



The "Oh Yeah!"

Letter

New Years, Letting Go And Dizziness

by Ami Loper

A new year. A time to reflect. A time to note the passage of time - most often with awe. For me - with a touch of dismay!

A dozen or so years ago, I remember vividly the older mothers warning me that time would fly, that I'd turn around and the kids would be grown. On frustrating days when I longed for grown children and time seemed to be at a stand still, I turned circles in my living room. But, no one got any older when I turned around! I only got dizzy!

Now all that is changed. Maybe I turned around too many times because I never expected it to feel this fast on this end of the child raising spectrum. Ashley is approaching 17, Alyssa is 12 1/2 and Abigail (my baby) is 11. I now find myself wishing there were brakes on this bullet train.

I also find myself doing a most pathetic count down of time. How many more Christmases do we all have guaranteed to have together? How many more family vacations? How can I squeeze in all those things I thought we'd do?

Don't get me wrong, I wouldn't hold my children back for anything! I want them to grow up and have their own lives to fulfill God's calling and reach their potential. Hey, I'm not stupid - I do want grandchildren!

However, there is that part of me that I find grieving now and then. That part of me that wants to put my hands over my ears when Ashley starts a sentence with, "When I go to college..."

The hardest part, I suppose, are the regrets.

(cont. on back)



* ARE YOU PARENTING INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF THE FUNNEL? (SEE GKGW CHAPTER 14)

* REMEMBER THE FATHER'S MANDATE TO REGULARLY EMBRACE YOUR CHILDREN! WRESTLING IS FUN, BUT HUGS COMMUNICATE CLOSENESS, AFFIRMATION AND SECURITY. SO HOLD THEM CLOSE (BOYS, TOO!) AND MAKE SURE YOU ARE THE ONE TO FULFILL THIS NEED.

* WHAT PRINCIPLE HAVE YOU WRITTEN ON YOUR CHILD'S HEART THIS WEEK?

* IS YOUR FAMILY PUTTING GOOD, BETTER AND BEST INTO PRACTICE? (SEE GKGW CHAPTER 17)

Marricage

It's a New Year! A time to celebrate the goodness of God, the blessings our families have experienced and a time to plan for an even better New Year. One area to seek for improvement is in the foundational relationship of your family - the one with your spouse. Sit down, husband and wife, and ask what was good in your marriage last year. What was not good? Make an action plan to make this the best year ever. Plan to date, plan for weekends together - alone! It will make for a stronger team in raising the children. Commit to the plan and enjoy the growth it will bring. Keep that plan near you and review it during your couchtimes

~Tim

Where there is no vision the people perish. Prov 29:18a

Announcement

Check out what's new on the web! At gfi.org you will find three new books have been added to the popular "On Becoming" series. "On Becoming Birthwise," "On Becoming Toddlerwise" and "On Becoming Preschoolwise" now join "On Becoming Babywise" (one and two), "On Becoming Childwise," "On Becoming Preteenwise" and "On Becoming Teenwise." These books are all great ways to read on specific ages or, our favorite use for them, to pass out to people as gifts!



A Parenting Treasure from the Word

"He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that have young." Isaiah 40:11 That's us! Praise the Lord!



FUN Idea of the Quarter

I'M SURE We all pray For our children. Tim and I love to go in the girls' rooms at night and pray about the issues we see in their lives, their futures, our concerns for them. But what about their concerns? It is very enlightening to ask your children what they want prayer for. I've set aside a section in my weekly calendar to jot down their prayer requests and it is before me each day. In the year or so that I've been doing this each week, I can't say I've ever been surprised by their requests, but it has definitely been interesting to know what is weighing on their hearts. It is also encouraging to them to know that I'm lifting their concerns up to the Lord.

Quotes Worth Remembering

A chud enters your home and for the next twenty years makes so much noise you can hardly stand it. The chud departs, leaving the house so silent you think you are going mad.

~John Andrew Holmes

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(cont.) The proverbial, "I wish I had's" and "I should have's" can be hard to live with. However, I keep trying to tell myself that it's still not too late. If I didn't sit on the floor and play enough when they were little, I have to stop wishing or waiting for grandkids, I've got to do it now - even if it's not the same, even if it is awkward!

One thing I do not regret, however is all that we taught the girls, all those seemingly endless hours of training that are drawing to a quick close. The dividends now are paying such rich rewards. As Proverbs 29:17 says, "Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul." How true! What a rich blessing to have a heart at peace.

because of all the training you've invested in a child! When you can trust your children, there is less fear in letting them go. And though the sadness in letting them go may be even more intense because of the closeness you've cultivated, it is sweeter by far, for joy stirs in your heart at a job well done and a child becoming a godly adult.

So, my encouragement to you is this: Love them with all your heart at each and every stage. Don't wish them to hurry to the next one because it looks easier from your perspective. Don't waste today wishing for tomorrow. And whatever you do, don't turn too many circles. You'll wish you could un-spin them.



Books we love...

We love books to read together as a family! It generally takes mom or dad a lot less time to finish eating dinner, so instead of hopping up to clear the table (that's a good kid job anyway), grab a book and start reading! Whether it is the Heroes of the Faith series or The Little House on the Prairie series (Farmer Boy is our favorite and is great for boys, too) or your children's favorite Christian book, you'll be building memories, good habits, and family togetherness. Right now our family is reading its way through the Anne of Green Gables series. It is a wonderful tale and holds so many spiritual truths. So, give it a try! I'm sure it's a habit that your kids, and you, will love!

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