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personally speaking



I felt the delivery room, then the rest of the world, shift to some strange but wonderful new dimension. I was holding my first child—just minutes old—for the first time. It seemed that Heaven and Earth revolved around the tiny baby boy in my arms, and perhaps for that moment they did. It took me a while to realize that only the focal point of my world had changed forever. I was no longer the most important thing happening.

My wife and I had been in this together from the start, of course, and throughout her pregnancy I had tried to be involved and supportive. Still, when the big day came, she was way ahead of me. For her the birth was a sweet and natural transition to the next phase of a loving and nurturing relationship that had been going on for nine months; for me it was a sudden awakening of emotions that I hadn't imagined before.

In the days that followed, I noticed myself changing in unexpected ways. Pastimes that had once seemed so important or even necessary lost their appeal. I drove much more carefully, especially when the baby was in the car. Life was dearer now. I had more reason to work hard, and more to come home to. I wasn't just a husband, but a husband and a father. I was a family man! If you have children of your own or children you have loved as your own, you know just what I'm talking about.

This issue of *Activated* is dedicated to one of God's most wonderful earthly creations, the family. We hope that you find these testimonials, tips, and other articles informative and inspiring.

Keith Phillips
Keith Phillips
For the *Activated* family

LUNCH WITH GOD

THERE ONCE WAS A LITTLE BOY WHO WANTED TO MEET GOD. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with cookies and a few bottles of juice and started his journey.

When he had gone only a few blocks from home, he met an old man in a park. The old man was sitting by a pond, feeding the birds.

The boy sat down next to him, opened his suitcase, and was about to enjoy a drink when he noticed that the old man looked hungry. So the boy offered him a cookie.

The old man gratefully accepted, and smiled at him. His smile was so incredible that the boy wanted to see it again. So he offered him a drink.

The old man smiled at him again. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they hardly said a word.

As it grew dark, the boy realized he was tired and he got up to leave. But when he had gone only a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. The old man gave him his biggest smile ever.

When the boy got home, his mother was surprised by the happy look on the boy's face. "What did you do today that made you so happy?" she asked.

"I had lunch with God," the boy replied. But before his mother could respond, he added, "And do you know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant from his day in the park, returned to the home he shared with his grown son's family. The son was stunned by the look of peace on his father's face and asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?"

"I ate cookies in the park with God," the old man answered. But before his son had a chance to respond, he added, "You know, He's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring—all of which have the potential to make someone's day a very special one, or even turn someone's life around.

—Author unknown



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CHILDREN ARE FOREVER

Compiled from the writings of
David Brandt Berg

BEARING BABIES AND RAISING CHILDREN IS THE GREATEST EXPERIENCE in this natural life. Children are eternal gifts—not just for a time, but for eternity.

Babies are so close to God—straight from Heaven. Although it's very mysterious how the Lord plans and orders His creation, we know that He does not make any mistakes. God is the Creator of souls. He's the one who creates that spark of life, the union of spirit and body to form a human soul.

Of course children are not only a gift of God, but also the work of God. If God has given you children, then your first duty to God is to raise those children right. Your children are God's work for you. They're His children too, of course, but He wants you to take care of and train them.

That's a full-time job, but with that big job come big rewards and lots of benefits. You should be very proud to be a parent, because yours is the greatest work in the world—molding the future. The world of tomorrow is what the parents of today make it, according to the way they raise their children.

What an important job a parent has! It probably doesn't seem very important, just taking care of a baby and changing diapers, but who knows what that baby will grow up to do someday?

Never minimize the training of your children. Did you ever realize that the most important things



children are going to learn in their lifetimes, they learn before they're five years old? So just think how important it is that you teach and train them right during those first formative years. That's why the Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

You can't wait till your child is five years old before you begin teaching him or her. Every single day counts, and what that child learns each day is important. You as a parent are responsible to see to it that your child is not only fed, clothed, protected, and kept healthy, but also that your child is taught God's Word, trained in His truth, and inspired with His love.

