

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far from . . . Me

Joel A. Nelson

Autumn is my favorite time of year—the cooler days, the colorful trees, and the countdown to the first NFL kickoff! My youngest child, Lindsay, is a great fan of the Chicago Bears. Recently, I asked her, “Hey, Linney, why do you like the Bears so much?” Her matter-of-fact reply: “Because *you* like ‘em, Dad.”

Though it warms my heart to know another Bear fan lives under my roof, I realize that it is not because of the Bears that she is a fan (they usually stink); it's because of me. It's the power of modeling.

The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* says *modeling* means “to construct or fashion in imitation of.” *Imitation* is defined as “following a pattern, model, or example.” Lindsay has decided to copy me. Why? Experts call it social learning or self-efficacy theory. One researcher explains it this way: “Behaviors of valued individuals are modeled. . . . Accordingly, these theories suggest that the extent to which children identify with or feel close to their caregiver could be an important mediating mechanism in the intergenerational linkage of behaviors” (Duncan and various authors, “The Apple Does Not Fall Far from the

Tree” at www.santafe.edu, search “apple”). Another expert states, “A significant model in one's life can instill self-beliefs that will influence the course and direction that life will take” (Pajares, “Overview of Social Cognitive Theory and of Self-efficacy” at www.emory.edu, search “self-efficacy defined eff”).

Whether this phenomenon is explained in scholarly verbiage or well-known witticisms, the bottom line is that *the apple doesn't fall far from the tree . . . or me!* Yes, parent, you are one of the most important, if not THE most important person in your child's life. You hold that important position in a whole lot of areas and for a whole host of reasons. And here is the most

important part: When it comes to spiritual matters, your modeling and example are HUUUUUUUGE!

Here's what some other experts have said:

“Although peers sometimes do exercise more control over an adolescent's choice of dress, music, entertainment, etc., only when parents are extremely negligent do peers exercise more control over the teen's choice of beliefs and relational styles than the parents do. In the vast majority of cases, parents remain the single most important influence in the development of an adolescent's personality” (Benson, *Effective Christian Education*).



Parents are, almost always, the single most significant determining factor in the development of their children.

Another writes: “Because of the extensive exposure parents have to their own children, they leave an indelible impression that radically affects how receptive their children will be to the gospel. There is overwhelming evidence that parents are, almost always, the single most significant determining factor in the development of their children. . . . Parents play a role second only to that of the Holy Spirit in building the spiritual foundation of their children” (DeVries, *Family-Based Youth Ministry*).

(Continued on page 2.)

