

“THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN RAISING KIDS”

By Shelby Faith



A strong intact home life is the biggest single factor in raising good successful kids, according to an article written in *U.S. News & World Report*, October 3, 2005, titled “All in the Family” by John Leo.

According to the article when Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana, Mississippi and other southern states, it took the media a while to notice that most of the victims were black. *The media has yet to acknowledge that most of the victims were women and children.* Where were the males who had fathered all these children?

George Will, a columnist for Newsweek, noted that 75% of births to Louisiana’s African-Americans are to unmarried women and in a large city like New Orleans the estimate is around 80%. Two decades of research has produced a consensus that family structure has a serious impact on children, even when factored for income, race and other variables. In other words, we are not talking about race but about a problem of missing fathers. The best outcomes for children are almost invariably produced by married biological parents. The worst results are by never-married women.

In 19 out of 20 studies that found family structure to have an effect, children from non-intact or single-parent families had a higher rate of crime or delinquency. Neighborhoods with lots of out-of wedlock births have lots of crime. Again, these studies were controlled for race, according to the article titled “All

in the Family” in *U.S. News & World Report*, Oct. 3, 2005.

“In a large sample of students in 315 classrooms in 11 cities the “single most important variable” in gang involvement was found to be family structure. In other words, the greater the number of parents at home; the lower the level of gang involvement. Another study concluded that out-of wedlock childbearing had a large effect on the rate of arrests for murder. Children in married, two-biological-parent families generally fare better than children in any of the family types studied. The other family types studied were single mother, co-habiting stepfather, and married stepfather families.”



Family Structure

“One study found that divorce rates had no relationship to violent crime rates but that out-of-wedlock births had a strong relationship to youth crime. Nearly 90% of the increase in violent crime between 1973 and 1995 was accounted for by the rise in out-of-wedlock births.”

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Personal Note

Hello Everyone,

The Feast of Tabernacles of 2005 has come and gone and we're in the midst of winter here in the Midwest. It's that drab, dreary, cold time of the year that a lot of us hate to see coming. During these months, when we don't get outside as often, I find that it's a good time to catch up on reading, Bible study, and many other things that I sometimes put off in the warmer seasons of the year.

But in just a few short weeks we'll be over the bad part of winter (ice, snow, cold weather) and once again edging toward Spring. And with Spring comes the holy days I look forward to as much as the fall holy days.

We've included in this issue a spring holy day lesson and secret word puzzles on page 4 and 5. These are geared for ages 6-14, but if you are bored this winter, you may try to solve the word puzzles. Kids seem to enjoy them a lot. We have other articles about "Reading with Your Children" and "Pass It On", plus Bible Trivia..

Also included in this issue I wrote an article about one of the most important factors in raising children, which is family structure. The family unit was intended by God to be a safe and happy place for children to grow up in. These days, the family unit is becoming an "endangered species", and a lot of our children are raising themselves, with hardly any supervision from any adult, let alone their parents. If only parents would realize what harm they are doing to their children, but for the most part, they don't seem to care. It's a sad situation for a country like ours to see parents abandoning their responsibilities in order to have their own pleasure. May God have mercy upon this generation of children is my prayer.

Until next time,

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**"Each day of our lives we make deposits
in the memory banks of our children."**

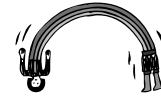
By Charles Swindoll



"Pass It On"

By Diane Kleeschulte

Rubber bands can be used in an object lesson that depicts any of us that have ever experienced stress. Rubber bands are one of those little items that we have either too many of, but



never use, or we always need, but can never find. Anyway, stress is always there. It comes in various degrees and amounts, and the sources and targets vary as well. Visualize for a moment the rubber band in your hands, stretch it as far as okay, you get the point. The rubber band eventually snaps, or you release it and it shoots off into the distance. Hopefully, it doesn't zing anyone- an unsuspecting target!

