



Growing Families Australia

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Reaching our nation one family at a time

Inside:

- Christmas word competition
- Dollar jobs
- Value of money
- Website launch
- Scotford's DVD
- Christmas present idea's
- Youth Camp 2010

Keep us up-to-date!

- Are you changing your email?
- Have a new telephone number?
- Planning to move in the next few months?

We would love to know your new details so we can keep you informed & connected with the Growing Families family! Email us on enquiries@gfi.org.au

National Greetings from Bill & Joan

We have been busy...

A team of us (including indigenous people from the Kimberley) have been deliberating on what our objective was for developing parenting materials specifically designed for, and with, the aboriginal parents of the Kimberley in Western Australia (at their request). We unanimously agreed on this statement: "To initiate and seek to develop Christlike Culture within their families".

We realized as we deliberated on this that this objective is universal and applies to all families across the globe, irrespective of race, colour, creed etc. It is not just for an indigenous parenting project.

"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" Galatians ch 3 v 26-28

This objective is generally **Counter-Culture** (to whatever culture we are a part of) and is a

"pipedream" and impossible to instill into our society unless it is thoroughly grounded in the Word of God and by the power of God's Holy Spirit working dynamically in our own lives.

What does it mean to be "Christlike"? We leave you to ponder this question and seek to "join the dots" for your own family. Maybe you would like to begin with meditation on Luke ch. 2 v 52 "And Jesus grew in wisdom, and stature and in favor with God and men". Maybe it would be a good idea to get the whole family involved in working on this concept.

See what the children say a "Christlike Culture" looks like in practice, and then reflect on your own family and see how you measure up.

Christmas is a special time to celebrate Jesus. A time to reflect on the purpose for which He came to earth. Let us share with you our favourite Christmas passage from the Bible. Philippians ch. 2 v 5 - 11. Another passage to reflect on as a family.

May you have a blessed Christmas time and a truly holy holiday.

Bill and Joan

Running a Course Next Year?

Have you ever heard "...you are so lucky to have such good kids"! Of course we know that it has nothing to do with "luck" - it is about godly wisdom, fervent prayer, and the love of God being lived daily in your home.

Even so, you have a unique gift from God - His Holy Spirit and His hand upon you as you parent daily.

