



Dear Friend:

Merry Christmas! As this historic year winds to a close, I'm especially mindful of the "unspeakable gift" of grace found in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 9:15). I encourage you to keep this gift from our Heavenly Father at the forefront of your mind as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

In gratefulness for your concern for families and to celebrate this joyous season, I also have a gift for you . . . our annual inspirational December story. I hope you'll be uplifted by this year's account that is loosely based on a real-life testimonial from the ministry you are providing:

Kelsey slumped down in the passenger seat with her arms folded across her swollen belly. Tears slipped down her cheeks as her boyfriend railed at her.

"This is all your fault! If you didn't always drag your feet we'd have made it on time. Fifteen minutes! *Fifteen minutes* earlier and we'd be rid of it!"

Kelsey winced. *It*. Their baby.

At 24 weeks, and she'd felt the flutters of tiny hands and feet. That morning, as Derek had pounded on the bathroom door, she had lain sobbing on the cold floor. She nearly wept with relief when they checked in late at the abortion clinic and missed their appointment.

Derek was unwilling to make the two-hour drive to the city again. "When we get back, I want you out. If you think I'm taking care of you *and* a kid, you're dumber than I thought," he fumed. Back in their apartment, Kelsey crammed the few items she owned into an oversized grocery bag and she headed into the chill of fall.

By dusk, Kelsey had searched everywhere for a place to stay. The town's only shelter was full. She had no money for a motel. The foster family that had taken her in before she aged out of the system had moved out of state. She was utterly alone.

Kelsey wandered into a residential area and looked at the glowing windows that dotted the street filled with family scenes. She looked desperately around her. A small backyard shed caught her eye. No one appeared to be home, so she moved toward the backyard gate. It was unlocked. Kelsey slipped through and opened the shed door. She pulled the door closed behind her and curled up in an empty corner of the shed.

Kelsey's eyes blurred with tears as she huddled on the cement slab. Her stomach rumbled, and she realized she hadn't eaten since that morning. It wasn't supposed to be this way. She couldn't even provide herself with a meal and a roof over her head. How was she supposed to be a mother?

Lexi wiped down the kitchen counters and placed Thanksgiving leftovers in the fridge. It had been a busy day full of conversation, feasting, and laughter with friends and loved ones, but everyone had gone home and the house was quiet.

(over, please)

In the family room, her husband, David, and their three children were watching a Thanksgiving special on TV. Lexi settled on the couch, but her thoughts kept straying to a conversation she'd had with her friend Sheila over pumpkin pie.

“She’s sleeping in a shed somewhere, Lexi, although we don’t know where. She was coming to the soup kitchen every day for a while, but vanished. I can’t imagine how she’ll manage with a newborn. Mark and I would take her baby in a heartbeat, but I don’t see how we can make it work now.”

Lexi had nodded with understanding. Sheila had given birth to a son three weeks earlier, and she and her husband were busy raising two other children as well. Sheila volunteered at the local soup kitchen and had gotten to know Kelsey, who would shyly approach the volunteers for a meal. But Sheila hadn’t seen her for weeks. Her baby could be born any day now, and no one knew where she was.

For the next few weeks Lexi couldn’t get Kelsey and her helpless baby out of her mind. She went to bed praying for them, dreamed about them, and woke up wondering if Kelsey had made it through another night. She couldn’t shake the sense that she had an important role to play in the life of this precious baby and her hurting mother. She prayed that her husband would feel the same prompting. That is, if they could only find Kelsey.

Later that day the phone rang. “Lexi? It’s Sheila. We found her. She’s in a hospital 30 minutes from here. She’s gone into labor. Would you come with me? I don’t want her to be alone.”

Lexi promised to meet Sheila at her house so they could drive to the hospital together. But first, she rushed to David’s study to ask him a question. His answer might just change their lives.

Ten Years Later

Kelsey stooped down to check the buttons on her 3-year-old son’s coat. She laughed when he stuck his tongue out in an effort to catch the fat snowflakes that swirled around them. Bundled-up revelers roamed around the downtown Christmas festival, listening to carols on the loudspeaker system and commenting on the various light displays.

Just a few years ago, Kelsey could never have dreamed she would end up back in this same town with a family of her own. But she had felt an inexplicable tug to come visit over the Christmas holiday, and her husband had graciously agreed. He knew her story and knew what it might mean to her to return to the place where she had made such a momentous decision a decade earlier.

