

LIVING  
IT OUT



**DAILY  
BIBLE  
STUDY**



CEDARCREEKCHURCH

# One Thing Worth Being Concerned About

May 24, 2021

A couple of years ago, my elementary-aged daughter was outside playing with some new neighborhood friends. I gave her some rules for where she was allowed to go, but shortly after, I watched as she went way farther than I had permitted. Initially, I was upset at what felt like blatant disobedience. It had only been a couple of minutes since I told her the rules, and her behavior felt personal. I didn't know these new friends or their families, and to see my daughter just walk off with them was shocking. When I got her back home, my instinct was to get upset, but I chose to calmly explain why the rule was made in the first place.

This weekend, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder taught us that we should **focus on FIGHTING FOR our family instead of FIGHTING WITH them**. Although we may win the fight, he said we could lose the relationship. Relationships live or die when trust is built or broken, so Ben outlined some things we do that can break trust. Two of the things he mentioned were things I was very tempted to do during my situation: take things personally and correct in anger.

Luckily that day, I had time to consider my reaction and chose a better path—I corrected in love and recognized why my rules were so quickly forgotten. (She was caught up in the excitement of being with new friends.) In a moment that could have been handled from only emotions, I was fortunate enough to have the clarity to treat it with delicacy and forgiveness. Because of my calm demeanor, my daughter was able to rest in a trusting relationship and learn from her mistake, instead of feeling shame and distancing herself from me. As a parent, I don't always get it right, but this choice felt good, and it built trust between the two of us.

We serve a relationship-driven God. He cares about our relationship with him, and our relationships with others. When Jesus stayed at the house of two sisters, Mary and Martha, Mary spent her time sitting with and listening to Jesus. Martha, on the other hand, spent her time preparing dinner while growing resentful of Mary for not doing her share of the work. She complained to Jesus, who replied, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her" ([Luke 10:41-42](#)).

When we value relationships over being right, our relationships grow closer. No matter where we are or where we have been, today, let's make a decision to focus on building trust. Over the next four days, we are going to focus on ways to achieve just that.

**Questions:**

Which relationship of yours comes to mind when considering the weekend message? How can you build trust? What trust-breaking habits can you be more cognizant of?

**Next Steps:**

Take a moment to read [John 8:1-11](#). Pay attention to how Jesus treated the woman who was caught in the act of adultery. Think of the ways he built trust instead of breaking it.

**Prayer:**

*Dear Jesus, you are the perfect example of how to love someone. It is so amazing that you want me to be in relationship with you! As I continue to grow in trusting you, help me to recognize how I can build trust in my relationships. Let me look to you for guidance and model how you built trust with people when they were in difficult situations. Help me to love others more like you do. Fill me with your love so that it may overflow into the lives of those around me. Amen.*

# Lite Brite

May 25, 2021

When my son was a preschooler, we gave him a Lite-Brite. You know, the toy with the little plastic pegs that light up? One day he decided to stick one of those little pegs up his nose, and it got stuck! Panic set in almost instantly when he realized that mommy couldn't get it out. The more his dad and I struggled, the more upset he became. We decided to take him to the E.R.!

Luckily, Grandma Ruth got there just as we were leaving. With her kind sweet gentle demeanor, she put my little boy on her lap and comforted him. Once he was calm, she gained his trust, and he let her have a look at the situation. She pulled it right out!

Can you see the difference in approach here? Grandma may have been freaking out on the inside—but on the outside, she exuded calm, trust, and goodwill. BUILD TRUST: communicate in a way that builds value. Grandma's actions spoke "I am FOR YOU ... for US."

My children are all grown now. They are all adults in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. They're individuals with differing values and opinions on a lot of things. They don't always agree!

## **Ephesians 4:29**

*Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*

I think God is asking us to communicate according to others' needs. During our interactions with others, we should listen empathetically and mirror their words to gain a better understanding. This process builds trust during the interaction. When we speak encouraging words it shows that we value the other person in the relationships.

Words are powerful! Proverbs 18:21 states, "The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences." In our fast paced lives, our relationships would benefit from slowing down, taking a breath, and selecting our words wisely, so that they are life giving.

