

Parents Crosslink

coloring outside



the lines

Vera-Ellen Cook

All children are born with a playful imagination. Only a few possess the potential for creative expression that reaches far beyond conventional limits. Their ideas soar in abstract directions that few can understand, or even tolerate. Decidedly different from their peers, such children can frustrate their parents and teachers.

But the converse is also true. Unable to understand or appreciate their special gifts, many parents and teachers frustrate development by trying to force creative children into a mainstream that, for them, is neither comfortable nor healthy.

Sarah's mother is puzzled by her daughter's quirky creative energy. Always thinking and inventing, Sarah's bedroom floor is littered with projects under construction.

Johnny's task-oriented parents are likewise thrown off their game. He seems obsessed with music and play-acting. His dad wishes he were more attracted to sports. He is worried that Johnny's interest in the fine arts may cause others to label him as strange or effeminate.

Both families have busy schedules to keep, chores to do, and little free time for tolerating noise or messes. Worse, they have no idea how to cope with, or even play with, their imaginative children, whose worlds are so unlike their own.

Harnessing such creative energy is a challenge. Home should be the place where kids can relax and explore their

interests in new and exciting ways.

In school children should be able to enjoy the freedom to investigate their inner world of fantasy and play, unencumbered by someone else's idea of what constitutes artistic expression. Of course, God's Word declares that "everything is permissible"—but not everything is beneficial" (1 Corinthians 10:23). But limiting a child's capacity to innovate by forcing him or her to adhere to the conventions of society and tradition should never be confused with teaching a child to resist sin and

Many parents frustrate the development of children with a gift for creative thinking.

temptation. Innovative thinking is not stupid, wrong, or a waste of time. We need to stop thinking of it as antisocial behavior. Nor should it be labeled as decadent, naive, or morally wrong just because some areas of the artistic world have chosen to explore art that lies beyond the lines that God has proscribed from eternity. It is a fact that every invention known to man

had its origin in a fertile imagination. We call it *genius*. Today's young innovators will become tomorrow's inventors.

Creative kids lose focus when they are required to sit and perform structured tasks. Lengthy paper-pencil lessons can bring boredom and frustration. Kids fidget or act out in class. They get poor grades or spurn friends in favor of pursuing solo play that engages their creative talents. But when they are given projects that engage their creative bent, these same kids will often produce work that excels far beyond the assignment's basic requirements.

So how can parents and educators do a better job of advocating for the rare child whose unique gift is to explore the idea of coloring outside the lines?

To begin, there needs to be a sense of cooperation and partnership between the creative child's home and school. Good communication about learning strategies is essential. Parents and teachers will both need to be sensitive to the child's need for free expression. At the same time, they will need to agree on the importance of providing a safe and healthy social environment for kids that don't always think like their peers.

One of the most important things a parent can do to help a creative child continue to grow is to resist the temptation to provide 24/7 media entertainment. And it is also wise not to overwhelm such children with excessive

(Continued on page 2.)

(Coloring Outside the Lines . . . cont.)

formal programs that involve a regular regimen of lessons or practices. A heavy schedule of programmed activities can have the effect of eliminating the freedom that a creative child craves. You will need to pray for guidance as you strive to strike a sensible balance.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that creative children want to share the joy they find in coloring outside the lines. Take the time to listen to his fanciful stories, even if they seem outrageous and bizarre. Let your own imagination do a little soaring of its own as you have a discussion about the poem she has written. Talk

about the difference between a genuine masterpiece and an artistic fraud. Examine together the pitfalls that artistic freedom can have for a person with Christian values. See films together and talk about the creative processes involved in filmmaking. Visit theme park exhibits, museums, and historical sites. When you read Bible stories together, explore the interesting picture language and word symbols that God caused his inspired writers to embed in their writing.

