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M O N T H L Y

ENVIRONMENT

modeling

"I see Christ in others, and they can see Him in me."

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How to Use this Resource

It's as easy as 1 ... 2 ... 3 ...

1 Start by deciding on a day and time that works well for your entire family. It can be an evening, afternoon, or morning. Just commit to building this time into your family's natural rhythm. (It's usually best to build this time around a meal!)

2 Look through the HomeFront Monthly and see what stands out. Choose one or two experiences that you would like to incorporate into your family times this week. Don't feel burdened to complete all the activities at once, but carefully select which ones will fit your family best. Each month's issue provides more than enough experiences to last you throughout the month.

3 Remember to **HAVE FUN!** Strive to make each gathering unique to your own family as you enjoy spending time with God and each other.



Editor's Note

A friend shared a life-impacting moment with me. As a working mother of two boys, she was constantly on the move—getting everyone where they needed to go.

One day as they were rushing and getting into the car her two year old looked up at her and asked, "Mommy, why are we always in a hurry?" She said it really made her stop and examine the model she was setting for her boys.

Often we think of modeling as the good examples we set for our children: going to church, praying before a meal, helping someone in need, etc. Yet we forget that everything (yes, everything) we do sets an example. The good, the bad, and the ugly.

Our children, our families, and even our neighbors are watching to see if our actions match our words. Do they see Christ in us? Do they see us carrying burdens that are not ours to carry? Do they see us "always in a hurry?" Or do they see lives that reflect peace and joy? Do they see us not give up when

things get tough, but rather turn to Jesus as the Source of all our answers? Do they see us trusting in God, knowing He will work all things together for good?

This month as we focus on modeling, we need to remember that Christ has set a perfect example for us to follow. He promises us that His load is not heavy and that we can cast all of our cares upon Him. Have fun this month with these activities, designed to remind you and your children that we have the privilege of modeling to others what it looks like to have Christ in our lives. ☺

Debbie Guinn

DEBBIE GUINN | EDITOR
the Tru Team | Costa Mesa, CA

ENVIRONMENT

MODELING

Biblical content needs a practical living expression for it to be spiritually impacting. This environment serves as a hands-on example of what it means for children to put their faith into action. Modeling puts flesh on faith and reminds us that others are watching to see if we live what we believe.

Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children." We know children love to imitate, so what do we as parents want them to imitate? As a parent, one of my deepest desires is for my kids to imitate God's Truth. Modeling then becomes an expression of that. We become living representatives of what that Truth means, whether as a parent or a volunteer.

We are people who have experienced God's love through Christ and God's forgiveness in the model of Christ. He was and is our living example. The environment of MODELING serves as a hands-on example of what it means for both our children and us to put our faith into action.

This month, as you model for your family what it looks like to live out a compelling and authentic faith, our prayer is that your view of God's Truth and love will be on display for others. ☺



MICHELLE ANTHONY
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VERSE OF THE MONTH

Memorizing Scripture can be an incredible practice to engage in as a family. But words in and of themselves will not necessarily transform us; it is God's Spirit in these words that transforms. We come to know God more when we are willing to open our hearts and receive what His Holy Spirit imparts to us through the words we memorize. Have fun with these verses and think of creative ways to invite your family to open up to God as they commit these verses to memory.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
Matthew 11:29 (NIV)

"Jesus answered ... Anyone who has seen me, has seen the Father." John 14:9b (NIV)

FAMILY FOOD TIME

Recipe: Layered Fruit Parfaits

This month allow your children to follow your lead as you model how to make a layered fruit parfait. Have fun making individual parfaits “cooking show” style, with you being the “expert” chef leading the rest of your family step-by-step through the recipe.

Layered Fruit Parfaits

Prep Time: 20 min. *Assemble Time:* 15 min.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES

- cup for the parfaits (1 for each family member)
- vanilla yogurt
- whipped cream (canned or your choice)
- 4 types of fruits (e.g., oranges, kiwis, bananas, strawberries)
- granola or other crunchy oat cluster

DIRECTIONS

1. Preparation

Set out the yogurt, whipped cream, parfait cups, and spoons. Spoon as much or as little yogurt as you like into a bowl, and mix in some whipped cream (the more you mix in, the sweeter the end result). Mix well.