Some parents have the wrong attitude that if their kids learn, they learn, and if they don't, they don't. While children shouldn't be forced to learn something they don't want to learn, the truth of the matter is that all children want to learn. They're happier and feel more fulfilled when they are learning,

and they can learn a lot more with a parent's guidance and encouragement than if they are just left to learn on their own. In fact, it is entirely unscriptural to leave children to make up their own minds without first trying to inform them and guide them in their decisions. "A child left to himself brings his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15).

My mother and father placed great importance on teaching me about the Bible, the Lord, spiritual values, and biblical truths. Bible stories and the Bible itself were a tremendous influence in my life. I loved them and believed them because I knew they were the voice of God and the Book of God. As a result, my knowledge of God's Word and its truths were what guided my decisions and kept me through many difficult situations as I grew older.

I traveled a lot when my own children were small, helping to put a Gospel program on over 1,100 radio and 300 television stations over a 13-year period. But when I was home, I followed my parents' example

and spent as much time as possible with my children. I also took them with me on my trips when I could, and constantly taught them myself when we were together. I'd tell them a Bible story at bedtime nearly every night, usually in simple language they could understand. I would even act out parts to help them get the point, and they really enjoyed that. Children's minds are just like sponges, or tape recorders, or computers; they absorb, record, and process everything that goes on around them.

It's simple to teach your young children about Jesus. Just do it from your heart! Point them to the Lord by your example and your love, and by talking to them about Jesus.

As soon as they're old enough to understand what a mother or a father is—someone who loves them and takes care of them, who helped create them and gave birth to them—they're old enough to receive Jesus as their Savior. Just explain that there is a great unseen Father who is everywhere and loves us all very much, but because we've all been bad and deserve to be punished, He sent Jesus to take our punishment for us. Then have them repeat a simple prayer like the following:

Dear Jesus, please forgive me for being bad. Please come into my heart and help me to be good.

That's all they have to do! Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). He's just waiting to become their Best Friend and Savior!

May God help us to be good stewards of the most precious gifts He's given us—our children! •



GROWING UP, HELPING OUT



PARENTING FROM THE HEART

By Michelle Lynch

I WATCHED FROM MY WINDOW as a group of neighborhood children tried to retrieve a ball that had fallen into a drain. One boy reached in to get it, and pulled out a handful of leaves and dirt instead. That handful was followed by a second and a third of the same. Soon he and his friends had forgotten all about their ball game and were enthusiastically cleaning out the drain. They worked tirelessly for nearly four hours, as a couple of their parents stood by to guide them.

As I watched that group of five- to twelve-year-olds work happily together, I thought about my oldest son, now in his teens, and how much responsibility I had given him when he was a child. By contrast, my six- and eight-year-old sons weren't nearly as responsible. That's when it dawned on me that I wasn't expecting enough of my

younger boys. The difference was in me. Like most kids their age, my younger two were sometimes rascals, but they also had a desire to help out and take responsibility. I needed to learn to channel their energy in the right direction and in a way that would inspire them rather than push them.

I decided to start working with them each weekend. We tackled such needed projects as gardening, sweeping the driveway, raking leaves, cleaning the pantry, and making jam. Most of these jobs required physical exertion that burned up their excess energy—and they loved it!

I needed and appreciated the help and it kept my boys occupied and out of trouble, but best of all we found that working together can be a fun and unifying experience. Before long they would actually

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ask, "Can we do one of those fun projects, so it's not a boring weekend?"

Some of the things I learned to keep in mind are:

►► Be realistic when choosing jobs and setting goals. Don't get into such a big project that it will leave a mess or create other problems if you run out of steam or time.

►► Spending quality time together is more important than getting the job done. If I go into the job with my primary goals being to give my boys attention and to strengthen the bonds between us rather than getting a lot done, we actually get more done and it doesn't become a chore.

►► Pour on the praise and appreciation. I make a point to be both lavish and specific when I thank my boys for their help and the difference their hard work will make for our whole family.

►► Reward jobs well done. Knowing that there will be a little treat at the end helps the job go faster, even if the reward is no more than a special snack that the kids fix themselves.

My long-term goal, of course, was to teach the boys to take initiative and be responsible when I wasn't there to remind them or work with them. As they gradually became more responsible, things that I had first done for them and then with them—like washing dishes, for example—they were able to do on their own.

