

PREPARING FOR BABY

Congratulations on the exciting stage of life you've entered! Whether you've recently had a new baby or counting down to your due date, you've likely noticed that parenthood is an entirely different world. In the midst of all the joy and anticipation comes a whole new level of stretching (not just mommy's belly) and character development. You may be wondering if life will ever be the same. So, become intentional about this season by preparing yourself to take three important steps for the transition into the wonderful and challenging season of parenthood.

STEP ONE: Buckle up

As new parents, you've strapped yourself into a roller coaster of adventure—with highs you could have never imagined and lows that can push you to discover abilities and courage you didn't know you had. Along with God's blessing of children comes His calling for you to lay your life down for your child (Philippians 2:3-11). Things you once took for granted—like sleep eating a warm meal or a spontaneous get-away with your spouse—are now things you will often sacrifice. While your friends without children sleep in on Saturday morning or hang out at Starbucks, you will be finding yourself in a whole new rhythm of life.

STEP TWO: Give Up

When you give sacrificially as parents you probably won't get the same kudos you'd get in the workplace, or even the same recognition you would have given each other for similar efforts before the kids arrived. You're moving into a time of life where such sacrificial giving is just something you have to do often and without expecting much fanfare. But it's in this aspect of your new mission — losing your life — that you find your life (Matthew 16:24-25). It's here that you develop "servant muscles" through the ongoing exercise of selfless giving. Though parenting is challenging, most research indicates that child-rearing tops the list of life's most satisfying endeavors.

STEP THREE: Team Up

A couple entering into the journey of parenthood usually discover a sense of purpose and shared accomplishment that can push their relationship into greater joy. But they can simultaneously drive each other crazy. Adjusting to less sleep, sex, money and time for each other can be a blow to marital satisfaction. In a time when they need each other most, they might find themselves taking their frustration out on the only other adult in the house. Your marriage can survive this adjustment and you can experience the joy of parenting that God intended for families. Being a team, you lay your lives down for each other (Ephesians 5:22-33) and give each other an extra measure of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8) and grace (2 Corinthians 9:8) – and you will see why God calls children a blessing and a gift!

EASTVIEW NEXT STEPS

Delivery Day – let the hospital know that you are a member of Eastview and a pastor will come each day you are in the hospital to pray with you and welcome your child to our world. We also have a small gift and literature for what's next to give to you.

Child Dedication Service/Spiritual Parenting Class – Val Burcham: vburcham@eastview.church

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

Your Marriage Can Survive a Newborn by and Dr. Glenn Williams and Natalie Williams

Visionary Parenting by Dr. Rob Rienow; faith4families.org

Faith Box – a spiritual scrapbook and parenting plan from birth to graduation.