2. Choosing the Fruit

Choose four types of fruit, such as oranges, kiwis, bananas, and strawberries. It is good to choose ones that are bigger and can yield thick slices, like oranges and peaches, and ones that easily yield smaller slices. Bananas and strawberries are good for topping the final layer of the parfait. Peel the fruit, if necessary, slice, and place them into separate bowls.

3. Layers

- Spoon a little of the yogurt mixture into the bottom of each parfait cup. Layer orange slices on top, either in a fan from the center, or in a circular pattern.
- Spoon a little more of the yogurt mixture on top of the oranges, and spread it evenly to cover. Then layer kiwi slices in a circle on top of the yogurt. Spread yogurt mix evenly on top of the kiwis.



- Lay out banana slices in circles starting from the outside, and spoon more yogurt mix on top.
- Cut the strawberries lengthwise, which makes a lovely color pattern, and keep them all about the same size. Layer them resting partially on top of one another, in circles to the center.

4. Slowly

So as not to get overexcited and use too much whipped cream, spray the whip cream in a whirl around the top of your strawberries. Top with a little granola, for the perfect mix of sweet and crunchy. Enjoy now or chill it in the fridge for later. ☺

COOK WITH YOUR KIDS

IF YOU ARE CAUGHT BETWEEN FINDING TIME TO PREPARE MEALS AND SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR CHILDREN, TRY COOKING WITH THEM. CHILDREN ENJOY HELPING IN THE KITCHEN AND OFTEN ARE MORE WILLING TO EAT FOODS THEY HELP PREPARE. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU GIVE KITCHEN TASKS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR CHILD'S AGE.

2 YEAR OLDS: CAN BRING INGREDIENTS FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER, WIPE TABLETOPS, TEAR LETTUCE OR GREENS, BREAK CAULIFLOWER, PLAY WITH UTENSILS.

3 YEAR OLDS: CAN DO ALL THAT 2 YEAR OLDS CAN, PLUS ... WRAP POTATOES IN FOIL FOR BAKING, POUR LIQUIDS, MIX INGREDIENTS, SHAKE LIQUIDS IN A COVERED CONTAINER, SPREAD SOFT SPREADS, PLACE THINGS IN THE TRASH.

4 YEAR OLDS: CAN DO ALL THAT 2 AND 3 YEAR OLDS CAN, PLUS ... FORM ROUND SHAPES WITH DOUGH, CUT PARSLEY OR GREEN ONIONS WITH DULL SCISSORS, MASH BANANAS WITH A FORK, SET THE TABLE.

5 TO 6 YEAR OLDS: CAN DO ALL THAT 2, 3, AND 4 YEAR OLDS CAN, PLUS ... MEASURE INGREDIENTS, CUT WITH A BLUNT KNIFE, USE AN EGGBEATER.

ELEMENTARY AGE: CAN DO ALL THAT THE PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN CAN, PLUS ... ASSEMBLE SANDWICHES, READ RECIPE DIRECTIONS, ROLL DOUGH, GRATE CHEESE, CRACK AND BEAT EGGS, AND MORE.

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL: INVOLVE THEM IN MEAL PLANNING, SHOPPING, AND PREPARING THE MEAL FOR YOUR FAMILY NIGHT.

by Lauren Francis

FAMILY FOOD TIME

Conversation Starters: Copycat Eating

Instead of eating dinner normally, enjoy a time of “copycat eating” with your family. Start with the youngest member of the group, and let him know that he gets to create an eating pattern, which the rest of the family will copy.



For example, he could choose a bite of chicken, a spoonful of peas, and a gulp of milk to wash it all down. Then the rest of the family members do the same combination, in the same order. Keep going around the table until everyone's dinner is gone!

Share with your children that Jesus set a perfect example for us to follow, and The Big God Story is filled with good examples of how God wants us to live our lives. 🍴

by Lauren Francis

GAME TIME

Younger Kids: Follow the Leader, Dance Move Style!

An important component of modeling is being able to watch others and having them watch you as well.

We all are fans of a good old-fashioned game of “Follow the Leader,” but why not add a twist to make it more fun for your little ones?

Start by forming a circle—it’s more fun when everyone can see each other! Then choose one person to be the “leader.” The leader makes up a silly dance move for everyone to follow. Give her about fifteen seconds to make up a dance move, then encourage others in the circle to copy the creative move. Once everyone has had a chance to boogie for a bit, switch leaders, and have the next person perform a new dance move. Everyone will have to watch carefully so they don’t miss a move! 🎵



FOLLOW
THE
LEADER!

by Lauren Francis

GAME TIME

Older Kids

There are so many games to play that are great examples of modeling for older kids. Here are a couple of options that might be fun for you and your kids to do together!

