



WEEK ONE

GENESIS 13:5-18

Abram Makes Peace

SAY
THIS

Prove you care more
about others by letting go
of "what's fair."

DO
THIS



BED TIME

Read Genesis 13:5-18. Think about a situation that happened recently where you didn't think something was fair. Did you push to get what was "fair"? What would happen to your relationships if you did? Pray for each other and ask God to give you the grace and wisdom to know when to let go of what's fair in order to make peace.

REMEMBER THIS

"So let us do all we can do to live in peace.
And let us work hard to build up one another."
Romans 14:19, NIV

LIFE
APP

PEACE – Proving you care more about each other
than winning an argument

THE ART OF DISCIPLINE:
MAKING IT HELPFUL

by Gina McClain

Shepherding the hearts of our kids is one of those daily behaviors that does more to refine and challenge me than anything else in my life. In my interactions with my kids, God reveals more to me about my own humanity than I care to know, particularly in disciplinary situations. One thing I've learned about kids is that I cannot control their actions. There are times when I try. There are times I guide, nudge, remind, even harass . . . Yet in the end, they decide what action they will take. Not me. I don't know about you, but that really gets under my skin. So I have to actively pray for guidance and patience. Recently, I was reminded of these words in Ephesians 4:29:

"Don't say anything that would hurt another person. Instead, speak only what is good so that you can give help wherever it is needed. That way, what you say will help those who hear you." (GW)

It's a timely reminder for me that my role as mom is to fight for the heart of my kids, to create a culture of unconditional love in my home that fuels their emotional and moral health. Approaching discipline in a helpful way takes Practice, Planning, and Patience.

1. I need to PRACTICE the way that I talk to my kids. That means that

through my everyday interactions I need to habitually speak words that are helpful to them. If I practice speaking them in positive interactions, I'm more likely to remember to speak them in a negative interaction.

2. Good discipline starts with good PLANNING. If my child makes the wrong decision, what are the consequences? Do they know what they are? There have been times we've sent a child to their room letting them know, "We're going to think about the right consequences for your action. In a little while, we will sit down with you and talk through them."

3. PATIENCE is critical when fighting for the heart of your child. Why? Because children are going to make mistakes. And my ability to be patient with their mistakes communicates unconditional love. They need a safe place to mess up and know that they are capable of doing better the next time.

In what way can you make your discipline more helpful than harmful this week as you fight for the heart of your child?

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WEEK TWO

GENESIS 26:1-6,
12-22, 26-31

Isaac's Wells

SAY THIS

Prove you care more
about others by walking
away from a fight.

DO THIS



MEAL TIME

Q & A for kids: If you had to pick one for the rest of your life, would you rather always get the last word in an argument or always get the bigger piece of cake?

Q & A for parents: When you were a kid, who did you find it hardest to stay at peace with? Why do you think that is?

REMEMBER THIS

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LIFE APP

PEACE – Proving you care more about each other
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FIGHT FOR THE HEART

by Reggie Joiner

My firstborn daughter, Hannah, has a lot of leadership potential. That's just another way of saying that she challenged the process a lot growing up in our house.

I distinctively remember having a conversation with her one night when I was tucking her into bed. It was one of those days when there had been a lot of conflict, and she had gotten in about as much trouble as a five-year-old can. For some reason, I was compelled to ask her a question right before I turned out the lights. I said, "Do you think I love you more when you're good, or more when you're bad?"

She immediately responded, "You love me more when I'm good!" My heart sank when I realized that was her perception of our relationship. I tried to apologize to her for my reactions as a parent. I remember telling her that night (and for several months afterwards every night), "I hope you will always remember that I love you the same, when you are good or bad."

It's so easy for us to make the rules more important than the relationship. It's in the tone of our voice, our body language, and our eyes. If we are not careful, disappointment in our kids' behavior can be translated into their hearts as rejection. The truth is our children will always challenge the rules

and debate our reasoning, but we should strive to parent in a way that they can never question how much we love them.

Looking back, I realize that I have never explained the rules so clearly that my children agreed and said in unison, "Oh, now we understand, father! You have explained it so well. We will do exactly what you say." It is natural and normal for kids to challenge the process. As they move toward independence, it will happen more frequently. That's the problem with rules—you can always debate their rationale, but you can't debate a trusted relationship. Unfortunately, most of us parents are better skilled at fighting to win the argument than we are at fighting to win the heart.

