

HEART CONNEX

Truth Flowing from One Generation to the Next—Through Strong Heart Connections

PARENTS PAGE

October 28-31, 2009

Dabbling with Darkness—Richard Ross, Ph.D.

1. Heart Surprise (Today a parent goes first): Say: **Halloween is this weekend, and that usually focuses on scary things. But I'd rather think about fears I've overcome. One thing I've learned not to fear over the years is...**

2. Read Scripture: Invite a family member to pray. Ask family members to read Acts 19:11-16. Discuss the Truth and Untruths in light of this passage.

Truth

- God intends for us to serve Him, not evil spirits.

Untruths

- Evil spirits really don't exist.
- If spirits do exist, they're either friendly or harmless.
- It's OK to experiment with "dark" things as long as it doesn't get out of hand.

3. Explore Scripture: Read again Acts 19:11-16. Point out that God did miracles through Paul and other believers that were extraordinary and beyond "chance" or normal explanations. Note that these miracles were so powerful that sick people were healed when they touched Paul's clothes and handkerchiefs, but some misused Jesus' name in an effort to drive out evil spirits. Say: **Evil spirits existed then, and they exist now. Those who dabble in darkness and don't take evil spirits seriously can suffer terrible consequences. But believers can resist evil through faith in Christ.**

4. Think It Through: A teenager will lead this step.

5. Nail It Down: Ask: **Which of the following ways of learning would you rather experience?**

- a.) Trusting a person who tells you that burners on a stove are hot and will burn if you touch them.**
- b.) Learning from personal experience by touching hot burners on a stove and getting burned.**

Explain that dabbling with evil things is a lot like burning yourself to learn a lesson. Say: **Experimenting with evil spirits and dark things is dangerous. I hope we will be known as a family who trusts God's Word and embraces a biblical view of dealing with evil.**

6. Pray: A teenager will lead this prayer.

7. Blessing: Say: **May God bless you and protect you from dabbling with evil.**

Parent Tip: Affirmation is a much better motivator than guilt and shame. One model of communication says it takes nine affirming comments to make up for just one critical comment. While teens need consistent discipline, they also need words of encouragement.