

# Living a Life Without Regret

As I write this, my heart is heavy. I recently received news that a dear family friend has been diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. I didn't cry the night I found out; I don't think reality had sunk in yet. But I spent most of the next morning in tears.

My friend is seeking a second opinion from another specialist. Apparently, there's still some possibility that what she has might have some other name and may not be life-threatening at all. That's what we're all hoping, anyway, and praying for. But always, in the back of my mind—and, I'm sure, hers—is the possibility that the first doctor was right. Maybe she really is going to die.

Our times together may be many fewer than either of us anticipated. And in light of that reality, I've been thinking: Which other family members and friends whom I really care about do I need to spend more time with while I still can?

After all, each one of us is going to die someday (unless, of course, the Lord Jesus returns first). Our time with every single one of our friends and loved ones is limited. We don't know how much longer we have with anyone. When I get the news that someone I love is dying, or has died, I don't want to have any regrets. I want to have made the most of that relationship that I could.

Especially my relationships with my children.

If—may God forbid!—one of my children were to die before I did, I would want to know that I had done everything I could to love them, nurture them, comfort, protect and encourage them while I had the chance. I'd want to know that I'd spent more time playing outside with them than inside on Facebook. I'd want to know that when I had the chance to really be with one of my children, that I took full advantage of that,

pouring love and security into their little souls, and making them feel like I'd rather be with them than anywhere else on Earth.

I know I can't be a perfect mom. But if that day were ever to come when I sat on my child's bed hugging his or her favorite stuffed animal and breathing in the fading scent of my little boy or girl, I would want to have no regrets. I would want to know that I'd put my children before myself and poured out my life so that they could have the best life possible. I would want to have a huge vault of memories stored up that I could take out and treasure one by one, instead of a string of memories of my own voice saying, "Not right now," or "Mama's busy," or "Why don't you go play with one of your siblings?"

I can't change the mistakes I've made in the past. I can't go back and retake advantage of opportunities I missed the first time around.

But I can start living differently from here on out.

I can be purposeful about spending time with my children. Why always wait until they come to me? Why not go to them and ask if they would like to play?

When my children do come and ask, I can accept their invitation gladly and be thrilled about the fact that they want to spend time with me right now, instead of resentful that they interrupted something I was doing.

I can make a list of all the things I would want to look back on and say, "I did everything I could," and I can begin doing those things now. Today. Because I really don't know how much time I have with my precious children.

If I fail to spend plenty of good, purposeful, quality time with my children, I'll regret that one day—whether that day comes at the end of my life, or of theirs, or somewhere in between. But I'll never regret it if I invest my life in my

children. If I pour my life into theirs.

If I make loving memories while I can.

Philippians 2:17—Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. (ESV)

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, *Manna for Moms*. Megan is the author of *Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy* and *Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure* (Regal Books.) She is also a blogger and a stay-at-home mom with five children.*