After giving birth, Sheila and Lexi had extended many offers of help. But she had left the state and went to live with the foster family that had been so welcoming to her when she was a teen. She found a job, began attending church, and met the man who would become her husband. Most importantly, she had found Christ. The love, grace, and forgiveness she discovered in Him had profoundly changed her life. Ever since, she had prayed each day that the baby girl she placed for adoption was being raised by parents who would nurture that same faith in her.

Kelsey’s husband had wandered off to find some hot cocoa for little Theo, so she guided

(next page, please)

their son toward the live nativity scene that was set up outside the little Main Street chapel. As they neared the life-sized creche, Theo exclaimed, "Baby Jesus!" Kelsey smiled and looked at the little family of three in the manger. Then she froze.

Mary was being played by a girl who must have been around 10. She gazed serenely at the baby doll in her arms and smiled at passersby, crooning a slightly off-key rendition of "Silent Night" with the rest of the actors.

She was the spitting image of Kelsey.

It was unmistakable. The dark, curly hair and brown eyes, the shape of her nose, the smile. Kelsey could have been looking at herself 20 years ago.

As she watched, the young girl stood up and a middle-aged woman handed the girl a steaming mug and rubbed her hands up and down the girl's arms to warm her up. They laughed together and the girl ran to a group of friends.

The woman stood up, still smiling, and then looked outside. Kelsey met her eyes, and it all came back in a rush. That frigid December morning when she had stumbled into the hospital. The labor pains. The paralyzing fear about what she would do when the baby was born. Sheila, holding her hand and encouraging her through the delivery. And the kind woman who was such a steady, calming presence throughout the difficult labor.

Following the birth of a healthy girl, Kelsey had stared down at the tiny, sleeping face and wept. She was overwhelmed with love for her baby, but she knew she was in no position to raise her. She knew what she had to do, but she also knew it would break her heart in two.

With her daughter swaddled in her arms and tears streaming down her face, Kelsey confided in Sheila and Lexi that she had decided on adoption and asked if they would help her start the process.

Without hesitating, the compassionate and soft-spoken woman named Lexi had reached for Kelsey's hand. "If you're willing, my husband and I will adopt your baby."

Kelsey would never forget her.

Now, as she stood on the sidewalk, Lexi descended the chapel steps and approached her. She engulfed Kelsey in a warm hug and bent down to introduce herself to Theo.

"I'm so glad to see you, Kelsey. You look wonderful! Are you doing well?"

Kelsey nodded and briefly filled her in on the last decade of her life. At that moment, the young Mary exited the chapel and skipped down the steps toward the two women. She stepped close to Lexi and smiled timidly at Kelsey and Theo.

Lexi wrapped an arm around her daughter. "I'd like to introduce you to Hannah." She smiled. "We named her after a courageous woman who did the toughest thing any mother could do. She relinquished her child to the care of another."

Kelsey fought back the lump in her throat as she gently shook hands with this young girl who was brimming with such life and hope.

(over, please)

Kelsey collected herself and nodded. “I love Hannah’s story in the Bible.” Lexi reached out and squeezed her arm. “Her middle name is Kelsey.”

I have such admiration for women like Kelsey who carry their babies to term under some of the most difficult circumstances. Our team at Focus is committed to serving these frightened, vulnerable women and their babies – not only through our Option Ultrasound program, but also through our various resources geared toward expectant women and single moms. Meanwhile, we’re privileged to come alongside those like Lexi who open their hearts and homes to children in need of loving families.

Despite the challenges we’ve all been contending with throughout this very unusual year, the needs of families and children have not changed. Even as we all make plans to celebrate Christ’s birth, our team at Focus is busy preparing for another 12 months of ministering to families around the world in Jesus’ name.

The support and prayers of friends like you help us continue this important mission to save and strengthen families. God will use your most generous support today to GIVE FAMILIES HOPE through Focus on the Family efforts like our broadcast, online and print materials, counseling resources and more.

As a friend who cares about the family, you need to know that this Christmas season, you can give hope to couples and families hurt by the challenging events of this year. Your immediate support of Focus on the Family will help rescue marriages from divorce and save families.

Your gift to GIVE FAMILIES HOPE will make an even bigger impact this holiday. Now you can DOUBLE YOUR DOLLARS to help save twice as many marriages through a MATCHING OPPORTUNITY provided by generous friends of the ministry. Your gift between now and December 31 will be matched—dollar for dollar—up to \$6 million to save and strengthen marriages and families!