1. BOP-IT TOURNAMENT

Try busting out the old “Bop-It” game and have a tournament of champions. Find the setting that allows players to continue until they make a mistake. Choose whoever will go first, and a timer for the round. Also, make sure to have a piece of paper and a pen to keep score (for even more fun, try using a whiteboard and tallying the scores so everyone can see). Have the timer start as soon as the first player hits the “Bop-It.” Record the times and see who can keep going the longest without making a mistake. The person with the longest time is the winner of that round and receives one point. Try having a tournament of five rounds and see who is victorious at the end. Who knew “Bop-It” could be so fun?

2. HORSE

Grab the basketball and head to the nearest hoop for an exciting game of “Horse.” Choose a player to start shooting the ball through the hoop in whatever goofy way he wants to. He can shoot it granny style, backward, from the left/right/center, even a simple lay-up will do. The trick is creativity ... because the next players will have to copy the same move and make the basket as well. If the other players copy the same move and do not make it in, they get a letter (“h” for the first miss, “o” for the second, and so on). The first person to spell h-o-r-s-e (or you can choose whatever word you want) is out. Keep playing until one person is left, and declared the winner! 🎵

STORYTELLING

A Living Example

AN EXCERPT FROM *SPIRITUAL PARENTING* BY MICHELLE ANTHONY © DAVID C. COOK

When I was a little girl, my father had a problem with anger. He was raised in a home where his dad left him, his brother, and his mom when he was only eight years old.

In the early 1950's, he was the only person in his community who didn't have a dad. Added to this, his mother was often ill. He felt insecure and helpless. He and his little brother often went without, even though his mother worked several jobs to try to make ends meet. He heard her crying herself to sleep at night, and he cried too.

Over time, this hurt must have built up inside him as an enormous amount of bitterness and anger. Without the tools of psychology and the resources we have available today, my father entered early adulthood and even fatherhood with a substantial amount of baggage.

My dad, who was the most gentle, loving, and godly person I knew growing up, would also suddenly have enormous outbreaks of rage and anger. That was confusing for me as a little girl. He was deacon in our church, and he was always pointing me to God. Always displaying who God was. He was constantly praying and immersing himself in God's Word—but he also had these outbursts of anger.

One night we were having dinner together as a family when all of a sudden my father became very angry at my mom. He picked up his bowl of chili and threw it across the room. It crashed against the wall and shattered, sending pottery and chili everywhere. I was terrified. I ran up to my bedroom crying and shut my door.

It wasn't long before my father came and found me lying on my bed. I was maybe six years old, and he quietly entered and sat beside me. He knelt by my bed and just wept. He told me how sorry he was, and then he looked at me and said, "Michelle, I did not reflect God by my actions just then. Will you forgive me? That's not what Jesus would've done, and I'm sorry." I threw my arms around his neck and said, "Yes, Daddy, of course I forgive you."

MODELING IN OUR MISTAKES

From a very early age I felt my dad was such a great example to me, even in his shortcomings and failures, because he consistently identified when his behavior was not congruent with that of Jesus. Moreover, he

then modeled for me what to do when that happens: You go to the person, you ask for their forgiveness, and then you make it right.

This modeled for me that I didn't have to be perfect. It modeled that when I fall short, I need to take responsibility. This is a crucial part of parenting, because we are tempted to think of modeling in terms of a "standard." We think of it as some kind of perfection that we try to attain. Instead, we have the privilege of being a living, breathing model of grace when we fail and of grace when we get it right. Either way—we are compelled by grace!

[We model this truth as long as we make our words congruent with God's standards.]

It isn't helpful when we fail and then try to cover it up. If my father had come to me that night and said, "Hey, I'm really sorry I threw the chili, but you know my dad left me when I was young, your mom's been nagging me all night, I was tired because I haven't slept, I was stuck in traffic—and so I'm just sorry that you were in the middle of that, but I've got a lot of stuff on my plate right now," how helpful would that have been? Yet how often do we do just that? How often do we make a litany of excuses for our bad behavior rather than just calling it what it is and seeking someone's forgiveness?

