

Inside this issue:

- ▶ [Single Parenting](#) -
An article from a dad's
point of view 1
- ▶ [Today's Divorce Rates](#) -
Proactive Actions /
Preventive Medicine . 2
- ▶ [Other Events](#) -
Love/Dare
Financial Peace 2
- ▶ [Micheal W Smith](#) -
Concert at Central
Community Church 3
- ▶ [Making Family Your Priority](#) -
Suggested
Priorities 4
- ▶ [Relationships](#) -
4-part tele-class series by
Ronda Welsh 4

○ November 1, 2009

Adult Ministries

Single Focus

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
2 Corinthians 5:20

Single parenting from a dad's point of view.



Memories That LAST

Dr. Andrew Stenhouse

Today I drove my girls by the house where we lived just after the divorce. It's not far from where their mom lives now, so we go by it once a year or so. I am always amazed when one or both of them will always exclaim how much they "miss that house!"

They remember playing "Harriett the Spy," looking through the fence hole into the

neighbors yards. They remember making stove top popcorn, the old kind with the expanding dome of foil (we didn't have a microwave). They remember making videos of their make-believe performances, dressing up, wearing makeup, and pretending to be on TV. They remember many things with surprising fondness.

Here it was, nearly eight years later, and their memories of the place are still the same - much different than mine. While I used to think of the house as a place of sorrow, pain, refuge, and loneliness, they saw the home as a place of laughter, affection, security, and togetherness. Now I believe that their memories are more accurate than mine. As I look back over the past eight years, I realize how lucky I have been to stumble onto a few things that have enabled them to create positive memories that will most likely last them a lifetime.

Laughter

Laughter is important for kids, and just as important for us. While kids need to laugh and have fun, they don't seem to have as much difficulty with it as we do. Some experts estimate that while adults laugh 10 to 15 times a day, kids will laugh about 400 times a day. One of the things that kids laugh at most is us. Laughing with a parent is just about the most amazing experience a kid can have.

Now of course we can't try to make them believe that we are not experiencing a pain. In fact, it is important they understand what a horrible experience divorce is. (The last thing we want is for them to grow up thinking that divorce is a painless transition from one marriage to another.) (*continued on page 3*)



Up-Coming Events

- **Fireproof**— Sunday at 9:00 a.m.— Married, dating, engaged, and single adults are invited to join us.
- **Financial Peace University By Dave Ramsey**— begins Sunday, Jan, 10 - This 13-week class will teach you everything you need to know about dumping debt, building wealth, and changing your family tree forever.
- **Ronda Welsh** — Sunday, Nov, 1, at 6:30 p.m. - speaks at Central Christian Church's singles group— What Can Make all Your Relationships Sweet & How To Avoid Things That Can Wound Your Relationships.
- **Clean Life Church** — rotation to clean Life Church once a month. See Annette if you can join us in filling this need. The more we have the faster we will get the church cleaned.

Do today's divorce rates scare you?

By *Relationship Ronda*
<http://www.resolveittogether.com/>



Whether you are currently married, engaged, dating, or a single adult wanting to get married, the divorce rates are probably keeping you up at night!

To summarize – you can try divorcing and remarrying, you can try different religions, and you can even try moving to a different country, but if you do not start doing relationships differently, you could still be the statistic you are trying to avoid.

If you do not meet with an advisor and develop a plan when starting your college career YOU FLOUNDER! If you start a business without a business plan YOU FAIL! If you go onto the battle field of war without a plan and strategy YOU DIE!

If you do marriage without a plan and strategy for issues, tough times, and differences of beliefs and perspectives YOU FLOUNDER, FAIL, DIE INSIDE and DIVORCE. You end up crying yourself to sleep at night with wounds so deep that the pain is unbearable.

Other Events

Central Community Church—Wichita
Every Friday—1:00 p.m.

Support Group for the Unemployed. Offering support for practical, spiritual, and emotional support during this life-changing season. Info: Sharla, 299-1840; or Church Office, 943-1800

Central Christian Church—Wichita
Ronda Welsh – Sunday, Nov. 1—6:30 p.m.

Ronda has been asked to speak at Central Christian Church's singles group November 1, 2009. See Ronda for details.

First Baptist Church—Augusta
Every Tuesday—7:00 p.m.