Every child has special abilities. Using these blessings in service to one another brings glory to God (Galatians 5:13). The dynamic of

creative expression has rich value in our ever-changing world. "Thinking outside the box" is in. It is especially in keeping with God's plan for those children who use their creative energy to discover the joy that comes with coloring outside the lines.

Vera-Ellen Cook is a wife, mom, and business entrepreneur. Her family belongs to Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin.



To add thoughts and continue the discussions about these questions and answers, go to

www.parentscrosslink.net.

What things do I need to consider when choosing a day care center for my children?

Does the child care provider understand that your child is a gift from God? Will God's law and gospel be used when discipline is necessary? Will the provider teach your child about the true God of the Bible? It is important that your provider answer **yes** to these questions.

Unless child care is provided by a trusted friend, state licensing is also very important. It ensures that guidelines are being met. Most states require that a compliance sheet be posted in public view. This sheet will inform you of any guidelines that have not been met. You will want to make sure that your provider respects the laws of God and the state.

What can I do when my child complains that he is bored?

The words *I'm bored* can grate on your nerves or be music to your ears.

We face a lot of pressure to entertain our children, and with scheduling activities or orchestrating playdates, the competition can be tough. Technology today offers countless gadgets for home entertainment that can occupy a child's time for hours. The challenge for parents is to strike a balance and make sure their child has personal (gadget-free) free time.

The American Academy of Pediatrics reports free play is essential to help children reach important social, emotional, and cognitive development milestones as well as to help them manage stress and become resilient. They emphasize "true toys," which cause children to really stretch their imaginations. Blocks and dolls fall into this category. You may need to get your child started with a tea party or playing in a sandbox. Then step back and watch your child use his God-given creativity to do some energetic exploring.

How can I help my teenager's transition into high school go smoothly?

One of the most important things a parent can do is to remember that grade school successes (or challenges) do not always translate into high school successes (or failures). Not hitting the panic button when things change will help your child grow, adapt, and mature, even if he or she struggles at times.

Encourage involvement. Whether your child participates in sports or cheers from the stands, plays in the band or attends the concerts with friends, adjust your schedule so your child can fully participate in some of the events that the high school offers. Well-rounded and involved kids are also well adjusted socially.

Pray. Ask God to guide you and your child. Thank God for a new growth opportunity. Trust that God will always do what is good for your child. And enjoy the blessings that come with watching the maturing process in your teen's life.





Love Notes

James and Katrina Brohn

They call me Mr. B. I'm a middle-grade teacher. At the end of every day, I take a moment to empty the contents of my pockets onto my desk. Today I've managed to capture a "fortune-teller," two confiscated notes, and what is left of Mark's pink eraser. Each played a role in the story of this school day. For this time of year, it's a typical haul. I don't need to open the notes to know what they say. But I read them out of curiosity anyway. This one asks, "Do you like Mark???" Yes, it's springtime, and love is in the air. As the school year winds down, students' attention spans are shortened by many distractions.

The eraser makes me think about Mark. He's been working hard all year and never been a troublemaker. He usually joins the rest of the boys at recess to play football, baseball, or other sports. When we distributed the individual pictures taken by our school photographer, I noticed that Tressa threw one of her pictures on Mark's desk. "Here, you can have one," she said, trying to sound casual. Mark acted as if he didn't really care to have a picture of Tressa. I guessed otherwise.

Lately Mark has started throwing bits of eraser and paper at Tressa. Instead of playing sports at recess, Mark and his friends now goof off near the swings where the girls huddle to gossip, giggle, and blush. I caught Mark showing off several times in the hallways, teasing Tressa.

"Stop it!" she resisted, giving Mark a stout shove. It didn't discourage him. In fact, coming from Tressa it was more of a reward—a sign that she didn't hate his guts. I'm sure he's already plotting a strategy to get her attention again tomorrow. I could see it in his eyes.