That means when you GIVE FAMILIES HOPE with your support today, your dollars will be doubled to save marriages, rescue babies from abortion, equip parents, reach families in crisis and more.

If there’s some way we can assist you, I hope you’ll call 1-800-A-FAMILY (232-6459). May God fill your heart and home with joy and peace!

Sincerely,



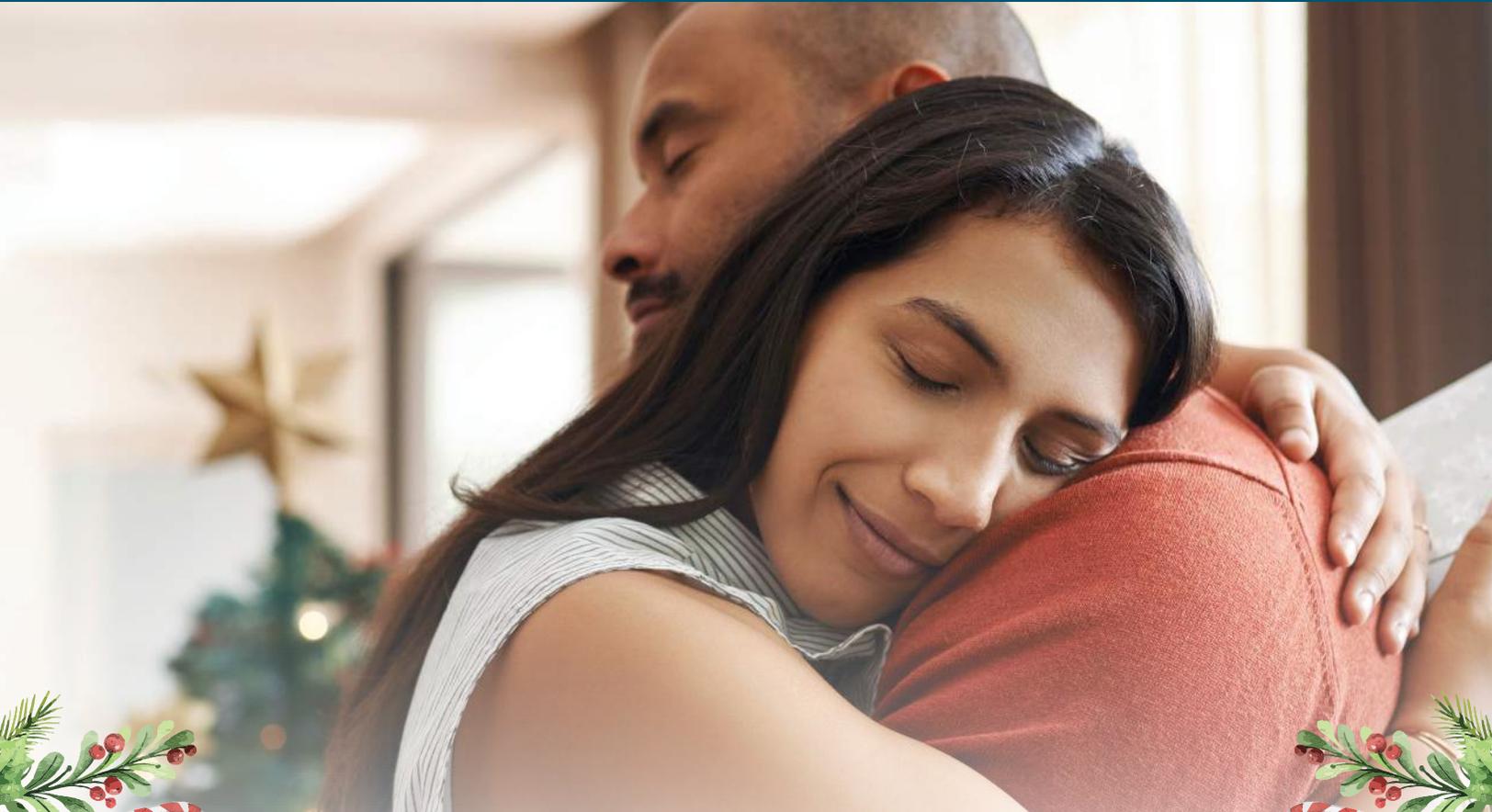
Jim Daly
President

P.S. As we close out the year, please consider sending your support to Focus on the Family today to GIVE FAMILIES HOPE. And through our special \$6 million matching opportunity, your gift will go twice as far to save and strengthen more families than ever.

