



# The Family Friend

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

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## Three Nothings by Mike Benson

THE NAMES HAVE been changed, but the story is real. Young ladies, please read this thoughtfully and prayerfully. You could be Tracy some day:

When they first started to date, Grant told Tracy he wanted to be “just friends.” Tracy was happy with the arrangement. But then, after about a month of going out together, their relationship began to change. It happened slowly and seemed natural enough... Grant first put his arm around her shoulder and kept it there. Later that evening Tracy wondered again what was happening between them when Grant gave her a good-night kiss... the question crossed her mind: Weren't we going to be “just friends”? But then, in the warmth of the moment, she put the thought behind her. Within a couple of weeks, Grant's and Tracy's physical relationship had moved... They weren't merely pecking each other on the mouth. Their kisses lingered. And Grant's hand, which he'd been so careful that first night never to let stray from Tracy's shoulder, now began gliding

down to the small of her back, to her side, to her hips... At the end of a date about seven months into their relationship, he remarked, “Well, Tracy, I've really enjoyed our relationship, but this is going to have to be the last time we see each other for a while. I've been seeing Brenda.” “Huh?!” said Tracy, startled. “What?! What are you saying?!” “I told you six months ago that I wanted to be your friend,” Grant pleaded. “I told you I was making no commitments.” “No commitments!” Tracy shouted. “No commitments! You...!” Tears welled in her eyes as Tracy felt the bitter sting of betrayal. How natural and innocent Grant made it sound: “I never said....” And yet he had, hadn't he? By his actions (John Holzmann, *Dating with Integrity*, 59-60).

Like many of her peers today, Tracy made a costly mistake. She sacrificed her virginity for the companionship of a selfish and immature young man. She may have also relinquished the success of her future marriage by being intimate with Grant. I wish I had a quarter for every tear that has been shed by young Christian women who have lost their purity. Like Tracy, their hearts have been broken, their reputations have been

tainted, and the most precious gift they own has been surrendered—not to a loving and devoted husband, but to some self-indulgent interloper (1 Thess. 4:6). Those of us who counsel try to offer comfort. “God is forgiving” (2 Chron. 6:21; Ps. 25:18; 32:1), we promise. The words are true and need to be internalized, but often they are marginally helpful at best. Words, no matter how well-intentioned they may be, cannot reclaim cherished innocence and virtue. I appreciate the guidance of one father and how he communicates moral values to his family. Like me, he wants to protect his daughter from the pain and consequences of promiscuity.

He writes:

*...Before a young man took out my daughter, he usually would come over for dinner. Before he came I would ask my daughter, “Would you like to tell him the three nothings, or would you like for me to tell him the three nothings?” Usually my daughter would tell him the three nothings before he arrived at the door. However, that gave me a good opportunity when we met to merely ask the young man, “I am sure that my daughter has told you about the three nothings.” “Yes, sir.” “Good. What are they?” I would ask. “Nothing below the neck. Noth-*

ing comes off. And nothing lying down.” “Super!” I would reply. “I just want you to know that I know them. My daughter knows them and [now] you know them” (Douglas M. Cecil, *The 7 Principles of an Evangelistic Life*, 125-126).

Young ladies, God’s plan for your happiness requires that sex be kept pure and beautiful (1 Thess. 4:3-8; Gen. 2:24-25; Prov. 5:19-20; Song of Solomon). This doesn’t mean the complete absence or denial of passion, but rather the proper directing of such within the boundaries of a lifelong, committed, Christian marriage (Heb. 13:4). Can you remember the three nothings?

**“For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality”**(1 Thess. 4:3).

1 “Couples who strongly believe that sex outside of marriage is wrong are...31 percent more satisfied with their sex lives” (Bethesda Research Group, quoted by William R. Mattox Jr., “The Hottest Valentine,” *Washington Post*, 1994). “Those who cohabit or live together before marriage have a 50 percent higher possibility of divorce than those who do not” (M. D. Newcomb and P. M. Bentler, “Assessment of Personality and Demographic Aspects of Cohabitation and Marital Success,” *Journal of Personality Assessment* 44, 1980, 21). “Researchers at UCLA discovered that not only do those who cohabit have a higher level of divorce, they are more likely to commit adultery once they get married” (Chip Ingram, *Love, Sex, and Lasting Relationships*, 2003, 147). A study conducted by the University of South Carolina suggests that those who abstain from sex before marriage have the highest rates of marital fidelity (Ibid). “The introduction of sex in a dating relationship is almost always the ushering in of the breakup of that relationship” (Les and Leslie Parrott, *Relationships*, 1998, 138).

## The Best Marriage Advice

After creating Eve especially for Adam, the Bible says, “*For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*” (Gen. 2:24). The term “one flesh” likely refers to more than just sexual intimacy within the marriage. It points to achieving emotional and spiritual unity as well.

Marriage certainly demands a sense of connectedness. Husbands and wives must be aware of each others needs and come to share each other dreams. Through common experiences and quality communication, partners reach common values.

However, far too often, couples damage their marriage by “going it alone.” Personal goals can create competition rather than camaraderie. Too much involvement in individual interests (hobbies, travels, etc.) sabotages the intent of the unity candle. Noted writer and counselor, Willard Harley warns that shared activities are mandatory in developing a lasting relationship. He reminds us that we “fell in love” spending time together, and we will likely “fall out of love” if we fail to stay connected.

Years ago on the Tonight Show, Johnny Carson interviewed an eight-year-old boy who was being honored for rescuing two friends from a coal mine in West Virginia. Johnny detected that the boy attended Sunday School, so he asked him

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what he was learning. The young fellow said that last week they had studied about Jesus turning water to wine at a wedding. Amidst the crowd’s laughter, Johnny asked him what he had learned from that story. Fidgeting for a moment, the boy raised his head and answered, “If you’re going to have a wedding, make sure you invite Jesus!”

In childlike honesty, millions of people heard the best marriage advice ever offered. How well have we followed it?

—Don Loftis

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### What Makes Your Child Happy?

from *AllProDad*

So you’re between the ages of 13 and 24. What makes you happy? A worried, weary parent might imagine the answer to sound something like this, “Sex, drugs, a little rock ‘n’ roll— Maybe some cash, or at least the car keys.” Turns out, the real answer is quite different. **Spending time with family was the top answer** to that open-ended question, according to an extensive survey conducted by *The Associated Press* and *MTV*. And even better, nearly three quarters of young people say their relationship with their parents makes them happy. So, the answer to the enigmatic question of **what makes your children happy? You do!**