We become synonymous with that rubber band every time we allow stress to control us. We are stretched and stretched until finally "zing"! Off we go towards some unknown and unsuspecting target. We fly off, words spew forth in several directions, but what about that target? Who is, perhaps, the unsuspecting one laying innocently in the path of your stress release? But what if the target deserves to be stricken, you say? Step back for a moment. Can you see that as Christians we have a responsibility to ourselves and to others to live peaceably among all men? (Romans 12:18) It is part of our rules for daily living.

Instead of allowing that moment of tension to become a weapon upon anyone, shouldn't we be instruments of peace? Yes, this is probably the exact opposite of what usually happens, but do you think we can all try, through prayer, to be sure the result changes next time? Ask God to intervene and take control of the situation.

It should be apparent to others around us that Christians do indeed live their daily lives under a different set of expectations than others in the world. "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me." This line from a hymn, sung in many churches, makes it obvious that peace can be achieved if people, maybe beginning with you, make it their mission each day. It can happen with friends, strangers, a spouse, or your children. (Phil. 4:5) It can happen at the cleaners, the supermarket, at work, or on the road. (Phil. 4:7)

And don't forget the brethren. Maybe they need the peace you have to offer them today. (James 3:18) Peace- let it begin with you and me. And be a good steward of the word- **Pass it on!**

**"And the peace of God, which surpasses
all understanding, will guard your hearts
and minds through Christ Jesus."**

Phil. 4:7 (NKJV)

("The Most Important Factor" - Continued from Page 1)

"The upshot of these studies is that America is confronted by a form of poverty that money alone can't cure. Many of us think social breakdown is a result of racism and poverty. Yes, they are factors, but study after study shows that alterations in norms and values are at the heart of economic and behavioral troubles. That's why so much research boils down to the old rule: ***If you want to avoid poverty, finish high school, don't have kids in your teens, and get married.*** But conventional wisdom (or the way people think) is determined to ignore the evidence. It holds that family fragmentation is positive and here to stay." (End of quotes from U.S. News and World Report article)

Is it any wonder that the children of our nation are in so much trouble and don't seem to have much hope for the future? Our youth are seemingly running wild, not only in the inner cities but wherever there is a concentration of unmarried women giving birth to illegitimate children, here in our country and around the world.

In the beginning, God made man and woman and told them to procreate. He told them to teach their children. (Deut. 6:6-7) He hates divorce, adultery and fornication. These things cause problems in marriages; but a big problem now is unwed women giving birth to one or more children without the benefit of the father being around. These fathers are not in the family plan and hardly ever show up to help the mothers raise their children. They usually don't support these children financially, emotionally or morally. The children are left to raise themselves if the mothers aren't around either.

It's not the children's fault. They were brought into a world that's not perfect. They do have to take the responsibility for their actions, but *the parents bear the greater responsibility for not teaching them properly and for not being there for them as a family unit.*


Parents, please, for the sake of your children, try to uphold the family structure. If you are a single parent, ask your family or friends for support, ask someone to be there when you cannot, and teach your children the right morals at every opportunity. And ask God for His guidance and help in raising your children.



READING WITH YOUR CHILDREN

By Cynthia Saladin

If your goal for your children is better grades in school, reading is fundamental. But if your goal is to rear children in the knowledge and faith of God, then hearing the word is even better. Look at Roman 10:17. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Therefore since most parents would like to achieve both goals, combine hearing and reading. That is, incorporate telling the Bible stories into your child's reading program.

Essentially, it works like this: Take a favorite Bible story like Daniel in the lion's den. Read through the story yourself until you are comfortable telling it to your child.  Infuse your telling with enthusiasm and drama. Make the event come alive in your retelling of it. Then turn in the Bible to Daniel 6. Read through the account with your child, perhaps taking turns reading. Explain and clarify as you go. Encourage comments. Ask questions to stimulate thinking. Then when you're finished, follow up with an activity. For the youngest children, have them draw a picture of a lion. For the older children, go to the library. Do some research into the history of the Medes and the Persians. Research, perhaps, into the historical accounts of Babylonian conquests and occupations. Use maps and pictures to make the locations a reality in the minds of your child. The activities are almost limitless. At the end of the activities that you choose to do, have your child retell the story of Daniel in the lion's den. Be sure to refer often to the Bible for accuracy. Mastering the details will give your child a sense of satisfaction while instilling faith—unbeknownst to them! Be prepared for their request, "What are we going to study next?"