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

When I think about that incident with the chili bowl, I realize that it has, ironically, become one of my most treasured childhood memories. Why? Because beginning that day, my dad became a living, breathing example to me of the Holy Spirit's power—every day, every month, and every year since that moment, I've watched my dad rely on the Spirit to transform him. So much so that today he is the most gentle, loving, and patient man I know. This is not someone who has been merely "trying harder," but someone who has learned to abide in Christ and let the Holy Spirit transform him over time to be more like Jesus. My dad has been a living testament to me that God is real and that His power truly heals and transforms lives. ☺

GOD'S WORD

Amidst soccer practice and school activities, doesn't it feel as if there is never time for rest? With children, "taking a break" is not usually an option in our daily routine. Routine trumps rest—end of story.

However it is clear throughout Scripture that the "Sabbath" is not something that is optional for us as followers of God. God took a day to rest after creating the world. In Genesis 2:2–3, the Bible says "... he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done." Right from the start, God modeled for His people that taking a day and setting it apart to rest was imperative.



"GOD KNEW HIS PEOPLE NEEDED REST. HE KNEW THEIR SOULS NEEDED REFRESHMENT."

When God gave Moses His commandments in Exodus 20, He spent the longest amount of time talking about keeping the Sabbath holy. Then later on in Exodus 31:1, He says the Sabbath "will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy." *The Sabbath was a special covenant between the Lord and the Israelites, something that no other nation had.*

Some of the Israelites had a hard time grasping the concept of God's commandment concerning the Sabbath. While they were wandering in the desert, God told Moses that on the sixth day they were to gather twice as much manna, because there would be none for them on the Sabbath. Still, some of the people insisted on going out on the Sabbath to look for manna. The Lord was frustrated with the people, and He asked Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions?" (Exodus 16:28).

God made it very clear that "the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly" (Leviticus 23:3). God even told Moses to tell His people that if they did not observe the Sabbath, their punishment was to be death! Scripturally speaking, the Sabbath was a very serious matter.

The reason it was so serious? God knew His people needed to rest. He knew their souls needed refreshment, and that their land and animals needed a break as well. The Israelites did not treat this day like a normal day, but used it to show that they were set apart. God intended for it to be an act of worship for His people!

But sadly, the Sabbath started to become a day more focused on rules and restrictions. There were a total of 39 laws made specifically about what constituted work or not; and people were so concerned with what they were or were not allowed to do, that they essentially missed the true intention of the Sabbath. For many, it became a burden instead of a blessing ... a symbol of bondage rather than the symbol of freedom it was meant to be.

When Jesus came on the scene in the New Testament, He began to say and do some pretty revolutionary things when it came to the Sabbath. He basically declared war against what the Jewish people had known to be true their entire lives! He healed a man, who had been sick for 38 years, on the Sabbath. He healed a man with a shriveled hand on the Sabbath. He let His disciples pick grain to eat on the Sabbath. He openly violated the regulations of the Sabbath ... while claiming to be the Messiah who would save the people. It truly went against everything the Jewish people believed!

Despite what the Pharisees thought, Jesus was not doing these things just to stir up trouble. He was showing them that the “Lord of the Sabbath” was more concerned about loving people than keeping religious tradition. It was revolutionary! He was proving that He was the Lord of the Sabbath, and that He was far above man-made rules. He was literally transforming the idea of the Sabbath, and calling people to a different way of thinking about this sacred day.

Both God the Father, and Jesus His Son, modeled for us what keeping the Sabbath is supposed to look like, but what does it mean for us to keep the Sabbath holy today? How do we slow down and set aside a block of time in our crazy schedules to use as a time of rest and refreshment for our souls?

HEAR IT

Read together with your children Psalm 23. Discuss how this Psalm makes you feel. Does this paint a picture of what the Lord intended our rest in Him to look like? Talk with your children about what they think rest looks like. Remind them that Jesus gave us a new way of thinking about the Sabbath, and that the goal of this day is to worship Him!

DO IT

Pray together, and thank God for giving us the opportunity to rest! He knows our souls need it, and He showed us how to do it. The CREATE portion of this HomeFront Monthly will give you a creative way to define what rest looks like for your family. 🙏

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT BE IN WANT. HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES, HE LEADS ME BESIDE QUIET WATERS, HE RESTORES MY SOUL. HE GUIDES ME IN PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE. EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, FOR YOU ARE WITH ME; YOUR ROD AND YOUR STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME. YOU PREPARE A TABLE BEFORE ME IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES. YOU ANOINT MY HEAD WITH OIL; MY CUP OVERFLOWS. SURELY GOODNESS AND LOVE WILL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE, AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER. (PSALM 23)

PRAYER

God wants to talk with us all the time, in all kinds of ways. Most of us know this, but in the busyness of everyday life, it can be easy to forget that our children need to see that God wants to have conversations with them in all kinds of different ways.