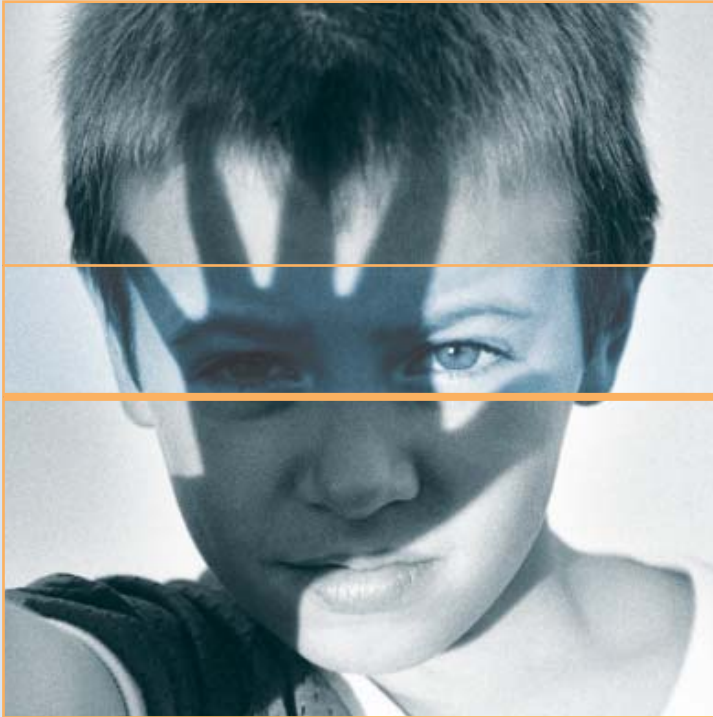
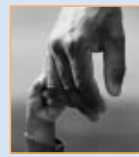
I could expect more of them, but they still needed commendation from me. There's a subtle but important difference between doing things out of a sense of responsibility and doing them out

of duty alone. I soon learned that if I failed to keep my boys motivated by praising them for being responsible and working hard, tasks that had once been fun and rewarding challenges became drudgery. I needed to be careful not to take their help for granted.

Another tricky situation was what to do when the boys couldn't fulfill one of their new responsibilities. I didn't want to be hardline, but also didn't want to be so lenient that they stopped taking their responsibilities seriously. It was actually my youngest son who helped me solve this dilemma. He had a good reason for not being able to help with dinner dishes one night, so he offered to do one of my small jobs the next day if I'd do his dishes. His sweet presentation put all of our household chores into the realm of a team effort. It wasn't a matter of bartering jobs in a self-serving sort of way, but rather a matter of shifting responsibilities. Of course I was happy to say yes, and I heaped on the thanks the next day when he fulfilled his offer without being reminded.

From what I learned by watching those neighborhood children clean out that drain and from working with my own children since, I think I can safely say that most children desire responsibility. They are just waiting to be helpful; they're waiting on us parents to provide the spark that makes it fun and rewarding for them. If they learn to enjoy and take pride in work when they're little, they will carry that attitude into the responsibilities that come with adulthood. That's something that contributes to our overall happiness, I think, and something we all want for our children. •

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By Maria David

Wanted:

I RECEIVED A LETTER in which a man told me of his childhood experiences before he found Jesus. He had been a juvenile delinquent as a preteen and teen, but a dramatic change took place when his father began spending more time with him. Here are excerpts from this man's letter:

"From the age of eight to fourteen I was a very bad boy. My father would leave for work at 3:00 in the afternoon, and come home at 3:00 in the morning. He was asleep when I got up, and by the time I got home from school he had gone to work. I rarely saw him, except for a few minutes on weekends.

"I got into lots of trouble. I stole everything I needed or wanted, including cigarettes, candy, food, and money. I was incorrigible, and did poorly in school.

"At fourteen I was arrested for stealing again and sent to a reform school. My father's first reaction was to be angry with me, but later as he prayed about it, he came to the realization that he had been partly to blame for not being more of a father to me. He reevaluated his life and decided to help me.

