

Preparing for Baby's Arrival

*From Terri Neal, Associate Pastor of Preschool Ministries
With Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families*

Congratulations on the exciting stage of life you have entered. Whether you have recently had a new baby or you are counting down to your due date, you have likely noticed that parenthood is an entirely different world. In the midst of all the joy and anticipation comes a whole new level of stretching (not just your belly) and character development. You may be wondering if life will ever be the same. In many ways, it won't. So, become intentional about this season by preparing yourself to take three important steps in the transition to parenthood.

STEP ONE: Buckle up

As new parents, you've strapped yourself into a roller coaster of adventure with highs you could have never imagined and lows that can push you to discover abilities and courage you didn't know you had. Along with God's blessing of children comes His calling for you to lay your life down for your child (Philippians 2:3-11). Things you once took for granted, like sleep, eating a warm meal or a spontaneous get-away with your spouse, are now things you will often sacrifice. While your friends without children sleep in on Saturday morning or hang out at the local Starbucks, you will be taking on the rewarding yet challenging work of a parent.

STEP TWO: Give Up

When you give sacrificially as parents you probably won't get the same kudos you'd get in the workplace, or even the same recognition you would have given each other for similar efforts before the kids arrived. You're moving into a time of life where such sacrificial giving is just something you have to do often and without expecting much fanfare. But it's in this aspect of your new mission, losing your life, that you find your life (Matthew 16:24-25). It's here that you develop servant muscles through the ongoing exercise of selfless giving. You'll also find that parenting is an arena for Christian discipleship with a dailyness and intensity like none other.

STEP THREE: Team Up

A couple entering into the journey of parenthood usually discovers a sense of purpose and shared accomplishment that can push their relationship into greater joy, but they can simultaneously drive each other crazy. Adjusting to less sleep, sex, money and time for each other can be a blow to marital satisfaction. Worse still, couples that need each other the most often find themselves taking their frustration out on the only other adult in the house. Your marriage can survive this adjustment and you can experience the joy of parenting if you choose to be a team, if you lay your lives down for each other (Ephesians 5:22-33) and give each other an extra measure of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8) and grace (2 Corinthians 9:8).

GOING FURTHER

Resources

Recommended Book:

These titles are available to check out from the UBC Library or to preview at The Porch. Additional titles on this subject are also available in the Library.

The Pregnancy Companion: A Faith-filled Guide for your Journey to Motherhood (by Jessica Wolsteinholm and Dr. Heather Rupe) is a valuable Christian pregnancy book that brings medicine and faith together with the same quality medical information as any other expecting book on the market, infused with thought-provoking and spiritual messages.

Church Support

To speak directly with a staff member, please contact:

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