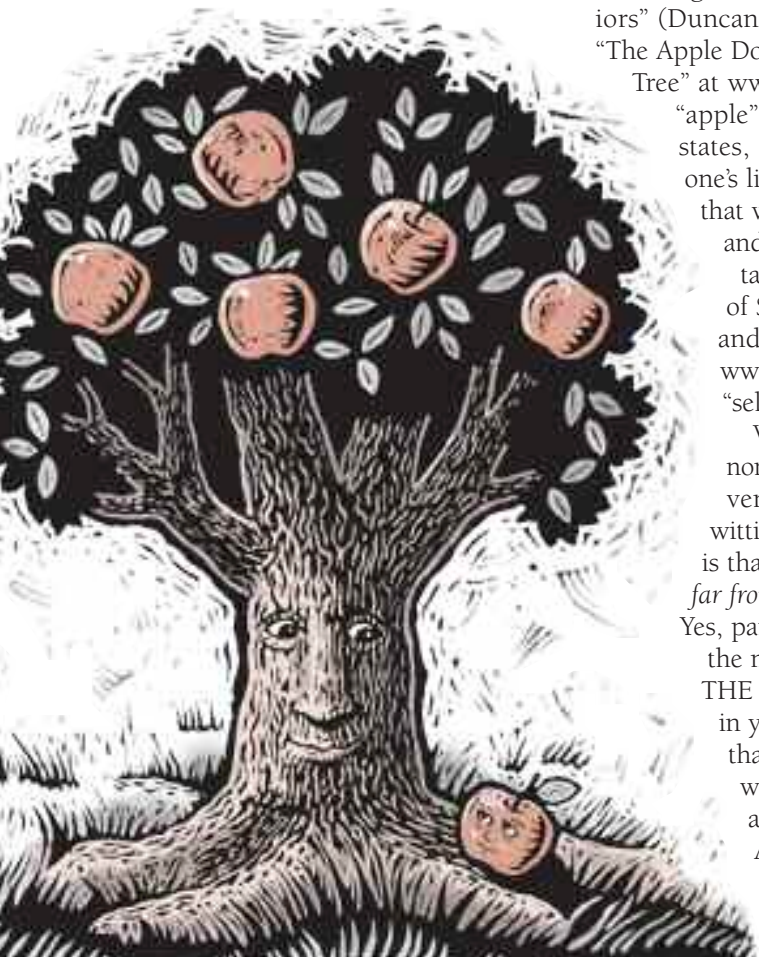


Illustration by Terry Herman

(The Apple . . . cont.)

And another: "In all the studies we've accumulated over the years regarding what influences children and teens, parents continue to be the most influential shapers of a person's life—either positively or negatively" (Freudenburg, *The Family-Friendly Church*).

And finally, George Barna writes: "[A] person's moral foundations are generally in place by the time they reach age nine. While those foundations are refined and the application of those foundations may shift to some extent as the individual ages, their fundamental perspectives on truth, integrity, meaning, justice, morality, and ethics are formed quite early in life" (*Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*).

These experts share nothing new. God was quite definite about the everyday modeling he wanted Israelite parents to practice. Deuteronomy 11:18-20 instructed Israelite parents to "fix these words of mine in your hearts and

minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." In Ephesians 6:4, God tells fathers, "Do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." And Proverbs 22:6 tells parents, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

It is for this reason that *Parents Crosslink* and its companion Web site, www.parentscrosslink.net, have been developed. Through the combined efforts of the WELS Commissions on Youth Discipleship, Adult Discipleship, and Parish Schools and Northwestern Publishing House, *Parents Crosslink* and parentscrosslink.net will connect



Christian parents with one another and with a host of exciting and engaging resources to help them become the models God wants and their children need.

My Lindsay has learned to love the Chicago Bears because of what she sees and knows of me. May the Lord use my parental modeling to help her feel even more love for him. That is my prayer for all of you too.



Dr. Nelson serves as the executive director for the WELS Commission on Youth Discipleship. He is married and has three children. The Nelsons make their home in Muskego, Wisconsin.

For more information about the influence parents have in the lives of their children, go to www.parentscrosslink.net. And be sure to watch for a live online forum with Dr. Nelson in September.



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

www.parentscrosslink.net.

My ten-year-old's classroom has two children with special needs. How can I help my daughter befriend them?

A When children with various needs come together in school, the lessons extend far beyond the classroom walls. Lives are enriched as givers become receivers and receivers become givers. You are a wise parent for recognizing the blessings that await your child.

More than anything, help your daughter see these two children for the similarities they share rather than the differences. Talk to her about what it is that defines a person and how God's children come in a variety of physical and developmental packages. Acknowledge that adjustments may need to be made, then suggest that she treat these children as she would any other friends.

You may also wish to consult the parents of these two children. Parents of children with special needs generally appreciate being able to educate others about their child's specific disability. The insights you gain can then be passed along to your daughter.

Finally, explore the possibility of your daughter's becoming involved in the educational process of her "differently abled" classmates. Perhaps she can assist the teacher as a peer-tutor. Children with special needs tend to respond positively to their peers, and the bonds of friendship are strengthened in the process. Everybody wins.

My child's new teacher hates to see kids waste food, so she makes every child eat everything in the lunch. Since my child often gets an upset stomach, I say he should be the one to decide what to eat and how much to eat. Who's right?

A We confess with James, "Every good and perfect gift is from above" (1:17). And we recognize all blessings, even daily food, as gifts from

God. We know these gifts are reflections of God's greater gift—salvation through his Son, Jesus. Motivated by Christ's love, we strive to take care of the blessings God has given.

Twenty years ago parents encouraged: "Eat everything up. Children are starving in Africa." Perhaps the abundance to which we daily sit down has desensitized us to how truly blessed we are. But should we expect children to consume every scrap of food on their plates?

The teacher's sensitivity is admirable, but responsibility to teach children starts in the home. Parents and teachers then need to work together to resolve issues regarding clearing a child's plate and managing waste, as well as promoting a healthy diet. Inform the teacher of any concerns.

