

PARENTS CHRONICLE

Growing in Grace at Grandview Park

MR. ENCOURAGEMENT

BY GREG LONG

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Do you have a nickname? Some nicknames are plays on the person's given name, such as "Shaq" or "Benji". Other nicknames describe physical characteristics, like "Shorty", "Lefty", or "Red." Still others are given for skill in sports, such as "The Glove" or "The Big Hurt."

One example in the Bible of someone who had a nickname is found in Acts 4:36. It tells of a man named Joseph from the island of Cyprus. His nickname was Barnabas, which means "Son of Encouragement." In that day, a son was considered to be a "carbon copy" of his father, so if someone was a "son of" something, it meant he was characterized by that trait. It is similar to our use today of "Mr.", such as "Mr. Basketball." So, today we might call Joseph "Mr. Encouragement."

Joseph/Barnabas was such an encourager that he was sent by the church at Jerusalem to the church at Antioch to "encourage [them] to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts" (Acts 11:22-24).

Do you like to be encouraged? Do you like to be praised? I know I do, and I'm sure you do as well. Do you think your children like to be praised? Do we as parents understand the "power of praise" in the lives of our children? The Bible says "gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body" (Proverbs 16:24 ESV). It also commands us to "encourage one another and build one another up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Dr. Todd Cartmell calls each instance of parental praise a "Specific Verbal Reward" (SVR). He says, "An SVR soaks your child with warm parental attention while giving her a highly detailed description of the positive behavior that just made the whole thing happen. In short, you make Susie so glad she listened the first time that she thinks she just one the lottery. Then you let her know exactly what she did to create this wonderful experience, so she'll know exactly how to make it happen again!" ("The Power of Praise" in the Spring 2005, Vol. 17, No. 3 issue of *Christian Parenting Today*).

I would add that we should praise our children not just so they want to please us in order to receive more praise, but because we can help them understand that they are pleasing God by their behavior.

We are commanded to "encourage one another daily" (Hebrews 3:13). Do you praise your children daily? Would you be known as "Mr. (or Mrs.) Encouragement"? On the back of this newsletter are some ideas to help you praise your children and to help them learn to encourage others.



WHEN FISH GET BAPTIZED

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BIBLE RESEARCH ON THE WEB

Do you have a question about something in the Bible? Is your child looking for a resource for a Bible project at school? Are you searching for help on a passage you discussed in family devotions? Here are some resources:

www.blueletterbible.org

This is a great tool! When you perform a search on a passage ("John 3:16"), it will show the passage with several little blue buttons with letters on them. Click the appropriate button for cross-references, a concordance search, commentaries, study tools, dictionaries, other versions, and even hymns that relate directly to the passage at hand.

www.openbible.info

Use the Topical Bible by typing in a topic ("Pharisees") to see a list related verses. Use the Bible Geocoding or Bible Atlas features to locate every place mentioned in the Bible on either Google Maps or Google Earth.

www.holylandphotos.org

Here are free, downloadable photos of Bible lands and places.

www.biblegateway.com

The Passage Lookup is a quick and easy way to look up a Bible passage from over 20 different translations. Use the Keyword Search to search for all instances of a biblical word or phrase. The Topical Index allows you to search for a topic and find information on that topic as well as a list of related verses.

www.bible-researcher.com

This site contains detailed information on the history of the canon, texts, and versions of Scripture.

www.studylight.org

This web site has concordances, an interlinear Bible, a Greek and Hebrew dictionary, topical Bibles, Bible dictionaries, and Bible encyclopedias.

IDEAS FOR ENCOURAGEMENT

Examples of Encouraging Your Children:

- * "Johnny, you did a great job listening the very first time I asked you! That's what the Bible means when it says 'Be quick to listen, slow to speak' (James 1:19)."
- * Susie, I just heard you say, 'That's OK, I can do it later,' when Mom said you couldn't go outside right now. That's a great way of 'honoring your mother' just like the Bible says (Ephesians 6:2)."
- * "Sally, thanks for being kind to your sister by letting her play with your doll. The Bible says, 'Be kind to one another' (Ephesians 4:32) and what you just did pleases the Lord." (You can use the word "kind" rather than "nice" so you can link it to the Biblical command.)
- * Write an encouragement note and stick it in your child's lunch box.
- * Write an encouragement sticky note and stick it on his or her bathroom mirror.

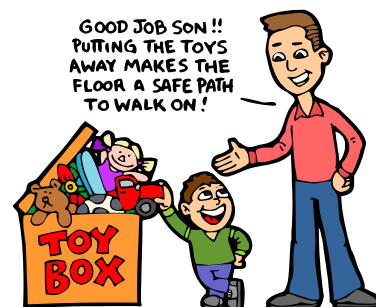


Summer Slide

Wonder why your child seems to slide spiritually during the summer and what you can do about it? Be sure to read "Summerizing Students" in the May edition of "Seyler's Scoop," available at the literature table in the church foyer.

Helping Your Children Be Encouragers:

- * Keep encouraging them! They'll learn by example.
- * Teach them to thank others, including their siblings. "Joe, tell Hannah thank you for helping Mom make supper."
- * Teach them to encourage others, including their family members. "Tim, why don't you go give Daddy a hug. He looks like he could use some encouragement."
- * Have them write thank you and encouragement cards or notes to others.



READ MY QUIPS

- "She was a super filly, a Christian, and a good friend." -- *trainer Henry Cecil on the retirement of his horse Borsal Sham*
- "In the legendary name of the greatest hockey player in history...what's his name?" -- *hockey expert Don King*
- "If we're gonna win, we have to play up to and beyond our potential. We're capable of doing that." -- *former Dallas Mavericks coach Don Nelson*
- "That was the nail that got the coffin going." -- *Bob Toledo, UCLA football coach, on an interception against his team in the Rose Bowl*
- "He's a guy that gets up at six o'clock in the morning regardless of what time it is." -- *Lou Duva, boxing trainer, on the training regimen of heavyweight Andrew Golota*
- "Nobody in football should be called a genius. A genius is a guy like Norman Einstein." -- *Joe Theismann, Washington Redskins quarterback-turned-announcer*
- "Statistically, when the Hawks score more than 100 points and the defense holds the other team to less than 100, they almost always win." -- *Atlanta Hawks announcer during a game*

DUMB SPORTS QUOTES

- "We started with 53,000 people. Half are gone, but, surprisingly, most are still here!" -- *Jerry Coleman, in the 13th inning of a 16-inning game*
- "Oh, that Lankford and McGee, the trio of 'em. They're a one-man wrecking crew." -- *Mike Shannon, announcing a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game*
- "He fakes a bluff." -- *Ron Fairley, NY Giants announcer*
- "Fans, don't fail to miss tomorrow's game." -- *Dizzy Dean, baseball great turned announcer*
- *Right after hurling his perfect game in the 1956 World Series, Don Larson was asked by a reporter, "Was that the best game you've ever pitched?"*
- "He slides into second with a stand-up double." -- *Jerry Coleman, San Diego Padres announcer*
- "There's a long drive! Winfield is going back, back, back! He hits his head against the wall! It's rolling into second base!" -- *Jerry Coleman, San Diego Padres announcer*

From *The Bride of Anguished English* by Richard Lederer (NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 42-44.