A Word to Single Parents
By Jim Burns, Ph.D.

With so much focus today on building strong marriages and a solid foundation for building strong kids, I want to say a few things to single parents. When I speak at single parents' groups, I am reminded of what incredible people single parents are with the extra load they carry. Parenting is tough enough with two people, let alone one.

I'd like to share with you a story from the Bible: Moses and the Israelites were battling their archenemy, the Amalekites. God instructed Moses to hold his arms up high above his head with his staff in his hand. When Moses kept his arms raised, the Israelites would begin to win the battle; but when he grew tired and he dropped is arms, the Amalekites would start to win the battle. Finally, when Moses was exhausted, others stood beside him and helped him hold his arms high. The Israelites ended up winning the battle because of the helpers Moses used to keep his arms held high (see Exodus 17:8-16).

Who comes alongside you to help you with your children when you get tired or lose perspective along the way? Are you discouraged and too tired to fight some of the battles that need to be fought? All parents–especially single parents–have to find the courage to ask for help and find replenishing relationships for themselves and their children. The church is a very good place to seek out some of those replenishing relationships.

Mary, a friend of ours, is a single parent and my pick for Mother of the Year. She is a networker. She finds others whom she can serve and who can serve her family needs. She has chosen to be involved in her church, where many of the moms take care of each other and look after the needs of each other's children. She can't afford fancy vacations or even much time off from work, but on a shoestring budget she still manages to create family fun nights and vacation traditions that will make wonderful memories for her children. Her life hasn't turned out the way she had dreamed it would, but she is constantly on the lookout for ways to focus on the positive as well as for people like her church youth workers who can help her bring up her children to one day be responsible adults. No one said it would be easy, but with God's help and by finding the right people to come alongside you, your kids will thrive.

(Excerpted from the book, The 10 Building Blocks for a Happy Family by Jim Burns, Ph.D. Click here to order a copy.)