Take a few minutes to think about what kinds of prayers you are modeling for your children. Has prayer become merely a quick thank you before a meal and a few minutes at bedtime? These are great times for family prayer, but there are more conversations God wants to have with each of us. Even if constant prayer is already a part of your family rhythm, there's always more talking to (and listening to) God we can do! Children may not know how big, amazing, and

exciting prayer can be unless it is shown to them regularly.

One way to expand your family's prayer experience is to involve your bodies. The Bible gives us many examples about physical expressions of worship. In Ephesians 3:14, Paul shows the humble posture of bowing down when he says, "For this reason I kneel before the Father." Psalm 47:1 says, "Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy." King David says, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD" (Psalm 134:2). And in 2 Samuel 6:14, David expresses abandon and praise by dancing "before the LORD with all his might."

This month, make a point of gathering as a family for prayer at different times throughout the day. Think of creative ways to use your bodies as you gather for these prayer times.

- Go outside at sunset, lie on your backs, and thank God for all of the beauty in your lives.
- Gather your children when they wake up in the morning, raise your hands in surrender to the Lord as you pray, and tell God that you want Him to direct your day.
- Play an upbeat worship CD and have a spontaneous family dance party while shouting out praises to God.
- When in the car, encourage your kids to take a moment to raise their hands in the air and simply thank God for being with you in that exact moment.
- After dinner together, take a family walk; as you walk, tell God about each person's day, as if He is simply another member of your family walking beside you. Get creative, and invite your kids to think of ways they can include physical expression in their prayers.

No matter what you do, remember that you have a beautiful opportunity to model prayer that is exciting and dynamic to your children. You are showing them that talking with God is interactive, that it can look all kinds of different ways, and it can be done at any time throughout the day! 🙏



“TALKING WITH GOD IS INTERACTIVE ...”

WORSHIP & TRADITIONS

Sabbath ... Just for Kids!

This month as an act of worship, we would like to suggest that you practice a day of Sabbath. We also suggest that you go so far as to make this a regular practice for your family, which would in turn become a tradition that could be passed down through the generations to come.

So what is Sabbath anyway? The Bible talks about Sabbath as something that God created for us as His people. He wanted to give us a gift every week that would remind us how much we are loved by Him. One day each week is set aside for us to rest. It's a gift because we stop working and have a chance to remember all that God has done for us that week. We remember the sunsets He painted for us in the sky, the friends and family that we spent time with, and the ways He provided for us ... food, clothing, and shelter. We rest from work,

but we also receive rest in a different way, by being thankful, too.

God is always sharing Himself and His love with us, but sometimes we just get too busy to see it or feel it. That's where Sabbath comes in. **Sabbath is a day when we say, "Hey, I'm going to stop all this work, and I am going to celebrate all that God is giving me!"** This is where your kids come in. They know that playing is good, and of course, they are really good at celebrating. Your kids are often the ones who say, "We should ride our bikes to the park," or "Let's go to the beach." Sometimes just being in nature can help us remember that God created such beautiful things for us to enjoy.

Another way you and your kids can practice Sabbath is by seeing the ways that God has provided for you and your family during the week. Our kids have really good memories, and we need them to help us remember how God answered prayer, protected us, comforted a family member, or gave us a really good laugh! Finally, your kids can help your family by being creative. Encourage them to think of fun things to do, ways to make a Bible lesson fun, or things that you can do differently for a day to make it special from the rest. ☺

A TRADITION IS THE HANDING DOWN OF STATEMENTS, BELIEFS, LEGENDS, OR CUSTOMS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. WHAT TRADITIONS ARE IN PLACE FOR YOUR FAMILY? WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO PASS DOWN TO THE NEXT GENERATION? IT IS ALWAYS FUN TO CREATE NEW TRADITIONS WITH EACH GENERATION.

WE OFTEN THINK OF WORSHIP AS ONLY SINGING, BUT WE CAN WORSHIP GOD IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS: PRAYER, SILENCE, ART, DANCE, GIVING, SHARING, AND THANKSGIVING, JUST TO NAME A FEW. MAKE PLANS FOR YOUR FAMILY WORSHIP TIME, BUT PREPARE YOURSELF TO HOLD THESE PLANS LOOSELY IF THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS YOU IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION.

