

Patrick Morley: Christians Should Never 'Normalize' Any Sin

It's important for every men's leader to have a thought-through position on same-sex marriage that's based on Paul's principle of bringing people to spiritual maturity by "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). Here are thoughts I posted on Facebook last week during the Supreme Court deliberations on same sex marriage:

I am a recovered homophobic. I say "recovered" rather than "recovering" because I am long since over it. Here's how it happened. When I went into ministry I started meeting men with same-sex attraction—not a lot, but enough. Here's the deal. Every man with a same-sex attraction that I've actually gotten to know is someone I really, really like as a person. I can't say the same for every adulterer, manipulative addict, and prideful person I've gotten to know.

So why not just endorse same-sex marriage? Because of the classic Christian principle of "hate the sin, love the sinner." We can and should love every person with the love of Christ, but without condoning their sin—whether that's adultery, pride, promiscuity, pornography, or homosexual behavior.

Sin is sin. Christians should never "normalize" any sin. To say it's okay to engage in homosexual behavior because of same-sex attraction would be like saying it's okay to commit adultery because of opposite-sex attraction. That makes no sense.

But people are people. Christians should also never "demonize" any person because they have a propensity to sin—whether to commit adultery, cheat on taxes, have sex outside of marriage,

or engage in homosexual behavior. That makes no sense either.

All of us sin every day. We all need the love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness of Jesus every day. Is there anyone among us so dull that at the end of any given day you would actually want what you deserve?

Let's face it. If Jesus didn't love sinners, he wouldn't love anyone at all. So let's be uncompromising about the truth, but humble how we use it.

People made comments, and here are three exchanges that I think reflect the kinds of things you may hear also:

Marie B Corn: If homosexuals (or adulterers) whom one really likes as a person claim to be a Christian, should Christians fellowship with them (1 Cor.5:1-5)?

Every Christian experiences sexual attraction to other people. For most it's the opposite sex. But some Christians experience same-sex attraction. The issue in both cases is what you do about it. The great Henry Nouwen, for example, struggled with same-sex attraction for his entire life, but he was celibate. Most red-blooded males struggle with opposite attraction for their entire lives, but don't act on it. But in either case, when they do, yes, they need to be held accountable.

The purpose of withholding fellowship, however, is always restoration. The 1 Corinthians 5 passage should be read in conjunction with 2 Corinthians 2:5-8, which deals with the restoration of that same sinner. However, when the person is a family member, I think it is a mistake to withhold relationship.

Dlakudze Sizo Dlaks: I think u are confused & u want to confuse athaz!! Why do u want us to like homosexuals? They r an abomination & a curse to this world!!

Diakudze, I would appeal to the following two teachings of

Jesus: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:43-45). "But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?' Jesus answered them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'" (Luke 5:30-32).

Paul Wilson: One problem: If same gender attraction is not a matter of choice, is it a sin?

Paul, same-sex attraction by itself is a temptation, not a sin. It's no different than opposite-sex attraction to your neighbor's wife. It's what one does with the temptation. The Bible draws a distinction between temptation and sin. Temptation can and should be resisted (See 1 Corinthians 10:13). Sin should be confessed and behavior adjusted (See 1 John 1:9).

Pat Morley is the Founder and CEO of Man in the Mirror. After building one of Florida's 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded Man in the Mirror, a non-profit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the bestselling author of The Man in the Mirror, No Man Left Behind, Dad in the Mirror, and A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines.

Despite the Arguments, the

Resurrection Happened

In Israel, Easter Sunday was just another workday. If not for Facebook, I would not even know about it.

Of course, we still celebrated Passover here, and the first believers, even the gentiles, used Passover to commemorate the Resurrection. In 325 CE Constantine, the first 'Christian' Roman emperor put an end to this practice.

"And truly, in the first place, it seems to everyone a most unworthy thing that we should follow the customs of the Jews in the celebration of this most holy solemnity, who, polluted wretches! having stained their hands with a nefarious crime, are justly blinded in their minds. It is fit, therefore, that rejecting the practice of this people, we should perpetuate to all future ages the celebration of this rite, in a more legitimate order, which we have kept from the first day of our "Lord's" passion even to the present times. Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews." (Constantine, the supposed Christian Emperor [Council of Nicea, pg. 52.])

However, without getting into an argument over the origins of Easter, I do love the idea of a special day each year to focus on one of the greatest miracles in history. Paul teaches that *the Resurrection* is a crucial tenet of our faith.