FAMILY FOCUS[®]

FOR OUR PARTNERS IN FAMILY MINISTRY

DECEMBER 2020



Share to Give Families Hope!

Double your gift to redeem marriages and families this Christmas!

Without your help, Doug's* family might not be together for Christmas this year.

Even though Doug and his wife Laurie* are long-time Christians, the stresses of running a small business, his weekday travel and the financial struggles and isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had a toll on their marriage and family.

In the home together during quarantine, they avoided each other as much as possible. Laurie moved out of their bedroom and

told Doug she planned to leave him and take their two teenage daughters as soon as pandemic restrictions were lifted. Because of the pandemic, their church wasn't meeting and they didn't have the sources of support that they normally would.

This marriage was in trouble and a family was on the line!

Desperate, Doug called Focus on the Family for help. He received prayer, encouragement from Scripture and referrals for local counseling. Our prayer is that God

will use the resources you provide through Focus on the Family to save and restore this family.

And now, when you share to Give Families Hope, God has provided a way to DOUBLE the impact of your gift through a special \$6 million Match. Your Christmas gift will go twice as far to help couples in trouble.

With your help, hurting couples can

"SHARE TO GIVE FAMILIES HOPE" continued on page 2 ►

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

Daily Focus
by Jim Daly

Life Update:
SEE LIFE 2020 a Success!

This Christmas, We
Want to Say Thank You!

Are You Ready
to "Live It"?





Daily Focus

By Jim Daly, President

Christmas is about . . . LIFE!

When I was 15 years old, I received my very first Bible. It was a gift from the parents of a guy who played on the football team with me. I'll never forget it. They wrote John 10:10 in it,

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

It was the first Scripture verse that I ever really connected with as a Christian. Jesus Christ came to this earth as our Lord and Savior to give us LIFE. Christmas is about that gift of LIFE, a life of hope, peace, joy, forgiveness, grace and purpose.

Because Jesus Christ came, we can have true life. And everything we do here at Focus on the Family is really about that life. Thank you for joining us to speak life this Christmas season and all year long.

Whether you are saving the lives of preborn babies, restoring marriages that feel lifeless, or giving a child in foster care hope, your support of Focus on the Family is about bringing life into every situation . . . the life that Jesus Christ came to offer.

Jim

Get your daily news with a biblical worldview!

Get the day's news highlights straight into your inbox by subscribing to The Daily Citizen™ Morning Headlines.

Just go to FocusOnTheFamily.com/EmailSignUp and list The Daily Citizen Morning Headlines in your Email Preference Center.

"Share to Give Families Hope" *Continued from page 1*

receive help from the daily broadcast, print and online materials, counseling resources and our *Hope Restored*® marriage intensive program.

Already friends like you have assisted over 144,000 married couples work to resolve a major marital crisis at some point during the past 12 months.

Your generosity helps us continue serving couples through the *Hope Restored* program in our three locations in Branson, Missouri; Greenville, Michigan; and Rome, Georgia. You are also vital to our expansion efforts at our Georgia facility and plans for a fourth site in Southern California.

And here's even better news! Of those helped through the *Hope Restored* intensives, some 80 percent of the couples surveyed are still married two

**Names changed to protect identity.*

years after attending with significantly higher marital satisfaction!

Families like Doug's need these efforts now more than ever. This year has provided so many stresses and challenges to couples, from quarantining to lost jobs to future uncertainty. Your compassionate support makes a difference.

As a non-profit, the resources and programs of Focus on the Family wouldn't be possible without you. The hope of redemption, healing, joy and love is the beautiful gift that you can share with other hurting couples this Christmas season.

And don't forget that when you offer your generous Christmas gift today, your support will go twice as far through a Matching opportunity as part of our Give Families Hope! campaign. ■

He Said, She Said on Your Impact in 2020

This Christmas, we want to say thank you!

With Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley



Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley share testimonies this month of how you are saving marriages.

GREG: With Christmas fast approaching, we just want to take a moment to say thank you. We are grateful to friends like you who make all our efforts to minister to couples possible. With your support, you are sharing the gift of a lifetime all year long.

ERIN: God is using your generosity to bring healing and restoration to couples and their families. What better way to celebrate the hope of Christmas than by sharing how you have helped save marriages this year. Enjoy!

