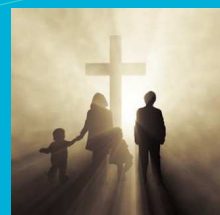


The Mops Messenger

MOPS @ Crossroads



Verse of the Month

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."
John 11:25-26



Wit & Wisdom

"A gush of birdsong, a patter of dew, a cloud & a rainbow's warning: suddenly sunshine & perfect blue, an April day in the morning."

Harriett Prescott-Spofford

"It's spring fever. That is what the name of it is. And when you've got it, you want—oh you don't quite know what it is you do want, but it just fairly makes your heart ache—you want it so!"

- Mark Twain

Can you hear me now?



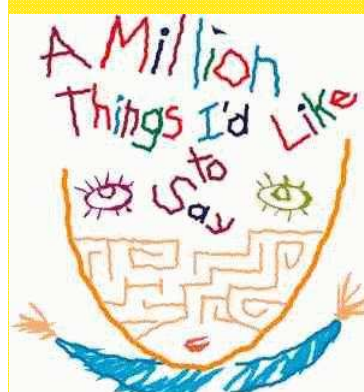
By Stephanie Marshall

This past Christmas my husband surprised me with an early Christmas present; a new top of the line Android phone with all the bells and whistles and a pretty pink plastic cover. Up 'til then I'd only ever had a basic flip phone and had been happy enough. I didn't really ever text, and it took pictures too, so I never thought about what I was 'missing'. That all changed after the new phone. This phone had 'apps'. It took great pictures. It had its own keyboard so I could text all the time. I could play games, watch YouTube videos, check Facebook, and yes, surf the internet anywhere I wanted. (including the bathroom!) It didn't take long for me to become addicted, and I realized it wasn't just the phone I was addicted to, but technology in general. At any given time in my home, the t.v. would be on, talk radio in the kitchen, one kid playing computer games, and me texting on my phone. I had become one of *those* people. I didn't know how to be quiet. I didn't know how to be still and not constantly have my attention drawn to something, because on top of all the technology, there was also my kids demanding my time and attention. One day God just smacked me with the realization that this also translated to my quiet times. I was fidgety and rushing through. My hands itched to check my phone or computer. I wanted the radio on for background noise. I'm not ADHD, but had sure developed some of the symptoms! How could God reach me through all the noise I had allowed to drown out His voice? I could feel Him trying to get my attention, and like the man on the Verizon commercials (how ironic!) saying, "Can you hear me now?" I realized it was time to unplug.

Which brings me to today. I'm calling an intervention on myself and my family. (Hello my name is Stephanie and I'm a technology addict.) I'm going to de-tox my family and myself from technology overload. My plan is to pack up the lap tops and put them away—out of sight out of mind right? This will be hard on me, but harder on my son, who is very attached to his games. My daughter is the one who will have a fit when I turn off the t.v., so as you can see this addiction has spread to my whole family. For me, the phone will sit in its docking station unless I need to use it. My hope is that having a designated spot for the phone will help me keep it there. The first week or so I'm sure is going to be very difficult. I know there will be tears (hopefully just the kids!) and a lot of whining and complaining. The trick is to be prepared with a list of activities and games we can do instead. I do not plan on cutting us off from all media 24 hrs. of the day, but it will be very strictly monitored and timed. I will work very hard to not be on the computer unless the kids are napping or after they've gone to bed. I'm not gonna lie, my self-discipline has never been very good, but my hope is that by nipping this in the bud while my kids are young, I can save us from being a family that's connected to everything but each other! I hope you'll pray for me, and my family, and perhaps even join us on this journey to (continued inside)



Stephanie is wife to Cass & mom to Cade & Macy.



"The King's Speech" may be an Oscar winning movie, but it also shines a spotlight on an issue that affects kids on social and developmental levels: stuttering. Nearly 5% of all children under the age of 7 stutter occasionally—especially when they're learning to talk, says Lisa Scott, Ph.D., vice president of the Stuttering Foundation in Memphis. If your child is stammering only occasionally, she says, you don't need to worry. But if you find that it's happening more consistently, or you notice any of the following signs, talk to your pediatrician:

- Repeating parts of words, such as "t-t-t-table" or "tay-tay-tay-table."
- Prolonging or holding a sound too long, like "sssssun."
- Opening the mouth to speak, but finding that nothing comes out.
- Struggling to produce speech by making a face or getting tense.
- Stuttering that has lasted longer than six months or began after age 3 1/2.

Article taken from Parenting Magazine

Mentor Mom Spotlight: Ellen Chiles



When Ellen was a mother of a preschooler Easter 1980 (paybacks are fun...see question #2)

1. What did you love the most about your time as a MOP? I loved just spending time with Chelsea and Jaret no matter what we did on a particular day, big or small. I loved being a part of their world watching them grow, explore and learn new things.