"If Messiah has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Messiah from the dead." (1 Corinthians 15:14-15)

Not only is our faith in vain, but also the original disciples were all charlatans. Either He appeared to them or He didn't. And if He didn't, what would be their motivation to leave everything and preach the gospel?

It is not like they were getting rich off the gospel (like some today)—they all die a martyrs' death (except John who survived being boiled in oil)! Remember, after his death, they were not devising schemes on how to keep this thing going—they were hopeless and dejected.

Paul also established the fact that Yeshua was seen by many people after His resurrection.

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to [Peter], and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born." (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)

Imagine that—while Paul was writing his letters, nearly 500 people who had witnessed the resurrected Messiah were still alive! It is an historic fact that He was seen. The skeptic has several theories:

1. **He wasn't really dead.** Okay, let's consider this. He is nailed to a cross, with spikes in His wrists and feet. He faints from pain. They assume He is dead and a soldier even stabs Him with a spear, as blood and water flowed (by the way, proving He was dead). Being flogged earlier in the day, His back was raw flesh and the pain was just too much, so He passes out. People assume He is dead, but no one checks. He is then placed in a tomb for three days. The tomb is sealed and guarded. While He is in this tomb, instead of succumbing to His wounds, He wakes up. He is in unbelievable pain (having been flogged and crucified). But in just a couple days, without food, water or medicine, He recovers. Oh ... and

then he pushes the stone away and fights off the Roman guards. If that is true, then that is even more impressive than the Resurrection!

2. **His disciples stole the body.** This one is so good that the chief priests immediately thought of this and offered large sums of cash to the guards to tell everyone that his followers stole His corpse. Here is the problem. And let me say it again, the same disciples who stole His body all died as martyrs—for *something they knew was a lie*. Peter was crucified upside down. John was boiled in oil. It is highly unlikely that these men would have suffered as they did for a lie.
3. **Someone impersonated Yeshua.** Do I really have to answer that? My wife and her sister look a lot alike. In fact, there have been times over the years when I walked into a room and briefly have mistaken her for Elana. However, never has that lasted for more than a few seconds. The disciples spent three years following Yeshua. And then some impersonator fools over 500 witnesses for forty days that he is Yeshua. Come on, people!

And according to these deceived disciples, this impersonator can appear and disappear at will (as he appeared to them in a locked room), has holes in his hands and a wound on his side and ascended into heaven. This guy was good! So good that Thomas cries out to him after seeing his wound, “My Lord and my God!”

No, my friends, Yeshua rose from the dead. Death could not keep Him. Compelled by compassion, He became our Passover Lamb.

Through Him we have eternal life. His blood is on the doorpost of our hearts and the angel of death cannot touch us. Thanks be to God for sending His Son, Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel and the nations.

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Harvard Links 180,000 Deaths to Sugary Drinks

Harvard researchers have found a link between sugary drinks and 180,000 deaths every year from obesity-related diseases.

The new study, presented at the American Heart Association conference recently, also tied the drinks to 25,000 deaths in the United States, which ranks third worldwide to deaths linked to sugary drinks.

The study supports other recent studies that suggest sugar-sweetened drinks are hazardous to public health.

The American Beverage Association criticized the study, calling it more about sensationalism than science.

The association said it doesn't prove that drinking sugary beverages causes chronic disease like diabetes, heart disease, or cancer.

For the original article, visit [.](#)

The Three Things Men Want

Manhood is more than not being a girl. After four decades of helping men think more deeply about Christ and life, I find men basically want three main things ...

- **A Cause:** *Something we can give our lives to—a mission.* This is the need to be significant, to make a difference, that our lives will count, that it will matter we lived.
- **A Companion:** *Someone to share it with.* This is the need to love and be loved, to be part of a community, to find acceptance, to have healthy relationships. By nature men want a woman to love, protect, and provide for—we want someone to share our lives with.
- **A Conviction:** *A system, narrative, story, or worldview that offers a reasonable explanation for why 1 and 2 are so difficult.* Life is difficult and, for sanity's sake, we each need a plausible explanation of how the bits and pieces of life all fit together.

There's certainly a lot more to being a man, but you can use these three as starting points with those in your ministry to men's group.

Form your men into small groups and study *Man Alive* to help your men satisfy these primal, God-given desires.