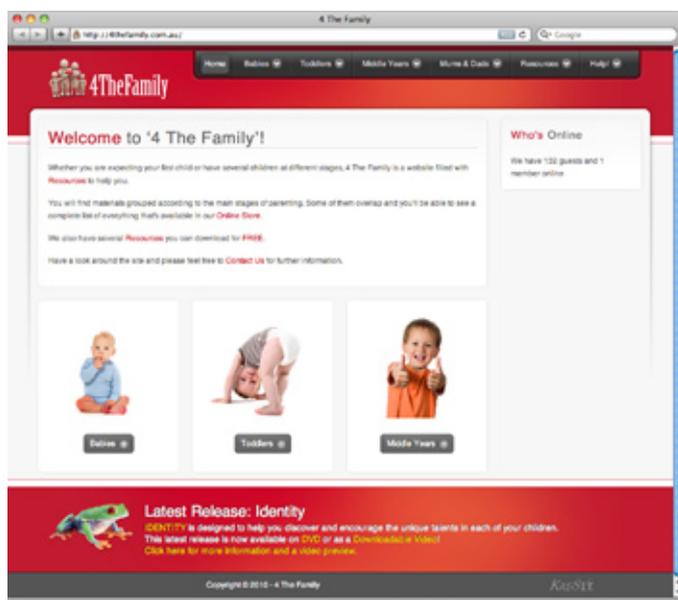
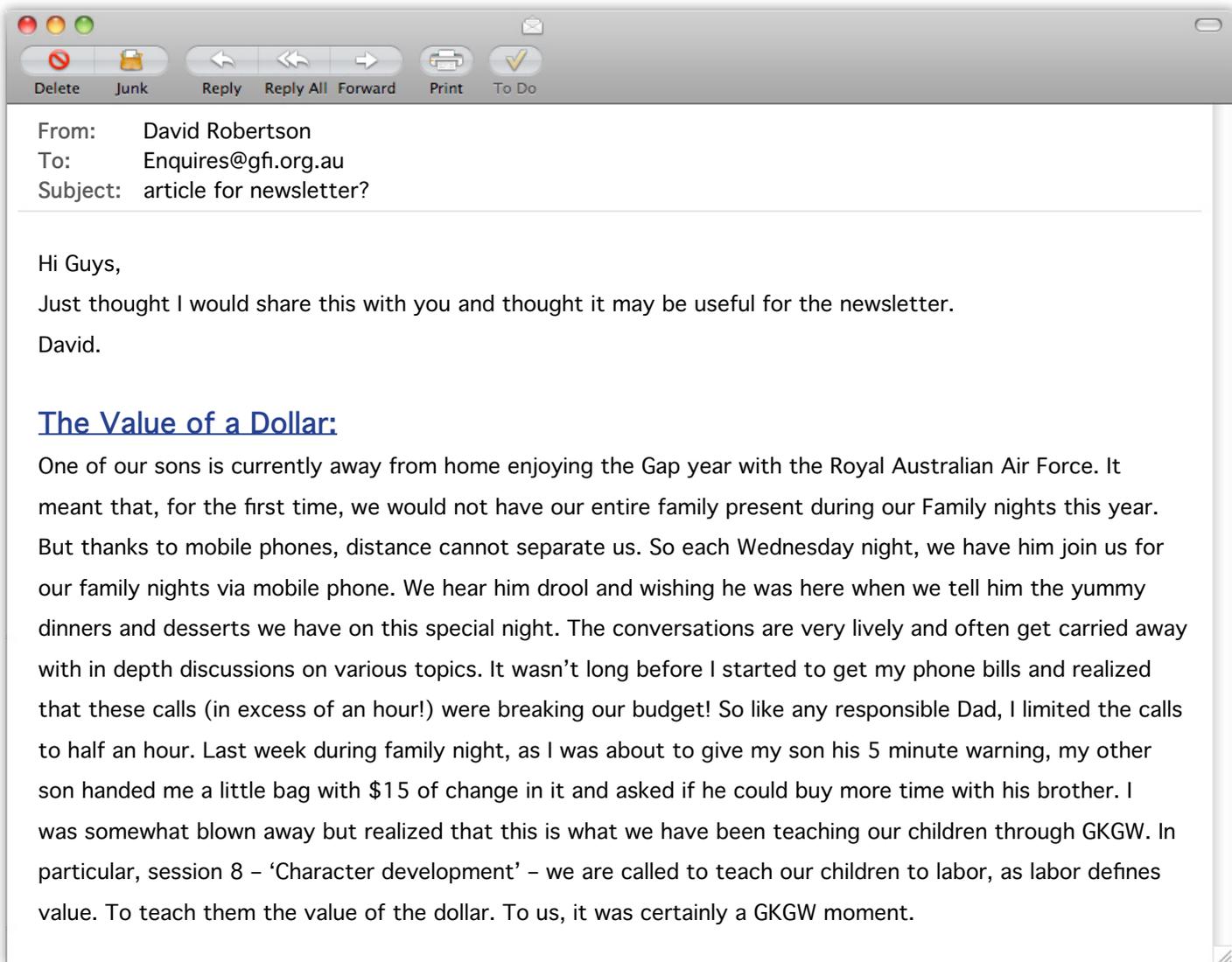
Are you sharing this gift with others? We all have a privilege and responsibility to live out Christ before the world and to give back some of the blessings He has given you.

In 2011 we ask you to seriously consider facilitating a parenting class (or two) so that you spread on the wonderful blessings you have received. To maximise your effectiveness and help out your State Teams who are trying to connect families with families - please let them know what you are up to. Check out the new website and how families can express interest in courses in your area. www.gfi.org.au

What's New!

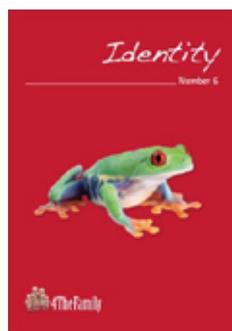
Growing Families is excited to announce the launch of its new website. Go check it out - www.gfi.org.au





Please check out our new website www.4thefamily.com.au

'Identity' a DVD of discovery



David and Charissa Scotford have been busy putting together their latest Aussie DVD. It is called 'Identity'.

Proverbs 22:6 'Train up a child in the way he should go (and in keeping with his individual gift or bent) and when he is old he will not depart from it.'

David & Charissa Scotford share a journey across Australia and their experiences as they begin to uncover the identity of their own 4 children. From encouraging the curiosity of young children, right through to making the best use of the teen years, this DVD offers inspiration for parents to identify and encourage the gifts they see developing in their own children.

'Identity' explores practical ways that Mums and Dads can train up their children in the way 'they' should go.

