

Jesus' Love for the Homeless—What is the goal of parenting?

Interview: Pastor Masayoshi Yamauchi (Okinawa Bethany Church/NPO Promise keepers)



We planted this church with the vision to serve the poor, the troubled, and the suffering.

Soon we had a person with mental problems living in our church. Within a

year, we had many homeless people come and stay at our church, too. What we discovered is that most of the homeless were former prison inmates whom no one would hire, so they had to live on the streets...

Most of them grew up in poor or dysfunctional families and some with no parents. One man was told by his case worker that as a baby he was found in a coin locker. Knowing that they are not loved nor wanted by their parents causes these men to lose motivation for living and to succeed. This is why we worked very hard to express love so they'll know they are deeply loved by God.



Becoming Parents that Children Can Look Up To

Interview: Mr. Daisuke Matsuo, Mr. Hikaru Miyaji, Mr. Shinya Nagao

These three men from Okinawa Bethany Church share how while growing up they got into trouble and went to prison. However, their lives changed when they met Jesus, and now two of them have enrolled in a seminary. Through their stories we



learn that the way parents treat their children truly impacts their future. Parents need to be the people that they can respect and be an example as followers of Christ.

Craft Time With Kids! Fish Crafts

by Haruka Otsuka



In summer time, we have more time for playing in water. Fish appears in many places in the Bible, such as the creation story, Jonah, and Jesus feeding the 5,000. Here we have three craft ideas that can go with those fish stories.

Your children will enjoy making them along with the story you'll tell. Enrich your devotion time with those fish!

Miracle fish:

Fill Tare-bin (fish shaped soy source container for Obento) with glitter glue or some drop of water with polymer beads. You can buy polymer beads at the 100 yen shop in the gardening section. Some are dry and small, other are already soaked in water and big. Use dry ones to fill the fish.

You can substitute this with other floating materials if you like. Just fill your fish with it and enjoy how they float in the water. Use a screw to secure the top instead of using the original lid of the Tare-bin. Fill a pet bottle with polymer beads and water and put the fish in. Then enjoy fishing with magnets!



Parenting for Beginners No.5

by Jon Benedict

Q. My husband loves his older son and our daughter but has a hard time handling our second born son. It seems as if he doesn't like him. What shall I do?



A. I want to encourage you that this sort of problem of clashing of personalities in the home is not unusual. We find favoritism and friction even in the Bible.

Sometimes the problem may stem from insecurity on the part of the father who doesn't want to lose face by having a rebellious son. The father needs to know that it is love and affirmation, not control and criticism that will win the heart of the child. And the father must understand that he needs to loosen his grip on the son give reasonable freedom so the son can to make his own decisions and grow in character.

Another reason for the friction may be that the father and son both share the same character flaw or weakness. This is a humbling experience, to say the least, but is a good opportunity for the father to mature and not worry about the speck in his son's eye but instead work on the beam in his own eye (Matthew 7:3).

A parent does not have to "like" the child, but he should always love him. What I mean is, we may not have a natural liking for the child because we are so different or too similar, but in spite of the aversion, we as parents must intentionally reach out and love the child like God loves us sinners.

I Corinthian 13: 4-8 is a good place to start for how we can love the child who may be "hard to like".

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger..." Eph. 6:4



Ask Pastor Hori

Q. Recently my non-Christian neighbor in his 70's lost his wife and is very lonely. This loss has been very hard on him and I heard him say that he has lost his interest in living. What can I do to encourage him?



A. There is no one answer to this problem since it depends on the person and how each has led his/her life up to this point. However, I can give some suggestions on how we can show compassion and care for those who have lost their loved ones.

First, sympathize with the deep sense of loss. It is ironic, but the surviving spouse's depth of sorrow will correspond to the depth of love he/she had for the one who died. So the more they loved, the more they will grieve the loss! When the intimate partner dies, they may lose their interest in living and the ability to take care of themselves. Please keep this mind as you encounter grieving people so that you do not over react.

Second, keep connected with that person. You do not have to be around him all the time, but make sure to express to him that you care. The best role model for us is in the Bible, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you (Hebrews 13:5 NIV)." This is the promise given us from God, and so we too can come along side the surviving spouse and walk the path with him.

Personally, I have no idea how I could survive if I were to lose my wife, but I know that God will always be there with me.

