**Read With Your Children**

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*April 27, 2007*

Read a good book lately-with your kids?

Let me take you back a few centuries. A Massachusetts Colony law enacted in 1644 stated that heads of households should be responsible for teaching their children to read. Not a bad law.

Maybe the fathers of today should make that the law of their own home. And you can start with the basics-reading to and with your children. The rewards for both of you are immeasurable. I can think of five right off the bat.

1. **Reading brings you into close proximity to your young child.** You can watch TV from opposite sides of the room. Not so with reading. You share the same book. You look at the pictures together. I believe that's why God gave us laps.
2. **Reading encourages you to be interesting.** If you read in a monotone, your child will go to sleep. But with something like Dr. Seuss or Berenstain Bears, it's nearly impossible to read without changing your voice for different characters, acting scared or surprised, and involving yourself in the story line. Exploring different emotions with your child helps him to be honest about his feelings with you.
3. **Reading together gives you a chance to observe and enjoy your children.** Out of the corner of my eye, I love to watch Micah react to a story. He thinks. He wonders. He worries. He smiles. Knowing how your children react to stories will help you communicate the important stuff you want them to learn from you.
4. **During the story you can ask questions**, like "What does that mean?" "Why do you think he did that?" or "What do you think you would have done?" That way you can learn more about your child, teach him your values and monitor his level of understanding and mental maturity.
5. **As your children grow, you experience the immense satisfaction of learning from each other.** My oldest daughter, Hannah, is reading real books, books for grown ups. And she's learning things that I can't teach her. And sometimes, she'll even recommend a book to me. That's a thrill that I didn't anticipate as a father-that they could teach me.