One suggestion. We can help children practice portion control. Teach them to take only what they can eat. Help them communicate with lunch servers and teachers. Praise children in the "clean-plate club" at meals. And demonstrate good stewardship by not wasting food in your own home.



What Parents Are Saying about Family Life Lived in the Fast Lane

Ann Ponath

Taxi!" Talk about a difficult customer—this one's about six, and he expects me to load his soccer gear and water bottle, two lawn chairs, a stroller, a big brother, two sisters, a team snack, a change of clothes, and a gift for the birthday party after the game! Don't forget an umbrella, sunscreen, and a parka in case there's a weather change.

"Taxi!"

This pickup seems a bit easier—just the two boys from school, but they come equipped with two backpacks, snow pants, boots, and the after-school hungries. Am I supposed to run a restaurant and a driving service too? Oh, and one of the fellows is saying something about a lot of homework and do I have a pencil.

"Taxi!"

The baby is crying, but the job is to deliver the oldest to choir, drop off #2 at his youth group, swing by the library, get gas, and make sure the middle child doesn't get lost in the shuffle. Then the baby gets fed, if she doesn't fall asleep first and wake up just in time for the return trip. Smile, you say?

Summer's over. Can you tell? Even if the summer hiatus wasn't long enough, hopefully, the past months were more relaxing than the coming school year promises to be. Life in a family of school-aged kids is an activities' whirlwind. These weeks and months disappear before you can say, "Do you have any homework?" It's an endless struggle just to find time to actually hug your

children, feed, clothe, bandage, and discipline them. So, how will you cope?

I didn't know the answer either, so I asked the experts—other parents who seemed to have it all together. Turns out, we are all struggling with this thing called parenting. But here are a few ideas that might make your life more livable.

Keep your perspective

Many parents in this life stage find household chores getting shortchanged. And this can become a constant source of irritation. Some moms and dads attempt to keep it all together with house rules: "Always pick up your entire house before going to bed." But, if you're like me and you tried this, you would never get to bed. Many parents mentioned making the whole family responsible for chores. Extra-large refrigerator calendars and organizational Web sites were cited as handy tools. Long-term, weekly, and daily list making can be a good tool to keep you on track. Others said, "Don't worry if Monday's bathrooms don't get done until the following Monday." Some parents try to do a couple of laundry loads daily. Some prefer to do it all at once. But perhaps this quote puts all other approaches in perspective: "Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is the noble art of leaving things undone. The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials" (Lin Yutang).

We heard many good tips for keeping families on schedule and homes neat as a pin, but to put a biblical spin on things, life is all about priorities. Didn't Luther say he needed more time to pray when life was most

difficult? (And, if they were all like that one, wouldn't you just love to hear a few more of Martin and Katie Luther's household hints?)

Many parents reminded me to "smile, laugh, and thank God for your little blessings every day!" "Enjoy the busyness, remembering that in a few years every Saturday will be open!" "Just prioritize, putting first that which will grow your children and your husband (or wife) in God's way. That would include taking care of yourself! Let the rest fall as it may!"

Take time for yourself

Taking care of yourself includes a daily dose of spiritual nourishment. That may mean waking early to start the day wrestling with a Bible thought or keeping a prayer journal recounting the day's joys ("Junior is almost potty trained") and frustrations ("Junior is almost potty trained") or reading parenting books with a godly perspective. One parent wisely encouraged us to "get the big stuff right first, and the day-to-day details will fall into place."

Perhaps a little more time at the family altar (holding the little hands entrusted to us) will keep our families together on the only journey that really counts—the one that leads from here to eternity.



Ann Ponath lives in Stillwater, Minnesota, with her husband, David, and their four children.

For more great tips on how to deal with family life in the fast lane, go to www.parentscrosslink.net.

BRAINING

Being a father of identical twin boys is certainly interesting. I remember a basketball game in which a player on the opposing team kept getting confused about which twin he was supposed to guard. His coach finally said: “Yes, they are twins. Guard one of them!”

