

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY[®]

Helping Families Thrive

OCT / NOV 2017 • \$3.99

**STEVEN
CURTIS
CHAPMAN**
**BEAUTY IN THE
BROKENNESS**

EQUIPPING KIDS TO
**DEFEND
THE BIBLE**

Adventures in
ODYSSEY[®]

the power of story

page 23





5 FUN FACTS ABOUT THANKSGIVING

Use questions to award the title of "Top Turkey"

6 MAKING BETTER CHOICES

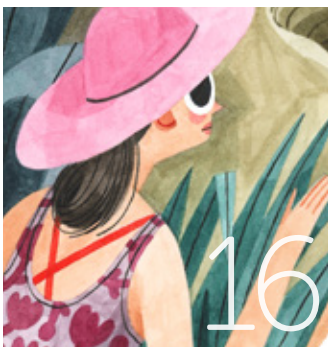
Shaping your child's behavior in positive and meaningful ways

8 BULLIES

Mean kids or bullies: What's the difference?

10 FAITH

Ways to encourage your child's faith



in every issue

- 4 DAILY FOCUS
- 17 PRODUCTS & RESOURCES
- 33 FAMILY MEDIA
- 46 MY THRIVING FAMILY



Couples

11 IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Explore God's Word together with this devotion for couples
by Sandra Samoska

12 BEAUTY IN THE BROKENNESS

Steven Curtis Chapman embraces the joys of family after the pain of loss
by Pam Woody

15 BEING GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SPOUSE

Expressing thankfulness in marriage
by Dr. Greg Smalley

16 HOW YOUR HUSBAND NEEDS YOU

It might not be what you expect
by Erin Smalley

18 OVERWHELMED BY EMOTION

Understanding your feelings to stay connected in your marriage
by Dr. David Stoop with Dr. Jan Stoop

Kids & teens

23 CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ADVENTURES IN ODYSSEY

Our award-winning audio drama continues to teach and inspire through the power of story
by Nathan Hoobler

27 ZOMBIE TEENS JUST NEED SLEEP

Bring your kids back to life by helping them get more rest
by Corrie Cutrer

30 NO MORE EMPTY WORDS

The secret to helping kids make wise choices may be easier than you think
by Michael W. Anderson and Dr. Timothy D. Johanson

34 EQUIPPING KIDS TO DEFEND THE BIBLE

Answers to some of the most common questions about God's Word
with Eric Metaxas

family

37 ADOPTION IN THE EMPTY-NEST YEARS

Cal and Terrie Morrow thought they were done raising children—until they met Abbey
by Matt Kaufman

42 'BUT MY HEART ISN'T DISABLED'

A child with special needs can have a tremendous capacity for trusting God
by Chonda Ralston

43 ONE DIRECTIVE, TWO PERSPECTIVES

What I meant didn't match what my children heard
by Jared Hottenstein

44 THE WAY THINGS WERE

Helping kids adjust to their new place in the family
by Sabrina Beasley McDonald



O HOLY NIGHT
A build-it-yourself Nativity scene and Advent calendar
Find free download at
FocusOnTheFamily.com/Advent



‘but my heart isn’t disabled’

A child with special needs can have a tremendous capacity for trusting God

BY CHONDA RALSTON

IF YOU ARE a music lover, perhaps you’ve heard of the virtuoso violinist Itzhak Perlman. Polio stole the strength of Perlman’s legs, requiring him to use steel braces and crutches to walk. When he solos with an orchestra, he must clang and slide and awkwardly walk across the front of the stage with his disability on full display.

Then, Perlman begins to play his violin. When he plays, there is nothing limiting or awkward about the music. It is

splendid! A promotional poster for the artist once read: “Now, let’s see what works.”

Have you spent too many years focusing on what’s broken—either in you or your children—instead of what works? Children with special needs face many barriers and they certainly need our encouragement, but they also have a tremendous capacity when it comes to trusting God. Their faith *works*.

Debbie Salter Goodwin says helping

her daughter Lisa have a personal relationship with her Creator was her No. 1 priority.

“I always tried to help Lisa understand that God would speak to her directly. I didn’t want her to confuse my voice and God’s voice. Nor did I want her to believe that God would speak to her only through another person. I regularly nurtured the idea that if she listened and learned how God spoke to her, she would never be alone.”

When she and her husband realized that Lisa’s challenges were going to be lifelong, they vowed to pray for her spiritual health first and foremost, even before physical healing.

“God answered our prayers over and over again,” Debbie recalls. Lisa’s heart failed her more than once, she says, but it was as whole as it needed to be for her to follow God.

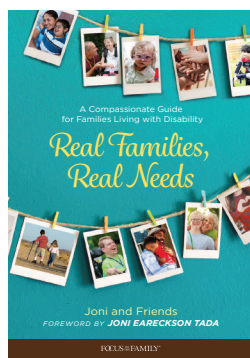
“I will never forget a conversation we had where I was trying to affirm Lisa for using God’s gift of compassion to reach out to people who were surprised by her sensitivity. I was trying to tell her that God was using her in spite of her limitations. Her reply stunned me:

“‘But Mom, my heart isn’t disabled.’”

It was truth, clear and unadorned. This same girl, who always fell below the norm on reading comprehension tests, could read God’s Word and share insights that defied every IQ test. When Lisa’s physical health failed in 2016, her spirit went home to be with the God she loved and served.

But Lisa was right about what worked. Her heart was not disabled. ●

Adapted from *Real Families, Real Needs*. Used with permission of Tyndale House Publishers © 2017 by Joni and Friends.



REAL FAMILIES, REAL NEEDS

To get a copy of *Real Families, Real Needs*, visit

FocusOnTheFamily.com/RealNeeds