I've noticed the same change in the girls, but it is more common for them to catch a case of puppy love a little earlier than the boys. At recess the girls huddled by the swings around Michelle. She's Tressa's best friend. In her hands Michelle held a piece of cleverly folded notebook paper. With a few flicks of

the fingers and a series of questions and answers, the paper device will forecast your future and the love of your life. "What is your favorite color?" Michelle asked Tressa. "Favorite number?" The folded apparatus flashed open and closed a few more times until enough data was gathered to predict Tressa's romantic future: "You will have three kids, live in a yellow house, and marry Mark!" The cluster of adolescent girls shrieked and giggled with glee. Tressa turned red. They know she has special feelings for Mark.

I pick up the fortune-teller from my desktop. The students who make these fortune-tellers tell me they are just for fun, though they may secretly dream of a romantic fortune coming true. I remind them that often the person we dream of for a girlfriend or boyfriend may not be the best choice for us and may not be God's choice for us either. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8,9). Then I invite my students to pray for God's

By the next day, word will have spread through the network:
Mark and Tressa like each other.

On the way in from recess, one of Tressa's girlfriends managed to corner Mark to inquire about his feelings toward Tressa. By the next day, the word will have spread throughout the network: Mark and Tressa like each other. Yet they both may deny it for a long time to come.

Each year I take the time to talk with my students about respect, relationships, and the purpose of dating and marriage. I try to explain to them that there are better ways to demonstrate one's special feelings about a person of the opposite gender than by throwing eraser bits at them. I show them God's love notes, which explain that "love is patient, love is kind . . ." (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). I encourage them to look for qualities like faithfulness, gentleness, and a forgiving heart in a boyfriend or girlfriend.

guidance when it comes to relationships and finding a spouse.

It's the time of day when I always take a moment to go to the Lord in prayer on behalf of my students: "Dear Father, give them wisdom as they develop God-pleasing ways of showing their love and respect for one another. Guide them as they learn about boy-girl relationships. And help each of them look for God-pleasing characteristics in a future spouse. Amen."

James Brohn serves as principal and fifth- through eighth-grade teacher at Morning Star Lutheran School in Jackson, Wisconsin. His wife, Katrina, teaches their daughters, ages 1 and 4, at home. The Brohns make their home in West Bend.

How will

Rachel Urfer

Before tackling the possible *who* of marriage

Your ten-year-old daughter comes home from a classmate's co-ed bowling party. Seeming more quiet than usual, you ask if there is something she would like to talk about. "How will I know who I should marry?" she asks. Panicky thoughts flood your mind: *This is one of those BIG questions I'm supposed to have the answers to. Marriage? I don't even want her to think about dating yet. Just what exactly happened at that bowling party anyway?*

We are not afforded futuristic visions of our lives on earth. We dream beautiful, idyllic images of our children's futures, but experience has taught us that God's plans often differ from our shortsighted desires. He allows unexpected people and events into our lives in order to further his kingdom, blessing us in ways we never could have envisioned. So what realistic expectations can we give our children to help them choose a mate wisely?

First Things First

At its heart, this is a question about decision making. When seeking God's will, the first step is to prioritize a healthy spiritual life. John 15:5 teaches, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." This is an everyday lesson with wide application. Consistent use of the Word and sacraments (in church and through devotions at home) keeps us connected to the vine, and we are able to discern God's will. Apart from the vine, our spirit loses its source of nourishment. Withered sticks are unable to produce the fruit of good decision making.

Marriage: God's Plan and Purpose

Before tackling the possible *who* of marriage, we need a working definition about what marriage really is.

- #1 God is the author of the marriage covenant. He is always the source for guidance.
- #2 God has a plan for marriage. In Genesis chapter 2, our Creator defines his "one flesh" plan: a monogamous oneness between one man and one woman.
- #3 God has a purpose for this oneness. Marriage is a living model of Christ's relationship with his church.

A husband sacrifices himself for his wife in love, as Christ sacrificed himself for the church. A wife submits herself in love to her husband, even as the church surrenders, in trust, to its Savior (Ephesians 5:22-33).