"He quit his nighttime job and took a daytime one that paid less, so he could spend time with me every day. When I came home from

school, he was there. He took an interest in how I was doing in school, and helped me with my homework. We joined a men and boys club. Instead of me hanging out at a dingy pool hall, we went together to a recreation center where we played pool, handball, and basketball together—all the things I liked to do. He bought me a season pass at the local golf course, and took me golfing three or four times a week. We were together all the time.

"As my father showed me love and understanding, it changed my life. My grades at school improved until I made the honor roll. I made new friends who were studi-

ous and didn't get in trouble. I had been tough on the outside, but on the inside I had been crying out for love, attention, and companionship. My father's love, as demonstrated by the time he spent with me, was the key."

All children need a father or a father figure—someone they know admires them,

prostitutes, gang members—those who fall through the cracks of society. In the interview she said, "The children that I serve are the most unwanted children, the rejects of the nation."

When the interviewer asked some of the kids what they were doing before they came to the home they

said, "She's my mom. Not by blood, but in a sense, she's still my mom. She takes care of me."

When the kids were asked what changes had come about in their lives as a result of this woman, the meanest-looking kid, the one who used to shoot people for fun, said, "Look inside of us. We've

Real Parents

has faith in them, enjoys their company, and looks forward to being with them. All children need someone who they know will be there to feel for them and pray for them when they're deeply disappointed, to hold on to them when they're about to lose hope, and to celebrate with them when their dreams come true.

Are your children getting that kind of love? Are there other children around you who don't have a father, who need that kind of love too? You can make a difference!

We often see stories on TV of otherwise ordinary people—teachers, pastors, police, etc.—who have helped bring about remarkable changes in young people's lives, even the worst of delinquents, because they gave them their time.

One such news spot featured a woman who had opened a home for troubled kids—runaways, castoffs,

answered, "Taking drugs." "Fighting a lot." "Pimping girls." "Shooting people for fun."

When talking about the kids, the woman said, "They've lost all hope. They've lost trust in adults. We adults are too busy. We don't listen anymore. No one has time for the children anymore."

When asked what the children need, she responded, "These guys? It's a very simple formula. You know what these kids really need?—Motherly love. They want role models. They want people who will be honest with them. They want someone to discipline them. They want someone who can teach them responsibility, consequences. Someone to hold them, hug them. I don't give up on them. If you teach them to give up easily, they'll give up."

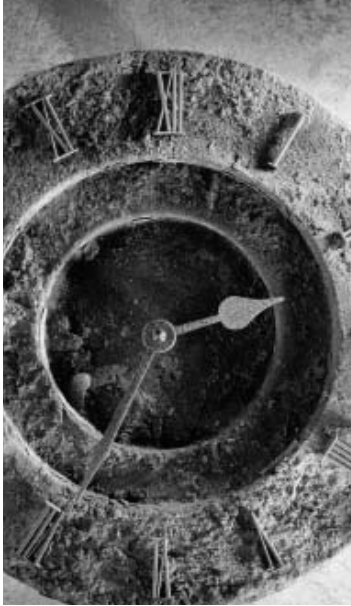
One of the older boys hugged this woman and

got hope. We've got dreams. We care too. Now I want to go to college."

This woman's closing message to parents was: "Love your children. Don't give up on them. Love them till it hurts. That's what love is all about—loving unconditionally, till it hurts!"

This woman is making a difference. Just one caring person is changing the lives of those kids. We can easily lose sight of the power of one individual. We can depend too much on society as a whole—its institutions, government, schools—so we as individuals don't feel the need to take responsibility for children, whether our own or some whose paths simply cross ours, who may need us.

You could be Jesus' love for a child. You could be part of God's plan of love and care for that young life. Your love, concern, and friendship could make a world of difference! •



A sense of values

By Virginia Brandt Berg

I WAS SITTING IN A LITTLE COFFEE SHOP overlooking the ocean, watching the boats far out to sea. Suddenly I became conscious that a man at the next table was saying something interesting, and loudly enough for everyone around him to hear. His companion had asked him the question, “Why did you dismiss Henry from your office staff?”

“Because he had no sense of values,” the man replied. “He didn’t value life, health, or money, and this began to affect my business. Whenever I wanted him, he was taking a coffee break. It seemed to me that he valued a cup of coffee more than his job—and I warned him about that a number of times.”

