



Bulletin

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Spring into Action!

STEP INTO THE PAINTING

BY JIM DALY

I'VE RAISED TWO BOYS, SO I UNDERSTAND HOW BUSY LIFE CAN GET for parents. Finding free time for your children in between responsibilities at work and responsibilities at home can be difficult.

I also know this: Opportunities to engage with your children are in front of you right now; you just have to harness them. Instead of just sitting back and watching your child's life unfold, step into the painting. Rather than standing back and admiring life from a distance, step *into* it.

Find new ways to engage with what's going on around you. If you're driving somewhere and notice a beautiful sunset, don't continue driving. Pull over. Get out of the car. Linger for a while and take it all in.

Or say you're at the playground with your children. Instead of watching from the bench as they play and laugh with delight, get up and join the fun. Make a memory.

My attitude when my boys were younger was always *jump in and participate*. I must have played the tag game Groundsies with them hundreds of times over the years. Wherever we were and whatever we were doing, watching from the sidelines was never an option. My goal was to connect.

You only get one chance to participate in your kids' lives. Make every moment count! Step into the painting.

Want to know more? Visit FocusOnTheFamily.com.





BEING A DAD FIRST: 5 TIPS TO DISCIPLE YOUR KIDS

Being a father can be a profound challenge. Here are five tips I've discovered for discipling your kids.

1. Let them catch you pursuing Christ

God calls us to bring up our children in the instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). My kids need to see me pursuing Christ personally.

Do they catch me listening to worship music? How often do they walk in on me praying? Do they catch me reading my Bible in my big, brown chair? I want my kids to catch Christ's work in how I live, not just what I say.

2. Disciple them according to their needs

The good shepherd immediately recognized when one of his 100 sheep was missing (Matthew 18:10-14). Shepherds are renowned for how well they know their sheep.

I need to know every facet of my kids' personalities and faith, what they're curious about, what they're struggling with, what they love about God and His Word and what they want to learn next.

3. Let them serve alongside you

Joshua's final words to God's people echo in our lives as dads: Anyone else may choose

to do whatever they want, but *as for our family*, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15). As a pastor, I'm constantly bringing at least one of my kids with me early on Sunday mornings to do mic checks, pray and set things up at church. This helps them see the church as a place where we all can serve as a family.

4. Pray with them and for them personally and privately

I love praying over my kids. I have a list I love bringing to God about my kids' development, faith journey, questions, challenges and futures. Praying a personalized prayer for each of my kids brings another level of joy and connection.

5. Make the most of the spontaneous moments

Water balloon fights. Sledding. Laughing with my kids. Dance parties. Watching the sunset. These spontaneous moments allow me to remind my kids of God's goodness (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). My phone is probably buzzing somewhere, but that's okay. Work can wait until later. Being the father to my kids is my first and more critical calling.

—Josh Weidmann

THE SECRET TO LOVING YOUR WIFE BETTER



When you embrace the perception that marriage is about Jesus first and you and your wife second, one of the secrets of a joyful, enduring marriage comes to light: Love Jesus better, and you will love your wife better.

Christ's relationship with the church is the controlling metaphor that God has given to help us understand marriage. When God created marriage in the Garden of Eden, He initiated a human covenant relationship that He knew would reflect the relationship between His Son and His people.

When we love our wives like Christ loves the church, we play our part in a story that has been told since the beginning of time, a story that all creation will continue to celebrate until the end of time.

Paul points this out in Ephesians 5:31-32, when he quotes Genesis 2:24, and then explains there are depths to marriage we can only begin to understand on this side of eternity:

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is

profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

God established marriage to point quietly to the gospel. When we love our wives well, we point to Jesus. But also, when we love Jesus well, we love our wives better. When you remember that Jesus is your first love (see Revelation 2:4-5), His love naturally overflows out of your life and into your wife.

Jesus explained: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Your wife is your closest neighbor, so Jesus' words remind us of our priorities as shepherds of God's people: Love Jesus, love your wife, love your kids and love others, including your church family and community.

Root your pursuit of your wife in the fact that Christ has pursued you. Embracing this secret can be the secret to embracing a joy-filled marriage.

—*Tim Counts*



7 TYPES OF PRAYER FROM THE BIBLE

Prayer involves talking to God—and listening as He talks to us! For a closer walk with Him, it only makes sense for us to pursue a richer prayer life.

Head: Throughout the Bible, we see several different types of prayer used. Seven different types of prayers for you to learn to take your prayer life to the next level are adoration, lament, thanksgiving, petition, deliverance, contrition and guidance. For definitions of each of these types of prayer, go to FocusOnTheFamily.com/live-it.

Heart: Remember, a strong prayer life will regularly incorporate these seven types of prayer in your conversations with God. For an example of this, look no further than Jesus' prayer in Luke 11:1-4, commonly referred to as the Lord's Prayer:

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." And he said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'"

Can you identify the different types of prayer included in that single prayer?

Hands: Take the time to work on each kind of prayer and go through the application activities at FocusOnTheFamily.com/live-it to help you deepen your time speaking to the Lord.

Remember that a strong, healthy prayer life requires a conversation with the One who loves you the most. Take the time to speak to the Lord every day, as often as possible, and watch your relationship with Jesus grow!

Sign up for the Live It Challenge at FocusOnTheFamily.com/live-it and receive fun challenges, updates and more!

For more information on any of the topics in this bulletin, go to FocusOnTheFamily.com or call 800-A-FAMILY (232-6459). To reach Customer Service regarding your subscription, please call 1-800-692-9912. To check out more ministry resources, please visit us at www.tyndaleperiodicals.com.

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