

# Tools for Parents

## C.J. Prospers

### Questions for Cubs

#### NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

#### Lesson

Learning how to rejoice with those who rejoice

#### Key Verse

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." (Rom. 12:15)

#### Ear Check (*Story Comprehension*)

Q: The Club teases C.J. about what?

A: *C.J.'s new clothes*

Q: C.J. was selected to work on the ribbon-cutting ceremony for what new building?

A: *The new Wildwood Library*

Q: What new rule does The Club make?

A: *Members of The Club are not allowed to go into "The President's Club"*

Q: What does Staci receive an invitation to?

A: *To give a speech honouring C.J. at the dedication banquet*

Q: What does Paw Paw Chuck suggest Staci might be suffering from?

A: *Being jealous of C.J.*

#### Heart Check (*Spiritual Application*)

Q: Is it really so bad to want what others have?

A: Yes and no. Let's say your friend has new and expensive shoes that you would also like so you decide to save up and buy them when you can. There is nothing at all wrong with that. If, on the other hand, you feel angry about it, and if you are burning to get them, you are clearly sinning. You may not even want the shoes, but if you are offended that your friend has them, you are wrong and may damage your friendship.

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Q: I have felt just like Staci. How can I just turn off the wanting and the anger?

A: The problem is deeper than wanting a pair of shoes or new clothes (Prov. 27:4). The problem is in your heart. The problem is the selfishness that is lying to you, telling you that you will only be happy when you have the most or the best stuff. Therefore when your friends are blessed more than you, it feels like an attack on your happiness. This is just the kind of thing Jesus came to save us from. First, you must not believe this lie; more stuff will not automatically make you happier. Second, pray that God will show you how to start to kill the selfishness inside you. Only when you are free of this selfishness will you be happy for others—and that is a sign of true freedom.

### **"I" Check (Personal Application)**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. In these verses the Apostle Paul writes that every Christian is part of a larger family and plays a unique role, just like our bodies have different parts with unique functions. Using the human body as an example, can you think of a way to illustrate verse 26? (One example might be when you feel sick—you ache all over. Another example might be when you are excited—you pump your arms or do a dance.) It's natural for your whole body to be affected by what happens to only one part. Can you think of some ways that a group of Christians behave like a body?
2. Staci's problem in this episode was her jealousy of the blessings C.J. and his family were receiving. Can you remember a time when you were jealous? Did you get over it? How?
3. You probably have heard the phrase, "count your blessings." Can you name some things that you are blessed to have (family, home, fun teachers, friends, etc.)? Take some time to thank God for His goodness to you.

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### Director's Notes

This episode was inspired by Romans 12:15, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." To rejoice with others is a pleasure when they have worked hard for a long time to achieve something that I do not particularly want for myself. However, if by some fluke or just plain "dumb luck" a friend is given something that I would very much like for myself, rejoicing becomes tough. In this episode C.J. reaps the benefits of his father's success. He wears nicer clothes, which annoys Marsha and Ned, and he gets special attention from Mr. Rockler and Tiffany. This is especially disturbing for Ned and Staci. To top it all off, C.J. stops spending time with his friends—adding the final insult to injury. It takes an incredible amount of selflessness to rejoice with C.J. under these circumstances, and I think that is the main point. Rejoicing under these circumstances is not a natural thing to do. Sometimes we may not even be able to do this on our own. The kind of grace it takes to rejoice in situations like these may only come from Christ. If we ask Him for it and are humble enough to receive it, we can be a genuine blessing to others. In the end, we will be changed by the very act of rejoicing with someone else.

Staci would have none of this unselfish rejoicing. She knew she was wrong, and she chose to continue to be wrong. I hope that the folly of this is communicated clearly in this episode. Staci's kind of selfishness is ugly and damaging. It has negative results for everyone. It is really the only alternative to rejoicing with others—and to our sin nature, it seems a very tempting option. One of the goals I have for *Paws & Tales* is to consistently illustrate that doing the right thing is always better than doing the wrong thing. Randy Alcorn addresses this in his book *The Purity Principle*. Purity is one of the bricks used to build a person's world view. Do we—in our secret hearts—sometimes believe that sinning is in our best interest? That is definitely what Satan wants us to think. If we believe this lie, then we are constantly pitted against the loving will of God. We must learn to believe what Christ has taught us . . . to believe God when He says something is a sin, for sin is a trap waiting to mortally wound us.



David B. Carl  
Creative Director  
*Paws & Tales*