A marriage obedient to this plan is a fragrant offering to our heavenly Father; a couple's enjoyment of that fragrant aroma—companionship, intimacy, procreation—is an added blessing.

Distinguishing Fact From Fiction

Our society may use the same words, but it has redefined God's plan and purpose for love and marriage into harmful concepts of personal fulfillment. Our culture aggressively works to engage us in self-centered fantasies about what we deserve in a spouse. We need to keep a critical eye

Managing Infatuation –

Preschool (ages 2-5): Young children's expressions are fairly direct ("My friend is my girlfriend, do we have to marry now?") Parents can explain that a friend is not a wife, or for choosing someone to marry. Another child is squeezing a friend in a giant bear hug because she is so proud of her. How do you give her a hug? She might not want a hug right now, just later.

Lower Grade School (ages 6-10): As emotions mature, children share their burgeoning feelings, parents should be aware that you feel you're in love with Jason. I remember feeling that way. Feelings are one thing and actions, such as holding hands, are another. It's a time when you're a little more grown up. You enjoy talking to Jason. God gives us friendships before marriage.

Tweens/Young Teens (ages 11-14): When hormone levels rise, words can be in short supply. Maybe your child is feeling that way because a friend betrayed a confidence. Parents can ask for help and then pray together for a peaceful spirit.

High School/College (ages 15-20+): There are many choices when choosing a date or spouse. Decide on one together and stick to it. As a young adult seeks a dating relationship, encourage them to reflect Christ's love, truth, and kindness to people w

I know?

ge, we need a working definition about what marriage really is.

toward media aimed at children that uphold this skewed definition of love. When a show on the Disney Channel promotes the idea that finding the right one will “make our dreams come true,” it’s time for parents to expose such notions as false claims and clarify God’s truth instead. Jesus teaches us to “love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12,13). Love is an action we offer, not a starry-eyed sensation we feel.

When renewing his covenant with Israel, the Lord prohibited his children from marrying into the pagan Canaanite culture to protect them from the influence of Satan’s trappings. We no longer have the commandment to avoid marrying certain groups of people, but there is still wisdom to be gained. We must caution our children to

choose carefully! The choice of a mate carries far-reaching, multigenerational consequences. A spouse from a culture that is hostile to Christianity will bring this hostility into the family’s daily life.

What We Model

Children learn the most about marriage by watching their parents interact. Using respectful words and tone when speaking to our spouses teaches children to seek this respect in a spouse. Repenting and forgiving willingly teaches our children that marriage is a place that reflects God’s forgiveness of us. Allocating resources toward a marriage retreat, toward Christian marriage counseling, or simply toward ‘date nights’ teaches children that marriage is valuable and worthy of effort.

Setting a godly example of marriage benefits all members of the family. It can be damaging to have a rigid expectation that our children pursue marriage. Our children should be secure in the knowledge that they can participate fully in the kingdom of God regardless of their marital status. On the other hand, if marrying and raising children is a desire of our children’s hearts, we should treat it like any other interest they have. Encourage them to prioritize the issue in their prayer life and nurture them as they strive toward the goal.

Arriving at a God-Pleasing Decision

So, how will she know whom to marry? After much thought, this was my answer, “I don’t know if you will marry, or who or when this may happen. But I am confident that he who knit you together in my womb, who knows exactly how many hairs are on your head, does know. As you continue to seek his will, he will reveal it. You won’t miss it!”

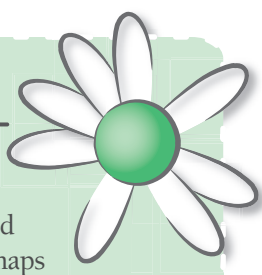
Rachel Urfer lives in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, with her husband and two children.

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ng that way when I was your age. But remember, feel-
or kissing, are another matter. Let’s save those kinds
”) Encourage communication instead. (“I’m glad that
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hristian books for teens containing wise advice for
pick a monthly time to discuss what you’ve read.
e him or her to become a good potential spouse,
who are already a part of his or her life.