Available at <http://4thefamily.com.au/dvds/identity-dvd>

Reminder: How about this month during couch time...
 Discuss how your children handle money

Christmas word competition

Just a game to play with your family. Try to get more than 92 words from the word **CHRISTMAS** using words with 3 or more letters. Send them to enquires@gfi.org.au before Friday 17/12/2010 with your postal address. The family with the most words will receive the recent edition of FACETS as their prize.

Dollar Jobs - Teaching the value of time and money

Dollar Jobs - Teaching the value of time and money in our house – the children have 2 jobs a day that they are required to do simply because they are part of the family, they don't get paid for these jobs (ie pocket money). They do however, like any other children, have wish lists of things they would like, so we encourage them to do extra jobs to earn their pocket money, and save up for the items on their lists. We have big jobs and little jobs and they are priced accordingly. A big job for example may be Mowing the Grass, and for this they would get \$10; or for washing and vacuuming the car, they would get \$5, etc – you get the idea. However most of the time, we don't have time set aside for many big jobs, nor do we have that many big jobs that need doing that are child appropriate, so I have had to sit down and make a list of "Dollar Jobs". Dollar Jobs don't take more than about 10-15mins to complete and are relatively easy tasks. We have found it much less effort or 'drama' shall we say, doing ten small 'Dollar Jobs', rather than one big \$10 job that takes a lot longer to complete, and requires a higher level effort (and would naturally need to be done VERY well to earn their \$10). So up on my pantry door I have a list with a few Big Jobs, and a large list of "Dollar Jobs". This is mainly due to my 'Mummy Brain' that is incapable of remembering the jobs with a moments notice. When the kids come to me and say "Mum can I have a job so I can put money in my money box" – I glance at my jobs list and choose an appropriate job for me to supervise (fitting with what I'm doing at that time), and one that can be done within the time constraints we have at that moment in our day. I also find

it handy on holidays when they are wondering around aimlessly saying they are bored, or have nothing to do. I can just say – "Well, we can't have that – how about you choose a job off the list and go and earn some money". This helps lesson the amount of times you'll hear "I'm Bored!" some jobs will get done, and their goal will be closer, win-win I say. So here are just a few examples of some of the "Dollar Jobs" I have on my list. Wiping down the kitchen cupboards; cleaning the toilet and toilet floor; wiping down the bench, basin, bath and mirror in the bathroom; sweeping the path out the front; putting on a load of washing, hanging it out and bringing it in when dry; folding 2 baskets of washing; cleaning both sides of the back door; etc, etc, the list goes on. All jobs must be done with a happy heart, and not with whinging and complaining. I try to make sure that these jobs are NOT ones that are 'normal, day to day running of the house' jobs that should just be done as a family requirement (or reserved for much younger children) – eg. making bed, tidying room, setting the table, feeding dog, etc. I also find that at those odd times where you need a quick punishment – pick a job and tell them that today they can do this job without getting paid, and think about what better choices they could make next time while they are doing it. I hope this concept helps you as it has helped us in educating our kids on the value of a work ethic, and working to save for things we want rather than just getting them handed to us.

Rochelle - Qld



Growing Families Australia National Youth Camp 2010

On Monday the 4th of October 2010, 21 campers arrived throughout the morning by car and plane to meet for lunch in the western parklands of the city of Adelaide. From there a group of 28 travelled north 2 hours to a farm homestead 15km west of the mid north township of Burra. The following Friday afternoon was a reverse of the week's start with the last campers flying out from Adelaide airport as the sun set slowly to end the day. In between was an experience that none of those who took part would ever forget.

Our camp theme was "Gone Fishin'" which focussed on what it meant to be called "fishers of men". We covered a whole bunch of stuff on how to share your Christian faith with the people around us through teaching sessions, group discussion and personal reflection times each day. Considering whether we truly own what we sell was the first and most important challenge put to us on the Monday night.

But that's not all we did. Nearly all of our time was spent outside and at night the guys took over the homestead while the girls stayed in the self-contained cottage. It wasn't luxury as we bedded down wherever we could find a piece of floor to place a mat and sleeping bag. All of our cooking was done on the campfire where we had toasties, pancakes, tacos, hamburgers and so much, much, much other awesome food, even a full roast lamb dinner on our last night.



