

# Replace Taboos with Openness and Love

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Have you ever noticed that Jesus never responded to a question by saying, "Now that was the dumbest question I ever heard?" In fact, Jesus invited questions and open discussion. On one occasion for example, James and John asked if they could occupy the seats to his left and right in the Kingdom. Jesus didn't rebuke them for voicing such an unexpected thought, but instead He answered their question and addressed the issue behind it (Mark 10:32-45).

When Peter asked, "What do we get for following you?" he surfaced a question that seemed both selfish and self-serving. Yet, Jesus didn't interpret the question that way. In fact, he answered it in a way that stoked Peter's vision (Matthew 19:26-28).

In an unhealthy and legalistic family, values are rigidly held and contrary views rejected. With Jesus there were no untouchable topics. In the Sermon on the Mount, He talked about sex, money, adultery, and divorce. He repeatedly talked about politics and His own death.

Your children need a family setting where they can bring up tough issues and express opinions that might not be popular with you and/or your wife. Healing occurs when a person surfaces their secret thoughts, feelings, and opinions. If you don't cultivate emotional and intellectual openness, then you'll retard your children's ability to progress along the path of healing and growth in Christ.

If you're a parent, make a point this week to encourage your children to ask tough questions. Help them feel safe if they happen to disagree with you. Let them know it's okay. In this way, you'll be following the example of Jesus and helping your kids grow. If you're single, do the same thing with your family and friends.

Open forums. Open ideas. Open trust.