"As a sales representative in and out of the car all day long, I began listening to Focus on the Family almost 20 years ago. Words cannot describe the amount of times that I felt like the show was written just for me and my situation. I can wholeheartedly say that my marriage is what it is today because of your ministry. You were a light in the darkness so many times when I was at my wit's end. I owe so much to all of you and your work in this beautiful ministry."

—PAULA, KANSAS

"Pornography is a struggle in my marriage. Focus on the Family articles on the subject hit me right where I needed it. I called for counseling and received prayer and help. Thank you for being there when I needed it. I know that God will use Focus to help my marriage."

—RAVEN*

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY® BROADCAST*

The broadcast schedule is subject to change. Listen to the Focus on the Family® Broadcast on your local radio station, your mobile device or online. If you've missed one of these broadcasts, listen online at FocusOnTheFamily.com/Broadcast. You can also hear us with the all-new, enhanced Focus on the Family App found at the App Store and Google Play.

Broadcasts are brought to you by our partners — you!

DATE	TITLE	GUEST
12/01	Helping Children Understand How They Feel	Dr. Josh and Mrs. Christi Straub
12/02	Holding onto the Hope of Heaven	Mr. John Burke and Mrs. Jean Daly
12/03-12/04	How to Have a Better Sex Life by Understanding Your Love Style I & II	Mr. Milan and Mrs. Kay Yerkovich
12/07	Championing Your Son Through His Battles	Mr. Jonathan McKee
12/08-12/09	Combating the Lies that Can Destroy Your Marriage I & II	Dr. Greg Smalley and Dr. Bob Paul
12/10-12/11	Are Your Five Core Needs Being Met? I & II	Dr. Kathy Koch
12/14	Leading Others by Following Jesus	Mr. Willie Robertson
12/15-12/16	How God Redeemed My Teen Pregnancy I & II	Mrs. Lindsay Pepin Ophus, Mrs. Scarlet Pepin, and Mrs. Bethany Pepin
12/17-12/18	Discovering the Secrets of Lifelong Romance I & II	Dr. Kevin Leman and Mrs. Jean Daly
12/21	The Best Choices You Can Make for Your Marriage	Dr. Ron and Mrs. Jan Welch
12/22	Remembering the Hope of Heaven	Mr. John Burke
12/23	Parenting the Heart of Your Teen	Mrs. Connie Albers
12/24-12/25	It's a Pokenberry Christmas I & II	Adventures in Odyssey
12/28	Kids: You Gotta Love 'Em!	Mr. Kenn Kington
12/29-12/30	Discovering the Truth About My Identity I & II	Mr. Jackie Hill Perry
12/31	Getting Rid of Clutter in Your Home	Mrs. Kathi Lipp

DATE	TITLE	GUEST
1/1	Enjoying Mealtimes as a Family	Pastor Ted Cunningham
1/4	Starting Off the New Year Right	Dr. Kevin Leman
1/5	Giving Up Sugar, Tasting God's Goodness	Mrs. Wendy Speake and Mrs. Jean Daly
1/6	Simple Ways to Love Your Daughter or Son	Mr. Matt and Mrs. Lisa Jacobson
1/7	TBA	
1/8	Mount Everest and Marriage: Braving New Heights Together	Captain Harold and Mrs. Rachel Earls
1/11	How Positive Words Can Change Your Life	Mrs. Sharon Jaynes
1/12-1/13	Finding Restoration When Love is Gone I & II	Dr. David Clarke
1/14	Created by God for a Purpose	Dr. Kathy Koch
1/15	Using Your Love Language to Grow Closer to God	Dr. Gary Chapman
1/18	Offering Grace to People Different from You	Dr. David Anderson
1/19	Holding onto grace During an Unplanned Pregnancy	Mrs. Kourtney Rae Cameron and Mr. Kevin Ray
1/20	Embracing Forgiveness as a Post-Abortive Dad	Dr. Greg and Mrs. Erin Smalley
1/21	TBA	
1/22	TBA	
1/25	Releasing Pressure From Your Life	Mrs. Amy Carroll and Mrs. Cheri Gregory
1/26-1/27	Teacher of the Year I & II	Mr. Guy Doud
1/28	Nurturing Your Child's Purpose and Passion	Mrs. Cyndie Claypool de Neve
1/29	How You Can Join the Pro-Life Movement	Mrs. Amy Ford

* The broadcast schedule is subject to change.



Feature Guest:

Morgan Weistling

Get your limited-edition Morgan Weistling giclée print, *A Prayer for a New Life*, with your ministry gift of \$150 or more today. *A Prayer for a New Life* portrays a pioneer family welcoming their newborn child with prayer. You can also get this unique piece with your pledge of \$10 or more a month to become a *Friends of Focus on the Family* member.



