

Fear Not!

Talking With Your Children About The Coronavirus

In a matter of days, and even moments, the coronavirus has disrupted life as we know it. Amidst all the declared states of emergencies, crowd limits, school closings, supply shortages and the like, make an intentional decision to communicate faith and trust in God to your children.

More than likely, your child has been spoken to about hand washing and covering their mouths when they cough or sneeze. But what else has been communicated to them about the coronavirus? Here are a few ways you can address the coronavirus with faith in God and practical wisdom:

1. Be the calm in this storm of quick changes, high emotions and media hype. While we don't minimize the impact the coronavirus has had on society, we can deny it sending us into a frenzy. If you're panicked and scared, your children will download that and take ownership of those emotions as well. Remind yourself and your children of God's promise of His presence and protection found in Psalm 91 and that there is no reason to fear.
2. Be the source of information for your child. Children always feel safer when the grown-ups they know and love are their source of information. Be able to answer their questions accurately, from a credible source of information. The media should not be your primary source. Again, start with God's Word and the truth of His power. There's no sickness that is more powerful than God. When we put our trust in Him and the victory over sickness that Jesus won for us, there is no need to be afraid. (*John 16:33 AMPC*)
3. Let your child lead. Starting this conversation will be easier if you allow your child to ask questions. See what they already know and if there is any thinking you need to reshape. Leading the conversation out the gate, runs the risk of oversharing information they are not ready to handle and spark fear. Ask what questions they might have and start there.
4. Help kids identify their feelings. Sometimes children may think they are afraid when actually they are angry or confused. Simply clarifying an emotion can bring relief. You can then help them overcome that feeling with God's Word.
5. Guide kids' plans to overcome fear or any other negative emotion they may be experiencing. Help them meditate on how much God loves them, protects them and how valuable they are. God's love gets rid of fear and boosts their confidence in the truth that everything will be alright. (1 John 4:18)
6. Focus on the solution, not the problem. Instead of focusing on the effects of the virus, talk about things they can do to stay healthy. Practice washing your hands for at least 20 seconds with them while you sing the 'Happy Birthday' song in a funny way (*after all laughter is medicine – Proverbs 17:22*), pick out a new healthy meal to cook together and get your healing scriptures out.
7. Have a faith-filled plan for your family and share it with your child. For children, there is safety in knowing what's going to happen next. What's the plan since school is closed? If you don't know, say that. But follow it up with, "God knows what we should do and He will see us through!" Then listen to and obey what He says ☺.
8. Control the info flow. Limit exposure to frightening media and images about the virus and anything else. Monitor your child's social media interactions as well. All of their accounts should be open to your viewing. Fear is fear, so don't shut the door on one topic and leave another open.

Prayer to Pray: Heavenly Father, You are good and You love us. Help us during this time. Show us exactly what to do. We ask that You protect us and provide what we need. Help us to be a blessing to someone else in need. We thank you for your protection and angels watching over us. In Jesus' Name, Amen!