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Hate Religion, But Love Passover

Back when I was a kid, growing up in a Jewish family in the 1980s, Passover was a really unique time of the year. Even though I didn't grow up in a "religious" family, we were a family that was very proud of our Judaism, and we loved celebrating all the holidays. That meant, for one week each year, we didn't eat bread. Instead, we ate matzah or unleavened bread.

The whole point of eating matzah, is to fulfill the commandment of God to remember the miracle He did for the Jewish people in freeing them from slavery in Egypt. When the Pharaoh finally relented, and "let our people go," the Jews had to hurry out of Egypt and didn't even have time to let the bread they were baking rise. Eating the flat, hard, tasteless matzah once a year gives us a glimpse of what that fateful journey must have been like for our ancestors.

Eating matzah for a week caused our family to have to get creative. We would make matzah pizza (matzoh with tomato sauce and cheese on top), fried matzah (which is just french toast, but using matzah instead of bread), and, of course, matzah sandwiches.

But nowadays, there's very little sacrifice involved in celebrating Passover. Modern times have led to a modern Passover. Here are some examples:

Passover in Israel is a multi-million dollar industry. Companies bend over backwards to alter their products just enough, to get the stamp of approval from some bureaucratic rabbinical institution that hands out "Kosher For Passover"

certificates.

There are Kosher for Passover cereals, cookies, cakes and even, yes, Kosher for Passover bread! Bread? Doesn't that defeat the entire purpose of this special time of remembrance?

Wednesday I went to one of my favorite cafes. I was lamenting the fact that they wouldn't have my favorite breakfast treat, which is called "bourekas," a flaky, doughy, pastry filled with cheese or potato or mushrooms. Obviously, this is a no-no for Passover, so I knew it would be a week before I could indulge again.

I was prepared to just have coffee, but when I arrived, I was shocked to see the pastry display area was filled with delicious looking treats! "What is that?" I inquired. "Those are kosher for Passover bourekas and strudels," I was told. Well, I never! I ordered one of each, sat down to taste and was blown away. They were almost even more delicious than the "non-kosher" for Passover versions.

But that's when it hit me. This makes no sense whatsoever. The point of Passover isn't to simply remove a few ingredients so it passes some rabbi's inspection. The point is to feel the pain of our forefathers, to go without, to fast in a way, and thus empathize with the struggle of those who went before me.

They had to rush out of Egypt and couldn't wait for their bread to rise! The pastries I ate yesterday took time to cook and bake. thus defeating the very purpose of this annual memorial.

The final straw for me was an article I read, saying some rabbi had declared that cigarettes are now kosher for Passover. Cigarettes? Seriously?

First of all, cigarettes don't have leaven in them, so why they're even part of the Passover discussion is beyond me (by the way Doritos, potato chips and the thing of cinnamon I

bought yesterday also had 'kosher' stamps on them). Again, it's just another way for so-called rabbis to make money.

But why would a supposed 'man of God' even want to encourage people to smoke during this holy festival? Wouldn't someone who really cares about people, if asked, tell his parishioners not to smoke this time of year ... or ever, for that matter!

And thus we get to the very heart of why I hate religion. It's the same reason Yeshua hated religion. People turned His house of prayer into a marketplace of thieves.

For me Judaism was fun while growing up in America. Judaism was alive! I loved going to my synagogue. I loved taking part in activities there. I loved learning about Judaism and about God. It gave me an incredible foundation of faith.

But the sad reality is, most Israelis don't have that love for being Jewish. To them, it's not about God; it's about politics. Judaism is about a country. It's about serving in the army. It's about flying a blue and white flag. But it has nothing to do with God.

God belongs to those guys in the black hats and the black jackets and the long beards. They got the monopoly on God. and they are not my friend. They don't work. They don't serve in the army. They study in their schools all day, and live off of my taxes.

They're the people I have to hire to marry me, sitting through their lectures about what it means to be a Jewish husband or Jewish wife ... their customs which I don't agree with, but I have no choice but to listen to, because the Israeli government has given them control over weddings in our country.

And the same is true for when I have a son and want him to be circumcised. The same is true for when my parents die and I need to arrange their funeral and burial. I have to jump

through religious hoops with rabbis I know nothing about and who know nothing about me. They're just a government institution like the place where I go to get my driver's license.

The very concept of 'Jewish atheism' was introduced to me by Israelis. They are Jewish by birth, but they want nothing to do with God.

That broke my heart.

