



Twolgnite

Just for Fun

Pastor Ted Cunningham

We love the second Sunday because we have a blast with Twolgnite. We celebrate marriage in this church and we promote marriage in this church. Today, just because it's summer... We always have a lot of guests during the summer. We have three main points of Twolgnite to go through with these scriptures.

Honor Marriage. We believe first of all that you should honor marriage. We believe whether you are young or old, married or single, all of us are called to esteem marriage as highly valuable. Scripture says in Hebrews 13:4 ***Marriage should be honored by all and the marriage bed kept pure.*** Honor means to esteem as highly valuable. So we believe every single person in here that calls themselves a follower of Jesus should esteem marriage as highly valuable. That's the honor piece.

Enjoy Marriage. We believe marriage should be enjoyed. We do not believe God gave you your spouse to beat you down and suck the life out of you so you can be more like Jesus. We believe you can enjoy marriage and have a spouse that's a companion through the grind. In too many marriages, a husband turns the wife into the grind or a wife turns the husband into the grind rather than being partners and companions and friends and lovers through the grind. So the scripture says in Ecclesiastes 9: 7 ***Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do.*** It's okay to enjoy life. ***Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil...*** It's speaking there of joy and festivities. And then it says this in Verse 9. ***Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun.*** We believe life can be difficult and challenging and painful, but you've been blessed with marriage and it should be enjoyed.

Prioritize Marriage. The third piece is this prioritize piece is in Genesis 2: 24. ***For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother...*** That part is parenting. We believe every child should leave home as an adult, not on a journey to become one. You need to teach your children "You won't be here forever, so plan accordingly." And the earlier we start with that, the better. We want them to go.

One dad said this a couple of months ago to me when I saw him having some tension with a teenage son. I love what he said because he said it with grace and with mercy and with strength. He said "I'm

just done; it's time for him to leave." I thought *that's good*. "He spent 17 or 18 years in this home; he knows everything we're about, we've poured everything we can into him, and it's time for him to go."

I love hearing that from a dad of a teenager, instead of “Oh, no, he’s not ready; hold him and let’s keep him forever.” This is the trophy child and we don’t believe in that here. We grew up getting A, B, C, D, and we skipped the letter E and went straight to F because we wanted you to know you failed. Isn’t that what we tell our kids now? Today, it’s “You’re a success no matter what. We’re going to help you be a winner at everything.”

No, I grew up learning that if you didn’t do well on a test, you were a failure. We have to teach our kids how to succeed and fail, right? In our family, leaning how to fail is important if you’re going to continue the long tradition in our family of being a Cubs fan, right? So we want them to know we succeed maybe once a century, but then there are times of failure and you need to be prepared for that.

I think when this dad was sharing that with his son, he was saying “Listen, I’ve done all I can do. I’m going to love you and now it’s time for you to go out and experience the world. Because you know so much more than I do, go... go! I’ll see you at Christmas and you can tell me how awesome you are at doing life on your own.”

... and be united to his wife and they become one flesh. That’s the marriage piece. Traditionally and biblically, historically and biblically, you left your parent’s home and you went right into marriage. You went right into your new home. Now, we have this extended period of time called *prolonged adolescence* where kids are taking ten to fifteen years between leaving Mom and Dad’s home and joining a new home, and it’s become a challenge. Honor, enjoy, and prioritize. We believe in eradicating the kid-centered home and making marriage a priority.

I spoke with Dennis Rainey this week at Family Life and Dennis said he was preparing his statement for when the Supreme Court decision comes down. There are a lot of people asking me about the Supreme Court decision. I have to be honest with you. I am not as worried about a Supreme Court decision as I am about churches that have a lack of enthusiasm to honor, enjoy, and prioritize marriage. To me, that’s a bigger deal. If we will be salt and light and our marriages will shine forth and our marriages will look different, people will look at us and go “That’s a marriage I want.” That couple enjoys each other. They enjoy spending time together. Look at how they laugh together” which is what we are going to talk about today as we look at the theology of laughter.

This year, we’ve been taking honor, enjoy, and prioritize to a whole new level with this #52IN15. We’ve been challenging the couples at our church to take 52 dates in 2015. We’ve been theming each month. Last month was “mentor” dates. This month is “just for fun” dates. The mentor dates went well and to date... So January 1 through June 1, we have recorded 1,710 dates here at Woodland Hills Family Church. We think that is fantastic.

