

Editorial: What do we tell the kids?

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What do we tell the kids about sex?

The neighbors are gay and invited us over. What do we tell the kids?

The pastor's been accused of sexual misconduct. What do we tell the kids?

A child at school says she no longer identifies as a girl. What do we tell the kids?

A teenager is receiving sexts from an online predator. What do we tell the kids?

An unashamedly immoral man is elected president. What do we tell the kids?

What do we tell the kids about other people?

White supremacists are yelling racial slurs in the park. What do we tell the kids?

A store opened where we shop that sells metaphysical supplies. What do we tell the kids?

ICE took workers out of the restaurant where we're eating. What do we tell the kids?

The neighbors look, talk and dress like people of a different religion, and our kids want to play together. What do we tell the kids?

A man asked us for money in the parking lot. What do we tell the kids?

What do we tell the kids about ourselves?

The doctor says I have cancer. What do we tell the kids?

The bills are due, and we don't have the money. What do we tell the kids?

We don't want our kids to repeat our mistakes. What do we tell the kids?

The company's relocating its offices, and we'll have to move to keep the job. What do we tell the kids?

We're struggling with doubt and don't know if we believe in God anymore.

What do we tell the kids?

The question that keeps us up at night

What do we tell the kids? I've asked this question repeatedly because the answer is so important.

I've asked the question repeatedly because whether or not you have kids or grandkids, you likely know the anxious feeling that creeps over you when faced with a question so big you aren't sure you can answer it and so important you know you must answer it.

We seem to be faced more and more with these kinds of questions, questions we feel should have simple answers even though simple answers seem to elude us.

Why do simple answers elude us?

Do simple answers elude us because we're trying to be politically correct?

Do simple answers elude us because the world is really more complicated than it used to be?

Do simple answers elude us because we don't know who to trust anymore to give us a simple and reliable answer?

Why do we expect a simple answer in the first place? Are we off course from the start by expecting a simple answer?

Difficult answers can deepen our faith

When I read the Bible, I find some direct answers, but I don't always find simple answers. For example, to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor," Jesus told a story about a Samaritan saying, "Go, and do likewise."

We like stories, but we like straight answers more. Straight answers don't require us to think or wrestle. A straight answer is our neighbor is someone in need. We can agree with that definition of neighbor (because it's the straight answer we wanted) while setting aside the rest (because it's more than we asked for).

But what did Jesus say?

Frankly, I don't think we want to acknowledge what Jesus really said. Why? Because it's not simple.

It's not simple to love in the way God loves—to *agape*. It's not simple to *agape* people we don't like, people who disgust us, people of whom we are afraid. To *agape* means we have to give up too much of ourselves. It means we have to be willing to hurt. It means we have to accept second place.

Can we trust God enough to *agape* other people? Can we trust God enough to accept second place? Do we have enough faith in Jesus to dive deep into the answer Jesus gives, or will we stay on the surface looking for simple answers to the world's tough questions?

Since life isn't simple, what do we tell the kids?

Is any of what we tell the kids informed by the Bible? Is any of what we tell the kids informed by our own prayers? Is any of what we tell the kids informed by the life of Christ?

Kids don't need simple answers. Kids need us to go boldly into the tough questions. Kids need us to trust God in the depths of the world's complications.

If kids open the Bible, will they recognize it as instruction for their lives because they see us looking for answers in the Bible?

If kids call out to God, will they be charting new territory, or will they have sufficient confidence in prayer because they hear us asking God for help?

If kids follow Jesus, will they recognize his steps because they see us walking in them?

When the world poses challenging questions, what are we telling the kids?

Eric Black is the executive director, publisher and editor of the Baptist Standard. He can be reached at eric.black@baptiststandard.com or on Twitter at [@EricBlackBSP](https://twitter.com/EricBlackBSP).