



Dear Friend,

Greetings from Focus on the Family! Can you believe spring is almost here?! It feels like I was just writing to wish you a “Merry Christmas,” and here we are already preparing to celebrate Easter! I hope you and your family have stayed safe and healthy throughout the winter months and that you’re anticipating warmer days ahead. I hope, too, that you and your family will enjoy a wonderful Easter as we rejoice in our risen Savior.

Every year I’m impacted in a fresh way by the Christian holiday cycle of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Throughout the Advent season we wonder at the miracle of the very Son of God taking on flesh to demonstrate that He is Emmanuel, God with us. God Himself broke bread with His people, healed their infirmities, remained in perfect communion with His Father, and showed us what it looks like to live a holy, perfect life — something not one of us can ever achieve. But He didn’t stop there, of course.

Our merciful Savior then went to the cross on our behalf, shouldering all of our sin and enduring the Father’s wrath so that we could be reconciled to Him. Do we truly comprehend the torment of Christ’s suffering and death at Golgotha? *Can* we?

### **Christ’s great sacrifice**

In his book *Gentle and Lowly*, Dane Ortlund offers this powerful description of the unfathomable suffering of Jesus:

What *happened* at the cross, for those of us who claim to be its beneficiaries?

It is beyond calculating comprehension, of course. A 3-year-old cannot comprehend the pain a spouse feels when cheated on. How much less could we comprehend what it meant for God to funnel the cumulative judgment for all sinfulness of his people down onto one man. But reflecting on what we feel toward, say, the perpetrator of some unthinkable act of abuse toward an innocent victim gives us a taste of what God felt toward Christ as he, the last Adam, stood in for the sins of God’s people. The righteous human wrath we feel — the wrath we would be wrong *not* to feel — is a drop in the ocean of righteous divine wrath the Father unleashed.

After all, God punished Jesus not for the sin of just one person but many. What must it mean when Isaiah says of the servant that “the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of *us all*” (Isa. 53:6)? What was it for Christ to swallow down the cumulative twistedness, self-enthronement, natural God hatred, of the elect? What must it have been for the sum total of righteous divine wrath generated not just by one man’s sin but “the iniquity of us all” to come crashing down on a single soul?

It’s speculation, but for myself I cannot believe it was physical extremity that killed Christ. What is physical torture compared to the full weight of centuries of

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cumulative wrath absorption? That mountain of piled-up horrors? How did Jesus even retain sanity psychologically in absorbing the sum-total penalty of every lustful thought and deed coming from the hearts of God's people — and that is one sin among many? Perhaps it was sheer despair that broke him down into death.<sup>1</sup>

Can we fully grasp such immeasurable suffering and anguish? And to think that Jesus did that for you and me, so that we would not have to bear the everlasting punishment we so richly deserved, is beyond our ability to fully comprehend. I simply pray that God will never allow me to grow indifferent toward such an enormous sacrifice that was offered on my behalf.

As we reflect on the torturous death our beloved Savior withstood for our sake, may we also be filled with joy in the knowledge that He did not stay in the tomb! As 1 Corinthians 15:19 reminds us, "If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied." Thank the Lord that His resurrection gives us hope for all eternity — because we know that Jesus' victory over death means that we, too, will one day be raised to live with Christ. This is the joy and triumph that leads millions of believers to assemble each Easter Sunday and sing, "Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!"

### **Sharing the Good News**

What's more, this is the Good News that prompts us to share the Gospel message with those who have not yet made a proclamation of faith.

In considering the Church's overarching calling to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), I often emphasize that Focus' mission doesn't stop with our efforts to sustain and strengthen families. In truth, we can't hope to call the outreach you make possible a success if we fail to introduce people to the Author of the family. He, after all, is the One who is able to mend broken marriages, encourage and empower weary parents, inspire forgiveness and reconciliation, and help raise up a generation of young people wholly committed to Him.

That's why we are dedicated to ensuring that evangelism lies at the heart of all ministry endeavors you provide. Our mission statement clearly expresses our objective:

*To be led by the Holy Spirit in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible by nurturing and affirming the God-ordained institution of the family and proclaiming biblical truths worldwide.*

Spirit-led, Gospel-oriented, biblically grounded outreach to families is truly the bottom line for us.

I'm thankful to be able to report that the Lord is working mightily through Focus on the Family friends like you to bring people to a saving knowledge of Himself. Each year we conduct surveys to measure the effectiveness of our efforts. In doing so, we discover that thousands upon thousands of people have chosen to follow Christ after being exposed to the Gospel through Focus.

