



HOME POINT

PREPARING FOR BABY'S ARRIVAL



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Congratulations on the exciting stage of life you've entered. Whether you've recently had a new baby or you're counting down to a due date, you've likely noticed that parenthood is an entirely different world. In the midst of all the joy and anticipation comes a whole new level of stretching and character development. You may be wondering if life will ever be the same. In many ways it won't. So, become intentional about this season by preparing yourself to take three important steps for the transition to parenthood.

STEP ONE: Buckle up

As new parents, you've strapped yourself into a roller coaster of adventure – with highs you could have never imagined and lows that can push you to discover abilities and courage you didn't know you had. Along with God's blessing of children comes His calling for you to lay your life down for your child. (Philippians 2:3-11) Things you once took for granted – like sleep, eating a warm meal, or a spontaneous getaway with your spouse – are now things you will often sacrifice. While your friends without children sleep in on Saturday morning or hang out at the local Starbucks, you will be experiencing a far different joy.

STEP TWO: Give Up

When you give sacrificially as parents, you probably won't get the same kudos you'd get in the workplace, or even the same recognition you would have given each other for similar efforts before the kids arrived. You're moving into a time of life where such sacrificial giving is just something you have to do often and without expecting much fanfare. But it's in this aspect of your new mission – losing your life – that you *find* your life. (Matthew 16:24-25) It's here that you develop

"servant muscles" through the ongoing exercise of selfless giving. You'll also find that parenting is an arena for Christian discipleship with a "dailyness" and intensity like none other.

STEP THREE: Team Up

A couple entering into the journey of parenthood usually discovers a sense of purpose and shared accomplishment that can push their relationship into greater joy. But they can simultaneously drive each other crazy. Adjusting to less sleep, sex, money, and time for each other can be a blow to marital satisfaction. Worse still, couples that need each other the most often find themselves taking their frustration out on the only other adult in the house. Your marriage can survive this adjustment and you can experience the joy of parenting if you choose to be a team – if you lay your lives down for each other (Ephesians 5:22-33) and give each other an extra measure of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8) and grace. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

STEP FOUR: Pray

There is no greater gift to offer your child than your dedicated prayer for them. Prayer is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

