



Bulletin

OCTOBER
2022

A PUBLICATION OF FOCUS ON THE FAMILY[®]

It's Pastor Appreciation Month!

JUMP FIRST

BY JIM DALY

I WAS A KID WHEN I DISCOVERED THAT CONQUERING OBSTACLES requires courage. My buddy and I were exploring the woods when we came upon a ravine that was ideal for an Evel Knievel-worthy leap across. We loosely calculated the distance from one side to the other—as well as the drop to the bottom—and agreed that the chasm offered the perfect measure of danger and reward. Only one thing held us back: Which one of us had the courage to jump first?

Resolving conflict in marriage is a lot like that: Somebody has to jump first. When both spouses dig in their heels and refuse to apologize, to seek forgiveness or to reconsider their perspective on a matter, the gulf between them widens and their conflict deepens.

Jesus said the right thing to do in the face of conflict is to “first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:24). Taking the initiative to resolve conflict with someone who has offended you is a model of reconciliation God himself demonstrates (1 John 4:19).

When conflict arises in your marriage, don't wait for your spouse to make the first move. Focus on what *you* can do to move your relationship in a positive direction. The Lord can transform any relationship . . . but somebody has to jump first.

Want to know more? Visit www.focusonthefamily.com.

A BETTER WAY TO RESOLVE CONFLICT

At one time, my husband and I had a pattern of using harsh, angry words toward each other during times of conflict. We realized we needed a heart change. Resolving conflict in a positive manner isn't as easy as simply deciding to speak gently and humbly. We created a practical process of healthy conflict resolution.

In most conflicts, both spouses have contributed something to the stated problem, so each must contribute equally to finding a solution rather than harping on the other person's faults. Sometimes my husband and I have found it helpful to jot down each of our contributions and solutions on a piece of paper; other times, we've been able to verbally navigate toward a solution.



One time we were in a heated argument over how we would make ends meet the following month. Our health insurance payments had jumped from \$900 per month to \$2,200 per week after we found out we were pregnant with our third child. We began to blame each other's spending habits for the lack of cushion in our savings account—a cushion that could have bought us some breathing room for a couple of months.

After we settled down and prayed, we both admitted we had responded out of fear. We apologized to each other, asked forgiveness, extended grace and began to explore possible solutions: contacting our insurance company to look for more affordable options; speaking to my employer (a nonprofit) to see if the company could offer support; and, of course, praying and trusting God to provide. As things turned out, our insurance never lapsed, our son was born healthy and our dependence on God led us to a deeper level of oneness.

Conflict is not a bad thing. It forges communication. Some couples' communication just needs a little touch-up here and there; others require an entire renovation. But that's OK when you've arrived together at the understanding that things need to change. Stop doing what is hurtful and find mutual ways to be helpful. Most important, depend on God—the One whose strength exceeds your own—and watch Him work powerfully in each of your lives.

—Elicia Horton

SHOW APPRECIATION FOR YOUR PASTOR

October is Pastor Appreciation Month. Here are some ways you and your family can show your appreciation to your pastoral staff:

- Write your favorite Scripture verses in a journal for the pastor to read whenever he needs inspiration or encouragement.
- Give your pastor a coupon good for one night of free babysitting.
- Work on the church building. Clean classrooms, tidy up the sanctuary, mow the church lawn or do general maintenance work.
- Put together a care package with coupons, gift certificates, sweets, treats and individually packaged items.
- Write a note of appreciation to your pastor and your pastor's spouse.
- Pray for your pastor and your pastor's family.
- Help where you can with any needed renovations to your pastor's home.
- Plan an evening celebration to bless your pastor. It can be a potluck dinner, a bonfire extravaganza or a simple get-together with coffee and desserts.

Don't miss the opportunity to make Pastor Appreciation Month a regular event for your family. Not only will you bless your pastor, but you will also model for your children an attitude of gratitude and respect for those who serve throughout the year.

—Pam Woody

PRAY FOR YOUR PASTOR'S HOME LIFE

This month is a great time to thank our pastors and their families for their faithful service. But don't just stop at saying thanks. Make a commitment to pray for your pastors and their families.

Long hours and high expectations can negatively affect any marriage. But pastors and their families face additional pressures. A pastor's family is always on display; the pastor's marriage is scrutinized; pastors' children are pressured to be models of good behavior. When spouses or children fail to live up to unrealistic expectations, they become the subject of unhealthy gossip. Many pastors' children leave the church because of how church members treated their family.

Such pressures, along with the 24/7 demands on the pastor's time, can leave a minister's family feeling discouraged, angry or broken. Pastor appreciation means treating your pastor's spouse and family with love and care.

Ways to pray:

- Pray that your pastor and his family will be able to have—and enjoy—a healthy family life.
- Pray for your pastor's spouse and encourage him whenever you have the chance.

—Bill Arbuckle

BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY

Live It Challenges by Focus on the Family are a way students can keep Bring Your Bible to School Day going all year round! We are challenging students and families to put into practice the “Live It” portion of Bring Your Bible to School Day’s “Bring It. Share It. Live It.” motto. Live It Challenges help families to live out their faith, build lasting biblical habits and strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ.

The October Live It Challenge is the one that started it all—National Bring Your Bible to School Day!

Bring Your Bible to School Day is a student-led movement to read and treasure Scripture as God’s Holy Word, to encourage others with the hope we have in Christ Jesus and to celebrate our religious freedoms in the United States. It all culminates with Bring Your Bible to School Day on the first Thursday of October. (This year, the celebration will be October 6, 2022!) This event empowers Christian students of all ages to speak God’s grace and truth into the culture around them, starting with two simple steps—bringing their Bibles to school and sharing what God’s Word means to them.

Students of any age can participate—remember the words of **1 Timothy 4:12**: “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”

LIVE IT CHALLENGE

IS IT FUN?

Yes! Bring Your Bible to School Day is designed to be a creative expression of your faith, which flows from the joy and hope we all have in Jesus. The buildup to Bring Your Bible to School Day includes activities, games, acts of service and personalized ways to get into God’s Word and learn what it means to you. The Bible is full of events and people you may not even know! Get ready to discover something new.

No matter if you attend a school that’s public, private or at home, we’ll give you step-by-step instructions, short Bible readings, Scripture cards and more to guide you right up to Bring Your Bible to School Day on October 6. **Sign up today** and encourage your friends and church youth or children’s ministries to join you!



For more information on any of the topics in this bulletin, go to FocusOnTheFamily.com or call 800-A-FAMILY (232-6459). To reach Customer Service regarding your subscription, please call 1-800-692-9912. To check out more ministry resources, please visit us at www.tyndaleperiodicals.com.

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY BULLETIN (ISSN 0897-537X), vol. 35, no. 10, October 2022. Jim Rusaak, editor; Shirley Ree, designer. Published monthly by Tyndale House Publishers, 351 Executive Drive, Carol Stream, IL 60188 in cooperation with Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO. © 2022 Focus on the Family. Used by permission. All rights reserved. *Focus on the Family* and the accompanying logo and design are federally registered trademarks of Focus on the Family, 8605 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version™), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Cover image of couple walking on beach © Ammentrop 1 Dreamstime.com. Image of newbyes’ hands © D11on1 Dreamstime.com. Image of young couple © Photographerlondon1 Dreamstime.com. Image of girl reading Bible © Pavel Losevsky 1 Dreamstime.com. Image of couple disagreeing © Wavebreakmedia Ltd 1 Dreamstime.com. Subscription \$16.00 per month per 100 copies, Canada: \$18.00 per month per 100 copies, payable in Canadian funds. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Focus on the Family, Subscription Services, P. O. Box 405, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.