**Questions:**

Are you an active listener? Do you respond with life-giving words? Have you looked into the Family Faith Plan?

**Next Steps:**

Text Faithplan to 419-419-0707 and take a step toward building Christ-centered, life-giving relationships. Pray, and ask God whose life he is calling you to invest in.

**Prayer:**

*Father, first I want to thank you for the people at CedarCreek Church who invest in the lives of those who seek to know you. I want to know you more and reflect on you better. Fill my heart with you until it overflows out of my mouth and gives life to the words on my tongue. Help me to build trust in my relationships. Put actions in my hands and my feet that reflect you. Let there always be less of me and more of you. In Jesus' name, amen.*

# Honoring Each Other

May 26, 2021

Have you ever received a “surprise” from one of your kids or siblings? The sort of surprise that ends up being a mud pie or a sparkly art project that you know has leaked glitter all over the house? The giver really just wants to bring a smile to your face or to hear you say, “Wow!” or “That is really special.” But it is so tempting to get frustrated or act impatient over the mess they’ve made. It is so easy to see the sin in others’ actions instead of God’s image—to point out what is wrong instead of what is right.

Lead Pastor Ben Snyder spoke last weekend about how to fight for relationships. He told us to “focus on FIGHTING FOR your family instead of FIGHTING WITH them.” There are many ways to fight *with* your family, and they all break trust. Whereas, fighting *for* your family is a means to build trust.

## **Romans 12:10**

*Love each other with genuine affection, and **take delight in honoring each other.*** (Emphasis added.)

Building trust is a way of honoring your family. That doesn’t mean agreeing with them all the time or thinking they are perfect. An honor is “a rare opportunity, one that causes pride or pleasure.” When you are honoring your family, you are drawing attention to something that, when it happens, brings you delight and satisfaction.

One way of building trust is to point out the image of God in your family more than sin. When I see my parents or siblings serving each other, being generous, or working hard, it is an opportunity for me to step in and tell them how I see God working in them. It is such a small action, but it builds trust.

Another way to build trust is to catch them doing something right. If I notice my little sister waiting patiently, I can tell her how much I appreciate it. When I see my brothers doing a chore without being asked, I can tell them how much I admire their responsibility, rather than saying they should do that more often. I can and should seize those opportunities to fight for my family.

Take delight in honoring each other. Choose to build trust by seeing how God is at work in your family, paying attention to even the smallest acts of goodness. When you do, you are not only honoring your family but also the way God is working through them.

**Questions:**

Who are the people in your life who you want to build trust with? What sort of difference would it make if you began to “take delight in honoring” your family?

**Next Steps:**

Pay attention this week to all of the times you see God at work in your family. Make sure to tell them some of the ways you see them doing the *right* thing.

Check out is this [Family Faith Plan](#) offered by CedarCreek. The Family Faith Plan gives you developmental and spiritual tools to engage with your child and help them take steps on their own spiritual journeys.

**Prayer:**

*Father, you have created a longing for relationships inside of me. Help me to be someone who grows relationships and builds trust. Thank you for making me a part of your family. I want to become more like you, taking the time to honor the people you have placed in my life. In Jesus' name, amen.*

# Be a Foundation of Faith

May 27, 2021

I am so grateful that my dad taught me to make Jesus a priority in my life. Every weekend, he took my brothers and me to church. My mom was not of the same faith, so she did not attend. If we stayed the night at someone's house on a church day, Dad would pick us up and take us to church and return us back to our friend's house afterward. Children do what they see, not what they hear. My dad's faithfulness in going to church influenced my life. I grew to know and love Jesus because of him.

This weekend, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder shared that one way we build trust in our families is by helping each other discover the God who made us. My grandparents laid a foundation for my dad that taught him who God is, and he laid the same foundation for me. They were amazing Christian people. If you were at their home on a Saturday afternoon, you went to church with them, and they always took you to dinner afterward. My grandpa was an usher at his church. I remember him "retiring" from ushering a few times, but if he was needed, he always stepped in to serve.

My grandma rarely scolded me. I remember as a teenager a time when my friend and I were staying at their home for a weekend. As usual, we went to church with them. Prior to that day, I had never realized how bad of a singer my grandma was. As my friend and I were trying not to laugh, Grandma gave me "the look." She handed me a song book, and I knew I had better start singing. I treasure that memory. My grandma was stressing the importance of worshipping God in song.