I never grew up thinking all that much about God. I usually only prayed when I had a test at school or a girl I wanted to like me.

But, growing up in my synagogue, going to Hebrew school and Purim carnivals and Simcha Torah parties and Tu b'shvat seders ... I was falling in love with Judaism and with God, without even realizing it.

God's existence, God as someone 'good' was never a question for me. It was just a given.

But that's not the case here in Israel. God is just a bureaucrat. Just another line I need to wait in. And that is heartbreaking.

So, as you celebrate Passover this year, do me a favor and say a special prayer for the Israeli people—especially now that we have a new government in place, without the ultra-orthodox controlling any government agencies for the first time in years. Let's pray that this truly would be the dawning of a new day in Israel—a day where God is our love and our faith ... not a guy who decides if my morning muffin is kosher for Passover.

Our ancestors have been freed from the bondage of Egyptian slavery thousands of years ago, but today we need freedom from rabbinical religion.

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Warriors Please God, Not Posers

Go to any fitness center and you will see the poser—the guy who can't walk by a mirror without flexing his “guns.” He grunts loud when lifting, then dramatically drops the weights to the floor.

He waddles back and forth to the water fountain convinced everyone in the room is impressed with his muscles. Yet all this guy does is train. He's not training for a purpose. He's not conditioning himself for longevity. He's not disciplining his body for a determined outcome. He wants to *look* like he could do something.

In a past season of *Survivor*, one contestant was ripped in muscle. He was a true physical specimen. It looked as if no one on the island had a chance to compete with him. That was until one of the challenges. A petite young lady out paced him, was more aggressive, more flexible, and more physically cunning. He dropped out of the challenge exhausted and finally dropped out of *Survivor*.

Unfortunately, there are a lot of posers in life. Men who strut and pose through life thinking their look alone will earn a place in the victor's circle. They soon discover that's not how life works. Life, business, family, even our spiritual walk is a challenge. If we're going to win, we need to be conditioned for it. We need to be strong.

Let me give you an example. In recent years the economy has been receding. This recession has wreaked havoc on a lot of men. Following the irrational economic exuberance of the 90's and early 2000's, many have found these last few years to be discouraging, draining, and disheartening. Yet this is the time to step up. To face the challenge head on. We don't need to shrink back and quit. We can't waste our time reflecting on the 'good ol' days.' Nostalgia is an obsession for an unattainable past. We can't go back. We need to press forward.

One of the greatest challenges we have when faced with financial shrinkage is to overcome the tendency to withdraw and hide out. Don't allow yourself to dig a hole and climb in. Don't succumb to the pressure. You can't afford to go into seclusion.

In biblical times, a recession was called a famine because the economy primarily relied upon seasonal crops. If weather conditions were not favorable the crops would not yield its harvest leading to an economic collapse. Isaac, the son of Abraham, experienced a terrible famine. The wisdom of the day was to relocate to Egypt where there was plenty of food. Yet, God spoke to Isaac specifically to not go to Egypt but to plant crops instead.

Rather than withdrawing and holding on, trusting in false hope that things would simply change, Isaac planted seed in dry ground. He reaped a hundred fold return that year!

It may not make sense to the crowd, but when God gives you specific instruction concerning your business, your finances or your family's well being, go for it. Move ahead.

The lesson here is this: You're not conditioning yourself just to look good. You're preparing for the challenge. You are strengthening yourself so when crisis occurs—and it will—you are prepared.

One last warning—when facing challenges don't attempt to draw

your strength from your wife and kids. It's not their job to strengthen you. Go to God and let Him strengthen you so that you can turn to your family and say, "It's ok, we're going to get through this. Follow me. We'll make it."

Don't shrink back in times of trouble. Be a man and be prepared.

*For the original article, visit [Fivestarman](#). Fivestarman was founded in 2008 by **Neil Kennedy**. He has passionately promoted God's Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Neil has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.*

Christians Can Choose Stress or Emotional Wellness

Too often we are frantic to speed things up, determined to cram big things into small spaces, and forever trying to be everything to everyone, only to realize it's an impossible task, leaving us frustrated and stressed out. Let's look at some principles of Christian emotional wellness.

I'm reminded in Isaiah 58:11, "*The Lord will guide you always... You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*"

We are to lean on God in all things, as He will provide all of our needs. So instead of looking at the rest of this year as being full of "stress opportunities," I wanted to share these "stress reducers."