Some of the stuff we got up to was playing a whole bunch of crazy team games each day, we took part in an orienteering activity walking through the area following directions (that ended up being full of mistakes), we tried to make fire by rubbing sticks together, we shored sheep and learned how to throw a fleece. We walked 7 km up a hill just to come back down and camp the night under the stars by a forest. The next morning greeted us with ice on our

pillows before we had breakfast and marched back to the farm. "Catch the flag" in the dark, a quiz night till late, and we were let loose with a couple of cameras all week to make a feature film of Bear Grylls in Burra.

We were dirty, we smelled of smoke, we had ash in our food and we ate with our hands, we sat on logs and slept on the floor. Some of us got caught on barbed wire, while others crawled into their sleeping bags with feet blacker than coal,

we sprayed each other with shaving cream and planted our faces in flour. We're not sure what other people thought of us, and we must have been a sight when the last group took over a spot at the airport as they waited for each flight to take people home. But one thing we do know, we had a fantastic time, we learned things and did things together that we will remember for a very long time. Can't wait to see the movie version when it comes out on DVD.

Martin Jak

What Should I Tell My Children About Santa Claus?



Thirty years ago, questions about Santa Claus' effect on your children were not an issue. However, in a society that does little to protect the real meaning of Christmas, these questions become pertinent.

As we move closer to the holiday season, the debate about the legitimacy of Santa Claus heats up in the Christian community. The debate centres on two issues. The first is the charge that parents who propagate the fantasy of Santa Claus cause their children to think of Jesus as a fantasy. As a result, the true meaning of Christmas and the message of the Bible are undermined.

Such confusion occurs most often in families that make the Lord real to their children only twice a year—at Easter and Christmas. However, if you teach your children about the reality of Jesus throughout the year, you will not have to worry about their being confused over the meaning of Christmas. As you continue that practice, you will help your children separate reality from fantasy. Santa Claus will become just another character to them, like those found in Mother Goose, Dr Seuss, and Veggie Tales.

A second question raised from this debate is also legitimate: When a parent tells his child there is a Santa Claus, isn't that a lie? Of course it is, if your child asked you a direct question about the reality of Santa.

So how can we tell our children the truth about Santa without destroying their fun at Christmas? It is important to preserve the innocence of your child's adventure fantasy, but you must do so without compromising the truth. Here are some responses you may want to consider when your child asks you about the reality of Santa.

You can tell him about the historical Saint Nicholas. He was a church bishop approximately 400 years after the birth of Christ, and was famous for his generous spirit. Explain to him that the Christmas tradition of Santa Claus is based on his life. Then tell him

that instead of a real Saint Nicholas, Mommy & Daddy pretend to be Saint Nicholas and leave gifts under the tree each Christmas season.

Another response you might consider is to ask you child some questions about Santa Claus. Be sure to be sensitive to their response when you do so. For example you might ask, "Do you think there are reindeer who know how to fly?" "Do you believe Santa can really fit through our chimney?" And if you don't have a chimney, you can ask, "How do you suppose Santa gets in our house?" One question you should ask is, "Do you think Santa brings toys to you, or do you think Mommy and Daddy are the ones who put gifts under the tree?"

By answering your child's question, you can lead him to the right answer in way that won't crush his spirit. That's one way you can preserve your child's fantasy world while at the same time providing him with accurate information. It will ultimately cause him to understand and accept that Santa Claus is not real. Yet he will also be able to have fun pretending that he is real.

When our children were at the age where fantasy was great fun, Santa Claus was just one of many gifts-givers in our household. Some of the others included our cat Mittens, our dog Pooch, our pig, Wilbur, and Henrietta the hen and her four sisters. Of course our girls understood that Mommy and Daddy were the ones who actually provided the gifts. In our family the traditional Santa Claus ranked no higher than our feathery and furry friends from the barn. Our children knew that and had a good time with all of them. What you tell your children about Santa Claus is up to you. But whatever you decide, remember that Christ is the King—both of Christmas and every day. That is the most important message you can communicate to them.

By Gary Ezzo, "Along the Way" Christian Family Heritage Newsletter Vol Two, Issue One



"Planning and organising for the next Growing Families Australia National Conference to be held in January 2012 is well on the way, with 14 Action Groups focusing on different aspects of

organising this great event.

The IT Action Group has been particularly busy of late putting the finishing touches on the new National Conference website, and getting it ready for launch. This new website is designed to give you all the information you need leading up to the conference, to guide you through the registration process for each member of your family, and will also provide a platform for an online community where like minded people from all parts of Australia and overseas can connect and continue to stay in touch even beyond the conference. The launch of this new website will be announced very soon."