2. What was one of the most embarrassing moments you had when your kids were little? When Chelsea was about 3 years old and she was the flower girl in her Aunt's wedding and she announced she had to go "tee tee" during the ceremony. Luckily she had a very small voice and no one past the first couple of rows could hear what she said. (Sorry Chelsea, I just answered the question.)

3. When you felt like you and your kids were in a rut, how did you change things up? We would get out of the house and go somewhere; like the library which always included a trip to get ice cream at an old drug store with a counter you could sit at, or go on a picnic at the park or go feed the ducks at the pond or go visit their granny.

4. Please share one scripture that has been especially meaningful for you as a mom. Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

5. Any last words of advice for us moms? Learn to say "no" to your children occasionally about non-significant things when they are young. That way when they are teenagers they will accept being told no and not be shocked they are being told no they can't do something. It's OK for your child to be upset with you over being told no, they will get over it and still love you!

12 Things No One Told You about Raising a Toddler

1. You talk about poop constantly. (Potty Training 101!)
2. The "I Want Daddy" phase is a love/hate thing for moms.
3. You may spend many nights sleeping on your kid's floor.
4. You'll make new friends based on your kid's friends.
5. The world is a much more dangerous place once he's mobile.
6. Tantrums are part of a toddler's job.
7. Remember, you're living with a parrot!
8. You will count the number of sprinkles on each cupcake to make sure they're equal.
9. You'll indulge ridiculous requests & rituals to get them to do what you want.
10. You'll Say "Because I told you so" when no one is looking.
11. Bigger kids will break your heart. (Bullies, mean kids and friend rejections)
12. So-sweet moments happen at the drop of a hat, making it all worthwhile.



Teachable Moments



This article appeared in the March/April Home Life magazine and is a wonderful hands-on way to teach your children the story of Easter.

RESURRECTION COOKIES

Pre-heat oven to 300 degrees.

Ingredients:

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 3 egg whites | a pinch of salt | wooden spoon |
| 1 c. whole pecans | 1 cup sugar | tape |
| 1 tsp. vinegar | a zipper baggie | Bible |

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1tsp. Vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hands. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sins. Read Luke 23:27.

So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 c. sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Ps. 34:8 and John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isa. 1:18 & John 3:1-3.

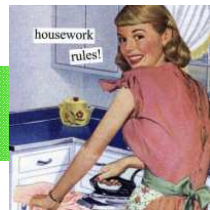
Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoonful onto wax paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matt. 27:57-60.

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF.

Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matt. 27:65-66.

Go to bed! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Resurrection morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Resurrection, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matt. 28:1-9.



Not Your Grandmother's Housewife!

We may laugh at some of the things Moms used to do, but boy they knew how to keep a clean house! Here are some tips I've garnered from the book, Classic Household Hints by Susan Waggoner:

- Squeaking door hinges can be silenced with vegetable cooking spray. Spray directly onto hinge, open & close door several times to work the spray in, then wipe off excess.
- Make sweeping more efficient by dampening the ends of your broom. If you dampen the edge of your dustpan as well, it will keep the sweepings from rolling back onto the floor.
- To keep plastic containers from discoloring when you store foods such as tomato sauce in them, coat the inside with nonstick vegetable spray first.
- Remove fingerprints from stainless steel with a small amount of baby oil on a paper towel and water spots with a cloth moistened with rubbing alcohol.

In Your Own Words

What we miss about being kids:

No worries, carefree, excitement over the little things, sleeping in, running around barefoot after my dad mowed the grass, being able to roam free & not having to worry about crazy people, eating as much as I want & not gaining weight, my imagination, no bills, slumber parties, rope swings, riding bikes w/ my sister, birthday parties, no chores!

We wanted to be:

Actress, princess, Avon Lady, jockey, banker, dancer, rock star, airline attendant, a Twinkie maker, Mack truck big rig driver, veterinarian, Queen—to a polygamous king! Cowgirl, firefighter, the Little Mermaid, astronaut, fry guy at McDonalds, dentist, doctor, teacher

Reliving Our Youth:

6 yrs. Old: 21%

16 yrs. Old: 26%

26 yrs. Old: 42%

None! : 11%

Fave t.v. show/cartoon

Animaniacs, Muppet Babies, Little House on the Prairie, Scooby Doo, smurfs, Mcgee & Me, Fraggle Rock, The Waltons, TGIF, Leave It To Beaver, Fame, Brady Bunch, The Jetsons, Johnny Quest, The Care Bears, Bugs Bunny & Roadrunner, The Littles, Dungeons & Dragons, Sky King, Full House, Punky Brewster, Wallace & Grommet, The Golden Girls, Double Dare, Mr. Rodgers, MacGyver

Passing Our Legacy to our Kids:

Snowboarding, doing fine arts, going to lunch w/ my mom, ski trips, camping in Alaska, learning to play guitar, catching fireflies, summer trips, vacationing in Destin, the beach, telling something good that day at dinner, a love for reading, going to the Frio River, camping, love of amusement parks, my love of outside, opening one gift on Christmas Eve, a closeness to each other, sports, raising them in a Christian home, big Mexican piñata parties, blueberry muffins for bdays & Christmas.



