



Parent Conversation Guide: Talking with Kids After a Public Tragedy

FOR PARENTS

- When violence or tragedy hits the news, kids need safety, honesty, and hope.
- As Christian parents, we get to point them not just to *what happened* but to *Who holds us in it*.
- Keep it age-appropriate, calm, and hopeful, weaving in Scripture and prayer where natural.

ELEMENTARY (GRADES K-5)

- **What to Say:**
“Sometimes we hear about people hurting others. That makes us sad, because God made us to love and care for one another (John 13:34). You are safe, and God gives us helpers who protect us. We can pray for everyone who is hurting.”
- **Questions to Ask:**
 - “How does it make you feel when you hear about people getting hurt?”
 - “Who are some helpers God gives us when we’re scared?”
 - “Would you like to pray with me for peace and safety?”

MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8)

- **What to Say:**
“Someone was hurt while speaking in public. It shows how divided people can be. But as followers of Jesus, we’re called to show love even when we disagree (Romans 12:18). Violence is never God’s way. Let’s ask God to help us be peacemakers.”
- **Questions to Ask:**
 - “What have you heard about this?”
 - “Why do you think God asks us to love people—even those we don’t agree with?”
 - “How can we bring peace into our school or friendships?”

HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12)

- **What to Say:**
“A public leader was killed in what many are calling a political attack. On a day like September 11, it reminds us how violence leaves deep scars. Jesus calls us to be light in dark places (Matthew 5:14-16) and to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). We can’t fix everything, but we can choose respect, compassion, and prayer.”
- **Questions to Ask:**
 - “How do you think faith shapes the way we respond to events like this?”
 - “What does it look like to ‘overcome evil with good’ in real life?”
 - “What role do you think Christians can play in divided times?”

FOR ALL AGES

- **Reassure:** “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1).
- **Listen First:** Give space for questions and emotions.
- **Point to Hope:** “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:5).
- **Pray Together:** A short prayer like, *“Lord, we pray for peace in our country, for healing for those who are hurting, and for courage to love others the way You love us.”*