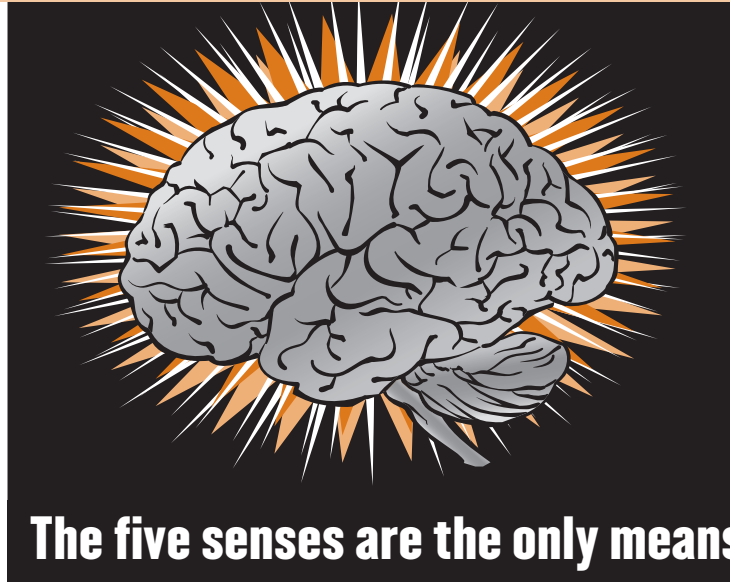
My sons’ physical characteristics are identical; their inner workings certainly are not. Observing their actions and behaviors over the past ten years has led me to appreciate even more one of God’s great designs: the human brain. My appreciation for the wonder of the human brain echoes the words of David, who wrote, “You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb” (Psalm 139:13).

God’s creation should always amaze us. The Creator of all things has designed the human psyche (“inmost being”) just as he created the physical body (“knit me”). He knows us in a very intimate way and has designed each one of us as a unique individual. And that includes the miraculous way in which he has designed the human brain to permit each one of us to learn in a distinctive way and think unique thoughts.

Not only has God created us to be unique individuals, but he has also given to each one of us a distinct background that includes parents, environment, social contacts, culture, experiences, and so on. What we experience in our environments helps to shape who we are and how we learn. So background also plays an important role in brain development. Even though my boys are engaged in many of the same activities and have similar experiences in life, each of them still has a unique perspective because, while their backgrounds are very similar, they are still slightly different.

Have you ever wondered how your child learns? Each brain, being unique in creation and environment, also learns in a unique way. A lot of activity occurs inside the brain through special sensory receptors. But every human brain is limited to the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste) to collect information from the environment. What senses we make use of and how much we make use of each sense determines our *sensory preferences*. In the past, educators referred to the way each individual learns as a *learning style*. This was one among many theories. Today cognitive scientists recognize that sensory preferences are an important component in describing, in part, how one learns.

The five senses do not contribute equally to our knowledge base when we learn. Most people do not



use sight, hearing, and touch equally during a learning episode. In the same way that people develop a preference for being right- or left-handed, the human brain has the ability to develop certain preferences for gathering information from the environment. This ability is a special gift from the Creator. In this way, the senses become even more efficient as a pathway for moving information into the human brain.

The five senses are the only ways we have to take in information. Some children have a preference for learning by sight; they are called *visual learners*. There are others who prefer hearing; they are *auditory learners*. Still others prefer touch or making use of the body in their learning; they are *kinesthetic learners*. Mike’s brain prefers the sight path. Mary processes best by being a good listener. Phoebe learns especially well when she can have a hands-on experience and make good use of her sense of touch. These three senses are most common in receiving information from our environments. They also explain, in part, how each of us learns.

Already at a very early age, individuals tend to begin to favor one or two of these senses over the others. Some children understand language at a very early age (auditory), others show a great interest in color and pictures (visual), and still others walk early and quickly learn to throw a ball or play with blocks (kinesthetic). These natural preferences are seen as talents in the first few years of life, and childhood usually provides plenty of opportunities to develop each learning style.

Making use of multiple senses when mastering new information or skills increases the likelihood of learning.

POWER

Jeff Davis



Illustration courtesy of Liquid Library

s we have for taking information in.

The brain remembers by being stimulated through the senses. The ears, the eyes, and the movement of the body all send different signals to the brain. By combining these signals into multiple activities, we leave a more permanent impression on the brain. In order to address sensory preferences, parents and teachers must take into account God's unique design of the human brain. This can be done by providing a variety of activities that incorporate as many of the senses as possible.