We have something to celebrate. We always give away these prizes. We haven’t celebrated this couple enough. Put Andy and Stephanie Watson up there. We’re actually giving them a prize. They have two teenage boys who we love to death, Sam and Roy, but raising them can be quite challenging. Survival kit

for raising teenagers... let me tell you all the stuff they're getting. They are getting two massage gift certificates, a stress relief bath gel and lotion, Extra Strength Tylenol, chocolate, and Backstage Café and Soda Bar gift certificate. It's actually Backstage Wine Bar, but... And that's okay. They have hard jobs and hard jobs as parents. We are so thankful to have Andy and Stephanie in our lives. They are on vacation today so they deserve that. They are in Florida.

Let's look at the next ones. These are two fun couples. This is R.G. and Karen. Many in this church have been mentored by R.G. and Karen. Let me tell you where we are taking them. We have dinner for two at Red Lobster. R.G. is an elder at our church so just to make sure we are legal, he's going to have to reimburse us for that gift certificate, but I think that's only right.

And then there's Crystal and Austin Morris. We love your enthusiasm and fun-loving spirit. "Dinner date with some of our favorite people; love and respect them so much."

I'm just going to tell you this as your pastor. R. G. and Karen wake up every day thinking of ways that they can save marriages at this church. They are retired and they sit on their back deck until about noon every day. R.G. says their ministry doesn't start until noon, so don't call them before noon. He wants his coffee and his time, but from noon on, the rest of the day, they are meeting with couples, talking with couples, trying to save marriages.

I have to be honest with you. They've made phone calls to people in here to try to help. If you know this guy right there... He's one of the most meek and humble guys you'll ever meet in the world. When I hear some of the ways people respond to him, it kills me, but I'm like "R.G., God has called you for such a time as this. You just keep going and when people throw something at you, you tell me and I will take them out." I love this guy and love what he stands for.

We're sending Crystal and Austin to laser tag, mini golf, go-carts, and zip lines because we didn't know if R.G.'s hips would be able to handle all of that. We want to keep him around for a little while longer.

Now this is a cool date right here. If you're single... Widow or widower, I want you to understand how valuable you are to this church as a mentor and on mentor dates. This is Dusty Winans' grandma, Pepa... We got a gift certificate for Pepa. "Thank you for teaching Dusty at a young age the importance of family communication, laughing, and love. He is now pouring into his family in a big way." So we are sending Pepa to a full spa day: a manicure, pedicure, and foot massage.

So we are going to jump in today. We're going to talk about the theology of laughter. I want to throw this idea up here because in April, I had the opportunity to debate Gary Thomas. Gary Thomas wrote the book *Sacred Marriage*. In that book, he just asked the question "What if God gave you your spouse to make you holy more than happy?" The book is close to selling over a million copies.

They said "Ted, why don't you come and be the fun guy and debate him for the happiness piece?" As though I'm against holiness. I told them I was for holiness too. They said "Yeah, but the problem is a lot of church leaders over the last few years have read that book and they've changed the subtitle of it."

Maybe they haven't read the book or what they've read into the book is "God gave you your spouse to make you holy, not happy."

Gary Thomas is a very intellectual scholar type. We're very similar that way. He got up and gave a wonderful talk on holiness. He spent fifteen minutes explaining holiness. And they made me follow with the happiness talk where I came in telling jokes. It felt odd at first, but what's funny is Gary and I are on the same page. Our personalities are different and I probably show forth more on the happiness side, but we both agree that holiness and happiness... In other words, your faith and joy are not at war. You don't have to be grumpy to be a follower of Christ. This is very important to understand.

We launched into studying this for a couple of months, making sure... Okay we have to help churches understand that both of these are choices that you go after. And confirmation bias... Ryan Pannell will teach you this if you sit with him for any time. He is the counselor here at our church. Confirmation bias is where we make decisions and then we look for the evidence to back those up. So what decision have you made about your marriage? What decision have you made about your spouse? Then you look for the evidence to back that up. If you think your spouse is worthless, you will spend your days looking for all of the activities in their life... and every word that comes out of their mouth will go through the filter of worthless. If you think your husband is lazy, everything that husband does will go through that filter of lazy. That's confirmation bias. You've made a decision and now you are going to spend your days looking for the evidence to back it up. The scripture talks about this in Proverbs 23: 7. ***As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.*** If you think about something long enough, if you dwell on something long enough... Some of you had a parent say something to you years ago. You believed it and now it has defined your life.

