

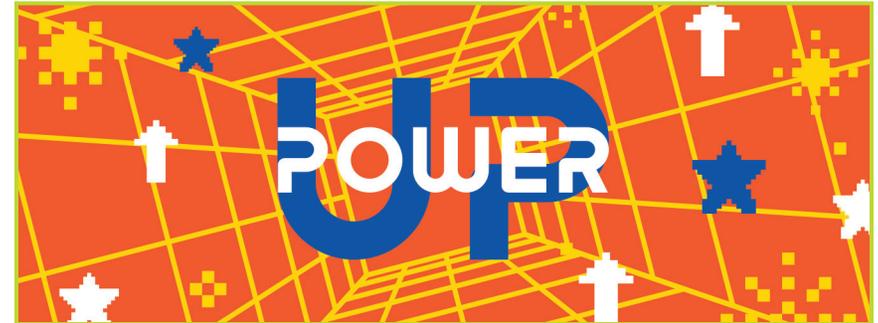
WEEK FOUR

LUKE 2:22-39

Simeon finally gets to see the promised Savior when Jesus' parents bring Him into the temple courts.

SAY  
THIS

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BATH TIME

Add a toy man and baby to bath time. Pretend the man is Simeon and the baby is Jesus. Tell your child to put Simeon on the side of the tub where he will wait for Jesus. Count to ten. Then place baby Jesus by Simeon. Repeat, telling your child to count to a different number each time. Talk about how Simeon had to be patient while he waited for Jesus. Jesus gives us the power to be patient too!

REMEMBER THIS

"I can do everything by the power of Christ."  
Philippians 4:13, NIV

BASIC  
TRUTH

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER

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## ADVICE I'D GIVE MYSELF IF I WERE STARTING OVER AS A DAD

By Reggie Joiner

I became a parent like a lot of you, while I was still trying to figure out who I was, build a career, manage a minimal income, establish a healthy marriage, etc. It seems like it would make more sense to find my identity, build a strong marriage, retire and then have kids. I really do wish I knew then what I know now. Not that I have all the answers . . . I just think I would be a smarter dad.

So here's some advice I would give to myself if I were starting over as a dad:

1. **Listen more, talk less.** I can't count the college students who tell me they don't feel like their parents ever really listened.
2. **Don't "send" your kids to bed, put them in bed.** You only have a short window of time when they are young enough to want you to tuck them in.
3. **Ask better questions.** Learn to shift from performance questions to heart questions.
4. **Guard Saturdays to create family traditions.** There are a little over 350 Saturdays between the time your kids are 1st grade and when they become teenagers, then Saturdays change forever.
5. **Don't sign up your kids for**

**everything.** We tend to make our kids experientially rich, but relationally poor.

6. **Play games.** Have fun together, build memories playing board games, or card games, etc.
7. **Don't take things too serious.** What you think matters right now will probably not matter as much as you think it does later. What does matter is what you communicate during stressful or dramatic moments.
8. **Never punish anyone relationally.** Don't withdraw your relationship to make someone feel bad for something they have done wrong.
9. **Do chores together.** Kids who work with their parents have a better work ethic and tend to be more responsible.
10. **Say "I love you" every day.** It's just a healthy habit you can never start too early.
11. **Apologize often.** You might as well admit when you do something wrong, everyone knows it anyway.

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