Viewpoint

I Want to Enjoy My Children

Benjamin Berger

Imagine standing on a mountain vista looking back at your life. Your children have their own families now. You and your spouse are recalling the journey that brought you to this point.

You see some of the challenging terrain. At the time, you weren't sure you could make it through. But now you're here, and you're happy that you endured. You could have given up long ago, but you would have missed the joy that came from the journey. Your relationships with each other and with your children would not be as deep. Your memories not as rich. Your life not as blessed. Now you see how God used you to raise your children to become mature Christian adults who are, in turn, raising their children in the same way. And you enjoy your children now as much as you did along the journey.

Sound good? As an active parent, you might not even think it possible. However, in his book *I Want to Enjoy My Children*, Dr. Henry Brandt uses his expertise and experience to show parents how they can enjoy their children on the journey up the mountain of life. While many turn back because it's easier or because they don't think they can do it, Dr. Brandt encourages all parents to push forward. And he always points us to Jesus for the strength to keep going. Dr. Brandt uses Scripture as the foundation for the three important areas he discusses in his book: *spiritual growth, marriage, and discipline*.

It might seem ironic that two of Brandt's three main topics point back to the parents rather than to the children. However, that's part of the secret. Enjoying our children has more to do with us than with them. And it all starts with our personal relationship with Jesus.

Before we are parents, we are all children . . . of God. God is our loving heavenly Father. He made us. He wants what's best for us. That doesn't mean he prevents all trouble in our lives. It does mean that he helps us persevere and endure. By sending his firstborn Son, God dealt with the cause

of our main trouble, sin. Jesus died to take away our sins. All that's left is the trouble sin causes. And God promises strength for that too. He gives us such strength in his Word and by his Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives us a new spirit. He turns us away from ourselves and toward God. Our new spirit, the result of our faith in God's promises, appreciates all that God has done for us. As we live thankful lives, the Spirit gives us his fruit, including joy. And as we worship, study, and pray, the Spirit increases our joy.

Joy spills over into our other relationships. After our relationship with God, our relationship with our spouse is most important. And our relationship with God sets the tone. We live for each other rather than self. We confess sins and offer forgiveness. We spend time with each other. We seek to live according to God's design. We enjoy each other.

Dr. Brandt encourages parents to define each individual's role in the family. Discipline is more teaching than punishment. Teach the children what is expected of everyone. And then follow through consistently. Love your children as God loves you. Encourage them to love you the same way you love God. When they sin, ask them to confess and then forgive them. When they love, celebrate and love them even more. Always forgive. Always love. Correct and rebuke as needed.

When we have a loving relationship with God, we learn how to have loving relationships with our spouse and children. Dr. Brandt confesses that the journey isn't over after the children leave the house.

But he teaches that wherever we stand on the mountain, we can look back and ahead knowing that with God's blessing we'll enjoy the journey.

Benjamin Berger serves as a pastor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Appleton, Wisconsin, where he lives with his wife, Heather, and their two-year-old daughter, Eliana.

Enjoying our children has more to do with us than with them. It all starts in our relationship with Jesus.

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OUR family MATTERS

The Camping Blues

Jennifer Werre

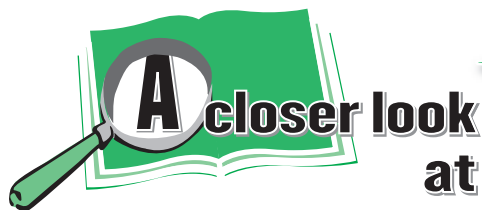


One of our family's camping adventures seemed like the perfect scenario: a quiet county park along the Mississippi, a roomy tent nestled among a stand of pines, a sandy beach for swimming. But as the days passed, uncomfortable things kept cropping up. The pine trees harbored mosquitoes. The fried chicken lunch on the beach included a side order of sand. Each morning I awoke with an aching hip from sleeping on the hard ground. The cute raccoon we spotted on the first night ate all our cookies from Grandma on the second night. I yearned for the comfort of my own clean bathroom, my own soft bed, my own comfortable house.

