

## Crucial Conversations with Your Kids.

### **1. I make mistakes. I need to be humble and able to admit my mistakes to God and to you.**

This fosters a connection with your children. They can relate to someone who makes mistakes. Suppose their perception is only of a parent who never does anything wrong. In that case, they may: a) learn to hide/ignore/justify their mistakes from others or b) identify with someone else who may model a completely different worldview from Christianity.

King Nebuchadnezzar had a lot of outward success but failed to such an extent that God had to humble him. In Daniel 4:34, he recounts the most humbling moment of his life, "At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified Him, who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation."

If only he had impressed this lesson upon Belshazzar. Belshazzar may have ruled with humility and glorified God throughout his kingdom.

It is OK to be humble and ask for help. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness but of wisdom, maturity, and strength. Share a time that you needed to ask for help from God and how He provided that help. Model this to your kids. They will be stronger for it.

### **2. Failure isn't the end—it's an opportunity to learn and grow. The only person to ever have lived a perfect life is Jesus. The more I learn from my failures, the more I can grow to be like Christ. Admitting my failure shouldn't lead to shame but to change.**

Lean into the fact that recovering from a failure teaches you composure, character, and how to have grace when others fail.

Michael Jordan, arguably the greatest basketball player of all time, said, "*I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.*" <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/power-failure-michael-jordans-journey-success-akshay-ramanathan>

King Nebuchadnezzar failed to learn from his mistakes over 30-plus years. It wasn't until God intervened through drastic measures that he experienced transformation and the remarkable rewards of honoring Him. Had Nebuchadnezzar imparted to Belshazzar the significance of recognizing God's transformative power, Belshazzar might have still faced failure. Still, he would have understood that failure can pave the way for positive change and growth. Instead of standing against God, he may have stood with God and prevented his kingdom from being divided.

Model graciousness and forgiveness when others fail, and ask for forgiveness when you fail. You will see your children's hearts changed for the better!

**3. My mistakes and failures should also lead me to the cross of Christ, where He gave His life and offers forgiveness for my past, present, and future failures (sins). So, while I need to ask you for forgiveness for my mistakes, I also ask God for forgiveness for all my failures. Forgiveness is the only way for us to maintain relationships with one another.**

This is a BIG conversation to have with your kids. But it's not. It is a *crucial* conversation to have with them.

You may feel that your kids are too young, too old, too disconnected, or too opposed to a discussion about the cross of Christ. But don't miss that this is a time for you to ask for forgiveness and to offer grace. The reason we can forgive is modeled by Jesus, who exited heaven to come to earth, where He was born into this unfair world and fully understands what it is to suffer, be betrayed, and die. ([Philippians 2:3-8](#)) You can demonstrate and explain this as God works on their heart.

[James 5:16](#) says, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." God assures us that while our relationship with Him is personal, it's not private. Because we're a body, what we do in our personal lives affects our brothers and sisters in Christ. Knit together by the Holy Spirit, how we live affects the rest of the body. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/confession-others-sin/> Belshazzar only appears in Chapter 5 of Daniel. Daniel records only 5 sentences before he passes away. I'm certain Nebuchadnezzar wanted more for his son, just as you want more for your children. Would you rather them learn the hard way on their own or give them the wisdom of your mistakes and failures so that they can learn, grow, and change because of the lessons you paid the price for? Sadly, Belshazzar didn't learn from Nebuchadnezzar's failures and suffered because of it. Think of what heights he may have reached if he continued what Nebuchadnezzar had started!

Jesus changes lives! This is good news that we call the *gospel*. Brandon shares a wonderful presentation of the gospel here: <https://mosaicgc.thinkific.com/courses/new-to-faith>

Let your child know that your love for them pales compared to Jesus' love for them and that you (and Mosaic Church) are ready to help them discover Christ's love.

**Let us equip you even further to have this conversation with your kids. Here are some tips to help you:**

**A. Listen and validate them.**

Listen means giving them your *full* attention. Set aside your phone, close your computer, and turn off any other distractions. Listen and share with them what you are hearing them say.

**B. It's OK to have emotions.**

Emotions are real and can be expressed in healthy ways.

Be aware of your child's emotions. Acknowledging them prevents them from ramping up to get your attention.

C. Set limits and problem-solve.

All emotions are acceptable, but not all behaviors. Help them problem-solve regarding humility, asking forgiveness, and especially in forgiving others.

D. Be vulnerable and honest.

While you don't need to share your worst failures, let them know you've had to rely on God's forgiveness even for the things you haven't shared yet. Think of an age-appropriate story to share with them to demonstrate the honesty that you want them to have with you. This can be contagious, so also prepare yourself to be surprised and have grace when they share with you their failures that you were unaware of!

E. Treat them the way you want to be treated.

F. Repeat as often as necessary!