



## Questions

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We were driving through eastern Washington and my phone rang.

That is not particularly unusual. What was unusual was the surprise the voice expressed when I (the author) answered the phone.

He talked about reading one of my books and how it was transforming the ministry he and his wife were doing. He said he had received my book from a young man who had attended a training of mine many years ago, and was told he should read it. He was enjoying the read, but he had some questions.

As background he shared some information about their ministry. They are reaching out to an apartment complex down the street from their Church. Lots of kids from this complex come to their after school program.

We talked for a half hour about his questions and I tried to help him understand what he was reading and how he could do what we had done.

As we entered some rugged terrain I had to end the conversation but told him we could talk again later that day when we arrived at our destination.

When I called back we finally got to the purpose for his original phone call.

He set a boundary with the kids they were working with and his wife disagreed. She thought he was being too strict. The conflict they were having in ministry was affecting their marriage. He wanted to know what he could do. (See "The Rest Of The Story" for more information about the resolution.)

Time will tell the results from this ministry, but for now, it is enough that they are reaching out. We will leave the results in God's hands.

Your continued interest in our ministry made it possible for us to minister for 38 years, write three books that talk about our ministry and be available to answer questions from someone who received a hand-me-down book from a training that happened six years ago, half way across the country.

You are a gift from God - for us, and for this man with the questions.

In His grip,

John  
for John and Sheryl Emra

### *Answers to Prayer*

Thank you for praying for the safety and needs of children. We will not see changes happen immediately as this is something that will only change over time!

### *Prayer Requests*

We leave Sept. 10th for Michigan where we will be leading a parenting class. We will be in that Church for 11 weeks.

Pray that the people God wants to be in that class will be in attendance.

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Pray for our extended family as several are dealing with health problems and other difficult choices.

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Continue to pray not just for the politicians but for everyone in the United States. That we would seek God's answer to the issues that face our country.

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## The Rest Of The Story - The Resolution

Problems are seldom simple.

In this case the problem had been simmering for a long time.

Josh was the disciplinarian and Shelia was much more interested in being a friend to the kids.

He was asking for my help because I dealt with that issue in "Cornerstones and Core Needs of Growing Kids". The issue is not necessarily who is right, but how do I want the kids to turn out.

In this case, Josh would set up the rules for the staff to follow and Shelia would go around (behind his back) and change the rules or not follow through with them with her favorite kids.

The current problem concerned cell phones.

Josh thought all kids should have their cell phones off during Bible Club so they would not be tempted to play games and Shelia was telling the kids just to turn their ringers off so they wouldn't distract the class.

Both could be workable solutions - but Josh had announced the rule. Now kids were telling him that Shelia had allowed them to get away without following the rule.

The solution we came up with started with taking his wife out to a nice dinner in a restaurant with table clothes and candles. During dinner he first needed to apologize. He made a rule without talking to the staff. He should have gotten input. Then they had to come to an agreement on what rules would be. They needed to be on the same page!

This is important because this ministry wants the kids to learn to trust the staff.

Trust is built on consistency. It only takes one staff member who is not enforcing the rules to destroy the trust of a group of kids who have no one to trust. Their parents are not consistent. Their teachers are not consistent. The police are not consistent. Everyone in their life who should be consistent is letting them down.

When Josh heard all the explanation and understood how the conflict he was having with his wife was counter productive to the purpose of the ministry, he was willing to face his fear of confronting his wife and take action.

I later heard that when Shelia understood her desire to be a friend to the kids was counter productive to their purpose as a ministry she was willing to change her actions.

It is all about actions - because actions speak louder than words.

Thank you for your actions through prayer and financial giving. Your willingness to act and own a part of our ministry has impacted the lives of more parents and kids than either of us will ever know.

To claim your part of our ministry, use the enclosed response card and envelope and mail a check to us. You can also use PayPal for a credit card donation. For those with internet access, go to [www.LifeIsFullOfChoices.org](http://www.LifeIsFullOfChoices.org) select the donation page then click on the yellow donate button to be taken to the PayPal donation page.

Whatever you can do, whether it is to pray or to give, and however you choose to make it happen, just know that we appreciate you and your actions!