

# PARENTS CHRONICLE

Growing in Grace at Grandview Park

## PERSPECTIVES ON PARENTING - FOSTER PARENTING BY CRAIG & JOELLE LOGEMANN

*Over the next several months, I will present several "perspectives on parenting" from parents within our congregation. This month Craig & Joelle Logemann contribute their perspective on foster parenting.*

I [Joelle] began considering foster parenting when my sister Cindy was dying. I was concerned that my brother in law might not be able to care for my niece, so Craig and I discussed caring for her if he couldn't. I knew if the Department of Human Services had to step in, they would be much more likely to allow us to take her if we

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James 1:27

we were already licensed foster parents. God was working in my heart too, as I had been considering James 1:27 which says, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep

oneself unstained from the world." So, one day I asked Craig what he thought of becoming foster parents. His response was that he hadn't really thought of it at all. I asked him if he would be willing to learn more about it; he was, and we attended an orientation class. Thirty hours of training, a couple of home visits, mounds of paperwork and six months later, we were licensed foster parents.

Fostering has been a challenge at times. Children do not come into the foster system without baggage. They have spiritual, emotional, physical,

and/or social needs that can be overwhelming. We have had to do massage therapy with a drug affected baby who had difficulty tolerating touch. We have worked with children who had what seemed like irrational fears, until we learned what they had been through. The birth parents and the legal system can also be exhausting and frustrating to try and work with. It is hard for me to understand how someone can claim to love their children, but do nothing that would be in their best interest. It has been hard on our family at times, too. It was very difficult when the first child left our home, and Jayde cried herself to sleep several nights in a row because she missed him so much.

If it were only challenging, we would have given up after the first placement. But foster care has been a blessing as well. Every day a child is with us, we know they are safe and loved and cared for. That is a blessing. When a child comes in to our home withdrawn and scared and becomes an affectionate, happy child- that is a blessing. When birth parents visit our church and are welcomed- that is a blessing. When we see our own daughters show compassion and love- that is a blessing. When I can

remember sitting on the floor, letting a child put little pony tails all over my head, and he asked for the grease, so he could really do it up right, and I laughed so hard that my face hurt- that is a blessing. When a child leaves our home with a Bible of their own- that is a blessing. And when I realize God has opened up our world and used us in the lives of people we would have never met had it not been for fostering- that is a blessing.

Fostering really is a challenge and a blessing.

Fostering really is a challenge and a blessing. If it is a ministry you are considering, we would be glad to talk to you more about it, and answer any questions you might have about the financial aspects, accepting or denying a request to place a child in your home, the stress it can put on your family, etc. You can also learn more about fostering at [www.iowakidsnet.com](http://www.iowakidsnet.com) or by calling 1-800-243-0756.

*Craig & Joelle Logemann are members of Grandview Park Baptist Church and live in Ankeny. Craig & Joelle serve as Awana Commanders and Upward Coaches. Craig also serves on the school board, while Joelle also serves in God's Garden and in the Deaf Ministry.*

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Thanks to Ondrej Paska (See Matthew 14:24-33) 01-01-2008  
PETER FINDS HIS FAITH TO BE MUCH STRONGER IN THE WINTER

Dinner is one of the great highlights of my day. Why? Because I get to sit in my home with the woman I love, laughing, chatting, and eating with our five children whom we deeply love and enjoy.

Every time I sit at the table with my family I am reminded of the words of Psalm 128:3–4, which says, “Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.” As Scripture says, I am blessed.

Some months ago we started a new tradition at the Driscoll dining table that has also been a blessing. Whoever is taking their turn setting the table ensures that our “dinner Bible,” as the kids call it, is sitting in front of “Poppa Daddy,” as the kids call me.

Throughout the course of our dinner together, we chat about how the day went, how everyone is doing, and whom we can pray for, and we discuss a section of Scripture. Over the years we have always made it a point to read Scripture to the children when they were little (especially at bed time), and help them develop personal daily Bible reading habits once they learned to read for themselves.

However, we struggled to find a way to do regular family devotions with five children of different ages and attention spans.

Still, the dinner Bible discussions led by Grace and me have been a huge hit. Every time we sit down for dinner the dinner Bible is in its place on the table, opened to the section of Scripture we will discuss that evening by one of the enthusiastic kids. We often have some really insightful conversations around the dinner Bible as the younger kids, especially the boys, seem to be able to handle longer and more reflective discussions when their hands are busy as they eat. Also, with the casual conversation over dinner I have noticed that everyone gets an opportunity to speak as we take turns chewing our food, and our dinners last longer than they had before because everyone is engaged.

The following steps are offered based upon my experience with our children over dinner. These steps are intended to help direct theological discussions between parents and their children while also building the children’s theological vocabularies so that they are increasingly familiar with biblical concepts.

**Step 1.** Eat dinner with your entire family regularly.

**Step 2.** Mom and Dad sit next to one another to lead the family discussion.

**Step 3.** Open the meal by asking if there is anyone or anything to pray for.

**Step 4.** Someone opens in prayer and covers any requests. This task should be rotated among family members so that different people take turns learning to pray aloud.

**Step 5.** Start eating and discuss how everyone’s day went.

**Step 6.** Have a Bible in front of the parents in a translation that is age appropriate for the kids’ reading level. Have someone (parent or child) open the Bible to a text and read it aloud while everyone is eating and listening. [If you don’t know what to read, here are some suggestions: 1) Read through a book of the Bible. Start with a Gospel. 2) Read the passage Pastor Smith preached on last Sunday. 3) Read the passage one of the children studied in his CBF or WorshipTime class. 4) Use a guide like *Keys for Kids* (<http://www.cbhministries.org/kfk/home.php>)]

**Step 7.** Ask them questions about the text. [Think who, what, where, when, why, and how.]

**Step 8.** Let the conversation happen naturally, listen carefully to the kids, let them answer the questions, and fill in whatever they miss or lovingly and gently correct whatever they get wrong so as to help them. [Don’t be afraid if you don’t know an answer to one of their questions! This presents a wonderful opportunity for you and your children to learn together. Go online to do research or ask Pastor Smith or me.]

**Step 9.** If the Scriptures convict you of sin, repent as you need to your family, and share appropriately honest parts of your life story so the kids can see Jesus’ work in your life and your need for him too, which demonstrates gospel humility.

**Step 10.** At the end of dinner, ask the kids if they have any questions for you.

Follow the Spirit’s leading and don’t be a religious parent who is rigidly inflexible, thereby making this sort of thing something they must be do in duty rather than something they get to do in delight.

If you miss a night, or if conversation gets off track, or if your family occasionally just wants to talk about something else, don’t stress—it’s inevitable. For your children, the point is to learn what they are thinking about God, to help them know and love Jesus as God and Savior, and to teach them how to articulate and explain their Christian faith. For parents, the point is to lovingly instruct children and each other, thereby creating a family culture in which every member freely and naturally talks about God and prays to him together. In short, the goal is simply that your family would open the Bible and grow in love for Jesus, one another, your church, and the world.

Finally, remember that family Bible study requires a sense of humor, so make sure to have some fun, enjoy some laughs, and build some memories.

*Mark Driscoll is the Pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, WA. Taken from [Trial: 8 Witnesses from 1&2 Peter](#). © 2009 Mars Hill Church. All Rights Reserved. Visit [www.8witnesses.com](http://www.8witnesses.com) for a free PDF version of this book. This article was modified to fit our church context. (Note: I do not agree with every aspect of Pastor Driscoll’s theology or methodology, but appreciate his stand for the Gospel. This should not be taken as an endorsement of his ministry.)*