

Talking About Death With Children

Why did Jesus have to die! Does it hurt to die? When you're dead, do you still get hungry? Will Grandpa come back to life like Jesus did?

Children are not afraid to ask questions like these. As we move through the season of Lent, we are getting ready for the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. We cannot faithfully talk or consider the resurrection without going through Jesus' ministry and the events of Good Friday. And it is difficult to talk about death and it is particularly difficult to talk about death with children. But it is an important way we share our faith in God. Death is a part of life.

We hope these thoughts will support you in conversations that are a natural part of this Lenten season.

- When talking with your children about Jesus' death and resurrection:
- Try to be as natural as possible so that children know it's OK to talk about dying.
- Be honest if you don't have an answer to a question. Then try to find an answer together.
- Children are concrete thinkers. Avoid terms like "passed on" or "went to sleep for along time." Say "Jesus died" to avoid confusion.
- Emphasize that Jesus was killed by his enemies, not by the Jewish people or by God.
- Teach them that God made everything in the world and God plans for everything to live and die – trees, plants, birds, dogs, and people.
- Assure children that death is not the end. God promises that when we die we will be with God forever. We will live in a new way. Some people call this "heaven."