Perhaps a study into Noah's ark. Remember tell them the story first. Then read the story together. Then, take a trip to the zoo. If you go early in the day, you may get to see the zookeepers feeding the animals. This will give you the opportunity to discuss how Noah was able to feed the animals the whole time he was on the ark! You may want to take along paper and pencil to list all the different animals you see, or to do a sketch of the most interesting. If you do have a zoo nearby, perhaps your child would love to build a model of Noah's ark with you. Make it sea-

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Lesson For the Spring Holydays:



Topic: Jesus is the Bread of Life

Objective: The students will learn and conclude that Jesus is the bread of life. We must learn who He is, why He was sacrificed for us, and how to grow to be more like Him in our daily lives.

Points of discussion:

1. Have each student tell what they know about Jesus Christ.
2. At the Lord's Supper, the Apostles ate the bread (body) and drank the wine (blood) of Jesus Christ.
3. When we unleaven our homes it is like unleavening our bodies and our lives of sin because leavened bread has yeast that is a symbol or sign of sin. Without leavening in our homes and bodies we have lived without "sin" for seven days. The only "bread" we need is that bread that is free from leaven (sin): Jesus Christ. Remember, Jesus was free from all and any sin.

Lesson Conclusion:

After the days of unleavened Bread, we should still try to keep sin out of our lives and keep the righteousness of Christ in our lives.



Lesson Activities:

1. Make a list of ways you can keep sin from your daily lives.

2. Use the concordance to find "bread" and "Life" scriptures in both the Old and New Testament.
3. Memorize a verse from your concordance search. Recite it to the class for a special reward.
4. Make a list of food items that have leavening in them (example: donuts).

5. Make a list of food items that do not have leavening in them (example: fruit).

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worthy so you can actually set it afloat in a pond somewhere close to your home. Again, remember to end the study with your child retelling the story, relying on the Bible for accuracy. And plan to keep the boat or pictures from the zoo. The visual reminder will help instill in your child the knowledge that God will save His people (a great faith builder).



The Garden of Eden is another great study. Possible activities include a visit to the botanical gardens, municipal rose gardens, the city park, or a favorite state park. Have your child draw a scene or a plant that they particularly like. Use the drawing as a prop as they retell the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

The topics for Bible study are endless. As you do a few, your children will probably begin requesting the next one. Plan the activities together. Most children are game to try anything for which their parents show enthusiasm. Be enthusiastic. You're helping your children read better! More importantly they are hearing the word of God. Their faith is growing! But, lest you think this whole project is just for your child's benefit, consider for a moment just how much you'll be learning and experiencing along with them. You're giving your faith a chance to grow too!

*"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
Roman 10:17*

* * * * *

TOP 5 SIGNS YOU'RE A MOM

* You automatically cut all your food into bite size pieces before eating.

* You seem to have a tissue ready at all times.

* Your feet stick to the kitchen floor...and you don't care.

* Total silence makes you think someone is up to something.

* Your diet consists of whatever the kids refuse to eat.

* * * * *

BIBLE TRIVIA

1. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible.
2. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible.
3. Psalm 118 is the middle chapter in the Bible.
4. There are 594 chapters before Psalm 118.
5. There are 594 chapters after Psalm 118.
6. If you add 594 and 594 it equals 1188.
7. The center verse of the Bible is Psalm 118:8.
8. Psalm 118:8 "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."
9. The best advice you can ever receive is at the center of God's word.

(From the World of Truth Ministry)

"PRAISE THE LORD"

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"Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers" Proverbs 17:6