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5-22-11

Summertime  
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Coming!



## Reflections

They say that one can tell Summer is approaching in Oregon because the rain gets warmer, but ask any school kid and they will tell you that, rain or shine, Summer is nearly here. Summer is a time of fun for kids along with summer jobs, long daylight hours, BBQ's, and many other activities. For some it means family activities, road trips, and days at the beach or hiking in the mountains. For parents it is a golden opportunity.

When I was a kid, it meant summer jobs, but also a lot of fishing, clam-digging, and swimming. Sadly, for me, it also meant gardening (weeding), picking strawberries, blackberries and huckleberries. Not my idea of how to spend my Summer break, though the pies and jams were well received. Some summers included road trips to Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, or other places on my parents list of must-see destinations. Keep in mind that our cars were very basic without air conditioners, with hot vinyl seats, and not enough room to keep my pesky sister and brother from touching me, so the trips were not all fun and games. Our trips didn't include acknowledging our Creator.

Summertime, by contrast, can be a wonderful time to remind our kids, and ourselves, that we have a glorious Creator who made this world with much to see and do as we wonder at His work in seeing the mountains, deserts, lakes, rivers, and wildlife. What a great opportunity to talk of God's greatness and to dispel the false stories of evolution that they have heard during the school year. We can, as Moses commanded his people, teach, talk, and walk our faith as we see God's glory in that which He created. Moses stated his argument in this manner. *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. (Deuteronomy 6:5-7 NKJ)* Having such spiritual conversation is vital for a child to hear and enter into with the parents and siblings. It makes the Word come alive as we answer the big questions of life and show them God's glory as evident in that which He created. Paul, in his letter to the church at Rome,

explains why sharing God's creation with our kids is so important. We don't want them to miss these great realities. Paul tells us... *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, (Romans 1:18-20 NKJ)*

In preparation for our own use of this special season of the year to teach our kids about God and His creative power, perhaps we need to fine-tune our own understanding of what they have been told by others and by the media so that we can counter it with the facts of God's Word, and expose the lies that have been perpetrated on our society for several generations. When you see that geyser, or that great beast, or that beautiful bird, or that spectacular mountain or canyon, remind them that God has made all this happen by His wisdom and power.

Let's also be sure to spend time playing with our kids this summer. What a fine time to enjoy their company doing the things that they find to be fun! Take time to laugh, to travel, or to just sit around the backyard and watch the clouds with them. Don't give up if they use words like, boring, lame, or "you've got to be kidding". Stick with the plan and they will come around. I can't believe I would recommend this, but teach them about gardening, yard work, or other tasks that can produce color and beauty around the old homestead. This may truly cause some complaining but here's yet another opportunity to join them in the assignment and talk of God's wonders as they plant a crop and watch it grow.

There are some "don't do's" for summer as well. Don't ignore them. Don't let them hide from the world with games and TV. Don't let them miss out on getting to know their parents as partners in fun. Don't spend your summer pursuing your own pursuits without finding ways to include them in your life. Above all, don't forget to include spiritual conversation in your daily walk with them. There is nothing more rewarding than when your kids turn down their friend's invitation for an activity because they would rather spend the time with you. Don't forget to be a parent, but, in reality, parents can be fun too. So let's enjoy our summer WITH our kids. Don't let the world have them!

**Pastor Doug**