



FITZROY YOUTH MINISTRY

Dear Parents & Carers,

How are you doing? These are challenging times but do take heart that we are all in this together. Many of us are worried about what all this means for the future of our kids. While we do not know what tomorrow holds or what the world will look like a year from now, we do know that God is still in control and we trust Him.

Many of our young people are concerned, anxious and worried about what their future holds. So as you process, pray and seek the Lord on how to disciple your children and young people through this time, I wanted to encourage you with a few questions to ask yourself as you lead them.

Here are Five Questions to Ask Yourself...

1. Ask yourself: How is my heart?

Parents, how is your heart? We are protectors by nature and probably worried about the future of our children and young people, and how all this is going to affect their education, their emotional wellbeing etc. In the midst of this, do not lose hope yourself. Take care of your own heart so that you can shepherd your child's heart.

How are you finding rest in the Lord? Chances are, if you are not resting, your children are not resting. Be diligent to fight for your own heart in the middle of this time. Jesus told His people, "I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world." (John 16:33) In other translations, be courageous also means, "Take Heart." Take hold of your heart and place it in the hands of peace.

2. Ask yourself: What do they need from me?

Beyond the basics, really ask yourselves, "What do they need from me?" Do they need to vent? Do they need a hug? Do they need you to be strong, even when you are struggling inside? Do they need your story? When was the last time you faced trouble and came out of it? Do they need you to be honest? Do they need a little space? You know them better than anyone else, so spend some time praying and asking God to show you exactly what they need. Meet those needs with grace and love.

One thing they do need is *hope*. So, in the middle of answering this question, think how do you wrap it around hope?

3. Ask yourself: How can I share future hope?

They may be worried about exams (especially if they are due to sit GCSE or A Level examinations), P7 kids may be worried about not getting back to school to see their teachers and friends before they transfer to 'big school.' They may be disappointed that much looked forward to events are no longer happening (Youth Residential, Summer Madness, Uganda Mission Trip etc.), they may be worried about how long this is all going to last and if things will ever return to normal. We do not know what the future holds, but this is a great opportunity to show our trust.

Remember, this is NOT a one family problem. This situation is affecting every person in our country. If we let ourselves, we will go down some dark roads in our minds. We will think up the worst scenarios and feel the fear and anxiety over and over.

In this, continue to talk about hope. Ask them about their future, ask them about their dreams and let them dream. Help them paint a picture of future hope. Find ways to keep that future hope alive. We do not know exactly what the future holds, but we trust the One who holds our future. For I know the plans I have for you”—this is the Lord’s declaration—“plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

4. Ask yourself: When was the last time they were brave?

Think hard about this one. When was the last time you saw them face a situation with bravery and come out better for it? When you remember their victories, you can use those as examples to encourage bravery today. These will allow you to encourage and equip them. “Remember that time when...” When they faced a tough situation or struggled, yet came out of it. They have what it takes to face this struggle today.

5. Ask yourself: What can I do with the extra time I have with them?

This is a great time, literally, we have extra time, to capture moments. People often talk about the need to have “quality time,” I’ve always believed that quality time is a myth, in reality *quality time is an accident that occurs in a quantity of time together*.

You now have a quantity of unplanned and unexpected time. Right now there are no sports. No plays. No extra activities. No parties. Their world is filled with a lot of cancellations that will lead them to spend more time at home. This is an opportunity to not waste the added time you now have with them. You may only get a few seconds a day. Capture it. Don’t waste this added time you have received. What will you do with the extra time? When this is all over, you will be able to look back and smile.

Take heart Parents & Carers! We are praying for you and your children. We want to be a support to you as you disciple and support them. If you have teenagers do encourage them to connect with our Youth Ministry via Instagram (@fitzroyym). Parents of children you will also find resources and ideas on the Fitzroy Children’s Ministry page on facebook.

Peace

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