



Volume 12, Number 3

The Family Friend

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

March, 2010

The Pressure Families Feel to Feel Good

By Jared Jackson

There is a gargantuan pressure in our society to feel good. And I'm not necessarily talking merely about sensuality. I'm talking about *feeling good*. But there is a Grand Canyon between feeling good and *being good*.

Feeling good is buying the kiddies' love with presents you really can't afford. Being good is exercising discipline over your mountain of debt because you know they don't really need more stuff and you don't have the money. And even if you did, your time and consistent, caring presence in their life is more important than the next iPod® gizmo that can hold seven gazillion rap songs.

The world's version of feeling good has ruined Tiger Woods and multitudes of less notable husbands. But being good is what makes women truly love and appreciate their spouses.

Feeling good might be getting your husband to dance like a marionette. Being good is respecting him as the leader of your home and honoring his

role—and yours.

Feeling good is like taking a walk through the Okefenokee Swamp—it's kind of fun, but you never know where the next step will take you. (*Okefenokee* was the Seminole word for "land of shifting earth.")

If you live your life anchored to the idea that feeling good comes first, soon your anchor won't be anchored at all and your family will become yet another wreck on the reef of pleasant feelings.

Feeling good distorts how you treat others, causing you to be so easily offended at your neighbor's miscues.

The idol of feeling good may enslave you to others—for fear you will not feel good about making them feel bad. Feeling good can be a vicious taskmaster.

Feeling good is all about the present, the feeling *right now*. Being good is about doing right things *now*, no matter the present feeling, so I can feel really good in the future. Oh, this principle is *soooooo* needed in families today.

Abraham was a *be gooder* instead of a *feel gooder*. In his sandals, I would have struggled when Jehovah commanded the

sacrifice of his son. But his action was based on confidence in what was right (obedience)—even if it meant giving up something so precious—and enduring a personal anguish right now.

Moses gave up feeling good in royal splendor to suffer with God's people. Why? Because he developed **conviction** about being good over feeling good.

And dare we speak of our Lord, "who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8). It was the **only** way to save you and me from an eternal pit of misery and despair.

Which is more important: feeling good or being good? Neither. Both. You see, it's not an either-or proposition. It's a now-or-then proposition. It's a how-and-why proposition.

Our Lord "endured the cross" for the "joy that was set before him." But that joy was obtained through a proper order, a proper means. And not by some shortcut devised by the devil.

The problem is this: we have long been trained at Satan's knee to feel good about all the wrong things, for all the wrong reasons.

My goal is to feel "on-top—of-the-mountain" good about my wife, my children, my church, my life, my service. But I can't reach that summit if I'm not willing to **endure** the climb.

There are things in our families and others we must endure: a bitter tongue, a thoughtless act, a broken attitude. And the answer is not to respond in kind, but to do good, knowing it will bring forth fruit in its due season.

Just start observing the people around you and ask this question: Is the way they are behaving about feeling good or being good? Then ask the same question of yourself.

It may feel good to chew out the "stupid" lady (who is having to work two jobs to support her "down and out" husband and four kids) because she forgot the special sauce on your jumbo taco meal. But as you boast about your triumph (over and over), you are slowly creating a cancer for yourself with an eternal bitter fruit.

Work on being good, doing good. Sacrifice feeling good now for feeling *great* later. Be willing to make a hard choice today and invest in your future.

Or ... will you sacrifice your future for a mess of pot-tage today?

A Tiger Woods World

"Startling"..... "alarming".... "cause for concern": those were some of the reactions of public health experts last year when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the results of the first national study of four common sexually transmitted diseases. The study found that 1 out of every 4 teenage girls in America has at least one STD, and 15% of those infected had multiple diseases.

The pandemic is especially prevalent in the African-American community: nearly half of all black teenage girls have at least one STD, compared to 20% of white teenagers.

And the long-term consequences of this pandemic will be tragic for some of these young ladies: the most common one (human papilloma virus) is a virus that can cause cervical cancer, while the second most common STD (chlamydia) can cause infertility.

When the figures are this high it indicates that something is clearly wrong on a cultural level. It is not just teens who are at risk, and it is not simply individuals who are infected: to put it bluntly, our society is sick.

When America's divorce rate is the highest in the world, and marriage rates have plunged 51% since 1970; when the National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity estimates that 18 million to 24 million Americans are sex addicts; when Nielsen Online reports that a quarter of employees use the Internet to visit porn sites

during the workday; when cohabitation has soared 16-fold from 1960; and when 40% of all births are now out-of-wedlock, the sexual sickness in American society is impossible to ignore.

The media have been obsessed with Tiger Woods since last November, and the golfer has reportedly checked into a rehab center for sex addiction. But while Woods admittedly demonstrated extraordinarily reckless behavior, we should not lose sight of the fact that he is a reflection of a much larger problem: a culture that has totally lost its moral bearings.

Simon Peter told the first century Christians, "*You have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do – living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you*" (1 Peter 4:3-4).

Our churches must continue to preach and teach, with both compassion and conviction, God's moral standards of holiness and purity (Hebrews 13:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). It is true that some will be offended, and many will ridicule them as being impossibly idealistic. The simple fact is, however, that the way of the world is not working. Our society is desperately sick, and it needs a medication much stronger than penicillin; it needs a strong dose of truth and righteousness! —**Dan Williams**