



Volume 11, Number 12

The Family Friend

A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

December, 2009

Beating the Post-Holiday Blues

Once the flurry of holiday activities comes to an end—the friends and family have returned home, and we must resume our daily routine—we may experience post-holiday stress or depression. We feel the loss of increased support we received from family and friends throughout the season. We are no longer caught up in getting a million and one things done, so we need to find things to look forward to in the upcoming winter days. There are things we can do to ward off or cope with these post “holiday hazards.”

Coping After the Holidays

1. Make plans for a weekend trip or special evening outing.
2. Invite friends for dinner or an evening of games.
3. Visit a shut-in or someone in a nursing home—it will brighten your day and theirs.
4. Invite your spouse/ significant other out for a “date” and let him or her choose the activities for the evening.

5. Plan a special activity to do with your children.
6. Spend some time with family members reflecting on the holidays.
7. Start a new activity. Is there something you have always wanted to do but have never gotten around to learning how to do? If so, see if there are any community courses you can enroll in to learn this new skill.
8. The day the holiday decorations are packed away, get fresh flowers for the house. It helps to brighten your home and your spirits.

Again, the possibilities are endless. It is still a matter of attitude and mindset. Make up your mind not to let the “post-holiday hazards” get a grip on you and your life.

Editor’s note: The above article was taken from the same newsletter as those from last month’s TFF. That newsletter is called *Coping With the Holidays* and can be found at:

<http://www.lcmhb.org/coping-with-the-holidays.pdf>

Happy Holidays!

Why Many Families Feel So Frantic

By Jared Jackson

Mary finally sits down at the end of a busy day—not to rest, but to fold her final load of laundry. But at least she’s sitting down. This dedicated mother loves her family of three kids, a great husband, and an average mutt. But sometimes she feels like she doesn’t have one more ounce to give. Why?

Her husband, Sam, is also exhausted—commuting and working long hours for a boss he can’t stand—and he often wonders if the layoffs will affect him this year.

The kids wake up and drag around the house trying to get ready for school. Billy’s hair is disheveled. Bobby forgot his lunch—again. No worry. Mom will get it along with Brittany’s homework.

On Saturdays, it’s soccer and yard work. Sunday it’s a struggle to stay awake through “church.” then it’s a rush home to catch the football game, while the evening is spent getting ready for the start of another grueling week.

Does this sound at all familiar? I imagine we’ve all felt that at some point in our lives, we fit

somewhere into this picture. But what is the BIG PROBLEM facing this family and so many others like them? Are they involved in some big secret sin? Are they really evil people? No, they are not. So why then does Mary and Sam feel like they're just a couple of hamsters running on an unending wheel of an unfulfilled life?

The answer is simple, but the solution is not. The reason why Sam and Mary feel trapped on the hamster wheel of doom is that they are being controlled by multiple forces which are placing unsustainable demands on their family.

I believe one of the biggest reasons people feel so unfulfilled in their families is because of the external and internal pressures burdening our families. But where do these pressures come from?

Extended Family

Extended family is one big source of pressure. We feel obligated to please our extended families, sometimes at the sacrifice of our own spouses and children. Sometimes there are domineering personalities everyone must tiptoe around to please and satisfy. Sometimes there are intense feelings of obligation and guilt dictating and interfering with our home life. External pressure from extended family members can be very intense.

Finances

Pressure also comes from our need to sustain a standard of living. There is no

doubt this is often complicated by families living at economic levels above what their income will support.

But setting that issue aside for the time being, just having to work in an environment filled with worldly people is a challenge in itself. Meeting the demands of an overbearing boss, or the worry and fear of economic disaster is often an albatross on the family.

Just imagine for a moment, husband, how much better your life would be if you didn't have to worry about your next paycheck. Imagine how much more attention you could give to your lovely bride of twenty years—if you didn't have to work extra hours for that demanding, unappreciative Ebenezer Scrooge. Imagine how much more time you would have to spend with your children in their precious developing years—years you will never get back. Think about how much more energy you would have to do the things you know you should be doing with your family and for your church if YOU were in CONTROL of your finances—both income and outgo.

This is not a fantasy. Many dads have left the demands of corporate culture behind to become family-focused fathers. They have learned a model of income that supports a family, rather than merely a lifestyle. This model comes not without sacrifice, but the rewards are well worth the investment.

Extracurricular Activities

Just about every one of us to some extent has felt the pressure that comes from being in-

The Family Friend

Published Monthly by
Calvert City church of Christ

involved in too much MEANINGLESS s-t-u-f-f. Whether it's sports or shopping or school or television, we have more diversions **from meaningful activities** than we can handle. And our children are being trained to go, go, go at the earliest age.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with any of these things. It's the lack of **balance** that is killing many families.

In the articles to come, I will be addressing these issues and others in detail. We'll look at all of these external pressures and what we can do about them. Stay tuned. You won't want to miss it.

—Via ***The Christian Courier***

Characteristics of Love

(1 Corinthians 13)

Patient
Kind

Not envious
Not Boastful

Not proud
Not unseemly
Not Selfish

Not easily provoked
Keeps no record of evil
Does not rejoice in wrongdoing

Rejoices in the truth
Bears all things

Believes all things
Hopes all things
Endures all things
Never Fails