Are you beginning to analyze your child's learning preferences? Is your child able to listen and take in information? Does your child enjoy doing things with the hands? Is your child able to communicate well using words, phrases, and sentences? Since children develop at different rates and young human brains are continually changing, it may be a challenge to identify a preference. No doubt, your child may be strong in one of the senses. But your child also probably makes use of several senses for learning, making it difficult to zero in on one particular preference. Since a good part of the equation is genetic, you might begin to try to understand how your child learns best by thinking about how you learn best.



Jeff Davis lives in Lake Mills, Wisconsin, with his wife, Sally, and their five children.

For some practical tips to increase your child's learning capacity, go to www.parentscrosslink.net.

SENSORY PREFERENCES AND THE CLASSROOM

People tend to teach the way they learn. Teachers who are strong auditory learners will prefer this modality when teaching. If they have children in their classroom who are strong auditory learners, those students will feel more comfortable and may learn more than students who are visual learners. The visual learners may even find that they have a more difficult time maintaining focus.

For this reason, it's a good idea to challenge your child's teachers to design lessons that include activities that address all sensory preferences.

BRAIN THEORY VOCABULARY

sensory preferences:

the tendency humans have for relying on one sense (or a combination of senses) for gathering information in the brain during the learning process.

visual learner:

a learner who shows a preference for learning by sight stimulation.



auditory learner:

a learner who shows a preference for learning through sound stimuli.



kinesthetic learner:

a learner who tends to learn well through tactile and physical stimuli.



Illustrations by Terry Herman



Viewpoint

The Right Tension

Jan Kuske

The right amount of tension, in the hands of a talented musician, can make a good guitar sing. But the guitar strings require just the right amount of tension. Too little and they lose pitch or fail to vibrate altogether. Too much tension and they rise sharply in pitch. If still more tension is applied, the strings will eventually snap.

Life is like that. Not enough tension and life becomes boring and dull; God-given talents fail to reach their full potential. Too much tension and life becomes frazzled and haphazard. We end up doing many things, none of them well. And there's little time to enjoy blessings. Sometimes blessings even go completely unnoticed. The kind of tension where one can no longer enjoy God's blessings is the spiritual equivalent of a breaking point. Just the right amount of tension, however, and life resonates with gratitude, joy, and a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.

In a heartfelt attempt to accommodate our children, many of us find ourselves trying to be everywhere, getting our kids involved in everything. We desperately want success, friends, popularity, rich experiences, and plenty of opportunities for our children. We want them to have a good future, complete with a great job and a happy home life. And we have convinced ourselves that our hurried lifestyles are the best way to accomplish those ends. It's the American dream! But at what cost?

To satisfy this insatiable appetite for fulfilling the dream, schools and communities offer a smorgasbord of activities: drama clubs, athletic programs, dance studios, choral organizations, music lessons, and so on. These are wonderful opportunities. Our children are truly blessed with the variety and quality of these programs. And it gives us special joy to support and encourage our kids and be proud of their efforts as they participate. But, lacking moderation and restraint, is there a point at which we begin to behave like gluttons, encouraging our children to be involved in too many of these organized programs? Is it possible to have too much of a good thing? And if so, how do parents begin to find just the right amount of tension?

First, we need to understand this is a parental concern. God charges us with the responsibility to bring up our children in the way that they should go (Proverbs 22:6). Schools, churches, and communities are tools that God

provides to help us do our job of helping our children grow to maturity. And what a blessing they are! But when we find ourselves strained by the demands of those we count on to help us, allies become adversaries. The institutions that serve us may need to be reminded every now and then that parents are trying hard to maintain a delicate balance and that undue pressure on kids is not in keeping with their role. And it's our job to communicate our expectations and limitations to program organizers so they can plan accordingly.

Some activity planners suffer the delusion that theirs is the most important activity. They assume that whatever it takes to succeed ranks right up there with breathing. Parents' voices can help these planners keep things in a balanced perspective. They need to know no activity will supersede your family's worship, strain you financially, or take an unrealistic amount of time and energy away from family life. This requires tact and patience. But as a parent you have every right and reason to be concerned

about unrealistic demands. Program organizers need to understand that all children need to have lives that extend beyond that activity. And sometimes, as parents, no is the most loving thing that can be said when program demands become unrealistic.

