



Prayer Tip: Build Your Foundation Step By Step.

(From: **The All-Time 10 Best Tips on Prayer** by Jim Stephens, www.themarriagelibrary.com/Resources/10-Tips-Prayer.pdf)

Have patience – Part 2.

One time I was asked to give a talk on the subject of growing up. I was frustrated myself at the time with the slowness of my own spiritual growth and I decided to pray strongly to understand the subject. I wanted to know for myself as much as I wanted to be able to give a good answer to the listeners.

The result was a great (and practical) answer from God for me. I already believed that God created all things to grow over time and that this was GOOD. But I couldn't understand why things couldn't grow faster, even as fast as I wanted them to.

Here's a paraphrase of the thoughts that answered my prayers, which I believe came from God.

"Suppose when I created everything, I made it so that a result would instantaneously follow the cause without any time in between for growing. Then what would the world be like? That would mean that if a husband and wife made love at night and conceived a child, then poof, the very next day the child would be born. How would that be?"

"Would that be the best way for creating love and being able to experience love? I don't think you'd like it."

"Love is actually created only by effort through a give and take relationship over time. All the parts are necessary. Parents who had a child instantly would not be prepared to love that child. In fact, the whole world would be chaos and confusion because everything in your environment would be totally changed every new day."

I was more than satisfied and have never forgotten God's explanation. If you think about it this way, then time is actually an expression of love also.

If there were no growing period, then when we have children, they would go from babies to 5 years old instantaneously. Or become teenagers over night. I wouldn't like that. Life and love are comprised by the richness of the precious memories we have shared with the ones we love.

As I grow in love (and wisdom), I've also learned that patience is needed to experience love. Life itself is eternal and therefore it is an eternal process that will always include growing and learning. There is never an end..



Think As a Team To Decrease Conflict

By Gary Chapman

Who cleans the toilet at your house? Has it always been true?

If you are the one who cleans, are you happy with this arrangement?

Who takes care of what in your marriage?

This is the question that often leads to conflict. Many couples do not agree on these issues before marriage and wake up six weeks into the marriage to discover that no one is cleaning the toilet.

If this is a trouble spot for you, let me encourage you to take a small action.

Make a list of all the things that must be done on a regular basis. Put your initials beside the ones that you think are your responsibilities. Ask your spouse to do the same. Then negotiate your differences.

Try it for six weeks and see how it works. If necessary, re-negotiate.

Remember, you are a team.

Article written by Dr. Gary Chapman. Based on the book, **The Marriage You've Always Wanted** by Dr. Gary Chapman. Published by Moody Publishing, copyright 2009.

Parenting Tip

(Here is a second article that I think is very profound for raising your children. Check it out. Jim Stephens)

Five Signs of a Nightmare Sports Parent

Written by: Steve Henson

Nearly 75 percent of kids who play organized sports quit by age 13. Some find that their skill level hits a plateau and the game is no longer fun. Others simply discover other interests. But too many promising young athletes turn away from sports because their parents become insufferable.

Even professional athletes can behave inappropriately when it comes to their children. David Beckham was recently ejected from a youth soccer field for questioning an official. New Orleans radio host Bobby Hebert, a former NFL quarterback, publicly dressed down LSU football coach Les Miles after Alabama defeated LSU in the BCS title game last month. Hebert was hardly unbiased: His son had recently lost his starting position at LSU.

Mom or dad, so loving and rational at home, can transform into an ogre at a game. A lot of kids internally reach the conclusion that if they quit the sport, maybe they'll get their dad or mom back.

As a sports parent, this is what you don't want to become. This is what you want to avoid:

• **Overemphasizing sports at the expense of sportsmanship:** The

best athletes keep their emotions in check and perform at an even keel, win or lose. Parents demonstrative in showing displeasure during a contest are sending the wrong message. Encouragement is crucial -- especially when things aren't going well on the field.

• **Having different goals than your child:** Brown and Miller suggest jotting down a list of what you want for your child during their sport season. Your son or daughter can do the same. Vastly different lists are a red flag. Kids generally want to have fun, enjoy time with their friends, improve their skills and win. Parents who write down "getting a scholarship" or "making the All-Star team" probably need to adjust their goals. "Athletes say their parents believe their role on the team is larger than what the athlete knows it to be," Miller says.

• **Treating your child differently after a loss than a win:** Almost all parents love their children the same regardless of the outcome of a game. Yet often their behavior conveys something else. "Many young athletes indicate that conversations with their parents after a game somehow make them feel as if their value as a person was tied to playing time or winning," Brown says.

• **Undermining the coach:** Young athletes need a single instructional voice during games. That voice has to be the coach. Kids who listen to their parents yelling instruction from the stands or even glancing at their parents for approval from the field are distracted and can't perform at a peak level. Second-guessing the coach on the ride home is just as insidious.

• **Living your own athletic dream through your child:** A sure sign is the parent taking credit when the child has done well. "We worked on that shot for weeks in the driveway," or "You did it just like I showed you" Another symptom is when the outcome of a game means more to a parent than to the child. If you as a parent are still depressed by a loss when the child is already off playing with friends, remind yourself that it's not your career and you have zero control over the outcome.

Five Signs of an Ideal Sports Parent

Let's hear it for the parents who do it right. In many respects, Brown and Miller say, it's easier to be an ideal sports parent than a nightmare. "It takes less effort," Miller says. "Sit back and enjoy." Here's what to do:

• **Cheer everybody on the team, not just your child:** Parents should attend as many games as possible and be supportive, yet allow young athletes to find their own solutions. Don't feel the need to come to their rescue at every crisis. Continue to make positive comments even when the team is struggling.

• **Model appropriate behavior:** Contrary to the old saying, children do as you do, not as you say. When a parent projects poise, control and confidence, the young athlete is likely to do the same. And when a parent doesn't dwell on a tough loss, the young athlete will be enormously appreciative.

• **Know what is suitable to discuss with the coach:** The mental and

physical treatment of your child is absolutely appropriate. So is seeking advice on ways to help your child improve. And if you are concerned about your child's behavior in the team setting, bring that up with the coach. Taboo topics: Playing time, team strategy, and discussing team members other than your child.

• **Know your role:** Everyone at a game is either a player, a coach, an official or a spectator. "It's wise to choose only one of those roles at a time," Brown says. "Some adults have the false impression that by being in a crowd, they become anonymous. People behaving poorly cannot hide." Here's a clue: If your child seems embarrassed by you, clean up your act.

• **Be a good listener and a great encourager:** When your child is ready to talk about a game or has a question about the sport, be all ears. Then provide answers while being mindful of avoiding becoming a nightmare sports parent. Above all, be positive. Be your child's biggest fan. "Good athletes learn better when they seek their own answers," Brown says.

And, of course, don't be sparing with those magic words: "I love watching you play."

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