In fact, in the last year alone 305,000 individuals surrendered their lives to Christ as a direct result of the work you support, and 111,500 more people rededicated their lives to Him. Meanwhile, 30,000 children gave their hearts to Christ after learning about Jesus through Focus on the Family! I'm encouraged to learn of just one person who gains hope for eternity, but it's especially uplifting whenever we hear of little ones who have committed themselves to our Savior. Now

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<sup>1</sup> Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2020), 199-200).

more than ever, our world is desperately in need of passionate Christ-followers among the next generation, which is why I'm grateful that you are helping to deliver life-giving truth to young people through our various resources.

### **God is using you**

There are many avenues through which your support communicates Gospel truth. The audio drama known as *Adventures in Odyssey* is having a tremendous impact on young listeners. Fans of Whit, Eugene, Connie, and the entire *Adventures in Odyssey* cast learn valuable, scriptural lessons about any number of vital topics — and many adults even contact us regularly to let us know how much they enjoy *Adventures in Odyssey*!

Meanwhile, the *Focus on the Family Clubhouse* and *Focus on the Family Clubhouse Jr.* magazines you provide help instill biblical truth in the kids who subscribe, and our *Brio* magazine speaks to teen girls about the issues they face and the ways a vibrant faith in Christ can help them successfully navigate life with all its ups and downs.

Other resources, such as *The Truth Project*, are tailored toward equipping people to view our post-modern culture through the lens of a Christian worldview. Given society's hostility toward evangelical beliefs, it's especially crucial for believers to have a robust understanding of true, biblical faith — and to learn to apply that faith to everyday life. Many folks who have gone through *The Truth Project* tell us this video-based curriculum gave them the confidence they needed to share their beliefs with others.

The beauty of the Gospel-centered approach you make possible is that those who have discovered faith in Christ — or renewed their commitment to Him — are then in a position to impact their families by shining Jesus' light in their own homes. We've heard stories of marriages being saved and children eventually coming to know the Lord, all because one person initially learned about Christ and accepted Him through Focus.

Every month I enjoy offering a glimpse into the real-life stories of those who have been influenced by your ministry. Following are just a few of the testimonials that have been sent to us in recent days:

*"I began to listen to Focus on the Family as a single girl right out of college. Though I did not have a family of my own, I was drawn to the biblical teachings and the hope and peace I heard. I grew up in the church but had spent many years chasing the wrong things and had recently discovered the reality of living out a full life with Jesus in my heart. Seventeen years later, I now have a family of my own: a dear husband and two girls, ages 6 and 9. I now use the Focus app and rarely skip a broadcast. I listen at home while doing my daily chores, so it actually makes me look forward to doing laundry or the dishes. I have served in the women's ministry at my church for over 10 years and have shared your amazing organization with countless women as a faithful resource of healing, hope, and thriving in our journeys through this life. Many of my conversations begin with, 'I heard on Focus on the Family . . .' In fact, I have been asked time and again if I work for the ministry. Thank you for the years of hard work and seeking truth in order that His name be made known and come to life in a new/creative way for so many. Your commitment to proclaiming the truth and His unfailing love is no doubt one of the most world-changing efforts aside*

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*from the Bible itself. I cannot wait to see, one day, all the millions of lives changed by this ministry. Well done, good and faithful servants! And thank you.” –Natalie, Texas*

*“Years ago I was dealing with chronic depression. Listening to Focus on the Family all day every day stopped the vicious cycle of critical and condemning thoughts. It was a life saver! You helped me feel like I was not alone and helped me to have courage to reach out to others and open up about my struggles. You helped me raise my kids, and now they listen to Adventures in Odyssey every night before bed and also during the day when we have rest time. Thank you for all the work you do and all the help you give to people like me! I look forward to thanking you in person either on earth or in heaven!” –Becky, Maine*

*“I’ve been listening to Focus on the Family radio programs for over 30 years. The content has been enriching, informative, and inspiring. Years ago, as a new listener, I was talking to a friend about your ministry, and I’ll always remember what she said: ‘I don’t know how anyone could raise a family without the Focus on the Family broadcast.’ I couldn’t agree more. My children are grown now, but as a grandma, I’m still listening.” –Tricia, Illinois*

This is the type of impact you are making with your continuing support of Focus on the Family. Our ministry is fueled by each and every dollar you share. As a non-profit ministry, we rely on the support of friends like you. Will you prayerfully consider sharing the Good News with other families through your gift this Easter season?

As believers we are called to point people toward Christ. Every investment you make in families today will also be an eternal investment in souls. Whether through broadcasts, counseling efforts, parenting guides or other resources, you are sharing the life-changing message of the Gospel to everyone we reach. Please give today to help lead individuals and families to Jesus Christ!

Thank you for your interest in Focus on the Family’s efforts to help families thrive in Christ. It’s my hope that Easter will be a joyous occasion for you and your loved ones. He is risen indeed!



Jim Daly  
President

P.S. Please consider a gift this Easter season to share the redeeming power of Christ’s death and resurrection with others through the Bible-based resources and programs of Focus. God can use whatever you share to transform lives and eternities.