

July 2006—Happy Father’s Day!

Greetings Missionaries,

This article was published in the Citrus County Chronicle (Florida) on Father’s Day. We share it in hopes that it will serve as a source of blessing and edification.

Bill

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Scott Jenkin has been preparing for fatherhood all of his life. Even before his sons, Alexander and Max, were conceived, he began keeping journals of his thoughts and hopes and dreams for them. It boils down to relationship. “If you have rules without a relationship, the rules don’t mean anything,” he said. “I’m a very law-and-order person; I’m black and white, by the book. That’s the way I understand the world, God has given us a lot of rules — the Word of God has a lot of commands — but first and foremost, God desires a relationship with us.

“With my kids: If all I ever do is give them rules and don’t have a relationship with them, those rules will mean nothing,” he said. As the oldest son of a Baptist pastor and church planter, Jenkin learned the importance of relationship from his own father. He said, while many preachers’ kids resent their parents being so involved in ministry, his own father included him and his two brothers and sister in every aspect of it, from laying stones at Heritage Baptist Church in Beverly Hills to going on hospital visits and pastors’ conferences. “My parents taught all of us to love and serve the Lord; it wasn’t so much done at my dad’s feet as it was by his side — and I loved it. We never wanted to rebel because we had such a fulfilling life following Jesus. What else is there that we could’ve wanted?”

Although his parents were 19 when he was born, Scott and Eileen were married eight years before “Xander” came along. “Dad would tell you that he and I grew up together, as for me, I’m glad we waited to have a child.”

Eileen said, “When we married, I was 18 and Scott was 22, and having that time before Xander was born gave us a chance to mature. Scott is very deliberate, with a strong personality, but he has allowed himself to grow and change. He reads a lot and seeks out wisdom from people he respects and admires.” Scott said when it comes to raising his sons, the one thing that keeps him focused and alert and seeking God’s guidance is knowing that he doesn’t know what he’s doing.

Even though his sons are still young, Jenkin said it's not too soon to teach and train them to be men of God. He and his wife have already begun teaching their sons Scripture and pray daily that both will make faith commitments to follow Christ from early ages.

Children get their concept of God as Father from the example of their own fathers, Jenkin said. "As their father, I believe that it's my job to model what the boys will one day learn about God the Father — unconditional love, patience, kindness, justice. It all comes back to; it's not for the sake of the rules, but for the relationship," he said. "That's what I'm trying to model."