In a couple of weeks, I'm going to do Psalm 139 that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. You turn on the news this week... And it's interesting to me that we have a man who wants to become a woman, we have a white lady who wants to live life as a black lady... I don't get the confusion. "I don't like how God made me..." And now science allows me not just to shake my fist my God, but to change what God created. And it's fascinating to me. My heart just goes out to them. Who said or did something to you that you don't like the way that you were made? You don't believe you are fearfully and wonderfully made so you're going to change it and try to be someone else. It's interesting to me to watch how the news responds to it. It's okay, if you don't feel comfortable in your gender, to change it, but if you don't feel comfortable in your race, you can't change that? Our world is so confused. What we are accepting and what we are not accepting. To me, it all goes back to messages on the heart. Who told that little guy something when he was six or seven years old or when he was a teenager?

Yesterday, I asked for comments on Facebook and got over 50 people to respond, giving me their laughing style. One of the saddest ones on there was "My ex-husband told me my laugh was terrible." He didn't like the way she laughed so she just changed her laugh. No... no.

I found out and I will share it in a minute, but this church is full of snorters. Raise your hand if you snort when you laugh. I just want you to hear this as your pastor. Your snort is accepted here. Whatever your laugh is, however God gave you that laugh, it's accepted at this church... use it. Don't be afraid of it. I love how people were not giving me their laugh style, but commenting on the laugh styles of their family

members. I'm just trying to figure out why we need to change. As you think in your heart, what are the thoughts that you've been living with and just mulling over in your mind for years? Many of them probably aren't true. They are not true about you, but it's now how you live.

So this whole idea of happiness... You go to Philippians 4 and you'll read this. Paul says it this way: **Rejoice...** The word *rejoice* in Verse 4 means an expression of cheer, of joy, like you are putting it out there. I like how he says this. **Rejoice in the Lord...** Meaning I know heaven is my home. I know the Lord is returning one day because of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. I know my faith; I'm grounded in the Lord. So because of that, I'm going to live a life of joy. You're thinking *If you start going Joel Olsteen at this church, I'm leaving. I need doctrine and doctrine comes with grumpiness.* I'm going to rejoice in the Lord and Paul, just in case you didn't get it, said "I'll say it again." I didn't add any of these words; this is straight from the Bible. **I will say it again: Rejoice...** you grumpy Christians. The people that leave our church mad... I hear this: "I don't like that church. There's too much comedy and too many people."

Our new Student Director, Mickey Pitman, heard that, years ago at a church in Florida. I love this response. His friend is leaving a church because there is too much laughter and too many people. Mickey goes "You're probably going to hate heaven."

Chuck Swindoll almost didn't go into ministry because he didn't think he could keep his sense of humor. Paul is saying **Rejoice in the Lord always I'll say it again: Rejoice!** Celebrate your life in Christ. He goes on in Verse 8 to say this and he's talking about the thoughts. What are you thinking about? **Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.** Just dwell on those. This is why we teach to memorize and meditate scripture. Just let your mind... over and over again you pour over the scripture so it's in you. You're thinking on that instead of your bank account or your home being a mess... You get a thought and you start obsessing over it. Do we have any thought obsessors in here? You know what we're talking about.

Laughter is a choice.

So here's the bottom line. The theology of laughter... We're going to give you three parts to it and then give you some very practical application as you think about this. We are going to start today understanding that laughter is a choice. You have to choose to rejoice. Paul was like "I'm poor, I'm in prison, I'm cold, I'm tired, but I have learned; I will choose to be content. I'm not going to wait for my circumstances to change. In this present circumstance, I'm going to choose contentment."

Here's the confusion that I think a lot of people have in the holiness versus happiness debate. Pursuing holiness is not a guarantee of finding happiness. Do you know any grumpy Christians that know the Lord, that have given their life to Christ, that have given their entire lives to ministry? I know grumpy Christians. I know grumpy churches. I may go too far by saying this. I know grumpy denominations where the young guys coming out of seminary were taught to not use too much humor. "Don't rejoice too much in the Lord; keep it down. If you want that, go to camp, but in church, we like to keep it down."

Pursing holiness is not a guarantee of finding happiness. You have to choose both. This is why these are the scriptures we go to often. Proverbs 5: 18 says **May you rejoice in the wife of your youth.** May you have an expression of joy and cheer over the wife of your youth. May you continue to celebrate her. The scripture goes on to say in Verse 19 **May her breasts satisfy you always.** And all the men said... Amen. I'll say it again. **May you rejoice in the wife of your youth and may her breasts satisfy you always.** And all the men said... Amen.

Ecclesiastes 9 says **Enjoy – choose to rejoice in – life with your wife.** Make the decision.