My grandparents were a strong Christian influence on me growing up. They were always there for me, especially during my teenage years, which were extremely difficult. My mom died tragically when I was 16, and they became my rock. I felt their love and prayers so strongly. In my early 20s, when I was doing something they did not approve of, they firmly and lovingly spoke to me about it. They made their opinion known and never brought it up again. That experience helped get me back on track.

My dad and grandparents' love and actions built the foundation of my faith. I am so grateful to them, and to all the many people who have loved and mentored



me along my faith journey. My hope and prayer is that God will use me to mentor others on their faith journeys.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

*<sup>4</sup> “Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. <sup>5</sup> And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. <sup>6</sup> And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. <sup>7</sup> Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

### **Questions:**

Who has mentored you on your faith journey? How did they do this? Who are you mentoring?

### **Next Steps:**

Print out the Family Faith Plan for each of your children at [cedarcreek.tv/familyfaithplan](http://cedarcreek.tv/familyfaithplan) to see what you can learn and implement. Share this resource with another parent.

Find a way to help others on their faith journey. Bring a friend to church, read the Bible to a child, teach a child how to pray. Be creative.

### **Prayer:**

*Jesus, I praise you and thank you for all the people who have made a difference in my life and helped draw me closer to you. I am so grateful that they allowed your amazing love to shine through them. I beg you to let your light and love shine through me. You are such an amazing God! Amen.*

# Do the Awkward Thing

May 28, 2021

Last weekend, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder explained our undeniable need for God, spouses, parents, children, and siblings and offered several ways to draw us closer to all of them.

How do we restart a stalled relationship with our families? We choose to put down our pride and do *that awkward thing*.

Let go of the need to be perceived as *the boss* or *wiser* than everyone else. Repent of that pride, and reintroduce yourself to your family by bringing back an old cherished family tradition—or start a new one. Should we start a squirt gun fight with our siblings or dance while standing on our dads' feet? Probably not, but you get the picture.

When my boys were young, I'd hide plastic Easter eggs filled with quarters, dimes, and nickels in the yard. They loved that game ... then they grew up and left home. Sure they came by for Easter, but it transitioned into eating and then leaving, instead of celebrating our salvation and love for one another. So one year when they were in their 20s, I made up plastic sandwich bags tied with ribbon and hid them around the front yard. When I said they had to find their Easter treats before they could go home, they moaned and looked irritated. That is until they picked up the first bag and found ammo in it ... the hunt was on! Yes, it was a little awkward, but it was a silly reminder of who we are to each other. A reminder that they are as loved and as valuable now as the day they were born.

It's also important to include family in the more difficult, awkward things. For example, when their dad was sick with Alzheimer's disease, one of my sons would take his dad out for ice cream and a car ride so I could go to the store, etc. My other son was willing and able to come to the nursing home with me to visit his dad when he became too sick to stay at home. Why did they do it? I'd say loyalty, love, and godly commitment to emulate what their dad taught them.

Please don't let pride or fear stop you from engaging in life with your parents, siblings, and children. They are precious gifts from God that he created and gave specifically to you. Cherish, love, and definitely, dance with them.

**Question:**

Are you suffering from any strained family relationships? What did you do to contribute to the breakdown? Or, what haven't you done to restore it?

**Next Steps:**

If you think that everything that is wrong with your family is someone else's fault, or that it's all your fault, check out Celebrate Recovery at 7 p.m. on Fridays at all the CedarCreek campuses. It's OK to not be OK, but maybe it's time to find freedom from your hurts, habits, and hang ups (including fractured relationships). Check out the [CedarCreek.tv/celebraterecovery](http://CedarCreek.tv/celebraterecovery).

**Prayer:**

*Lord, we praise your name. Life can be so hard, so painful, and so sad. Thank you for walking through every relationship with us. As we draw near you through prayer and reading your Word, help us know you more. Use our relationship with family and friends to bring us to a deeper relationship with you and others. Please never let us waiver from our desire to draw our loved ones into the light of your love. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*