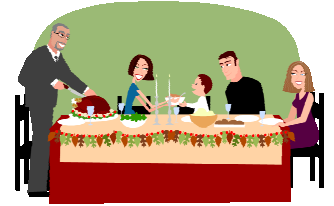


The Family Friend



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

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“Senior Moments”

I was attending a presentation on Seniors Ministry when the speaker briefly lost his place and apologized to the class by saying, “Pardon me – I’m having a senior moment.”

Pat Malone, a leader in the Seniors Ministry at the Pleasant Ridge church in Arlington, Texas, promptly interjected, “It is NOT a ‘senior moment’ – it is an ‘intellectual interruption’”. Pat said he first heard the phrase “intellectual interruption” used by a professor in her 30’s. The young woman explained that she preferred the phrase to describe those instances when she herself lost her train of thought, because all people, of all ages, have momentary lapses in focus.

I appreciated Pat’s good-natured clarification, as did the speaker, and the entire class gained a valuable lesson in the dangers of stereotyping. But I believe the phrase “senior moment” can be a useful one, if it is applied correctly. The Bible tells us that growing older is a blessing for the righteous

(Proverbs 16:31). If you are one of our older Christians, may I remind you of some worthwhile senior moments?

What about the beaming couple celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary? That is a moment only a senior can savor.

How about the day you held your first grandchild in your arms? Or your second? Or third? Surely that experience is one of the greatest blessings of growing older.

Speaking of grandchildren, what about the privilege of witnessing them make their own confession of faith and be baptized into Christ? Didn’t your heart burst with pride on that occasion?

Did you have mixed emotions when you reached the day you were finally able to retire, and you realized the weight and burdens of your job were now behind you? Knowing your time is now your own, to do with as you please – and as pleases God – can be an exhilarating, disorienting, but ultimately rich senior moment.

When the worship leader sings “Precious Memories,” many in the audience don’t

have a clue what that phrase implies, but *you* do, and you smile as the hymn causes those happy memories to come flooding back.

When a wise elder puts his arm around the shoulder of a beginning preacher and, drawing from the well of wisdom accumulated during a lifetime of Christian service, gives the young man some friendly, life-transforming advice, that surely qualifies as a senior moment.

What about the hours you and your spouse spend browsing through your family’s photo album? Or the first time one of your children insists on picking up the check at the restaurant? Or the day you finally paid off your mortgage?

These are just a few of the joyful experiences that only a senior can savor. May you be blessed with a long life and many wonderful “senior moments”!

-Dan Williams
Vice-President for Church Relations
Harding University
Searcy, Arkansas

Fidelity in Marriage

Our friend was a twenty-something young husband when World War II came along. He was drafted into the service and was asked to choose between the Army and the Navy. He flipped a coin and it came up Navy. In his youth he made a nominal yet sincere commitment to Christ, but his faith was not deeply anchored. However, he married a lovely woman with a deep and abiding faith. After their marriage he began to make progress in the Christian life, and then the war came along.

He knew that he would likely be separated from his wife a long time. He was aware of the fact that his faith had not been developed as much as it needed to be in order to face the life challenges that lay before him in wartime. He fully understood the kinds of temptations that would be placed before a young sailor on shore leave, but he was determined to remain faithful to his wife for the duration of the war. He believed that vows were sacred.

To prepare himself to grow in the faith and to be strengthened to fulfill his commitment to fidelity, he included two things in his belongings that he thought he would need if he had any chance of remaining faithful to the Lord and his beloved. He chose to pack a King James Version of the Bible and a one volume New Testament commentary. In the three years that followed he read them both over and over again. By keeping himself in touch with Scripture, he stayed close to God, and felt encouraged to hold on

to him commitments.

When he got to Proverbs, he ran across texts like these:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. - Proverbs 1:7

Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee. - Proverbs 2:11

My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. - Proverbs 5:1-5

For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. - Proverbs 6:26

In the New Testament, he was encouraged by verses like these:

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. - Romans 8:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. - 1 Corinthians 10:13

When the war was ended, and he set down his duffel bags to put his arms around his wife, he did so with the knowledge

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that he had been faithful to her. In the process he had learned something about the scriptures, and in the process of that he got to know God. Eventually he became a preacher of the gospel. Not surprisingly he was well known for his mastery of the book of Proverbs.

Truman Spring, Jr. offers this incredible post script to the story. "Dad and Mom met on 6/21/1939 in downtown Dallas (a block from my office now), and were married exactly six months later 12/21/1939. He and she walked in complete marital faithfulness (a subject which he and I talked about) for their 52+ years of marriage, ended by Mom's passing on 4/18/1992. I know that as a minister, there were women from time to time who wanted to 'lean on his shoulder,' but Dad resisted such invitations."

What a wonderful example this couple showed to others throughout their lives and a legacy of commitment and keeping ones vows in complete faithfulness in marriage and also as Christians. It seems that the reason this fidelity occurred goes back to the time, shortly after their marriage, when Truman left for the Navy. He was determined to stay faithful and prepared to do so by studying God's word. That discipline kept him true to his marriage vows and prepared him for a life in service to the Lord. That's not a bad way to get a start in Christian living and insure fidelity in a marriage. —Norman & Ann Bales, *All About Families*, July 22, 2010