

Questions for Cubs

NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

Lesson

Being a Good Steward of God's Gifts

Key Verse

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand." (1 Chronicles 29:14 NIV)

Ear Check (Story Comprehension)

- Q: What does Gooz put on the poster that The Club doesn't have?
A: *Cake*
- Q: What is The Club dedicating?
A: *The clubhouse, called The Fortress*
- Q: What does Staci want to use the clubhouse for?
A: *A theater*
- Q: Who was hiding out in the clubhouse?
A: *Henry Longtooth, a homeless person*
- Q: What is Mr. Rockler planning to build that will go right through the clubhouse?
A: *Train tracks*

Heart Check (Spiritual Application)

- Q: If God gives me a gift, why should I dedicate it to Him?
- A: If you were to give an 8-year-old girl a steak knife, you would want her to use it in a very special way. You wouldn't want her to throw it at the wall, hoping to see it stick. Nor would you want her to play "sword-fight" with her little brother or try to slice her napkin into thin strips. You would want her to use the knife safely and efficiently for the purpose you intended—to cut steak. Now if the little girl in my example were to "dedicate" the steak knife to you, she would simply be promising to use it for the purpose you intended and none other. Once she made this decision, you wouldn't take the knife away from her. You wouldn't need to. On the contrary, you would be so pleased to see her use it properly that you would feel confident in trusting her with it even more. This example is a great illustration of what happens when God gives us gifts and we dedicate them to Him.

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Q: Aren't there some things that I can have and just enjoy? Do I have to dedicate everything to God?

A: Yes and no. In the Old Testament, God told the Hebrew nation to set aside certain days such as the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8–11) and certain amounts of their flocks and produce to be given back to Him (Exodus 23:16, 19). Today when we tithe, giving part of our money to our church, we are doing the same thing. After we give back a portion to God, we can decide what we want to do with the rest. That said, it is wise for us to use these remaining possessions and money in a way that pleases God. It is never good or smart to use our “stuff” selfishly, without regard to how it will impact others.

“I” Check (*Personal Application*)

1. Have you ever taken care of someone's pet while he or she was away on vacation? What things did you have to do? Look up the word *stewardship* in a dictionary. In what ways were you a steward of the pet your neighbor left with you?
2. Read Genesis 1:26–28. What are some things that God has entrusted humankind to be stewards of? How are we stewards of what God has given us?
3. The Club dedicated their clubhouse, promising to use it to glorify God. Read 1 Chronicles 29:14 and Luke 20:25. If everything we have comes from God, and if we are to give to God what is His, what things do you have that you could dedicate for God's purposes? (Don't forget about your skills, talents, and gifts.)
4. Why do you think it is difficult for some people to share their gifts with others?

Director's Notes

If you are a longtime *Paws & Tales* listener, you may have noticed that we have created a story arc for many of our episodes. Each episode is intended to stand alone, though there is a larger story going on as well. To set things up for future episodes, we leave clues and build tension in the overall story arc for those keeping track. These stories are like chapters in a larger story—what we are calling our “story arc episodes.” Episodes not attached to this story arc are typically referred to as “slice of life” episodes.

“The Dedication” is a part of the story arc, which means there is a setup at the beginning and end of the episode providing part of the larger story. The broader story is not simply one of good versus evil, for that can be a misdirected pursuit without a Christ-centered worldview. How would we reliably determine the difference between good and evil apart from Christ? So, we want to inspire kids to enter into the battle against evil as representatives of Christ (Ephesians 6:10–17). That is a battle of eternal significance, and happily, we know how it will turn out.

If you have read these Director's Notes before, you may know how important a Christian worldview is to me. We are dealing with that here as well. In my former days, I was particularly unspiritual about my Christianity. I now see that statement as an oxymoron. But for a long time I went to church and avoided sin as long as it wasn't too inconvenient. Christianity was a lifestyle, but it did not have much effect on my worldview. By that, I mean it did not guide my every decision, it did not change the way I looked at the world, and it did not help me to interpret what I saw. I was a “semi-catatonic Christian.” I was a believer, but it was difficult to see because I did not really do anything with it. This is a huge problem for believers, and it's getting worse.

In this episode we encounter a club house called “The Fort.” It is just a place for the Paws & Tales gang to hang out and play in—there is nothing particularly spiritual about it. But The Club begins to see that it can be used for spiritual things. I especially like the scene where they argue about what happens to something that you dedicate to God. Somehow we have come to believe that God takes pleasure in spoiling the things we want most. It may seem that way at times, but it's often like my 2-year-old daughter when I take away her favorite new toy. Invariably, she throws a tantrum, even when the new toy happens to be a steak knife she's snatched off the table. She thought she wanted something good, but I knew better. To make it even more complicated, the thing God allows to be taken away from you for your good might be the very thing He gives to someone else in order to bless him or her. When this happens, it's especially hard not to throw a tantrum. Trust me; I've had some doozies of my own. We need to trust that He has our best interests in mind (Romans 8:28). He will provide what we need to help us draw closer to Him.

By the end of the episode, The Club has seen that if they give their fort to God, it can actually do more good than they had ever envisioned. As a result, they are changed. That is one of the benefits of living for Christ. When we do, we can be certain that we are changed, becoming a little bit more like Christ than we were before.



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