

March

Celebrate Your Family Identity

Jim Burns -President of HomeWord and Executive Director of the HomeWord Center for Youth and Family at Azusa Pacific University

On Monday nights when our girls were growing up, Cathy and I would take them to the Golden Spoon for frozen yogurt after dinner. The weekly yogurt run was part of our family identity --- part of what made us who we were. Even the neighbors knew our routine and sometimes shouted to-go orders as we pulled out of our driveway. Our three daughters are now grown, but when our family gets together, we still make trips to the Golden Spoon. It's one of those simple traditions that have kept our family bonds strong.

Not surprisingly, a strong family identity also helps children develop a strong and healthy self-identity. Knowing what makes their family unique --- traditions, values, and ways of relating to one another --- gives children a clear starting point for discovering their own place in the world. Studies have shown that kids who identify with their family's values tend to be less promiscuous and face less risk of drug and alcohol abuse.

I'm a big fan of parents who make the effort to build a strong family identity. But how is it done? Here are three principles that I believe are critical to the process.

1. Be present. Children regard your presence in their lives as a sign of care and connectedness. Families who eat meals together, play together, and build traditions together thrive. Your presence matters! Does your family eat together at least four times a week? If so, there is a greater chance your kids will perform better in school and be less likely to exhibit negative behavior.
2. Celebrate everything! Don't miss a single chance to celebrate your family. You can celebrate birthdays, graduations, and other rites of passage, but don't miss out on celebrating life's smaller occasions such as Little League victories, learned skills, and school achievements.
3. Talk about faith. For some families, spiritual discussions are easier said than done. But having faith conversations with your kids helps to build your family identity. They also help your kids build strong convictions, as they get older. When you regularly expose your kids to God's truth, it can, as a friend of mine says, "help them develop a sweet tooth for Jesus." And that's something far better than buying your kids frozen yogurt at the Golden Spoon.



https://www.youtube.com/watch/bC_rgDY6TvE



Second Sunday Small Group

March 10

LOCATION: Youth Room

Students head over to the youth room at the start of the sermon for donuts and discussion!



Team Steve

March 31

10:30am - 11:30am

LOCATION: Youth Room

Pancakes and Leadership Lessons

No Youth Group March 27th...Spring Break



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