CREATE

What Does Rest Look Like?

Rest looks different for each of us. It can look different depending on your age, stage of life, or just your personality type. Together as a family make a collage of “rest” that represents each person’s unique contribution. During this week, write words or draw pictures on sticky notes of what “rest” is like to you.

Some examples could be: napping, golfing, reading, drawing, lying on the beach, boating, biking, or even playing at the park. It can be anything that causes you to take a time-out from the hurried life our society calls us to. Place those sticky notes on the black foam-core board, which should be placed somewhere prominent in your home.

At the end of the week, when it comes time to Sabbath, sit down together and read how each family member defines “rest.” Ask: How does that refresh you? How does that honor God? How can that be a form of worship toward God and His Son, Jesus? Then incorporate those ideas into your day of Sabbath, and worship and thank God for giving this gift to you and your family. ☺



SUPPLIES

- black foam-core board
- sticky notes
- colored markers

MARRIAGE

“Do as I say, not as I do!”

When I was seven years old, I remember my dad telling me, “Do as I say, not as I do!” I remember thinking, “This doesn’t make sense; Why would my dad be able to do something and then tell me not to?”

I remember him getting mad and yelling at either my sister or me, but then telling me I shouldn’t yell when I got mad. Dad would make us go to church, but he would miss many times. I remember thinking, this doesn’t make sense—and it didn’t. But as I got older, I found myself being more like what I saw than what I heard.

In 1 Corinthians 4:16, Paul says, “Therefore I urge you to imitate me.” He goes on in Chapter 11, verse 1, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” Then He says again in Philippians 3:17, “Brothers, ... take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.” Research has confirmed this truth. Children tend to respond to and follow the behavior of models more than verbal instruction or demands. Kids do what we do, not what we say. They watch us. Our behaviors get embedded onto their brain pathways. Eventually they do as we do, not as we say.

If you are married and realize your children will model what they see in your marriage, what will they be modeling when they get married?



Here is a list of things for you to consider:

- Showing patience in disagreement.
- Finding “win-win” solutions to problems.
- Dating on a regular basis.
- Showing affection in front of others.
- Praying together.
- Going to church together (and not fighting on the way to and from).
- Eating meals together as much as possible.
- Showing love through acts of service, physical touch, and words of encouragement.
- Affirming one another on a regular basis.
- Seeing you submit to one another in loving ways without resentment.
- Reading the Bible and talking about it.
- Going on mission trips.
- Reaching out to neighbors as a couple.
- Listening and sharing in loving caring ways.
- Laughing and having fun as a couple and a family.

Most of us will have to be intentional if we are going to pass on to our children something more than we received from our families. As a couple, look at the list above and check off three of the items you feel you are doing fairly well. Give your partner a “high five” and let her know you appreciate her. Find two items from the list above that you would like to improve on as a couple. Don’t let it turn into a “blame and shame” experience. ***Share a couple of specific ideas of how you might be able to move forward in the upcoming week to take the next step.*** Take a small step, and celebrate it when you succeed. 🎉

by Debbie Guinn

BLESSING

This month, read Psalm 23 as a blessing over your children. There are blank spaces for you to insert your child's name into this psalm of rest to make it personal for each individual in your family.

THE LORD IS _____ SHEPHERD. HE GIVES _____
 EVERYTHING _____ NEEDS.
 HE LETS _____ LIE DOWN IN FIELDS OF GREEN GRASS.
 HE LEADS _____ BESIDE QUIET WATERS.
 HE GIVES _____ NEW STRENGTH. HE GUIDES _____ IN
 THE RIGHT PATHS FOR THE HONOR OF HIS NAME.
 EVEN THOUGH _____ WALK[S] THROUGH THE DARKEST
 VALLEY, _____ WILL NOT BE AFRAID.
 YOU ARE WITH _____.
 YOUR SHEPHERD'S ROD AND STAFF COMFORT _____.

(PSALM 23 NIRV)

A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a Bible passage, or words of encouragement. As your children are blessed, tell them they have the opportunity to also be a blessing to others. Encourage them to freely share with others the joy and love they have received from God. ☺



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Don't forget the HomeFront Weekly: A resource to get parents and kids talking about God's Word together.

What's Happening in Your FAITH COMMUNITY?

