

## Spiritual Tip

### It's Never Too Late to Start on Your Life Calling

By Rick Warren

If you're going to follow God's calling on your life, you've got to believe it's never, never too late.

After Joshua sent the 12 spies into the Promised Land, they returned and reported that the land was too hard a place for God's people to settle. Because of their unbelief, God had a nation wander around in the desert for another 40 years, and an entire generation died because they did not believe in God's promises. But Caleb and Joshua believed, and they got to live.

When the Israelites returned to the Promised Land 40 years later, Caleb was 85 years old and living his second chance. He said, "Now here I am, eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out, and I am just as ready to fight now as I was then. So give me the mountain country the LORD promised me that day long ago" (Joshua 14:10b-12a NCV).

"Give me the mountain country." I love that! The land Caleb wanted was full of giants and cities fortified with great walls. He was saying to God, "Give me the biggest assignment. Give me the hardest city. Give me the place with the biggest giants. Give me the mountain regions. I don't want some easy place. I know I'm 85 years old, but I've still got it in me to do great things for you."

When I went to the store recently to buy a birthday card for my granddaughter, I noticed something I'd never seen before in the greeting card section. They now have an entire section that offers birthday cards for the 80th, 85th, 90th, 95th, and even 100th birthday! Growing up, I didn't see those kinds of cards, because everybody lives longer now. When my dad was born, the average age of an American man was 76. That life expectation has gone up at least 12 years in his lifetime.

Some of you think it's time to hang it up. I'm telling you it's time to get it down and dust it off! Do you think God's going to let you live 30 more years just to play golf?

Here's a word that's not in the Bible: retirement. You may stop working, but you keep serving the Lord. You have more wisdom and experience now, and God is not going to waste that.

At the age of 85, Caleb began the greatest mission of his life. Moses was 80 when God called him to set God's people free. Abraham was 79 when he received God's call.

If you are in the Caleb generation, you have to believe that it's never too late to start on your life calling. The best is yet to come!

## Marriage Tip

### Ten Secrets to a Successful Marriage

By Mitch Temple

Here are 10 principles that will help you create and maintain a successful marriage. Successful couples are savvy. They read books, attend seminars, browse Web articles and observe other successful couples. However, successful couples will tell you that they also learn by experience – trial and error.

Here are 10 principles of success I have learned from working with and observing hundreds of couples:

- 1. Happiness is NOT the most important thing.** Everyone wants to be happy, but happiness will come and go. Successful couples learn to intentionally do things that will bring happiness back when life pulls it away.
- 2. Couples discover the value in just showing up.** When things get tough and couples don't know what to do, they need to hang in there and be there for their spouse. Time has a way of helping couples work things out by providing opportunities to reduce stress and overcome challenges.
- 3. If you do what you always do, you will get same result.** Wise couples have learned that you have to approach problems differently to get different results. Often, minor changes in approach, attitude and actions make the biggest difference in marriage.
- 4. Your attitude does matter.** Changing behavior is important, but so is changing attitudes. Bad attitudes often drive bad feelings and actions.
- 5. Change your mind, change your marriage.** How couples think and what they believe about their spouse affects how they perceive the other. What they expect and how they treat their spouse matters greatly.
- 6. The grass is greenest where you water it.** Successful couples have learned to resist the grass is greener myth – i.e. someone else will make me happy. They have learned to put their energy into making themselves and their marriage better.
- 7. You can change your marriage by changing yourself.** Veteran couples have learned that trying to change their spouse is like trying to push a rope – almost impossible. Often, the only person we can change in our marriage is ourselves.
- 8. Love is a verb, not just a feeling.** Everyday life wears away the "feel good side of marriage." Feelings, like happiness, will fluctuate. But, real love is based on a couple's vows of commitment: "For better or for worse" – when it feels good and when it doesn't.
- 9. Marriage is often about fighting the battle between your ears.** Successful couples have learned to resist holding grudges, bringing up the past and remembering that they married an imperfect person – and so did their spouse.
- 10. A crisis doesn't mean the marriage is over.** Crises are like storms: loud, scary and dangerous. But to get through a storm you have to keep driving. A crisis can be a new beginning. It's out of pain that great people and marriages are produced.

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# Parenting Tip

## 7 Parenting Behaviors That Keep Children From Growing Into Leaders – Part 4 of 4

By Kathy Caprino

(Continued from Part 3 last week)

This information is from leadership expert Dr. Tim Elmore who explains how we as parents are failing our children today — coddling and crippling them — and keeping them from becoming the leaders they are destined to be.

***Why do parents engage in these behaviors (what are they afraid of if they don't)? Do these behaviors come from fear or from poor understanding of what strong parenting (with good boundaries) is?***

**Tim Elmore:** “I think both fear and lack of understanding play a role here, but it leads with the fact that each generation of parents is usually compensating for something the previous

generation did. The primary adults in kids’ lives today have focused on **now** rather than **later**. It’s about their happiness today not their readiness tomorrow. I suspect it’s a reaction.

Many parents today had Moms and Dads who were all about getting ready for tomorrow: saving money, not spending it, and getting ready for retirement. In response, many of us bought into the message: embrace the moment. You deserve it. Enjoy today. And we did.

For many, it resulted in credit card debt and the inability to delay gratification. This may be the crux of our challenge. The truth is, parents who are able to focus on tomorrow, not just today, produce better results.”

***How can parents move away from these negative behaviors (without having to hire a family therapist to help)?***

**Tim Elmore:** “It’s important for parents to become exceedingly self-aware of their words and actions when

interacting with their children, or with others when their children are nearby. Care enough to train them, not merely treat them to a good life. Coach them, more than coddle. “

**Here’s a start:**

1. Talk over the issues you wish you would’ve known about adulthood.
2. Allow them to attempt things that stretch them and even let them fail.
3. Discuss future consequences if they fail to master certain disciplines.
4. Aid them in matching their strengths to real-world problems.
5. Furnish projects that require patience, so they learn to delay gratification.
6. Teach them that life is about choices and trade-offs; they can’t do everything.
7. Initiate (or simulate) adult tasks like paying bills or making business deals.
8. Introduce them to potential mentors from your network.

9. Help them envision a fulfilling future, and then discuss the steps to get there.
10. Celebrate progress they make toward autonomy and responsibility.

***Question for readers: How are you parenting your children? Are you sacrificing their long-term growth for short-term comfort?***

*(For more about developing our children’s leadership capabilities, visit Tim Elmore and Growing Leaders at [www.growingleaders.com](http://www.growingleaders.com) and follow @GrowingLeaders and @TimElmore on Twitter.)*

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