jesus for my whole life.

...in Jesus' name, Amen!

