

The "Oh Yeah!" Letter

THIS IS NOW, BELOVED, THE SECOND LETTER I AM WRITING TO YOU IN WHICH I AM STIRRING UP YOUR SINCERE MIND BY WAY OF REMINDER, THAT YOU SHOULD REMEMBER THE WORDS SPOKEN BEFOREHAND... "2 PETER 3:1-2A

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THE NEXT STEP

Ami and I started our involvement with Growing Families International nearly 15 years ago. At that time, we were having trouble getting Ami any sleep between toddler Aly and newborn Abby. Friends graciously came over and taught us the principles from "Preparation for Parenting" and the hope that came from that evening of loving help from some friends opened our eyes to a resource that was practical and Biblically based.

It wasn't long till a "Growing Kids God's Way" class was being offered in our church—we signed up, if this organization had such valuable information for infants, we hoped they would have something helpful to say about older kids as well. We were not disappointed. In those video taped lectures, we heard principles that help us think Biblically toward the rearing of our children. We learned foolishness from childishness and what to do about each. We sat and listened, read our homework and answered our questions.

Our hearts and minds were captured by the hope and vision that the Word of God had for us as parents and that truth was illuminated by a man standing in front of a book case, behind a lectern, talking to us. GKGW was the catalyst to a changed family and it was a call to us to bring that hope to other families.

After moving to Phoenix a year later, we began offering the GKGW classes. Many of you came to our home and sat in our living room and watched that same man talking in a room filled with tables and couples sitting around them. That man, Gary Ezzo, presented those same truths in those lectures and the Q&A session from the "students" helped bring clarity to the teaching. Anne Marie still wore doilies on her dresses. We all listened and took notes.

Meanwhile the culture around us was changing. It was speeding up. The information super highway was exploding. Music videos and computer games popped up



BY: TIM LOPER

everywhere. TV news programs added tag lines along the bottom of the screen so we can read and listen at the same time or tune them both out if they droned on too long (that is, more than a minute or two).

In parallel, the Growing Families International curriculum was repackaged as the "Let the Children Come" series, starting with "Along the Infant Way", to "Along the Virtuous Way", and up through "Along the Adolescent Way". The books and lectures continued to reach the hearts of parents and provide the same principles to those parents who would set aside the fast paced information world and listen to Gary expound those truths to us.

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It turned out to be a great experience even though she had practically knitted a sweater before I'd finished my first row!

Connecting on their playing field is a great way to grow a relationship!

Fun Idea of the Quarter

Fun & relationship ~ they go hand in hand! Trying to have a relationship without fun is like trying to have dessert without chocolate! What's the point?

One way to have fun with your child is to take a class together with them. No, I'm not talking about something super educational ~ something FUN! Each year, find something fun that your child is interested in and take a class with him.

There is an interesting dynamic that happens when you are both students, sitting side by side trying to obtain a new skill!

I've generally taken art classes with my children as that is something my oldest two are very into, but this year, Abby, my youngest informed me that she wanted to take a knitting class! Knitting???. Wow. That is really not me, but...okay!

Quotes Worth Remembering

"Progress is the activity of today and the assurance of tomorrow."

~Emerson



A Parenting Treasure from the Word

"Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning." Pr 9:9. Are you willing to be taught—even by your children?

Reminders

- * DADS, SCHOOL'S ABOUT TO BEGIN! HAVE YOU WRITTEN LETTERS TO YOUR CHILDREN?
- * FATHER'S MANDATE #2: DEMONSTRATE LOVE FOR YOUR WIFE! DO COUCHTIME! TRY MARKING IT IN YOUR DAYTIMER OR AS A REMINDER ON YOUR CELL. WHATEVER IT TAKES, JUST DO IT!
- * MEET WITH YOUR SPOUSE TO DISCUSS PRIORITIES. ASK ONE ANOTHER IF YOURS ARE IN LINE!

Marriage

Similar to my "Fun Idea of the Quarter," my "Marriage" idea is to take a class together. Find something you want to learn together and sign up! Of course, parenting classes are our favorite recommendation, but in between those, take a class that will draw you together in a new way. It will give you more to talk about and something to look forward to together.

You can choose something that interests you both or you can take turns picking different things. Dance lessons, parasailing, rafting, or tennis.

Find new ways to relate to one another and keep growing, fresh and alive!

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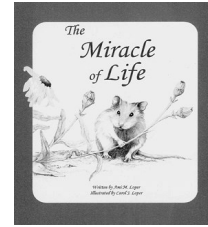
"The Next Step" was the title for the recent GFI National Leaders and Alumni conference. During the conference, on top of the challenging workshops, the encouraging teachings, hilarious introductions of GFI leaders from across the world, was the announcement of a new series designed to capture the hearts and minds of this next generation of Dads and Moms. The new series is presented in a new format, one that uses humor, drama and storyline to capture the attention and emo-

tions of the class. The sessions are just a half hour long, but they powerfully present the "Parenting by Principle" curriculum. The series is designed to help engage the parents: heart, mind and body to the call God has given them in the raising of their children.

The other big change is that the names for all the classes are returning to the original names. This announcement was greeted with cheers, since no one could ever get used to not saying "Growing Kids" when referring to the curriculum that changed our lives!

In keeping with the popularity of "Growing Kids" an exciting new web resource was launched: www.growingkids.org. The new website is filled with more information, practical help, and new resources like the "Babywise Bliss" DVD from Australia and GKGW teachings in Spanish. Blogs are being started as needed on topics from young families to discipline issues and maintaining the purity of your children.

There is new life in the Growing Families Community—Check it out and be encouraged!



It's
Here!

Wondering how to begin teaching the birds and the bees? "The Miracle of Life" is now available! Please visit our website for more information and to purchase this exciting and valuable resource for your family!

<http://members.cox.net/miracle-books/>



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