A light wind had risen, and the little sailboats on the horizon skimmed over the water. As I watched them and thought about Henry, I wondered how many people like him just skim over the surface of life, never having any sense of values and living off the nonessentials while the things that are truly worthwhile in life get

crowded out.

Can you imagine someone ruining an expensive pair of gloves by picking up a penny from an oily driveway, or lighting a dollar bill to find a lost penny in the gutter? Well, there are people like Henry who do that with their lives, and they do it because they lack a sense of values.

I wonder sometimes if that’s what’s the matter with our confused world. On a stupendous scale, we have put the emphasis on material things instead of spiritual things.

Jesus’ emphasis was always on the spiritual. What’s the great, outstanding purpose of life? What are we here for? God has entrusted us with the sacred responsibilities of loving Him, pleasing Him, and loving others, but do we truly put those things first? Too often we shove God and the things of the spirit aside in order to give some trivial, momentary interest first place.

When that’s the case, all of life is thrown out of balance and the result is only disharmony and confusion,

and the only remedy is to put God back in His rightful place.

Are the things that really matter in the proper perspective in your life? Do you have a sense of values? Or do you let little trivialities and material things come before your relationship with God or finding His best for you through reading His Word and prayer?

The Bible contains the Word of God. There's life in that Word. It's food for your soul and absolutely essential to your spiritual growth. If you excuse yourself by saying you don't have time for it, then your soul will suffer; you will be stunted spiritually.

Prayer is communion with God. Without prayer, you go through life powered only by your own puny strength and wisdom, when you could have His. God's Word says, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5), but it also says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). The Lord's strength comes only through prayer and reading His Word.

A friend of mine spent all of her years scraping, digging, and slaving to build and decorate a little cottage where she could be comfortable for

a few years, and just a few months after it was finished she was stricken with an incurable disease. While I was at her bedside she said to me, "Time is closing in on me! I spent the little time I had on things that don't have a bit of value in the place where I'm going." She had a sense of values, but too late. How sad!

I wish sometimes we could see all the events of life framed in the results they lead to. What a change there would be in our lives! We wouldn't give priority to trivialities when eternal things are calling.

The one that lives only for today instead of for eternity has no sense of values. Every day someone will say, not in words, perhaps, but by his actions, "I just don't care about getting a mansion in Heaven. I'm not interested in eternal things. Give me a mansion here instead, or a little fame and glory. I'll take my satisfaction here." And the King of kings who has offered him a crown of glory and an eternal Home among the mansions of Heaven is put aside for these "other things" that really have no value. Please don't let that be you! •

No one
will ever
be great in
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LOOKING FOR LIFE?

If you're looking for meaning in life and want to put priority on things of eternal value, the first step is to receive the most precious gift ever bestowed—salvation, the promise of eternal life in Heaven. All you have to do is open your heart and life to the gift-giver, Jesus, by sincerely praying a prayer like this one:

Thank You, Jesus, for the great gift You are offering me—forgiveness for my sins and eternal life with You in Heaven. I open my heart to You and accept this gift that You paid for with Your own life when You died for me on the cross. Please give me a new life, a fresh start, with Your sense of values. Help me to learn to know You better, find Your plan for me, and to love You and others more. Amen. •



ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

What to Do when You Don't Know What to Do

Q: MY ELDEST SON HAS BECOME REBELLIOUS to just about every rule in our home. This has been going on for months now, and it's getting harder and harder to communicate with him or to get to the bottom of his bad behavior. I'm exasperated! What can I do to straighten out my son?

A: When children seriously misbehave, there is usually an underlying cause. Maybe they feel insecure, so they act up to get more of your time and attention, reassurance, and love. Maybe they're upset about something that happened at school. Maybe they're testing the boundaries you've set, to see if you mean what you said. Maybe they think they're old enough to make their own decisions and don't understand the reason behind some of your rules. Maybe it's time to change some rules in order to give

them more room to grow.

Whatever the case, it's important to find out why they're misbehaving, and how you can help them get back on track. Most problems don't just go away by themselves, nor are children usually equipped to handle them on their own. Many times the children themselves don't even know what is wrong. They need a parent's love and guidance.