On the other hand, it would be unfair to single these organizations out for making our lives more hurried. We need to remember that we are the ones responsible for making the choices. We must learn to be more selective in the programs and activities in which our children participate. And, at the same time, we need to teach our children to be more selective. As wise stewards of our financial resources, we don't buy every product advertised. When we buy something, we ask: "Is it needed? Is it worth the cost? Is it age appropriate? Does it reinforce our values?" Our children need to learn how to apply the same stewardship principle to their own time. And for children who are still too young to make these decisions wisely, it is our job to do it for them.

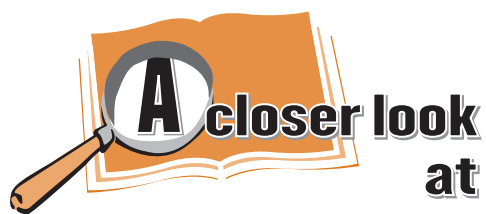


Jan Kuske makes her home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with her husband, John, and their four children.

Do you have an opinion to share with other parents on the subject of the hurried home? This topic is featured on our Web site discussion board. Go to www.parentscrosslink.net. And while you're there, look for our list of resource sites that discuss this same topic in greater depth.



When we find ourselves strained by the demands of those we count on to help us, allies become adversaries.



A closer look at

SOLOMON

Katie Martin

Sometimes a piece of advice from a parent, a friend, or a mentor becomes the little voice of wisdom that replays in our minds and guides us through difficult decisions. I received such wise words before my first year of teaching.

Filled with apprehension, I visited the teacher I was replacing to get some tips on how to run a classroom. Notebook in hand, I listened and waited for him to pour out his knowledge. Instead, he simply said, “If you say you’re going to do something, do it!” That was it. No dissertation on classroom management or step-by-step lesson plan. I left feeling cheated. But his words stayed with me and guided me in many decisions as a teacher and a parent.

Where children are involved, one often wishes for the wisdom of Solomon. Solomon’s scope of wisdom included scientific knowledge about plants and animals and literary genius, which guided him to write over four thousand songs and proverbs. His wisdom was especially apparent in his ability to administer justice in his kingdom. The Bible tells us that “all the kings of the earth sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart” (2 Chronicles 9:23).

We tend to forget that Solomon was the son of Israel’s greatest king—David, the shepherd-king. Young Solomon must have looked up to his father with reverence and awe. And when he ascended the throne, Solomon probably had his share of doubts regarding his ability to meet the high standards of his father’s reign. After all, his father was a military genius. His father had written more than one hundred psalms—some of the greatest literature of all time. His father had slain Goliath with a stone and sling. His father had a name and a reputation. These were big shoes for a young, inexperienced, inept Solomon to fill. He wanted to govern the kingdom well. But he knew he

would need divine guidance for such an overwhelming task.

Because of his great love for Solomon, God came to him in a vision and told him to ask for anything he wanted. Solomon could have chosen military success, wealth, or a long life. Instead he asked for a discerning heart—a heart that would know good from bad, right from wrong, justice from injustice.

God gave Solomon a vast knowledge of earthly subjects, but he also gave Solomon a kind of wisdom that was set apart from the wisdom of the world. Solomon’s wisdom was centered on the fear of the Lord. His wisdom was anchored in the knowledge of the coming Savior, who would bring the light of salvation—true wisdom—to a world living in darkness.

WHILE THE
WORLD SEEKS
WISDOM FROM
SCHOLARS AND
HUMAN EXPERTS,
OUR WISDOM
COMES FROM
ON HIGH.

Are you ever overwhelmed by responsibility and suddenly find yourself short on wisdom? Parenting can make us feel that way sometimes. The temper tantrums, teenage angst, or that pesky rash all seem to call for much more wisdom than we’ve been given. And in some of these matters, human wisdom offers valuable solutions. But the wisdom that takes us and our children to our ultimate goal—that kind of divine wisdom we already have. It’s called faith. Through faith we

know that Jesus died to bring us life. We are wise beyond human measures because we are wise about our salvation in Christ Jesus. We live in him and for him. We listen as he speaks to us in his Word, the Bible. In that Word he sets the standards for Christian living that we pass on to our children. In that Word we learn the good news that Jesus Christ kept God’s standards perfectly for us and died in our place.

In Proverbs 3:5 Solomon wrote, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” On the days we feel like throwing up our hands in frustration, our human wisdom isn’t enough to sustain us; but our confidence in God’s wisdom is. He promises to give us the kind of wisdom we need to deal with any bump in the road.