DivorceCare. Learn how to deal with the pain of the past - look forward to rebuilding your life. This is non-denominational and features biblical teaching for recovering from divorce and separation.
 Info: Church Office, 775-5466

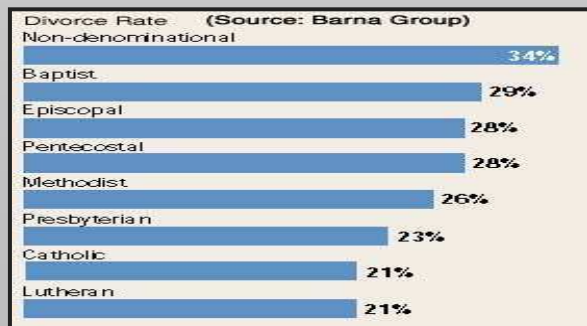
PROACTIVE ACTIONS + PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE =

- Already married:** Do not wait until your marriage is near death. Pull up a chair, talk about each other's expectations in the most common areas of dispute and the ones that cause the most pain, hurt and divorce. There are studies that reveal the top ones. Find out what they are, discuss and agree on how you will handle these things if they become an issue. Some to start with are infidelity, finances, sex, communication (good, bad, styles), addictions, raising children, managing and resolving conflict, religious beliefs and practices, abuse (mental, physical and sexual), personal and career goals, intellectual differences, mental illnesses and in-laws. Agreeing ahead of time on a plan of how you will handle the issue if it ever presents itself to you can save you a lot of pain and anguish.
- If you are already having the same disagreements all the time get outside professional help before anymore bitterness, anger, resentment and hurt can occur.
- Single adult:** Get crystal clear about how you feel about each of the above listed hot topics. Understand your background and history that has created your beliefs around those topics. Know what you will tolerate and work through and what is not acceptable under any circumstances. Decide how you would like you and your future spouse to handle each thing if it ever becomes a problem. Write this all out. Share it with a friend of the opposite sex, get their feedback.
- Be ready to have the sit down discussion before you tie the knot regarding each of the hot topics listed and any others that are important to you.
- A third party can be more harmful or very beneficial in helping you ferret out where you stand on things so choose them wisely. Friends and family mean well, but sometimes are too close to you to be objective.
- Everyone:** Read the Word of God, underline and commit to memory every scripture that shows you how God wants you to be in relationships. Pray to God to give you wisdom, strength and courage to address any relationship roadblocks you are facing. Thank God for the strengths you possess and bring to relationships. You got them and we all know you do!

Most sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, indicate that estimated divorce rates are currently as follows:

First marriages.....	40-50%
Second marriages.....	60-67%
Third marriages.....	73-74%

Another study looked at divorce rates among the different religions:



A source at www.mapsoftheworld.com shows the top ten countries for divorce:

(Divorce rates per 1,000)	
Maldives (10.97)	Estonia (3.65)
Belarus (4.65)	Puerto Rico (3.61)
USA (4.19)	Ukraine (3.59)
Panama (3.82)	Coast Rica (3.58)
Russia (3.66)	Cuba (3.54)

(continued from page 1)

However, laughter lets them know that we are surviving and that we still have the capacity to enjoy life. It gives them a great sense of comfort. Not only does laughter release stress reducing hormones, it gives peace of mind to us and our kids. Most importantly, it lets our kids know that we will be fine and they don't need to take care of us. They can go on being a kid.

Affection

Part of being a kid is feeling loved. Kids need to know they're loved. With all the pulling away and rejection going on between the parents, it is only natural for them to wonder who will pull away from them. They need to know that they are not the source of the grown-up's hang-ups and need verbal affirmation and praise to be convinced. They need to hear how much they are loved and admired.

They also need hugs, lot of them. Some of the most memorable nights for my kids are the movie nights at home. A couple of weeks later we can't always remember the movie, but we can almost always remember where we were sitting, especially if we were sharing a blanket and getting cozy. It's that touch that makes such a difference. Touching another person releases oxytocin, a hormone suspected to diminish depression and increase psychological bonding with others. Our kids need our touch and we need theirs. It makes us feel at home.