I'm not sure where I first saw a similar list; this is definitely not an original concept. I have made a few changes, reflecting more of my personality. Cut these out and place them on your refrigerator or bathroom mirror as a reminder of choices you can make every day, choices that will lead to a healthier you in the future.

Pray often, multiple times a day. I have found, if we limit our relationship with God to a once or twice a day experience we miss out on a continual flow of His Grace and blessing. Prayer is communication with God, a way to develop a relationship. If we only speak to Him once a day, how can we truly know Him?

Make your daily resting-goal a minimum of seven hours of uninterrupted sleep. We don't need studies to prove lack of sleep results in a less than desired effect on our health, work, and relational habits. We must be refreshed to be refreshment to others.

Lay out clothing the night before—an excellent habit to teach your children. If you find yourself standing in front of your closet for more than two to three minutes deciding what to wear, you can benefit greatly by organizing your wardrobe. Match outfits ahead of time, even down to the jewelry you will wear with it, and hang them all together. (This is a great tip from my friend Jill Swanson, an image coach). Guys, you can do the same with ties, socks, and shoes—never assume it's only the girls spending time in front of the closet.

Say "No" more often. Burning the candle at both ends has become an acceptable pastime for all "Good Christians." But living a multiple-wick life leads to early burn out. Getting our priorities straight—God, family, job, and other—will help in choosing which wicks to light. Just in case you're asking, spending time at church every moment the doors are open does not fall under the "God" slot; it may be under your "job" slot if you're a pastor or church secretary, but if not, it's

“other.”

Delegation makes others stronger. Sure, you can choose to make yourself solely responsible for every detail of life in your house, or you can delegate tasks to capable others; your strength is seen in your weakest link. Teach the kids to set and clear the table, fold laundry, water the garden—any chore appropriate for their age and ability. Most important, don’t stress out if they don’t do it exactly “your” way.

Simplify and downsize your life, office, and closets. Keep, store, or give away—repeat every six months.

Stop using credit cards. It’s easy to whip out a credit or debit card for all those little purchases in life, but the statements at the end of the month can be major stressors. Instead, designate a cash amount for your weekly quick-spends (maybe \$30) and leave the credit/debit cards at home.

Plan for a rainy day. Here are some ideas: crossword puzzles, board games, favorite family movies. Plans change, but if we plan ahead for those unexpected changes, we can redirect hurt feelings or bouts of disappointment.

Oops Items. Carry an extra car key in your wallet or purse, hide an extra house key, keep extra stamps in the car, and make a photocopy of the credit cards you carry. Ask the family for ideas. What do we always seem not to have at the time we need it? What would we hate to lose? Making the list can be fun, and it will prevent stress-filled moments.

Do something just for fun at least once a week. Movies, fishing, time with the grandkids, garage sales, date night, the zoo, painting furniture—whatever works.

Incorporate at least 30 minutes of accumulated physical activity a day. I really believe stress can’t live in an active body. I don’t have scientific proof, unless you count my soon to be 97-year-old mother-in-law: Cancer survivor, avid

gardener (used a powerless push-mower for more than 50 years), walks one to two miles a day, and plays one mean piano for church, for her apartment complex, and for family.

Journal your thoughts. Use a journal to reflect, share, and recognize the positives God is doing daily in your life. Stress can consume our thoughts with *what if's* and *why not's*. If we make a conscious effort to pen the positives, we can loose the grip of daily stress.

Laugh out loud! Four great ways to incorporate humor into your day: Play with a puppy; run with your child; sit down in front of *Lucy*, *Carol Burnett*, or *The Three Stooges*; or record some at home karaoke and play it back for friends.

Talk less; listen more. We have two ears, one mouth—there's a reason.

Allowing these simple changes to incorporate positive choices in your life will open doors of opportunity for you to shine as a child of the King. This is the year of change—

embrace it!

Linda Goldfarb is a certified physical fitness specialist, speaker, and syndicated radio talk show host. You can download her weekly “Not Just Talkin’ the Talk” radio broadcasts, a one hour variety talk show based out of San Antonio, Tex., at . Linda’s show encourages listeners to “walk the walk” spiritually, physically, and relationally each and every day.

For the original article, visit .

10 Ways to Joyfully Keep Your Marriage Vows

Next time you find yourself exacerbated at your wife, or feel defeated in terms of maintaining your enthusiasm for the union, take a moment and remember your marriage vows. Better yet, take the time now to make a handy copy you can keep in your wallet at all times.