The best way to know what your children need and how to help them—the only way, really—is to ask the Lord to show you. Next to having the Lord's love, the most important key to successful parenting is learning to ask the Lord for the answers. Jesus always has just the answer you need. Having Him as a parenting partner lifts a great deal of the load off of you. You know you can always go to Him in prayer, and He will speak to

your heart and mind with the guidance and solutions you need.

If your child has been going through a difficult phase that is trying your patience, ask Jesus for help. Share your burden with Him; He has lots of patience. He has had a great deal of patience with your faults and failings, so you can be sure that He will help you be patient with your children's. When you feel at the end of your rope, ask Him for His love and patience. His Spirit will calm your own spirit, bring solutions to your mind, help you to ride out the storm of difficulties that may arise, and help you be the kind of love and support to your children that He is to you.

*This month's answer was provided by Derek and Michelle Brooks, from their book *Keys to Kids*, available from Aurora Production. •

PROFILE OF A DESPOT

Characteristics of the
Coming World Dictator
and False Messiah,
the Antichrist



By Joseph Candel

The world is waiting for a superman to come and put an end to the wars and armed conflicts, religious squabbles, and political and economic instability. And according to the Bible, just such a superman will soon appear on the world scene—a man who will be the Devil incarnate, who the Bible calls the Beast and the Antichrist. Numerous Bible passages describe some of the Antichrist's personal characteristics. Pieced together like the criminologist's composite sketch of a suspect, they can help us recognize this man when he begins to rise to power, so we won't be duped into following him.

1. The Antichrist will be intrinsically evil, yet appear as a savior.

He is variously described in the Bible as “a vile person,” “the man of sin,” “the son of

perdition [Hell],” and “the wicked one.”

“[There] shall stand up a vile person ... he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries” (Daniel 11:21 KJV). Some versions use the word “intrigue” here, in place of or in addition to “flattery.”

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the Second Coming of Jesus Christ] shall not come, except ... that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3 KJV).

“Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall ... destroy with the brightness of His coming [at the Battle of Armageddon]” (2 Thessalonians 2:8 KJV).

“Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers [such as the Antichrist] also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end

shall be according to their [evil] works” (2 Corinthians 11:14–15 KJV).

2. The Antichrist will be outspoken and have great speaking ability.

“He shall speak great [pompous] words against the Most High” (Daniel 7:25 KJV).

“He was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies” (Revelation 13:5).

3. The Antichrist will have a fierce countenance.

“In the latter time [the Endtime, just prior to Jesus' return] ... when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up” (Daniel 8:23 KJV).

The prophet Daniel also describes him as a man “whose appearance was

greater than his fellows” (Daniel 7:20). Other translations render this phrase “more stout than his fellows,” or “more imposing than his fellows.”

4. The Antichrist will be extremely proud.

“The king [the Antichrist] shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper” (Daniel 11:36).

He is going to be so proud, in fact, that he will eventually claim to be God Himself. “Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

5. The Antichrist will be a military genius.

The prophet Daniel describes several major wars that the Antichrist fights against those who oppose him during the last three and a half years of his reign. “He will be a master of deception, defeating many by catching them off guard as they bask in false security. Without warning he will destroy them” (Daniel 8:25 TLB).

“They worshiped the Beast, saying, ‘Who is like the Beast? Who is able to make war with him?’” (Revelation 13:4).

6. The Antichrist will not desire women.

“He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all” (Daniel 11:37). This verse could mean that the Antichrist will be either celibate or a homosexual.

7. The Antichrist will have supernatural powers, given him by the Devil.

“His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper” (Daniel 8:24 KJV).

The Antichrist will be a man of such force and perverse ways that throughout the book of Revelation he is referred to as “the Beast.” And by whose power will he prosper? Not by his own, and definitely not by God’s! He will be the Devil’s own man, the false messiah, and through devilry and witchcraft and all that is evil, he will take control of the world. “The Dragon [Devil] gave him his power, his throne, and great authority” (Revelation 13:2).

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:9 KJV).

He will astonish the world with his devices. “I saw [the Antichrist] as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the Beast” (Revelation 13:3 KJV).