So bottom line is this. Don't choose between holiness and happiness. Don't make that choice. That argument has been presented to the church as a false dichotomy, as though you have to have one or the other. Don't choose between holiness and happiness; go for both. Make the decision for both to have a life set apart to Christ and to choose to rejoice in the Lord, to choose to rejoice in the wife of our youth. Go for both, but prioritize holiness over happiness.

The scripture is very clear on this in Ecclesiastes 7: 3 in a passage we go to often. Probably ever funeral that is going to be, from here on out, at Woodland Hills will start in Ecclesiastes 7: 1 and 2. **It's better to go to a house of mourning than to a house of feasting.** This verse flows right from that when it says this in Chapter 7: 3. **Frustration is better than laughter.** Again, it's not that laughter is bad. There is a place for laughter as we will see in a second. There is a place for laughter but with frustration, you get a sad face and that's good for the heart. It's in the context of a funeral. In other words, when you go to the house of mourning, it recalibrates and it reprioritizes life. You begin asking all the right questions about your life. Laughter is a choice.

So I decided a few weeks ago... I don't know if you've felt this. Some of you are thinking *Okay, I'm not a real fun person.* I get that a lot. You're like *I'm not funny, I don't tell jokes. I sit at the end of the table and listen to everybody else.* I hear this from people a lot. You have to make the choice and you have to pursue it. I'll give you an example. When I go down to the Buzzard Bar at Big Cedar and watch Clay Self play the guitar... When I watch Doug Gabrielle play the guitar... When I watch Keven Allen play the guitar up here ... Do you know what's in my head? *I'm going to do that one day. I'm going to be awesome at the guitar.*

So last year I bought a guitar. I don't know if you know this, but guitars are expensive. I went up to Springfield to the guitar shop. Guitars start at \$99.99 and they go up to just countless thousands of dollars. I bought the one for \$99.99. It came with a pick, a case, a tuner, and twelve free lessons. I thought I could do this because every country song is G, C, and D. You just have to know G, C, and D. It's true because if you ever watch at a Branson show, the entertainer playing a song has got G, C, and D down. If they hit a B chord which takes six fingers on your left hand to play, that's when they encourage you to clap. And then they go back to G, C, and D. They get to an F sharp and they get back to this right here and then they're back to a G, C, and D. It's simple. I'm only a year or two away from headlining a show here in Branson. That's terrible. That's not funny; don't laugh at that.

To me, when I watch these guys, I think *I can do this. I can do this.* I can't. I'm never going to play the guitar like Kevin Allen or Clay Self. These guys have spent their lives and careers learning how to play

that instrument. But I can be okay at it. If I announce a gig on Facebook, you're not coming to it. You would come to laugh. *Chicken Fried and Wagon Wheel* are the only two songs I can do because all you have is G, C, and D. I even play the fake C chord. I don't even play the real C chord because that takes four fingers and my hands get exhausted about halfway through that song, but I'm still trying.

That's how laughter works for all of us. You're not going to be Jeff Foxworthy. You're not going to be Jim Gaffigan or Brian Regan or Tim Hawkins, but you can get close, you can practice, you can try. Laughter is a choice. Make the decision. We need more laughter. I am sad when I read through comments on Facebook whenever something goes out on laughter and I hear somebody say something like this. "I haven't laughed in a long time." That's not the case in our home. It's more like "I haven't laughed in the last hour; what's the matter?" We've decided our home is going to be a place of rejoicing. Do we have difficult times? Yes. Do we have frustration? Yes. Do we have pain and sorrow and do we go through seasons of mourning? Yes, but we are choosing joy. Amy and I are choosing to rejoice in one another.

Laughter is a season.

Ecclesiastes 3: 1 says ***There is a time for everything*** and the *time* there means appointed time, an anointed time for everything. ...***A season for every activity under the heavens***. In Verse 4, it gives you a few of those activities. ...***a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...***

There are many in here right now that are not in a season of laughter. This isn't the season that you find yourself in. You're in a season of mourning. I've met with some this week and as part of our funerals here, we're trying to follow up with people, weeks after a funeral. That's because three weeks, four weeks, eight weeks after a funeral is a very trying, difficult time. As people move back into life and back into the grind, it becomes a challenge. We say "Let's meet and process." Let me tell you something. The tears three, four, or five weeks later are just as strong as they were the day they lost their love one.

That's many of you who are in here right now. You are not in a season of laughter and it's okay that you are in a season of mourning and you need to rest in this season. You need to embrace the season that you are in right now. Some of you have been in a season though for a long time. One of the things I love about living in Branson is we have four seasons. You come in and out of these seasons and for some of you, you're stuck in a season. Maybe today is the day you go *Okay, there's going to be a new season. Our marriage has been in a dry season for years, but today we are going to make the choice to enter into a new season.*

Laughter is a medicine.

