

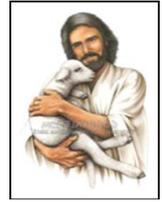
"News from Your School"

December 2016

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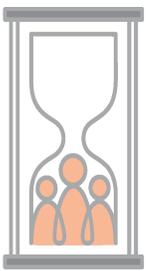


Christmas 2016

During the weeks before Christmas, do you find yourself wondering how to make the holidays more meaningful? Sometimes the best gift we can intentionally give our Loved Ones is TIME! Enjoy this "timely" article from Parents Crosslink, Autumn 2016.

Who Has Time For Family?

By Dr. Myles Tonnacliff



Ever wonder what happens to all of the time we wish we could spend with our families? Often we are so busy trying to get places and fulfill commitments that time for families seems to evaporate. So while this may sound like a silly question to some, many families struggle to stay connected. One reason for this struggle has to do with—ironically—how connected we all are to so many *other* people.

We all know what being connected means: having multiple electronic devices to help us stay on top of work, social media, websites, Facebook entries, Twitter feeds, and the ever-important e-mails. While these all provide a certain level of convenience and staying on top of our electronic communication is necessary in order to function in today's world, the truth is, in order to stay connected with others, we steal from our family time.

It's not that we don't like to spend time with our families, but rather, family members are more forgiving when we are available. Our culture has come to this point because there is so much information out there, and its appeal is often more flashy than family time. So we click, follow, or friend more than we sit, talk, and listen.

So how do you balance all of life's distractions and still find time to be with the family? The answer is deceptively simple—one word: *commitment*. To make family time a priority, you have to reflect on the importance of spending time together and then make a commitment to demonstrate that in the way you behave.

The word *commitment* is not foreign to us—Jesus made a commitment to love us by dying on the cross

for our sins. In our busy lives, we strive to commit to daily and weekly devotional time. But we have been tempted to give our family time to the Google nation. The result has been an erosion

of the connection to our families, which then undermines our opportunities to build one another up and to encourage one another in our faith. The issue is worthy of our attention.

Here are a few ways to reconnect:

- Recommit to making **family meals** a priority. Even sharing a quick meal together helps.
- Be intentional about **daily devotions, weekly worship, and growing in faith**—all essential for building a strong family.
- Spend **online computing and social media time together**. Yes, these are direct competitors for our time, but families can actually be together online and still be in the same room together.
 - Be in the moment—**intentionally find time to speak and listen**. You will be valued and recognize the value of family.
 - Organize **family activities** such as movie or game nights, or sports or cultural pursuits—anything that all members of the family can do together.
- Attend **extracurricular activities** —children's games, performances, and events—as a family, so everyone supports the family athlete or performer.
- **Pay attention to the health triad**. Healthy diet, exercise, and good sleep hygiene all contribute to personal well-being. They also keep the family on a daily routine, which can increase time spent together.
- **Stop multitasking**. Think about it. If we check our e-mail while trying to talk to a family member, we may miss subtle cues about things that are troubling them or give the impression they aren't important. Put down your device and listen.

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The stronger the family connections are now, the stronger the family will be when faced with life's trials and tribulations. During difficult times, family members will find their strength in God's promises and their primary source of support in their family rather than posting their despair on social media sites.

So, make a *commitment* to yourself and your family to be more proactive in doing things with your family. It is time well-invested. Remember, technology and social distractions come and go, but family is one of the best investments you can ever make.

Dr. Myles Tonnacliff lives in the greater Milwaukee, Wisconsin, area with his wife; they have three children. He is the Director of Counseling for Christian Family Solutions and is a licensed psychologist specializing in psychological testing and assessment, as well as family psychological issues.

Looking Forward To December Events at Good Shepherd!



December 4: Advent by Candlelight
December 10: Christmas! Let's Celebrate!
December 24: Children's Christmas Eve Service:
"What Child Is This?"

A blessed and Merry Christmas to you all!
Mrs. T

Hey Everyone! Here's a picture to color!

