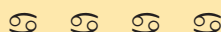


Families are important too

We always knew when Mother was spending time with God. She would kneel at the big chair in the middle of the living room. It was a secure feeling. We were always allowed to be close to her—to climb on her back, take off her shoes, tickle her toes. But we were not allowed to talk as long as she was kneeling at that chair. We were always very quiet because Mother told us how important it was that she have time to spend with God. We respected her need for quiet.

I don't know how long Mother spent each day with God. But I could count on her always being by that chair sometime during the day. Susanna Wesley had 19 children, and she spent two hours a day with the Lord. I think Mother and Susanna Wesley knew that if they listened to God, they would know what to do. They didn't let anything—even children—stop them from time with God. And what a heritage they left to their families!

Kari Torjesen Malcolm in We Signed Away our Lives



My mission statement focuses on building better relationships with my family through spending more time with them, listening to them, and engaging in worthwhile activities. Every evening, I go home, read the paper, and listen to the business news. About three months ago, my daughter and her son came to live with us while she started college. Invariably, every night I came home, Connor, my little grandson, would try to climb into my lap. Invariably I'd respond, "Well, just as soon as I get done reading the paper."

When I was done reading the paper he was already off to bed. He didn't get to climb on his grandpa's lap and play. With my mission statement in mind, I decided a small thing. No matter what I am involved in, whether its business or television, if Connor wants to get on my lap, he can climb right up.

Steven Covey in Living the 7 Habits



In May 1947, David Junior was born—our first son and the first grandson. By this time my health was better; I had passed the first Kanarese language exam and even preached a sermon in it. When little Davey was a healthy nine-month-old, one morning Helen shared with me a terrible dream she had had. She dreamed that Davey had died and

we were burying him. She was deeply troubled by the emotions of her dream. I tried to be sympathetic, but my skepticism was a bit too obvious.

Two weeks later I was to go on an evangelistic tour in the villages. Still remembering the dream, Helen pleaded with me not to go. In my concern for my work, I ignored her emotional appeal in favor of my much more rational approach. When I kissed Davey good-bye, he was a healthy, happy baby. But the next night, I had received the mission doctor's desperate message telling me to return home at once, that Davey was very ill. The doctor called it "*fulminant bacillary dysentery*." *Fulminant* comes from a Latin word which means "to strike with lightning." That was certainly an appropriate name, for by noon the next day we buried our beloved son in the tiny cemetery on the mission compound in Bidar.

Unfortunately the dream—more like a nightmare—had come true. You can be sure since then I have had a high regard for Helen's intuitive knowledge and spiritual perceptions. We now



realize that God was, in some mysterious and loving way, trying to prepare us for the tragedy.

My parents were stationed only 100 miles away, but by the time they got our message and drove over, it was late that night. They hurried out of their Jeep and started toward the back steps of our house. Mother anxiously asked, "How's little Davey?" I replied, "I'm sorry to tell you, Mom, but we buried him this morning." By then they were on the steps. My dad was one of the most saintly men I ever knew. He literally "practiced the presence" of God and talked with Him at any time—just like one would talk to a close friend. Dad stopped on the top step, and looked up into the starlit sky. There was a long

silence. Finally with just the slightest edge to his voice, he said, "Father, I don't understand this!" And he walked on into the house.

We didn't understand either, certainly not at the time. It seemed like a great many of our dreams had been smashed and dashed within such a short time. And of course, though we didn't know it then, we were soon to be caught up in the seething turmoil of the early days of Indian independence, and many more of our dreams would have to be refashioned. So it was going to take awhile before we could actually see how God was going to work it all out. But then, down in the dumps of our Dothan, we did not understand.

David Seamands in Living With Your Dreams