



Bulletin

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God's Love Never Ends

LEARN YOUR TOOLS

BY JIM DALY

IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF, I HAVE AN OUTSTANDING SET OF TOOLS IN MY garage. I have hammers, a circular saw, a miter saw, a router—every tool a guy could want.

The trouble is, I'm not much of a handyman, so I've never learned how to use most of the tools. That circular saw? I've never operated it. The router? I'm not entirely sure what it's for. As a result, my collection of tools is not particularly useful to me.

A lot of men face the same problem in marriage. They have every tool for building a good relationship available to them, but they don't know how to use them.

Like the tool of communication. Women talk to share feelings, not to share facts. There's what your wife *says*, and what your wife *means*.

Romance is another tool men should master. Know your wife's love language. Understand what makes her feel valued. Learn her likes and dislikes. Celebrate the little quirks that make her uniquely her.

Conflict resolution is also an important tool. Marriage isn't about *me*; it's about *we*. Resolving conflict isn't about winning an argument; it's about two people attacking a problem together.

Men, become an expert in knowing your wife and work hard at mastering your relationship with her. After all, tools are only useful when you know how to use them.

Want to know more? Visit FocusOnTheFamily.com.



REFLECT THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN YOUR MARRIAGE

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he writes, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25). If you want to know how to treat your wife, look at Christ's love for the church.

To what extent did Jesus love the church? He gave Himself *completely* for her. What was the extent of His service? He said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Now we are told as husbands that this sacrificial service will be the model for serving our wives! This is so contrary to our natural inclination.

I must continually remind myself that my love for my wife requires me to take the initiative in serving her and the family. May it be clear to your family that you are not there to be served but to serve because that reflects the sacrificial love of Jesus for you.

Also, remember that you base the love for your wife on commitment, not conditions, regardless of how difficult things might

become in your relationship. Jesus didn't love you and give Himself for you because you were so smart, holy or indispensable to His plan for the world. He loved you because He loved you!

He still loves you when you fall short of perfection every single day. Keep this in mind when you are tempted to revert to conditional love with your wife. Through the Spirit of Christ, love your wife as Christ loves you unconditionally.

Paul's discourse on marriage ends with these words, "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:32-33).

If you sacrificially love your wife through the power of His Spirit, her regard for you will soar, and together you will reflect the mysterious union between Christ and His church.

—*Timothy Z. Witmer*

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO VALENTINE'S DAY



Valentine's Day actually has roots within Christian history. Help your kids understand the generational impact of one man's decision to honor God's design for all of creation.

Historical records show that around AD 268, Roman Emperor Claudius II banned marriage throughout the region. In his mind, men who weren't married made better soldiers in war.

A local Roman priest named Valentine disagreed and decided to break the rules. Performing hidden marriages, Valentine eluded the Roman government for a while. But he was eventually imprisoned and executed.

A few centuries later, the Roman Catholic Church declared the day of Valentine's death as St. Valentine's Day, which paved the way for later Middle Ages celebrations of love and marriage. Eventually, the holiday continued to morph into the modern global celebration of affection and love we experience today.

As a priest, Valentine was likely familiar with biblical teachings on love and the

importance of marriage. When reading the Bible, it doesn't take long to see God's emphasis on love and its impact within our relationships.

As you approach Valentine's Day for your kids this year, consider using these readings from the Bible to teach your kids about God's design for love:

- Galatians 5:22-23: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. [Love] does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; [Love] does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

—*Jackson Greer*



HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER

The Bible is clear about how we are to treat our parents. The fifth commandment says, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you” (Exodus 20:12). This commandment, and the blessing attached to it, are repeated throughout the Old and New Testaments.

But what does it mean to “honor your father and your mother?”

Head: The *Oxford English Dictionary* says *honor* means “to regard with great respect or high esteem.” It also describes honor as “something regarded as a rare opportunity and bringing pride and pleasure; a privilege.” Both describe what it means to honor your parents.

So when honoring our parents, it’s essential that we show them respect, accept their authority, obey them and appreciate them.

Heart: Your relationship with your parents will change as you get older. How is your relationship with your parents different now than when you were a child? An infant? What will your relationship be like when you become an adult?

As both you and your parents grow older, you’ll find that you have the privilege of caring and providing for them. Paul wrote to Timothy, “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8).

Even as we grow into adulthood, we never stop honoring our parents.

Hands: What does it look like to honor your parents? If you are looking for some practical ways to honor your parents, we have a list of 20 ideas at FocusOnTheFamily.com/live-it to get started.

Don’t miss out! Sign up for the Live It Challenge 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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