Why? Because marriage is more than a piece of paper, it's a framework designed to facilitate giving you the best possible experience in a committed relationship. The vows, rather than a list of rules, express the promises, purposes, intentions, and hope the two of you bring into a binding covenant.

If we remember this, and re-read the covenant in that context, it becomes difficult to imagine anything other than joy and passion as the result.

Here are 10 ways to joyfully keep your marriage vows:

- 1. Continually reaffirm your love.** Immediately, within moments of reading this, contact your wife and tell her you are so grateful she married you and that she is the light of your life.
- 2. Love your wife with fierceness and determination.** "Fierce" in this context means with passion. Passion, like love, often relies on intention before it gets going under its own steam.
- 3. Learn this definition of "faithfulness" by heart.** Faithfulness means fidelity, constancy, dependability, dedication, loyalty, trueness, advocacy and – here it is again – determination.
- 4. Find your favorite picture of you and your wife together, put it in a new frame, and place it on your desk.** Then, take a

photograph of your desk and send it to your wife along with a soppy love note.

5. Write out the marriage vows, in your best handwriting, in a letter to your wife. Learn this and learn it well. Handwritten notes are golden. Tell her how much these vows mean to you. Then get home early.

6. Break the vows down into bullet points (yeah, just like a guy!). Then, every day, do something profound to support each point until you've gone through them all. Then, start over.

7. Paraphrase your vows into a new, contemporary, document. For example, if you said, "for richer for poorer," you might write, "I'm committed to you no matter what; if this house was repossessed tomorrow I'd still have a home because you are my home..."

8. Understand that the definition of love is not the same as the definition of infatuation. Long-term commitment is the most profound expression of love. If you're looking for hormones to drive the relationship, you will both be increasingly disappointed. When commitment leads the way, infatuation takes care of itself.

9. Calculate the number of days you have been married, write the number down, then ask your wife on a date to celebrate the number! Joy is most often found in the small things. Take note of these small things, then relate them to the initial set of vows.

10. Make your own "Top-10" list. Write down ten ways that being married and keeping your promises has bought happiness, peace and joy into your life. Then share the list with your wife.

Additional related resources from All Pro Dad: What Children Gain When You Love Their Mom and 30 Day Marriage Challenge .

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a by-product, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include: daily emails, blogs, Top 10 Lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook, Twitter, YouTube** and **Instagram**.

How Far Would a Good Dad Go to Limit His Child's Media Access?

Have you seen the drastic measures a couple of dads have taken to address their kids' media habits?

Recently, it was reported that a man in China hired virtual "assassins" to hunt down his son in an online video game and kill off his player ... over and over. The father, identified as Mr. Feng was concerned that his 23-year-old son was spending too much time playing the game. Putting a virtual hit out on your son probably isn't great for the relationship, but it seems the two have reconciled.

Earlier, a story came out about Paul Baier, a dad in Massachusetts who agreed to pay his 14-year-old daughter \$200 if she would give up Facebook for six months. They drew up an agreement, and Paul will pay her in installments along the way. She plans to use the money to "buy stuff," and will go back to Facebook when the six months are over.

Honestly, sometimes it makes me long for the days of cap guns. Did you play with those?

I remember when we got them for Christmas, with their own holster! We played with them for hours on end—running around the neighborhood, climbing trees, hiding from each other, setting up ambushes, pulling the trigger over and over and hearing that *bap!* sound. And if you got shot, you had to fall over and act dead for a minute. Then we'd run back to load up another roll of caps and keep going.

Today's a bit different for kids, wouldn't you say? They can get a lot of that same fun and excitement—chasing other people, running across a roof and leaping to another roof and crawling down the side of a building, and yes, shooting at other “people” in the virtual world—all while sitting in a chair or lying on a bed.

Today's kids are often missing out on the benefits of physical activity, real-life interaction and the lessons that come with them. We could say similar things about people who overdo it on social media.

When I speak to kids, I try to point out some of these dangers and encourage them to focus more on their education. I tell them many times:

“You can't sit around all day watching all that TV and playing all that Nintendo, and then watching that video, and then your mind turns to Play-Doh, and when they pass out the real dough, you can't get any because you're nothing but a dodo.”

It's a little bit outdated, but it seems to get kids' attention, and I hope they're getting the message. Many dads need to get the message, too.

