

The most precious thing you can give your children

By Gary Andrews
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Over the past few weeks my wife has been going through boxes and boxes of what we have saved from when our four children were in school. She has neatly divided and marked the contents for each one of our children. We have anything from sports memorabilia, newspaper clippings and photos, to report cards, journals they wrote, stuffed animals, etc.

I remember a story I read about an elderly father that was doing the same thing we are. He came across his son's journal and remembered the journal he kept also. He opened up his journal to a certain date and it read, "Went fishing with my son today. Terrible day, didn't catch a fish."

He opened his son's journal to the same date and read one of the most shocking things he had ever read. His son had written in his journal, "Went fishing with my dad today. One of the best days of my life."

It is unique that two people can look at the contents of a day, after spending time with each

other, and see it totally different. One saw the day as a duty to fulfill and the other saw it as a time to spend with his dad. It is a sad day when we, as adults, look on the time we spend with our children and grandchildren as a duty to fulfill instead of viewing the great joy that they can provide for us and we can provide for them.

My wife and I made a promise to each other that when we were blessed with children that we would grow up with them. We would spend time with them and stay active in their lives. The Lord has tremendously blessed us and our children. Three out of the four are married and have families of their own. The fourth is a high school counselor and associates with teenage children every day.

Spending time with our children has been most rewarding. They continue to come home and we are invited to their homes. It is a sad day when parents are so involved with themselves, such as jobs, social life, etc., that they have little or no time for their own children. It's amazing how many nannies,

daycares, and others are raising children for families.

Most young marriages require two jobs to make ends meet. This is because the younger generation is always trying to have more than they really need or can afford. My wife was a stay at home mom and this was one of the best decisions we have ever made. She is a certified school teacher but stayed at home with our children until our youngest started school. She then went to work when they went to school and came home when they did.

It was a great day when our daughter announced that she would be staying home with her children. She quit teaching school when her first child was born. Time is the most precious item we can ever offer our children. Cherish every moment that you have with them because, and you can truly believe me on this one, time waits for no one and tomorrow they will leave you nest empty.

As my wife had compiled the items for each of our children, she came across a school assignment that my son had written. The assignment was to tell about his best friend. When she showed it to me big old tears came into my eyes as I read,

"Let me tell you about my dad, my best friend." Memories such as these can never be lost or replaced.

It's my wish that all parents could spend more time with their children. Even with all the gifts we offer them and big ticketed items we buy for them, nothing can replace the love or the time we can give them.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the children you have blessed me with. Be with them each and every day and lead them on the path you would have them go. I pray that our parents of today will give more time to their children and raise them to know you and your saving grace. Amen.

Suggested daily Bible reading: Sunday - Mark 10:13-16;

Monday - 2 Samuel 7:1-17; Tuesday - Ecclesiastes 6:1-6; Wednesday - Matthew 18:1-6; Thursday - Ephesians 6:1-4; Friday - Titus 1:6; Saturday - 2 Chronicles 24:1-2.

Gary Andrews is the author of Encouraging Words: 30-days in God's Word. To obtain a copy go to his website www.gadevotionals.com.



The executive board of Keep Holmes County Beautiful, an affiliate of Keep Mississippi Beautiful, met on Wednesday, March 21 at Gladys' Restaurant in Lexington. Members discussed the local chapter's structuring, new membership goals and other planning efforts. Executive Director Jim Thompson (pictured second from right) said the board will look to review designated areas for the "trashiest spots in the county." The group is aimed at litter prevention, recycling and beautification. The next scheduled board meeting is April 11. To participate or for more information call the Holmes County Chamber of Commerce at 662-834-3372.

(Photo by Matthew Breazeale)

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