



Good News for families

December 2020

The Voice of One Crying

Why are children always crying? I have three children, and at any given time, at least one of them might be crying. Sometimes, I hit the jackpot and they're all crying at the same time. There's even an internet phenomenon called "Reasons My Kid Is Crying," which consists of compilations of photos from parents around the world depicting their crying children and reasons for the meltdowns. Usually it's something ridiculous, like the child got the blue cup instead of the green cup he wanted.

Sometimes, however, the sound of our children crying makes us want to cry too. When they're hurt, when we've had to speak a word of discipline to them, when we're *all* frustrated, any of these situations can provoke us to tears alongside them.

But crying isn't necessarily always dreadful. When we read the Gospel in Mark 1, we hear the words of Isaiah the prophet echoed:

Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way

of the Lord, make His paths straight." (Mark 1:2-3)

We all know that messenger well. John the Baptist cried out with a voice of guidance, discipline, and faithfulness. He proclaimed to the children of Israel that it was time to repent of their sin. There, in the wilderness, he cried out so that they would in turn cry out in repentance. I'm certain this wasn't an easy task for John. He may have wished he could do any job but that one. But being faithful often means we need to stay the course and do the hard work that is before us, even if it means tears for us and tears for those whom we serve.

It's unquestionably not enjoyable when we must guide our children to repentance. Sometimes that is precisely the reason they're crying, and our parental instinct is to take away the pain and make the crying stop. In those moments, we feel like we, too, are in the wilderness (spoiler alert: we are). It can be lonely.


Go ahead and cry. Cry out to our Lord. That's why He's here, after all. He'll speak a word of comfort to you, just what a repentant heart needs.

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Or, if you need to be disciplined, you know He's good for that too, and He won't shy away from that unsavory work. He knows and does what is best for us, working all things for our good.

Rest assured, your brothers and sisters in Christ—regardless of age—all need a good cry sometimes. Come, cry out with the Church, “Lord, have mercy!” Cry out in joy and thankfulness that salvation has come to us. Teach your children that it's okay to cry to God. He wants to hear our voices crying out in the wilderness of this world—He's not ashamed of us.

Rather, we can bring our troubles to Him in prayer, “with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father” (Small Catechism, Introduction to the Lord's Prayer).

John indeed prepared the way of the Lord. And now that Lord has come, giving us a reason to weep tears of joy. Raising children is hard work. On those wilderness days, remember that a day is coming when we—together with our children—will be with our Lord, and He will wipe every tear from our eyes. 

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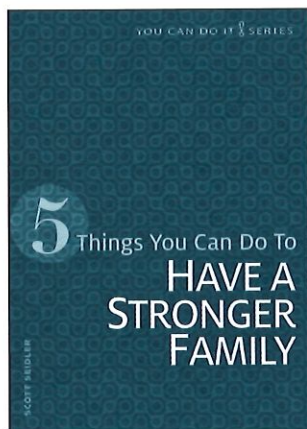
Recommended Reading

5 Things You Can Do to Have a Stronger Family

by Scott Seidler

The need to have a strong family is at everyone's core, yet no family is perfect. Even from creation, God says that it is not good for humans to live alone. But in a world full of familial problems and conflicting needs, how can you build a strong family?

Using this guide, you can learn how to strengthen your family through Christ. Understand how to create a family centered on time together and forgiveness. Most important, understand that God gives you all different vocations within your family.



155207

\$7.99

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Printed in USA 851801



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3558 South Jefferson Ave.
St. Louis, Missouri 63118-3968