Stability

Just after the divorce I was convinced that the sooner we could settle into the new place and establish a routine, the sooner we would all feel at home. Their mom was kind enough to keep them for a few days while I went to work with the move. She had moved out long before I had so her place already felt familiar to the kids. Since I could no longer afford to stay in the "family home" I had to establish a new place that provided a sense of stability and continuity.

By the time the girls came to the house, it was set up and fully decorated with all the familiar items. Their clothes were hung in the closet and folded in their drawers. The same things that were on display in their old room were on display in their new room. I didn't go out and buy new things right away. I tried to use as much of the familiar stuff as possible. (I was broke too.)

Once the girls felt secure and stable, we could all enjoy shopping for new things. But that was fun reserved for another time. Right now, I wanted to set things up as familiar as possible and it worked. They loved their new room and said it was always meant to look that way (clean, I suppose).

Soon we established the evening routine of homework, packaged salad, frozen pizza, showers, and perhaps a little TV. Then it was off to bed with the same devotion and prayer schedule. The inside of the house was very familiar, even if the outside was very different. It felt like home rather quickly. (I guess I understand why they liked that house so much.) Eventually, the décor of house did change, but it was a very slow process and it was a process that was done together.

"You see before the divorce, I thought I was close to my kids. But I really wasn't. I mean, I loved them. I took care of them; made sure they had a roof over their heads, that they had food on the table. But I left it to my wife to handle the real emotional stuff..."

Togetherness

With shared custody, togetherness with my kids had become scarce and scheduled. I learned to value every moment spent with them and couldn't wait until the next evening when we would be together again. It seemed that every time we would see each other after a few days of separation, so much had changed. "When did you get your ears pierced?" "When did you start wearing eyeliner?" "Who is Daniel?"

So much can happen in a couple of days in the life of a teenager. I didn't want to miss a single minute of it. While confiding in a friend, I mentioned to him that I felt that I had actually become a better Dad after the divorce.

I can't tell you how many times I have heard that from divorced fathers since then. It shouldn't be too surprising though. In most cases, we had all been good dads, really good dads. We just became even better dads after the divorce. We had no choice. We had no one else on which we could share the parenting responsibilities. We became everything to our kids.

The movie "Bye Bye Love" almost always comes up when talking with divorced dads. We laugh at the McDonalds exchange, the "child-support-mobile", the first (Italian), "rollin', rollin', rollin'," projectile junk food, the in-laws, and of course the "porch scene." Eventually though, the laughter dies down, slight smiles emerge, voices become nearly reverent when we recall Dennis Quaid's narrative at the end of the film.

"You see before the divorce, I thought I was close to my kids. But I really wasn't. I mean, I loved them. I took care of them; made sure they had a roof over their heads, that they had food on the table. But I left it to my wife to handle the real emotional stuff... I was working, you know, sometimes two jobs. I just wasn't around much. I'm not making excuses. I should have been there. But I wasn't. I'd come home and my wife would tell me which kid to hug, which kid to yell at. I'd read the report cards, I'd kiss them good night and sometimes I would make breakfast. That was about it. But now when my kids are with me, it's just me. I'm the one who puts the Band-Aids on. I'm the one who rubs the tummies, who shampoos the hair. I'm the one who holds them when they have bad dreams. Then, they go back to their mother and I realize what I am missing. You know, before I didn't really know. I couldn't put my finger on it. But now I know."

Then we all clear our throats, blow our noses, and go call our kids. We're really good dads.



Michael W Smith in Concert Sunday, November 15, 2009

Tickets available at the following locations:
itickets.com, Perfect Peace,
Family Christian and Lifeway stores,
or in the Church Office

7:30 PM (Doors open at 7:00 PM)
Central Community Church
6100 W Maple St, Wichita, KS
General Seating Tickets:
\$14.99 Balcony & Wings
\$19.99 Floor
\$16.99 Groups of 15 or more
\$39.00 VIP (includes "New Hallelujah" CD)

Central Community Church—Singles Ministry

will be hosting

Wanna Get Hitched?

and Not to a Uhaul?

By
Kris Swiatocho

<http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org>

Vivacious. Knowledgeable. Passionate. That's Kris Swiatocho, Director of From His Hands Ministries and The Singles Network Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 20 years. An accomplished trainer/mentor author, Kris has a heart to reach and grow people so they will in turn reach and grow others.

