



The "Oh Yeah!"

Letter

Trust AND Obey

by Ami Loper

"I'm just trusting the Lord." These words sound so noble, so wise, but over time, Tim and I have found ourselves cringing when we hear them. Why? Because when parents say these fine sounding words, we've found that, all too often, that is all the parent is doing. Training? Why bother? It's too much work! And why should we have to train when we can just quote a few verses over our child and it will all be all right?

In the Christian community, we often see well meaning parents hoping that if they just pray enough, all will work out fine. Is prayer for our kids important? Of course! What joy and peace accompanies the parent who is able to rest in the assurance that he partners with God in parenting a child. To know that the Holy Spirit desires to direct a parent's steps and a child's heart brings an excitement that can't be equaled by the shot in the dark of trying to figure it out on your own.

We must never forget that we are in a war for our children. Praying for yourself as the parent and for your child is a vital life line and safeguard. However, it was never intended to be the be all and end all of our calling as parents. Remember, Proverbs 22:6 tells us to, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Too often this is quoted in hope for the promise, while the condition of the promise (train) is glossed over. "Train" is not a passive word. It is an action word that requires all a parent can give: mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. No one ever claimed it would be easy, but it will be worth it.

God requires obedience and it is when we are doing all He has shown us to do that we can rest in His promises - not before. Admittedly, God may tell us to do nothing in a given situation, especially in the late teen years when a child must stand on their own two feet and walk in all they've been taught already. It is in those times that we must muster all our courage and wait on God exclusively and do nothing to interfere with His dealings with our child.

Our generation's motto seems to be, "balance." And why not? It is true that there can be danger in extremes. The extremes that swing on either side of Biblical parenting often break our hearts with their shortsightedness and lack of revelation of the heart of God. Whether it is the impossible to please legalistic parent or the waffling,



* FATHER'S, THE 5TH DUTY OF A FATHER (GKGW CH. 4), IS TO BE THE ENCOURAGER OF THE FAMILY. DON'T FORGET HOW MUCH YOUR CHILDREN DEPEND ON YOUR APPROVAL AND HOW FAR YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT CAN LAUNCH THEM.

* HAVE YOU SLIPPED BACK INTO OLD HABITS? ARE YOU THREATENING AND REPEATING, BRIBING OR NEGOTIATING IN CONFLICT? OLD HABITS REAP OLD RESULTS!

* HAVE YOU TOLD YOUR CHILD LATELY THAT YOU ARE GLAD THEY ARE YOURS?



Marriage

Investments come in many forms. Real Estate, Stocks, Bonds are all forms of investments. All things that are valuable require investment. However, the most important "thing" in life is our relationship with our God, our Spouse and our children. The currency of most investments is hard cold cash, but what is the currency for investments in relationships? I think there are several forms. Time together is certainly one form, so is communication, and selflessness. Sometimes it may come in the form of a Mens', Womens' or Couples' Retreat that takes money and time away from the family, but with God.

Recently Ami was able to attend a retreat with the women from our church. During that time she was blessed directly by God and by the women around her. That time and money was a good investment for our family. When any of us are able to draw closer to God, to be refreshed and encouraged in Him, all the family benefits. Maybe there isn't an organized retreat to attend, if not we each can make sure that our spouse has a chance to spend some extra and special time alone with God.

I made another investment when she came home from retreat when I asked to sit her down and have her tell me all about it. It really blessed Ami to be asked. It meant I was invested in her, what she experienced and felt, what God did in her and through her. We are one flesh, anything that she experiences I want to experience vicariously through her. I want her to know I care about her, that I'm interested in her. I want her to talk to me. I want to know her.

Investing has benefits, payoffs and rewards but we should be focused on serving and blessing on another for the sake of the other person. When we focus on giving, serving, loving, blessing, listening, we will be investing in relationships with eternal rewards.



A Parenting Treasure From The Word

"They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortunes for they will be blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them." Isaiah 65:23 Keep up the good work! It will not be in vain! God will bless it and it will bless your children.



FUN Idea OF the Quarter

We are ALWAYS LOOKING to FIND WAYS FOR our FAMILY to create special FAMILY TIMES and BUILD ALL THE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY. FOR MANY YEARS AMI and I HAVE HAD MONTHLY dates WITH our GIRLS. THEN We added MOM and Dad dates WITH each daughter on a TWICE per year basis. Most recently We Started HAVING "FAMILY days" WITH the activities planned by one MEMBER OF THE FAMILY. THE FAMILY day MAY be a trip to THE MOUNTAINS, or to THE MALL - WHATEVER it IS, it IS FOCUSED FAMILY TIME THAT WE WILL REMEMBER! Start SOON, BEFORE THE BUSINESS OF INDIVIDUAL LIVES gets IN THE WAY and the opportunity is gone!

Just a note to say, "Sorry this Newsletter is so late." Due to a death in the family and being over committed in a few areas, this "Oh Yeah Letter" is about six weeks late. Sorry for the delay and we'll try to get back on track!

Quotes Worth Remembering

"When home is ruled according to God's Word, as gets might be asked to stay with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element."
~Charles H. Spurgeon

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insecure permissive parent, both have misunderstood God and His plan for them as parents.

A true balance in the middle of the extremes is essential. However, "balance" can sometimes become the buzzword that denies absolutes and the real need to do the right thing consistently.

Frequently, a misunderstanding of authentic balance can make the most well meaning parent like that person in Ephesians 4:14 who is like an "infant, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching." A new foolish idea comes along, hits some cord of familiarity within the parent and he jumps on the band wagon. The desire to have balance can produce a parent who is inconsistent and using a hodgepodge of methods that sound good. There is no "balance" between trusting and obeying. Instead, trusting follows when

obedience has been carried out to its fullest. They go hand in hand. We must trust that the obedience God requires of us in our parenting will reap the promised fruit.

So what is our compass? What is the magnetic force that will keep us from swinging into the extremes?

The Word of God is our compass. It will light our path and make it straight. The revelation of the heart of God is what brings our steps into focus.

We need to stop parenting simply for the benefits to ourselves or even the benefits to our children. Parenting is a Kingdom issue, as we say in Growing Kids. As such, we parent with the purpose of the Kingdom in mind and out of sheer obedience to God and His Word. So the next time you feel like being inconsistent or leaning on you own understanding or even hoping that prayer alone will do the trick, turn your mind to the Word of God and focus on fulfilling your calling as Parent.

Books we love...

We have been introduced to two wonderful books that teach children the importance of purity. They are "The Princess and the Kiss" for girls and "The Squire and the Scroll" for boys ages 8-12 years. They are delicately written by Jennie Bishop and delightfully illustrated by Preston McDaniels. Even though our daughters are 12 and older, we bought both books anyway, simply because they are so valuable. Girls will learn to value their purity and wait for just the one that God brings while young men will learn that they are the ones responsible for protecting the purity of the world. They are available at christianbook.com or in your local book store.



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