Paul wrote about a longing for our heavenly dwelling: "Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling" (2 Corinthians 5:1,2). The apostle knew that life is a little like camping. There will always be bumps in the road. Some are more serious than the kind that we can laugh about later. That's when we really learn to rely on what God has promised. Next time you hit a bump—camping or otherwise—remember your heavenly home, which God has readied for you and the other members of your family. He'll be waiting with open arms!

Jennifer Werre lives in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, with her husband, Luke, and their four children. She teaches part time at Peace Lutheran School.





Angie Molkentini

VACATION

Travel brochures help us plan how and where to spend our vacation time. The brochures depict families, relaxing and perfectly happy. We often choose a destination because we can see ourselves in those pictures.

According to travel statistics, the economic downturn has caused many of us to rethink our vacations. How much is too much in terms of time and money spent? Is there a godly model for vacation?

Some would actually say no. After all, the Bible is full of admonitions against slothfulness: “Go to the ant, you sluggard” (Proverbs 6:6) and “If a man will not work, he shall not eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) come to mind. But the Bible gives us beautiful pictures of rest too. From the Old Testament Sabbath to Jesus’ own examples, we find plenty of reasons to value rest for our bodies and our souls.

Old Testament Sabbath Rest

In the Old Testament, we see a vivid picture of what God meant by “rest” when he instituted the Sabbath. The word *Sabbath* has its roots in the Hebrew word *shabbath*, which means, “to cease, to desist.” God first modeled this idea of ending work in Genesis 2:2 when he “rested” after six days of creating. A few thousand years later, on Mount Sinai, this model became the basis for the Jewish Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11).

The Sabbath became part of Jewish ceremonial law, a set of laws God designed to set his people apart from other peoples of the world, as well as to give them a picture of the coming Savior.

The Sabbath laws truly did set the Jews apart. There was to be no gathering of wood on the Sabbath. No lighting of fires. No carrying of loads. All animals and servants were also to rest. There was even a provision for land to lay fallow and rest from agricultural production every seventh year. God’s punishment for not observing the Sabbath was strict: death to a man caught gathering wood on the Sabbath (Numbers 15:32-36).

Despite their detail, these laws were foreshadowing the Savior. By completely resigning themselves from all worldly business, Sabbath observers acknowledged their reverence for and dependence on God. The Sabbath was a day to worship him for the physical rest he provided and to focus on the spiritual rest he would one day bring to his people in the promised Savior.

Rest for the Body

As New Testament Christians, we are not obligated to follow the Old Testament Sabbath laws or to worship on

any particular day (Colossians 2:16,17). But the concept of Sabbath has value for us, as it did for the Israelites, for our bodily and spiritual welfare.

When God introduced the concept of physical rest, he did so with an understanding of the weakness of human flesh. We lose our spiritual focus when our bodies are busy working. It happened to the Israelites. Over time the business of life and commerce tempted them to trade on the Sabbath, much to the chagrin of prophets like Nehemiah. He ordered the gates of Jerusalem closed during the Sabbath to end trade for that day (Nehemiah 13:15-21).

It wasn’t long ago that our American culture valued the concept of rest. I remember a time when few stores were open on Sundays. Now we engage in commerce 24/7.

Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27), indicating that he valued the Sabbath because it was intended to fulfill our needs and serve our welfare, not because it was a legal obligation. Our Creator-God understands that our bodies and minds require rest.

Rest With Jesus

Jesus, both God and man, modeled the value of work-rest balance. After a particularly busy time of ministering to crowds, Jesus urged his disciples to “come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest” (Mark 6:31).

