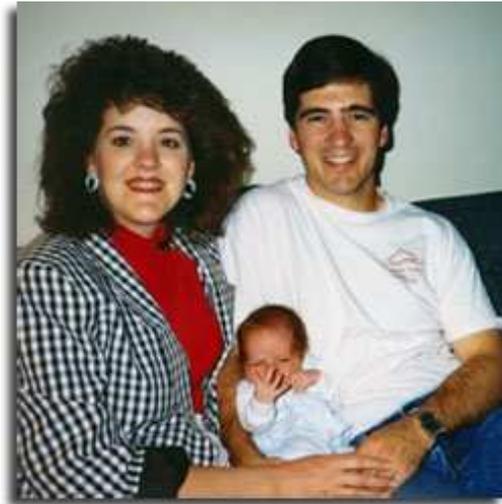


Announcement! The Birth of a Baby Boy

I'm sure many of you have been praying for us for the last several months about our ever growing family. Parenting is always a little scary and not much is more scary for us than this. Yet the time has finally come and once again God has delivered us through another rite of passage. I'm very proud to announce that we are now the proud parents of a 92 pound, 62 inch teenager.

Yes, thirTEEN years ago today our first was brought into the world. Thirteen years ago we carried a little baby home from the hospital in a car seat, and now he can carry me. Thirteen years ago he was helpless. He needed to be clothed, diapered, and nursed. He couldn't speak, talk, or read. He knew nothing.



Now we have a fine young man. He can laugh and jump and climb trees. I can still beat him in a foot race, but only for another year or two. He has his own relationship with God, a heart for his friends, and a love for his family. He loves God's Word. Not only is he educated, but in some areas he knows more than I. He still has his issues, as do I, but he's certainly not a baby any more.

I remember our first day at church with our new baby. Clayton Larson, an older gentleman in our church at the time, shook my hand with the grasp of a former military man, gave a steely-eyed stare directly into my eyes and said, "He'll be out of the house before you know it." He's right. Thirteen years have flown by. The next five are a blink away. I'm glad we took the first thirteen seriously. I'm glad God guided us—two twenty-seven-year-old inexperienced kids—through the first thirteen years of raising our charge.

What now? How should we face the teen years? Much like we did the "terrible twos". We ignore such classifications. We don't believe in them. We refuse to conform to an expectation that is set by the world. We give the same amount of credence to the teen years that God's Word does. None. We'll keep raising him, not as a teen, but as a young man. He needs more discipling, guidance, and training. And we need to continue scrambling through God's Word, desperately seeking guidance and wisdom.

He is just a day older than he was yesterday, but he's also a day closer to moving out on his own. It's all serious stuff.

Psalms 90:12 Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.