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Easter Greetings!

HOPE FOR THE PRODIGAL BY JIM DALY

PHILO FARNSWORTH WAS 14 IN 1920 WHEN HE CAME UP WITH AN idea that changed the world. He was daydreaming about electricity while walking behind a horse-drawn plow. He was *looking* at the rows he'd dug back and forth across the field. He *saw* something else.

What if electronic beams swept back and forth across a screen at a speed undetectable to the human eye? If his idea worked, images would flash across the screen and create the illusion of motion.

In 1927, Philo introduced television to the world. That day in the field, Philo saw more than an old plow and rows of barren soil. He saw beyond to a world of possibility.

Parents with prodigal children need that kind of vision too—to see beyond who their child is right now to who God can help them become. In Luke 15, the Prodigal Son's father looked beyond his son's arrogance, believing that God had created his son for something better than he was accepting for himself. When his son returned, the father didn't get angry or lecture him. He wept, threw his arms around him and loved him.

If your child has lost his or her way, don't lose hope. Take a deep breath, pray and ask God to help you see beyond, to what he or she can become.



Tough
Questions
from Kids

Should I
stick up for
someone
who's being
bullied?



APRIL 21 Bulletin

AN EASTER REMINDER: HONOR YOUR SPOUSE

I tell couples to make it their goal to out-serve their spouse. Love is a sacrifice, and if we love our spouse, it should motivate us to give them our very best. Imagine the health of marriages in our country if couples served each other. But the motivation for our service matters. I shouldn't serve my wife, Erin, out of fear. I should serve her because I want to be like Christ. Jesus came to earth to serve, not to be served.

As we revisit the Easter story, we're reminded of Christ's sacrificial death and His great love for us. He willingly gave His life so we could find forgiveness and hope. Jesus knew that love is a sacrifice.

And if Jesus counted it a privilege to sacrifice for us, then—as I follow His example—I should count it a great privilege to serve my wife. If I'm serving her, that means I don't want to be indulged like a king . . . instead, I want to treat Erin like a queen. First Peter 3:7 describes it like this: "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman."

"Show her honor" is a present-tense participle, which means you show her honor all the time, ongoing, continually paying her honor. The phrase "and show her honor" should be translated "and paying her honor continually" or "constantly pay her honor."

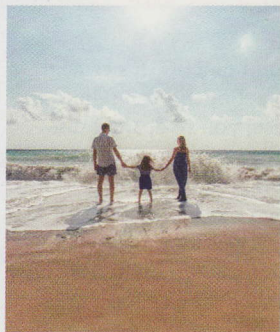
I want to serve my wife sacrificially because she is immeasurably valuable. King Solomon was right when he said in Proverbs 18:22, "He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD." So because I highly value Erin, I told her that doing the dishes is now my job. I'm far from being a perfect husband and I still hate doing dishes, but I love sacrificing for my wife! It's one small way that I can follow Christ's example.

Since love is a sacrifice—a way to show our spouse how much we value him or her—a good marriage is made up of two servants looking for ways to out-serve each other, not out of fear, but out of a deep awareness of the other's incredible value. Romans 12:10 says it perfectly: "Outdo one another in showing honor."

—Greg Smalley



WHY FAMILIES NEED VACATIONS



This point is obvious, but vacations are fun. They allow us time to relax, be silly and laugh together as a family. As the load from the daily grind falls from our shoulders, stress lightens. Life at home is filled with responsibilities; on vacation, life can be all joy.

And the Bible says joy is a good thing. Happiness is a feeling that fades. Joy is deeper. Joy goes with us. King Solomon had it right when he said, “I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 8:15).

As parents, we toil. There are jobs to do, clothes to wash, errands to run and responsibilities to be kept. In the midst of these day-to-day responsibilities, we sometimes fail to pause and appreciate our families. That needed “pause” can be a weekend camping trip or a weeklong cruise. The key is to slow down and practice joy.

Joy from watching your kids delight in doing something new. Joy from having fun together as a family. Joy from observing God’s beautiful world and the many people He has created. Joy from experiencing something for the first time . . . together.

As parents, we work hard. God only gives us so many days on earth and with our kids. Using some of that time to vacation can be a great investment.

—Jesse Florea

THRIVING IN LOVE AND MONEY

We all tend to get sideways with each other about money. In fact, because we hear money is the leading cause of divorce, we tend to believe money is the most serious issue in marriage. But the truth is more nuanced. Yes, money can be a real cause of strife, but it can also be an opportunity for connection because we interact with money in some way, somehow, every day.

Since we can’t get away from money, we can’t get away from how money makes us feel. It is difficult to create a stable financial foundation without coming together in the marriage relationship. Clearly, this works in reverse too: Money troubles can create a relational strain. But as anyone who has survived bankruptcy or financial heartache can attest, if you are close in your relationship, you can get through anything financially.

—Jeff and Shaunti Feldhahn

FAMILY MATTERS

Answers to your questions...

When my spouse and I have conflict, avoiding the issue seems easier than talking it out—and neither of us gets angry. That's okay, isn't it?

ANSWER:

No. Unresolved conflict can hang over your marriage like a thundercloud, threatening a storm you don't want to brave. Perhaps your efforts to resolve differences have ended in icy silence or shouting matches, experiences you don't care to repeat.

Not resolving conflict may give an initial feeling of peace or harmony, but it's like a wound that heals on the surface when underneath there's an infection that needs to be released.

Fear of conflict can stem from having experienced

too much of it as a child—or from never having seen any. Some parents shelter their children too much by not revealing disagreements or demonstrating how they can be resolved.

How couples deal with conflict is one of the greatest predictors of whether or not a marriage will end in divorce. In most marriages, conflict resolution is initiated by the partner who's more assertive. That can at least bring situations to the table but the healthiest scenario requires freedom for both spouses to start conversations on areas of concern.

When both partners aren't assertive, or fear conflict, or lack the skills to deal with it, resentment can

build quickly. It's crucial to get outside help in that case; you're dealing not only with personality issues here, but most likely a life-long pattern of avoidance.

When unresolved conflicts are immobilizing your marriage, your goal should be to get “unstuck.” Here are five steps in that direction: (1) Forgive your spouse, (2) pray together, (3) show appreciation in tangible ways (cards, gifts, special meals, etc.), (4) confess stubbornness and the desire to be “right” and (5) get help from a wise mentor or counselor.

(Adapted from *The First Five Years of Marriage*, general editors Phillip J. Swihart and Wilford Wooten)

TOUGH QUESTIONS FROM KIDS

ANSWER:

Yes, always stick up for the person who is being hurt, not the one doing the hurting. If there is a big, strong bully, you may want to encourage your friends to stay together in a group to be safer. If kids don't feel safe walking home from school, maybe parents can take turns giving rides.

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