

Make Time to Give This One Precious Gift to Your Loved Ones

Hey, what happened to my candy?" my 7-year-old son complained the day after Halloween.

I had done what any health-conscious mom would do. Once they were asleep, I emptied those buckets of candy, left only a handful, and tossed the rest in a bag to give away.

When they realized what I did, they complained. That was okay. And although I was a "mean Mom" for taking their candy, I went back to my daily routine—placing love notes in their lunch boxes.

Now years later, I wonder if that gesture made any difference. I decided to ask them.

Notes From a Mother's Heart

I looked in their direction one day. "Hey guys, do you remember the notes I used to tape to your pillows and put in your lunch boxes when you were growing up?" I asked.

"Got every one of them; I saved them, Mom," my oldest son said.

"I remember the notes that you'd put in our lunch boxes," my middle son said. "One day, I almost ate one of them by accident."

I smiled, glad they remembered. And also hoped they forgot those times I raised my voice, blurted instructions, made demands and more than a few times, delivered harsh scoldings.

I also hope they lost the memories of times when I threw my

hands up in the air, and, in utter frustration, commanded, "Okay, the three of you, in your room, and don't come out until you know how to behave."

As they grew older, longer notes that expanded on life's insights, admonishments, praises and advice waited for them on their pillows.

But I confess. Often, I questioned my ability to discipline them. I doubted its effectiveness. Yet I don't regret spending those moments writing words that expressed my love.

I got that idea from God's Word which He wrote on the pillow of my heart. And His Scripture notes of love, unconditional and constant that kept me going through moments of insecurity.

5 Rules That Guided Me

Pray with conviction. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

Ask for help. "Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips" (Psalm 141:3).

Recognize the goodness our words can carry. "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body" (Prov. 16:24).

Remember the power of our words. "Our words can build up or tear down. As the tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit" (Prov. 18:21).

Heed the warning. "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" (Eph. 4:29).

You may not be a mom or dad; but you're special to someone. That someone is waiting for a word of encouragement to build

them up. To offer warmth in a cold world. To reassure in moments of doubt. To show your presence and erase loneliness.

Words of love can be the gift no one else has the time to give, but they give what others need the most.

Let's Pray

Father, help my life to be a note of gratitude for others to read. And may they see your love written between the lines. In Jesus' name.

Who is that someone in your life who would welcome a note of love from you?