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The Family Friend

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

February, 2010

The Pressure Families Feel from Sorrow

The family is a special place for love. That is how God designed it. And no distortion of God's plan for the family can replace the special love he intends us to enjoy in this life.

Which leads us to this grand truth: since the special family love is so powerful and so effective in achieving heaven's eternal purposes, it is little wonder that in survey after survey the death of a spouse or close family member ranks highest of all those events that create stress in our lives.

When the bonds of family love are broken by death's cold reality, the result can range from a strengthening of resolve to a bitter, endless depression.

Sandy and I have recently lost a close family member. Marcelle Lyons is the picture of a Christ-like woman. Married to her husband, Bob, for fifty-seven years, she embodied faith, hope, and love in all that I ever observed.

Bob and Marcelle have

been dedicated servants for decades—helping people, teaching people, and caring for people.

They loved to travel—meeting new friends and seeing new places. One summer shortly after Sandy and I had moved to California, they made a special effort to take a little “detour” to Stockton during one of their travels and surprise Sandy with a visit.

Marcelle suffered for several years with Alzheimer's, and we observed this terrible disease's progressive nature take its toll on this sweet, Christian woman.

During our visit in September (2009), it was especially noticeable. As we greeted Marcelle, I thought how terrified she appeared—not knowing who all these strangers in her house might be.

We enjoyed a meal together with many family members. Later, when several had departed, those who remained sat in her living room, and we worshipped in song.

To my surprise and delight, when the singing of those familiar hymns started, Marcelle's voice could be heard along with the others, song after song.

I reflected with Sandy later

that I would not be surprised at all if in heaven Marcelle remembers our singing together. Even in the depths of this debilitating disease, a spark in her spirit longed to worship her God.

We simply do not have the ability nor words to describe the degree our spirits are hampered by our feeble earthly dwellings. We are contaminated by personal sin and by a world baptized in rebellion. Our bodies are sick and tired and consumed with the present.

But it is a comfort that those, like Marcelle, who spend a lifetime exercising the “inner man” will shine as the morning sun when they reach their destination, “though seven deaths lay between.”

I have not shared this personal experience as a novel fascination. Bob now is mourning the loss of his bride. But as difficult as that may be, I can only think this pain would be magnified a hundred times if it were not for the blood-stained promise the Creator of heaven and earth has personally made to him and you and me: “Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the death of his saints” (Psalm 116:15).

Young people, as you plan your future and develop your families, realize this: who you

will be in eternity will only be a magnified extension of who **you are striving to be right now.**

Is it all about you? Then you have a miserable future in store. One day you will look into the mirror of your soul and ask. "Why have I wasted so much on so little?"

But if you, like my dear Aunt Marcelle, spend a lifetime serving your mate and your family, helping others, leading others toward an eternal destiny with our Lord, then you will truly be blessed—even when your faithful loved one departs—because you know:

There the Red Rose of Sharon

*Unfolds its heartsome bloom,
And fills the air of Heaven
With ravishing perfume:—
Oh! To behold it blossom,
While by its fragrance fann'd,
Where glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.**

We cannot avoid the hardships of our earthly passage. WE can, however, find comfort and solace in the promises of God and by making the most of the blessings and time God has granted us.

**Last Words.* Mrs. A.R. Cousin

—Jared Jackson

The T.C. Principle

"Well, if this is the way it is going to be, then we'll just get a divorce!" What a sad mistake! What sorry reasoning! Human—yes! Correct—No! The T.C. principle could prevent DIVISION—solve the DIVORCE problem, and in general, save humanity from a multitude of errors.

The T.C. principle is powerful. It brings patience and begets perseverance. It is the glue that keeps us going, the hope in the darkest hour.

You see, T.C. stands for two great words: "THINGS CHANGE." They could get worse, but then again, they could get better—but for better or worse—things will change. The only sure thing about this life is CHANGE.

Change is not the solution, but it is the battle in which the solution comes—"All things come to him who waiteth is not a true adage—but without time, the change that brings the solution has no chance at all.

Lower your expectations. It's alright! Don't give up your visions, your dreams. Just make room—give them time. We are not born full grown. We enter babyhood, the T.C. principle takes over. We leave babyhood for boyhood/girlhood. Then adolescence, then manhood/womanhood. Each change was based upon change. Time is important. So why stop it at any

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age, this marvelous power of T.C.?

When you get married, you simply repeat the baby—boy—adolescence—manhood stages. Lower your expectations of marriage and give you and your spouse time. Don't push the panic button—no bailouts—no quitters. "Stick with the one you're stuck with!" Give T.C. a chance.

The Bible says, "Now no chastening for the present time seems to be joyous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:11). The child, the baby, the immature, are all interested in words like "NOW" or "PRESENT" The T.C. principle deals in "AFTERWARDS." Grow up! Remember T.C.!

—Jack Exum, from **The Wisdom Box**

Random Thoughts On Happiness

- ◆ Happiness is a butterfly, which, when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you sit down quietly, may alight upon you.
- ◆ To be happy is not the purpose of our being, but to deserve happiness.
- ◆ Money can't buy happiness—but it helps you look for it in many more places.

—via **RSVP Newsletter**