

Dear Brothers,

For a long time, I've felt strongly that we should devote one of our priesthood lessons to talk about a topic that is near to my heart:

How to respond when your adult children lose their faith and leave the church.

This is something that many, if not nearly all, of the families in our ward have had to deal with. Ours included.

(I know that some of you have seen more than just your children struggle with their faith.)

If you're like us, you may have been blindsided by your children losing their faith. You received "the text" ... "the email" ... "the call" ... "had the conversation" or otherwise learned of this sad news.

Again, if your experience was similar to ours, you may have immediately experienced a range of emotions – sadness, regret, anger, bewilderment, etc. This makes sense because, to you, this is the thing that is most precious.

You undoubtedly prayed, fasted and put the names of ALL your kids on the temple prayer rolls.

You, like us, probably had discussions where you asked, "Now what?"

I'd like our priesthood lesson to be a group discussion of that question – "Now what?"

How do we respond when this happens? Is there a "right" way to respond? What have you personally seen and felt is the best thing to do? Have you had to learn anything the hard way? Does your response differ according to circumstances?

I'd love for us to learn from one another. I would really like to learn from you.

I'm going to bring some helpful resources that my wife and I have found. Mostly, though, I'd like for us to talk.

I'd propose that this discussion be less about why young people are losing their faith these days. I think that is an absolutely critical discussion to have, but perhaps on another day.

If you have NOT had children lose their faith, you are still an important part of our discussion – both because your opinion matters AND because this discussion could possibly apply to you and yours someday.

So, I'm asking you to come to priesthood next Sunday ... and to think about this topic before our lesson ... and to be willing to share your thoughts.

Looking forward to our discussion.

Greg