So while the world seeks wisdom from scholars and human experts, our wisdom comes from on high. It’s the kind of wisdom that will last into eternity. And this wisdom is not just for us but for our children as well. Through faith created by the Holy Spirit in Baptism, even the tiniest baby is wise about his or her salvation. It’s the kind of wisdom Paul had in mind when he wrote to Timothy, “From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

Grow in that wisdom daily. Pass it on. Hold on tightly to the promises of your loving Savior as you exercise his wisdom in your life as a Christian parent.



Katie Martin lives in Killeen, Texas, with her husband, Josh, and their two children.

To discover how Solomon’s Proverbs can help you in your role as a Christian parent, go to www.parentscrosslink.net and look for “Parenting Wisdom from Solomon’s Proverbs.”

ACTIVITIES FOR THE FAMILY

adapted from www.savingchildhood.org

Corn Necklace

CAUTION: Corn kernels can present a choking hazard for small children, also this activity should not be attempted with children too small to safely handle a needle.

You will need:

- ears of multicolored Indian corn
- large darning needle
- heavy-duty thread

The best part of this is removing the colored kernels from the cobs of Indian corn. Rub the corncobs together, and watch the kernels hop all around. After you've corralled them, place them in a container for soaking.

Add water the night before you want to string the necklace to soften the kernels. In the morning pour off the water. The children like to dip their hands in and feel the damp, swollen corn.

Using a large needle threaded with doubled, strong thread with a knot at the end, start with the kernels resting on the table. Just push the needle down through each colored kernel and pull each one through to the end of the thread.

If your child runs out of "steam," just tie the two ends together. A bracelet is just as nice as a necklace.

Nature Walk Bracelet

With summer coming to an end, it's a good time to bring home some of the wonder and beauty of the outdoors. This project works well even with very young children, boys and girls alike.

You will need:

- a roll of 2" wide clear tape
- low-melt hot glue gun
- strips of plastic, can be cut from soft-drink bottles (optional)

First, wrap a piece of tape loosely around each child's arm with the sticky side out.

Now, have the children find bits of nature—pinecones, leaves, sticks, seeds, or anything else that attracts them—and stick the bits to their tape bracelets!

At the end, comparing the beauty of each bracelet will be the highlight of these walks.

Optional: To make their bracelets more permanent, hot glue the items to a plastic band.

Pumpkin Puppets

Convert a paper plate (or two) into a jolly jack-o'-lantern puppet! There are several ways to do it; choose one and try it. One puppet is lots of fun, but you may want to make more and have a puppet show.

You will need:

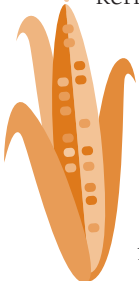
- paper plates
- glue or stapler
- strip of cardboard or rolled up newspaper
- tempera paint (orange, black, green)
- scissors
- stick, small stones
- paintbrushes

Idea 1: (with one paper plate)

1. Paint a pumpkin and make its face. Let dry.
2. Attach a handle to the back of the plate. Make a handle out of a strip of cardboard or a roll of newspaper. Staple it to the top and bottom on the back.

Idea 2: (with two paper plates)

1. Paint two pumpkins. You can make a jack-o'-lantern face on each one (a scary one and a happy one). Let dry.
2. Staple the two plates together faces facing out. Insert a stick between them for a handle to hold. For a noisy pumpkin, put a few stones inside to make it rattle.



Cartoon by Ed Koehler



"Looks like we can take all the cookies we want; God seems to be watching the apples."

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 on-going conversation about Christian parenting at the PCL website located at www.parentscrosslink.net.

Kenneth Kremer, PCL Editor

Parents Crosslink is published by Northwestern Publishing House four times annually in partnership with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's Commissions on Youth Discipleship, Adult Discipleship, and Parish Schools. Please also visit the *Parents Crosslink* interactive Web site at www.parentscrosslink.net. All comments should be directed in writing to **Kenneth Kremer**, Editor, 2949 Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222 or kremerk@nph.wels.net.

For subscription rates or other questions regarding subscriptions, call NPH Subscription Services at 1-800-662-6093, ext. 8, or visit www.parentscrosslink.net.

Copy Editor – **Amanda Swiontek**
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