Of course, it isn't all bad. The other day I came in the house and said, “What's all the noise?” My bride and my son were doing a dancing workout using the gaming system.

There's a balance we all have to find, and for me, it comes down to coaching our kids ... being involved and aware of what they are getting into. As I think about these specifics and how you can apply them with your kids, I don't think I can say it any better than the blog I wrote nearly a year ago, when the *Hunger Games* movie had just come out.

Let me encourage you, dad. Short of hiring a virtual assassin or bribing your child to give up time online, you can—and should—plug in and tune in to this area of your child's life, and place appropriate limits where necessary.

And even more than you reinforce those healthy boundaries with your kids, be proactive about scheduling and carrying out fun, interactive family activities that emphasize the importance of time together. Make them interesting enough that your kids will be drawn to those times even more than video games, Facebook or whatever else he or she likes to do.

(Here are some very similar thoughts from a pastor on this issue, which appeared in *The Washington Post*. Check it out [here](#).)

Help other dads by sharing. What works for you when it comes to limiting your kids' media time? Please join the discussion below or on our Facebook page (but don't spend too much time there).

Action Points for Dads on the Journey

- Really investigate what your child likes—without interrogating him. Ask questions like, “So, what is the game about?” “Why do you like it so much?” “Can I see where you like to spend time online?”
- Pull out an old toy that you played with as a kid. Show it to your kids and talk about memories you have related to it.
- Make a commitment to eat dinner as a family at least 2-3 times each week (with no email, Facebook or phone

interruptions).

- Take advantage of parental tools that help regulate media time. Have a digital “code of conduct” that you revisit regularly.

Carey Casey is the CEO of the National Center for Fathering, a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the culture of fathering in America by enlisting 6.5 million fathers to make the Championship Fathering Commitment. NCF believes that every child needs a dad they can count on, and uses its resources to inspire and equip men to be the involved fathers, grandfathers and father figures their children need. Subscribe to his weekly email tip by clicking here: [I want tips on how to be a great dad who loves, coaches, mentors and inspires my children.](#)

Click here for the original article at .

Random Acts of Kindness Can Dramatically Change Children's Hearts

Stephen and his wife are parents of pre-teens. Their biggest challenge revolves around peer relationships. The kids disrespect one another and they don't earn many checks for “plays well with others” at school.

Then a friend suggested a new tactic. “Get them to help in the nursery or one of the preschool classes at church,” he said. “And spend some time as a family volunteering where you have to serve others.”

Desperate, Stephen made the arrangements. After some initial protest, the kids grudgingly accepted and, within just a few weeks, the family detected a subtle shift in the direction of kindness.

Another man tells of the radical change in his teenage son after the young man started babysitting for a child with special needs. It was as if the discipline of kindness worked to heal his own heart.

New research is documenting the effectiveness of such interventions. Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl of the University of British Columbia found that children who make an effort to perform acts of kindness are happier and experience greater acceptance from their peers. "We show that kindness has some real benefits for the personal happiness of children, but also for the classroom community" she said.

We all know a little thoughtfulness goes a long way. It is, perhaps, the most underestimated trait for true long-term success. Train your children to have generosity as their default setting, starting with their peers at school.

Here are five acts of kindness your kids can do for their classmates:

Be an encourager. Teach your children to encourage their peers, recognize friends' achievements, say "Have a great game," compliment a cool project, say "I hope you feel better" when they're sick, and smile when they do well.

Stand alongside other kids when they're alone. Simple proximity is an act of kindness. When a peer is sad, encourage your child to sidle up into their vicinity, sit at the same table, or join them in line. Nothing complicated, just deliberate presence.

Listen when they have a story (and laugh at their jokes). Listening is a kindness. Train your children in active

listening skills. Paying attention to peers is a powerful act of kindness.

Watch out for the weak and the bullied. Some kids are victimized, awkward, or simply incompetent. Teach your child to be an advocate for the oppressed. Sometimes the favor of just one other child will tip the balance for a kid who might otherwise become a perpetual victim.

Pick a variety of kids for the team. This is a powerful one if your child is popular (of course they are!). Teach your child to include everyone, regardless of ability, when teams are chosen. Not just the least popular, but everyone. Train your child to accept every kid in their class as worthy of their time and attention.

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a by-product, the hearts of the children with their dads. At [All Pro Dad](#), dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include: daily emails, blogs, Top 10 Lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.