For a short time, through the Antichrist, the Devil is finally going to get what he’s been after all the time—kingship of the entire world—and he’s going to rule the world with tremendous power. “Power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb [Jesus]” (Revelation 13:7–8 KJV).

God put these descriptions of the Antichrist and his reign in the Bible not to cause us to be fearful, but to help us to recognize him and be prepared. “You are all children of the light and of the day. ... So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Watch for His [Jesus’] return and stay sober” (1 Thessalonians 5:5–6 TLB). Knowing that the appearance of the Antichrist signals Jesus’ soon return to rescue His own will help carry us through! •

ALONG

CAME

A BABY

Love Is Making a Connection

Jesus said the first and greatest commandment is to love—to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. . . . And the second is like it.”—It’s almost equal, almost the same—“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37, 39). Those He was speaking to then asked Him who was their neighbor, and with the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tried to show them that it is anyone who needed their help. If we have real love, we cannot face a needy situation without doing something about it. We can’t just pass by the poor man on the road to Jericho! We must take action like the Samaritan did (Luke 10:25–37). Love is making a connection like that from God to somebody who needs His love. The next issue of *Activated* will help you do just that!

Almost two centuries ago, men followed the events of Napoleon Bonaparte’s march of conquest across Europe, waiting with bated breath for any news of the outcome of his various wars. All the while, babies were being born in their own homes. But who could think about babies? Everybody was thinking about battles!

However, in that one year, 1809, there came into the world several babies who were destined to become stars of the greatest magnitude—William Gladstone, considered by many as Britain’s greatest statesman of the 19th century; Abraham Lincoln, one of America’s most famous presidents; Alfred Lord Tennyson, the celebrated poet laureate of Britain; and the Frenchman Louis Braille, the blind inventor of the widely used Braille system of reading for the blind. While they were being born, no one thought of babies, just battles. Yet which of the battles of 1809 mattered more than the babies of 1809?

Some fancy that God can manage His world only with big battalions, when all the while He is doing it by babies. Whenever a wrong needs righting or a truth needs preaching, God sends a baby into the world to do it.

—Author unknown

FEEDING READING

Children



Children are a blessing from God.

Psalm 127:3
Genesis 49:25
Psalm 113:9
Psalm 127:4–5

God loves and knows children, even before birth.

Psalm 22:10
Isaiah 49:1
Jeremiah 1:5

God takes care of young children.

Matthew 18:10

Their early training will guide children all through life.

Proverbs 22:6

If you neglect your children for other things, you and they will suffer.

Proverbs 29:15b

You should teach your children God’s Word.

Deuteronomy 6:6–7
Isaiah 38:19b
Joel 1:3
John 21:15
2 Timothy 3:15

Teach your children to trust in God.

Psalm 22:9
Psalm 34:11
Psalm 78:6–7
Acts 2:39

Lead your children to receive Jesus.

Mark 10:14
Galatians 4:19
1 John 2:12
2 Timothy 3:15

Only God can teach life’s most important lessons.

Psalm 25:5
Proverbs 8:32–33
Isaiah 54:13



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

A Promise for You and Your Children

All parents feel inadequate in some way or another, at some time or another. It is part of parental love to want the best for your children even if it means giving of yourself beyond your natural limits.

But don't make the mistake many parents do in thinking they have to carry the whole load themselves. If you do that, you'll soon wear out. You need to learn to share the load with Me. If you can't give your children everything you would like to every day, give them what you can and then trust Me for the rest.

The most important thing you can give your children is love—your love and My love. Do that, and you will have happy, well-adjusted children; you will have succeeded as a parent. But to have that love, you must take time with Me and My Word, in prayer and reflection. I have all the strength and peace and faith and love and answers you need. I love your children and know exactly what they need day by day. I want to fill your every need so together we can fill theirs, but to get those things you must spend time with Me.

When it seems impossible to make time for Me, that's when you need it most. Come into My arms and find rest. Cast your burdens upon Me. My shoulders are broad enough and My arms strong enough to carry any load. Make time to be with Me each day and I will answer your prayers for your children. I will make you the parent you want to be. I will do what you can't. And last but not least, your children will see a new light upon your face, for they will see Me there.