Stay At Home Mom What Did You Do Today?

Today I left some dishes dirty.

The bed got made around 3:30.

The diapers soaked a little longer.

The odor grew a little stronger.

The crumbs I spilled the day before, are staring at me from the floor.

The fingerprints there on the wall, will likely be there come next fall.

The dirty streaks on those window panes, will still be there next time it rains.

Shame on you, you sit and say, Just what did you do today?

I nursed a baby till he slept,
I held a toddler while he wept,
I played a game of hide and seek,

I squeezed a toy so it would squeak.

I pulled a wagon, sang a song,
Taught a child right from wrong.

What did I do this whole day through?

Not much that shows, I guess that's true.

Unless you think that what I've done,

Might be important to Someone,

With bright blue eyes and soft brown hair,

If that is true, then I've done my share.

- Author Unknown

(cover article continued) reclaim our family and our focus on God. Has technology become a way to pass the time when you need a moment, or does it fill the time you have together? Thinking back to when I was a kid, we were always outside playing or at a friend's house. It wasn't until we were older that t.v. became so entrenched in our daily routine. I don't want my kids to look back one day and only remember what video games they played or shows they watched. I want them to remember a mom who played with them, who could sit with them. A mom who was able to focus on her kids, not checking her phone for the latest email update. So that next time I hear God asking, "Can you hear me now?" I can answer, "loud and clear."



Mark Your Calendar!

APRIL 2011

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--------|---------|--|--------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | MOPS | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | MOPS Bible Study | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | MOPS ²⁰ Picnic & Play | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| He is Risen! Easter | 24 | 25 | 26 | MOPS ²⁷ Bible Study | 28 | 29 |
| April Holidays April Fool's Day - 1 Easter - 24 Earth Day - 22 | | | | | | |

NOTES

4/20 Stay & Play: Bring lunch for you and your kids after MOPS. Picnic on the lawn & kids play on the playground.



Birthday Girls!

Susan Shelton 4/12
 Jill Bartlett 4/19
 Sarah Bierhalter 4/25
 Jackie Yarbrough 4/27
 Amy Morefield 4/29



Coming next Month!

Crossroads

Craft and Crop

Bring your favorite craft and enjoy a fun relaxing environment in which to create.

Every 2nd Friday beginning

May 13th

6pm-10pm

Register online at

<http://www.crbctw.org/women>
 or contact Stephanie Marshall

for more details.

Shadow Puppet Theater 4/7, and every Thursday 11am The Woodlands Children's Museum
 Shadow Puppet theater is a story time that incorporates the use of light, paper puppets, and shadows. The puppets are designed to from the storybook characters and are used while the story is being read to bring new dimension, movement and intrigue to your child's favorite story books.

Crazy About Critters 4/8 and every Friday 11am The Woodlands Children's Museum

Come on in and see who or what we have visiting each Friday. Learn about the care and feeding of our scaley, furry, or slimey friends as well as their habitats and behaviors.

Family Carnival 4/9 10am-1pm VillaSport Athletic Club & Spa

All ages will enjoy the entertainment of juggling, balloon artistry, face painting, an animal show and more. Rock climbing wall, indoor jousting, airborne adventure, Jacob's Ladder, obstacle course, and classic carnival games. No guest fee. Open to the public.

Movie Nights at Waterway Square: 4/9, 4/16, 4/23 4/30 8pm-10pm

Featured Movie: 4/9: Up, 4/16 Finding Nemo. 4/23: Wall-E 4/30: Cars

Bring your own picnic blankets & coolers.

Waterway Wednesdays 4/13 11am-12pm Eggs Galore!

Kids can decorate Easter eggs, take part in a fun scavenger hunt, and make bunny ears. Kids ages 2-4, \$12per child, \$7 each additional child

Meet the Easter Bunny 4/14 10am-12pm Rob Fleming Park

Meet and greet with the Easter bunny, egg hunt, snacks and other fun activities \$15 per child, \$7 each additional child.

Faith Bible Church Baby Consignment Sale 4/15-4/16

Gently used infant, children's and maternity items at bargain prices. Friday's hours: 7-9pm, Saturday 8am-2pm. Half off period runs from 11am to 2pm Saturday.

4th Annual Fishing Derby 4/16 8am-10am Creekwood Park

Free fishing event for all ages, bait is provided and t-shirts will be given out, first come first served.

Prizes for smallest fish, heaviest fish, and longest fish. Bring your pole!

Rabbit Races at Terramont Park 4/23, 12pm-2pm

For older kids; ages 6-10 Rabbit race is a bunny sack pursuit, egg relays, a craft, and a jelly bean toss.