Notice that Jesus didn’t say, “Go, get away and relax.” Rather, he said, “Come with me.” That’s a beautiful picture of what vacation should be. A vacation with Christ refreshes our spirits and reminds us of our need for him. A godly model of vacation has to include God’s Word. The Bible reminds us that the work of this world is temporary and we are awaiting true Sabbath rest in heaven with Jesus.

If it seems strange to take Jesus with you on vacation, imagine “God’s travel brochure for heaven.” Imagine that it includes pictures of each member of your family, smiling and happy. Can you imagine how perfectly restful it will be? Can you picture yourself and your family there?

Angie Molkentini is a freelance writer and Bible study leader. She lives with her husband, Jon, and their three children in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

A VACATION WITH
CHRIST REFRESHES
OUR SPIRITS AND
REMINDS US OF OUR
NEED FOR HIM.

"I'm bored."

Are these common phrases in your house? Try out the ideas below to help remedy the summer blues!

Katrina Meinel

"There's nothing to do."



Illustration: Carol Heyer

Go camping. either at a campground or in your backyard! Slow down, get everyone together, and enjoy God's creation. While you are outside, you can . . .

Go stargazing. Research and find some constellations to look for. Or use your imaginations to find pictures in the stars!

Try a day without TV. Or if you are really brave, try to go without any electronics! You will all need to get creative, not only to find things to do but also to find meals to eat. Stick to simple, popular foods, but look for creative ways to serve them.

Build a campfire. Invite a couple of your children's friends over and enjoy the conversations that arise during this together time. Make s'mores or hot dogs over an open fire. Tell ghost stories. Sing campfire songs. Tell jokes.

Take a walk. Make it a morning or evening tradition.

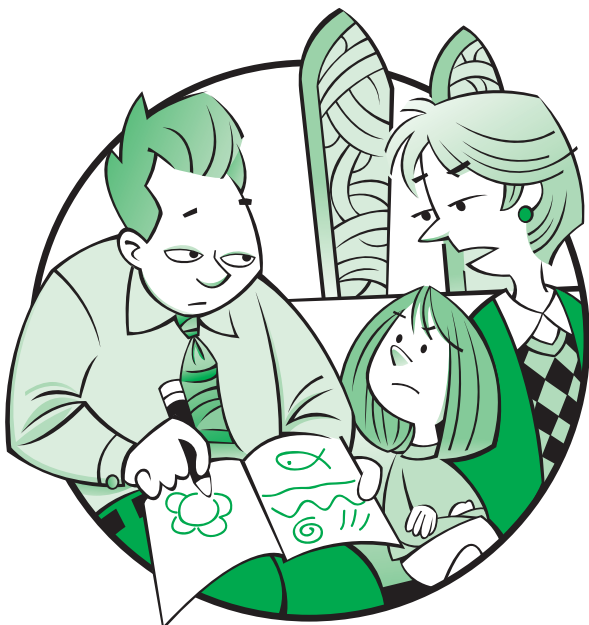
Make meals together. Children are less picky while eating something they helped make. It is also a great time to spark conversations.

Teach or attend vacation Bible school. Younger children have the opportunity to be social in a Christian atmosphere. Older children can be volunteer helpers to see the faith of little children grow.

Teach each other something new. Teach your children a life lesson, such as how to do the laundry or how to balance the checkbook. Then ask your children to teach you something new, such as how to download music or how to skateboard or how to do a magic trick.

PODCAST @ www.parentscrosslink.net

Cartoon: Ed Koehler



"I think she can finish the rest by herself."

Parents & Crosslink

DEAR READER,

Today's parents learn from each other, sharing ideas and encouraging one another to meet the daily challenges of living in an increasingly godless society. In the context of the gospel, this is a very powerful dynamic. *Parents Crosslink* (PCL) is a response to the demand for an interactive approach to assisting parents with a biblical view of family. Please join our ongoing conversation about Christian parenting at the PCL Web site located at www.parentscrosslink.net.

Kenneth Kremer, PCL Editor

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