Use the enclosed response card to mark your gift and print request or go to FocusOnTheFamily.com/MW20.



Check out our YouTube channel

FocusOnTheFamily.com/YouTube

LIFE UPDATE

See Life 2020 a success!

At While the numbers grow by the hour, we want to give God praise for more than 502,500 views of our See Life 2020 program this fall.

The life-changing online documentary-style program featured moving testimonies, brand-new music, scientific and historical facts and, of course, an ultrasound that revealed life in the womb.

A special "Will I?" video created to promote life in conjunction with our See Life 2020 campaign received more than 1.7 MILLION VIEWS!

In addition, over 164,000 people signed the #LoveEveryHeartbeat pledge and many people gave

to save lives through our Option Ultrasound™ program.

The *Option Ultrasound* program equips pregnancy medical clinics with ultrasound machines, resources, and nurses' sonography to show moms the child growing inside of them. Through the *Option Ultrasound* program, it takes just \$60 to save a child from abortion!

If you weren't able to view See Life 2020 or want to watch it again or recommend it to friends, it is available on YouTube. FocusOnTheFamily.com/SeeLife2020

The LIFE UPDATE column features testimonies and the latest news on how your support is rescuing babies from abortion and saving moms from the pain and regret of abortion.

THE MARCH FOR LIFE 2021

Join us in taking a stand for life during the 48th Annual **March For Life** event on January 29, 2021 in Washington, D.C.

For more information about how Focus on the Family is getting involved, and how you can participate from anywhere, visit: FocusOnTheFamily.com/MarchForLife



Parenting Corner with Danny Huerta

Are you ready to “Live It”?

Danny Huerta is Focus on the Family’s vice president of the Parenting and Youth department



This fall, we were thrilled that nearly 515,000 students took part in our Bring Your Bible to School Day® event. Praise God that half a million Christian students were empowered to share God’s grace and truth—the very message of the Gospel we celebrate this month.

Despite the COVID-19 challenges posed to school schedules, students across the country lived out their faith for their classmates. But we don’t want it to stop there! We want to give you the resources to equip your children to continue to shine the light of Christ through #BringYourBible’s Live It Challenges.



The challenges keep the movement of Bring Your Bible to School Day going all year. You can commit as a family to follow the monthly challenges—specific, tangible actions you can take to live out your faith and strengthen your relationship with Jesus Christ. It’s the perfect way to prepare for a new year and empower your kids to step out in boldness to share their faith.

Got to FocusOnTheFamily.com/live-it to learn more and see this month’s challenge. You’ll also find quizzes, activities and other resources. ■

YOU CAN STILL DOUBLE YOUR GIFT!

Don’t Wait to Give Families Hope!

Share the hope of Jesus Christ this Christmas season and Give Families Hope when you support Focus on the Family. **And now, through a \$6 Million Matching opportunity provided by generous friends of the ministry, your gift today will go TWICE AS FAR!**

Act now to DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT for marriages and families this holiday season. Your gift will help save marriages on the brink of

divorce, equip parents to raise children to be bold in their faith, rescue babies from abortion, reach families in crisis, help waiting children in foster care and more.

“I came to know Jesus at 18. I had been married for a year to my high school sweetheart, who was religious but did not know Christ. During the early years of my marriage, the radio ministry of Focus on the Family helped grow me in my faith and apply faith principles to my marriage. There were

many times – sometimes entire years – that I thought our marriage might fail. But God! Through your broadcast, he always intervened with timely messages that encouraged me to keep running the race. Four years in, my husband came to know Jesus, too. We grew in our faith together and with your help we overcame years of infertility and turned our pain into a marriage ministry to others. Today we are the parents of five kiddos (three adopted and two biological – all miracles to us!).”

–JOY, COLORADO

Will you help offer Christ’s peace, healing and joy to other families with your gift today?

When you share your ministry gift of \$150 or more, you’ll get a copy of the “A Prayer for a New Life” special edition giclée print hand signed by the artist Morgan Weistling.

Remember, your Gift of Hope today will go twice as far through a \$6 Million Match! ■

Give Families Hope!



Give smarter to help Families

There are several great ways to avoid unnecessary taxes and make an even greater impact with your giving.

Find out how. Scan here to watch a free video with planned giving experts.



FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

Planned Giving



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