It's not that parents shouldn't give answers when kids ask, "Why?" It's just that the answers carry more weight when combined with a healthy relationship. One of the most powerful things a parent can do is learn to communicate in a style that values the relationship.

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WEEK THREE

1 SAMUEL 25:1-35

Abigail Intervenes

SAY THIS

Prove you care more about others by being a part of the solution.

DO THIS



DRIVE TIME

Make a peace challenge the entire month to not argue in the car with siblings, parents, or friends. As a group, pick a special prize (gift card, toy, candy, etc.) and put it in the car as a reminder to keep the peace. Whoever does the best job keeping peace throughout the month, will win the prize!

REMEMBER THIS

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Romans 14:19, NIV

LIFE APP

PEACE – Proving you care more about each other than winning an argument

MAKING PEACE WITH YOUR KIDS

by Sarah Anderson

Have your kids ever hurt your feelings? I don't mean their critique of your clothes, cooking, or stupid jokes. I mean the thing they say that just cuts to the quick.

A couple of weeks ago, one of my boys said something and it hurt so much, it felt like the wind was knocked out of me. He's young enough where I don't think the words were said with the intention to hurt, and he was oblivious to how hurtful his words were. But I am not naïve. I know a day will come when my boys will know the power of their words. And then they'll use those words to cause pain on purpose.

As hard as it was, I decided to not let those careless words create a rift. To not let hurt feelings dictate my behavior towards him. To move towards the one I felt inclined to back away from.

I decided to be a peacemaker. To be a mender of things made wrong—even when I was the one who had been wronged. To move past what had been broken in me, in order to make right what was broken between my son and me.

Not just a peace-liker. Not simply a peace-supporter. But a peace-maker

Jesus said peacemakers are called the children of God.

James, the brother of Jesus, said peacemakers reap a harvest of righteousness.

I say peacemakers have a better chance of a healthy relationship with their kids in the future.

Making peace is hard. Moving towards the one who's hurt us is challenging. But a parent who makes peace with their kids now sows a relationship of peace in the future.

No matter what my child does or says, no matter what my child doesn't say, or doesn't do, I want there to be no doubt about what he'll get from me: a mom who'll go to great lengths—not to keep the peace, but to make the peace.

As parents, let's work on resembling our heavenly Father in this. And live in expectation of what might happen when we do.

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WEEK FOUR

COLOSSIANS 3:15

God Made Peace with Us

SAY THIS

We can make peace with others because God made peace with us.

DO THIS



MORNING TIME

Leave a note in your child's backpack telling them how you noticed them being a peacemaker in a certain situation. Encourage them to keep being a peacemaker anywhere they go!

REMEMBER THIS

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LIFE APP

PEACE – Proving you care more about each other than winning an argument

THE POWER OF A QUESTION

by Sarah Anderson

Questions are powerful—made all the more powerful when they are a response to what we intentionally listened for first. Purposeful questions are the best and easiest tool we have as parents to invest in the lives of our kids. They communicate that we want more than information—we want insight into what makes our kids tick, motivates them, challenges them, and hurts them.

A good first question says, "I'm interested." Active listening says, "I care." An intentional second question says, "You matter."

And what follows creates relational equity between you and your kids. So sure, we can start, with the "How was your day?" "What happened at school?" "What did you learn at church?" But what happens next can't be found in any book, blog, or article. What happens next is up to us. It can't be scripted or predicted, but that's where the magic happens.

It happens in the quiet, as your child slowly peels back the layers of their life, and you thirstily drink in what they have carefully entrusted with you. And it happens when your reaction and your response communicate over and over and over again, "You've got my full attention, there is no where I would

rather be, thanks for letting me in."

Be prepared. You may get more than you bargained for. You may learn the details of everyone's show-and-tell treasures, about the kid next to them on the bus, or the specifics of what was served in the lunch line. But you'll also become the best student of your child and then earn yourself a reputation as being the person in your child's life who did whatever it took to get to the heart of the matter, to get to the heart of them.

They may not know it now, but what you are working towards as a parent who asks a good first question, but even better second question, is becoming the best front row attendee to your kids' lives they'll ever know. Becoming their cheerleader, their confidant and their biographer of life, who remembers all the big stuff but has managed to tuck away the little stuff too—the stuff that makes your kids uniquely them and uniquely yours.

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