

## Life Group Discussion Questions/Week of May 23, 2010

**Summary:** Kids will disappoint. How do we respond? More broadly, how do we face life in the face of disappointment? The Scriptures provide us both positive instruction (Proverbs 3:1-14) and anecdotal evidence (Gen. 4:1-17) that the reality of our Fallenness is the very place in which God applies the Gospel for our good, our growth, and His glory. Only He can change the heart; but we can target it. Morality is not our goal; creating an environment for growth in the Gospel is. We must treat prayer like water: essential for life, give Christ space to shape the story He is telling, and fall in love more deeply with the good news. Cain, Abel, and Solomon show us how these statements steer the course for our anticipation and response to disappointment, especially with kids.

1. Pick two of the *10 Things Children Need to Know* that EITHER a) you wish you had a better grasp of in your childhood; b) you wish you had taught your kids or would teach your kids better; OR c) you have been able to teach your kids with some degree of proficiency. Explain.
2. How does total depravity (every part of our being is touched by the Fall) inform our understanding of kids' behaviors. Our own? How does this shape our approach to life in general?
3. If we can't change someone's heart, how can we target it?
4. What is the danger in making morality our goal in parenting or in living? Where have you seen the Gospel modeled well in a parenting scenario?
5. "Mature Christians are keenly aware that they can't raise their kids...." Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*. He says this in the context of the desperate need for prayer. Discuss.
6. Giving space for Christ to shape His story is a challenge. Where does our responsibility end? How do we know when to back off? When to pursue kids? Reflect on how you've seen Christ tell His story in your own life over the long haul, especially reflecting on disappointments.
7. How does believing there is a Story being told change your perspective?
8. Read through Prov. 3:1-14. Pick one verse that hits you hardest.

**Rabbit trail of the week:** "Train up a child in the way he should go, and he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6). How do we understand this in light of what we see around us – kids instructed in the Scriptures who are wandering from the faith?

### ***Ten Things Children Need to Know***

1. Choose your friends carefully (1:8-9)
2. Blessings come from *doing* the Word of God (3:3-18)
3. The balance of grace and truth in relationships (3:3)
4. How to manage money (3:9-10)
5. Guard the heart from harmful affections (4:23)
6. The consequences of loose living (5:11-6:32; 7:22,23)
7. Correction and instruction are the way of life (3:11,12)
8. The priority of humility (3:7, 6:17)
9. The value of hard work (6:6-11)
10. The fear of the Lord (1:7)