Friday, November 20th, 2009

7:00 p.m.

Central Community, Wichita, KS

Also

Saturday, November 21st, 2009

Singles Ministry Leaders Event Topic:

Leaders Forum; open to anyone wanting to start, grow or maintain their singles ministry

<http://www.centralcommunity.org>

Life Churches singles will be helping by door greeting and providing drinks.

Making Your Family Your Priority

"The life we have is the life we allow. If we allow work, friends, schedules, etc. to edge out time with our spouse and/or family it is because that's what we want. We do what we want to do. For the most part, you determine your priorities."

Dr. John Lloyd Ogilvie – U.S. Senate Chaplain

Suggested Priorities

- God
- Family
- Church/Ministry

Steps/Ideas To Making Priorities Correct

Probe where you are now – Out of control? (Evaluate and admit honestly)

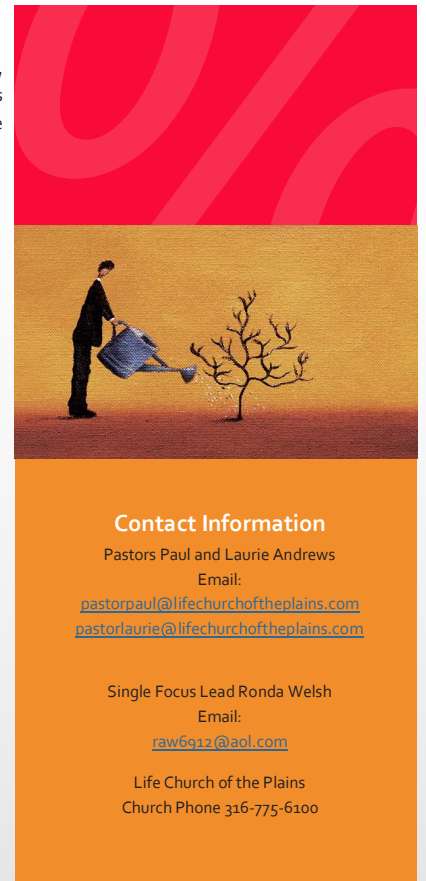
Pledge to God plus each other to change wrong priorities

Plan ...a regular "Family Night" (weekly/bi-weekly/monthly)...a regular "Date Night" for you and a child. Ask a grandparent, friend, aunt or uncle to watch the other child/children to cut back on baby-sitting expense. The next time, switch kids so everyone has a turn! Remember, family/date night does not have to cost a lot of money. Most children will be happy just to have one-on-one time with you. Play at the park, walk at the local nature center or zoo, listen to a free concert. Be creative! Most communities often have free activities listed in the local entertainment section of the newspaper so when you see an opportunity, grab it!

Play together – Make kids responsible for 1 time per week.

Pray together – Make kids responsible for 1 time per week.

Provide Availability - Is your home like a motel? Do people only eat and sleep there? Are the kids alone much of the time?



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*Is fighting
with your
spouse
causing
you
to
lose sleep?*

Ronda Welsh is starting a new 4-part tele-class series for married couples. This program consists of four (45 min.) telephone classes of relationship system coaching.

Discover how solid your marriage really is. Learn skills to strengthen your marriage. Learn the four most toxic things that could destroy your marriage. By the 4th class, you will be able to recognize and dispel beliefs that prevent you from having the marriage of your dreams. And for the marriages that are already great, you'll build skills and knowledge that help reinforce what you already have. A healthy marriage is the foundation of a healthy happy family—and you are everything to your family. Plan to participate in this 4-part tele-class series.

<http://www.facebook.com/1/4ee94>; www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3Dk5ipCLbE

How do you define relationship?

What is a relationship?

1. A connection, association, or involvement.
2. A connection between persons by blood and marriage.
3. An emotional or other connection between people.
4. A particular type of connection existing between people related or having dealings with each other.
5. A romantic involvement.

*Are all of your relationships
bringing you joy?*

"Psychologists have suggested that all humans have a motivational drive to form and maintain caring interpersonal relationships. According to this view, people need both stable relationships and satisfying interactions with the people in those relationships. If either of these two ingredients is missing, people will begin to feel anxious, lonely, depressed and unhappy."

Wikipedia, Baumeister, R.F., & Leary, M.R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117, 497-529.