

FAMILIES FIRST NEWSLETTER

Assisting Parents with the Spiritual Formation of Their Children



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“By demonstrating love and warmth, you’re preparing your child to express and return love...”

Healthy Children
Fall 2006



ANXIOUSLY AWAITING YOUR RETURN

On different occasions you may need to leave your infant or toddler with someone that may not be a family member for a short period of time. Of course my thoughts focus on Sunday Church Service, Vacation Bible School or Day Care. All of a sudden it sinks in with that little one that you are leaving, walking out that door and he or she is not going with you. Then it starts, the dropped lip, eyes well up and the water works begin. At this point a parent tries to make the best decision for the child, do you pry the child’s arms/legs from your body and run for the door, do you hold your child until the crying subsides or you decide to abort the mission completely to stay with your child.

According to the American Association of Pediatrics separation anxiety arrives around 10 months, peaks between 10 to 18 months and usually ends just before the age of three. They say it is perfectly normal for the child to experience this emotion of a parent not being by their side. It also doesn’t help that they do not have a sense of time or remember that you always come back after leaving. In an article from Healthy Children (fall 2006) it states, “A parent can encourage this anxiety to pass quicker “...by showing as much warmth and good humor as you can during this time. By demonstrating love and warmth, you’re preparing your child to express and return love, a strong foundation he or she will rely upon for years to come.”

Here are some strategies to help your child cope with separation:

*If your child is hungry, tired or sick it could increase the separation anxiety so try to avoid leaving them during these times.

*Make sure to leave an item that they really like to play with or an item that has a comforting effect like a special blanket, pacifier or toy.

*Say goodbye, let them know when you will be back and leave quickly so the caregiver can divert the child’s attention with a toy, activity or snack.

*The tears will eventually go away and in time the child will play and enjoy themselves.

*If things still are not going well when you leave, you can try to practice leaving at home so the child will get use to a real absence. For an infant, when you leave a room let the baby know where you are going and you will be right back. If the baby fusses reiterate that you will be back from the other room instead of rushing back in the room. This way the baby will eventually learn that is no big deal that you are out of sight since you always come back.

As I look at this topic, I can see a similarity in my Christian walk. There are times that I try to hold on so tight to God and cry out for his closeness. I know that God shows me warmth and lots of humor when worldly circumstances cloud my path and I do not feel that He is by my side. So like a child, there are times that I sit anxiously awaiting His return.

Erin Wines

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS FALL.

Beginning September 7

9:00 AM

Worship in the Sanctuary
Sunday School
for Nursery - 6th Grade

The children 4 years and older will begin in the sanctuary with their parents. The children's message will come about 15 – 20 minutes into the service after which they will be released to Sunday School or may remain with their parents in worship. Sunday School will last until 10:15 am.

10:00 – 10:30 am

Fellowship Time

10:30 – 11:20 am

Sunday School
for Adults and Youth (7th - 12th)

Crossroads Kid's Worship

This will be worship that involves and is understandable to children. Lively music, mission focus and interactive bible lessons will be taught in a format that will encourage children to worship God, ask questions and teach them elements of worship in the "big church". Adult helpers called the Road Crew will help children walk the road of faith in Jesus.

Nursery

11:30 am

Worship in the CORE
Nursery
Preschool Class
Elementary Class

**LOGOS is now apart of
PFUMC
WEDNESDAYS
6:30 - 7:30pm**

Logos is a Greek word meaning "word" and the Gospel of John identifies Jesus as the incarnate Word. What is this special Wednesday Children's Program?

- Every session of every course is focused on some aspect of the Christian faith and life.
- Children and youth are guided by teachers to explore the Biblical roots of their Christian faith.
- In every course teachers and learners are helped to build bridges between the world of the Bible and the world in which they live in order that faith may bring forth new life.
- The goal of the curriculum is to be a means by which children may be challenged to respond to the invitation of Jesus Christ to follow him and to serve others as his faithful disciples. The faith that is learned and affirmed in LOGOS will provide the basis for a life-time of Christian discipleship.

Sign your kids up for this exciting educational opportunity and better yet learn along with them by taking part. What could be better time with your child teaching important biblical truths that equip us to be better disciples of Jesus Christ.

Parenting with Bravery

Recently I had the opportunity to attend the Willow Creek Leadership summit. One of the speakers there, Gary Haugen, was the head of International Justice Mission. They specialize in finding and correcting injustice in developing countries so that God may be glorified. They focus on freeing those in forced labor, forced prostitution, and imprisonment without a trial. His organization gets into some scary places and there are powerful people who become their enemies through this line of work. He stood on the stage in front of a hundred thousand people or more, and stated that “Jesus didn’t come to make us safe, he came to make us brave.”

This idea of bravery immediately resonated with me, so I began to look for examples of this in the Bible and elsewhere in Christendom. I have found many examples, from the Narnia books by C. S. Lewis, to the story of the Reformation and Luther’s thesis. In Luke 9 we see a prime example. Jesus sends out the 12 disciples to preach for Him. We aren’t sure exactly how far into His ministry this is but Jesus doesn’t pick twelve of his followers to be apostles until Luke 6. Between chapter 6 and chapter 9 He has a chance to teach the twelve everything they need to know. I’m sure most of them didn’t feel ready. In chapter 10 he does it again with even more of His followers. He sends them out with no money, no food, no change of clothes(10:4), and no point by point itinerary (10:6). On their way they are supposed to encounter demons (and cast them out, 10:17) wait for a roof (10: 7)and a meal to be provided(10:8), and talk about a guy that the leaders of the country don’t like (9:7).

This is not an easy mission that Jesus sends them on. I would have been fearful of that command. I would have done my best to have gotten out of it, but what great things would I have missed by remaining safe? When the disciples came back every one of them was glowing. They had cast out demons. They had seen God change people’s

lives. They had seen God provide for their needs just like Jesus said. Jesus wanted to make them brave, not safe. Every single apostle died a martyr’s death with the exception of Judas. (By the way I wonder who got stuck with Judas for this mission.) They needed bravery for the life they were to lead, kind of like the way Gary Haugen needs bravery to fight injustice today.

“Jesus didn’t come to make us safe, he came to make us brave.”

Gary Haugen

I have a nephew, and a niece (and another on the way). Each time I have been with them I have heard myself utter the two word axiom that might be the most common phrase in parenting; “Be Careful.” Why do I say that? Am I really teaching my brother’s children a biblical principle by saying this? I say it because I don’t want things to happen that might hurt those that I love, but is hurting really the enemy? Do I subliminally tell youth this when I teach and model Christ? If Christ were a parent, or a youth pastor, instead of saying “be careful” he would say “be daring.” There is a stark difference between stupidity and daring. I am in no way advocating the former, but maybe we lack much of the latter. Do youth rebel and mix up adventurous actions with stupid ones because we as parents and mentors have mixed them up as well? How can you encourage your child or youth to be daring, brave, or adventurous?

Joe Rea

Who Calls the Shots in Your House?

My generation has some good qualities, but one particular area of weakness we have strapped young parents with is not teaching children who is in charge. My parent's generation wanted to give us all the things they never had or their parents couldn't afford. We carried it to an extreme of trying to give our children everything we could to "make them happy". The value of caring for personal things or working hard to earn something one desires, has not been generally taught. We have become a disposable society that has often carried into relationships. There has been so much divorce that today's children can have 4-6 sets of grandparents instead of 2. This is a significant contributor to "stuff-itis;" which results in children not caring for their things secure in the knowledge someone will always buy them a new one.

There is a reason Nanny 911 is one of the most popular reality shows. Written resources on parenting abound, but here is one resource that is worth running, not walking, to the store to purchase Dr. Kevin Leman's new book, Have A New Kid By Friday. Does the title sound too good to be true? Believe it or not this one works if, as a parent, you are willing to read and act accordingly. "It all goes to show that in today's society, children even shorter than a yardstick are calling the shots."¹ Do you find yourself sounding like a broken record of don't, stop that or no? At the end of many days are you relieved when they are in bed asleep (including teenagers)? Do you feel as though you are constantly running from one thing to the next? STOP. You are the parent. Saying something once and expecting

your child to act accordingly is not only possible, but healthy. A few months ago, Jim and I finished obedience training with our recently adopted Golden Retrievers, Shadow and Maggie. Of course we know who the training is really for don't we? We were taught to give a command once and expect a responsive attitude. I hadn't considered how similar the correlation is with children. Dr. Leman says, "If you want your child to take you seriously, say your words once. Only once. If you say it more than once, you're implying, 'I think you're so stupid that you're not going to get it the first time, so let me tell you again.'"² Give your directions once and walk away.

The wonderful truths of this book work because they are biblically sound and encourage proper God given authority and respect. Children are most responsive and secure in a home with clear, obvious and consistent boundaries established calmly with the expectation of obedience and the parental resolve of appropriate consequences for their misbehavior. So who calls the shots in your home?

Linda Bynum

1. Have A New Kid By Friday, by Dr. Kevin Leman, Grand Rapids, MI: Revell Publishing, 2008, pg 16.
2. Ibid, pg 33.

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