Oh do I love this one. Proverbs 17:22 says ***A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*** Pastor Chuck Swindoll who I mentioned earlier... this is one of my all-time favorite laughter quotes from him. "*Laugh out loud; it helps flush out the nervous system. Laughter is the most beautiful and beneficial therapy God ever granted humanity.*" And all God's people said... Amen. It is a medicine.

Dr. Frank Lipman believes laughter helps us both emotionally and physically. He says *“What’s the one prescription I am always happy to dispense? Take two belly laughs and call me in the morning. Safer than any big pharma pill-of-the-moment and free of harmful side effects, laughter is one of the easiest things you can do to promote healing and well-being. In fact, in my 20 years of medical experience, I’ve found that patients who have a sense of humor and laugh a lot tend to heal better and faster than those who don’t. Therefore I say, if health and wellness is your goal, skip irony, bypass sarcasm and make the conscious choice to add more joyous laughter into to your day.”*

We saw the movies Patch Adams. The whole movie was about “In the middle of taking care of your physical well-being, I’m going to through on a red nose and make you laugh. I’m going to put on big goofy shoes. I’m going to bring laughter into it.”

Norman Cousins wrote the book *The Anatomy of Illness*. He found that when he was sick, he had to watch Marx Brothers’ films and he surrounded himself with those hidden camera shows. He found that 20 minutes of intense belly laughter gave him up to two hours of pain free rest. It didn’t necessarily knock out his illness, but it helped him get through the illness.

One French surgeon puts it this way. *“The surgeon must forbid anger, hatred, and sadness in the patient and remind him that the body grows fat from joy and thin from sadness.”* This is where we want to head today. We want to look at laughter as a choice, look at laughter as a season, and look at laughter as a medicine. So if you need more of this in your marriage and in your home... Chuck Swindoll heard from a listener... one lady said “I’ll no longer listen to your program because you use way too much humor in your sermons.” At the same time, he got a letter where a lady said “Please keep the laughter coming because it’s the only laughter that finds its way into our home.” He said “At that point, I just made the decision that I was going to use laughter as part of my ministry.”

So here’s where we are going to start.

1. Connect with laughter.

If you came today and you are frustrated with your spouse, you’re at the end, you’re done, I’m going to encourage you. This is going to be the weirdest thing ever. I’m going to encourage you to lighten up. You’re not as awesome as you think you are. You’re taking yourself way too seriously. You have a higher view of yourself than you probably have of God. Your ways are right, your thoughts and ideas are right, your opinions are the best, and so you go to Facebook and Twitter and you’re going to let the world know of your opinions and guess what? It’s Unfriend, unfriend, unfriend, unfriend. And it’s not necessarily your opinion; it’s your approach.

So I’m just going to encourage you, as a couple and within your family, to say “This week we are going to find ways to connect with laughter.” So surround yourself with funny videos, watch comedies. If you are in a bad place in your marriage, don’t go see *San Andreas*. I tell couples that if they are really struggling in marriage, the bad thoughts that go on in your brain when you watch end of the world movies... Some of you are thinking *That sounds so good right now. The world coming to an end would help this marriage out tremendously.*

I tell couples not to go to the romance movies. The romance movies are two people that are always somewhere for long periods of time... Have you ever noticed that everybody in romance movies don't have jobs. They're lounging around on shores and on water craft and they are just chilling. Everybody in the romance movies is filthy rich; they are not you. The problem when you watch a romance movie when you are in a bad or stuck marriage is you watch and you feel like you should have that and now the guy feels worse that he can't afford that yacht. "Why won't you hold me like that?" "I have a job; I can't hold you all day like that." Am I speaking the truth? This is the truth.

So don't go to end of the world movies and don't go to romance movies. Go to a comedy and laugh, just laugh. Gary Smalley taught this for years and I believe it. Fake it if you have to. Here's what I want to encourage you to do just so we can see if it's working here at Woodland Hills. When you leave here today and get in your car... From the moment you get in your car, for every laugh that takes place in your car, honk the horn real fast. Seriously. This will work.

One of my friends does this at marriage conferences. He tells them "When you leave here tonight, when you get to your first stop light, I want you to make out, husband and wife, until the person behind you honks." He said there is no greater feeling than to go out the front of the church and hear the horns honking. So we are going to do that today, but with laughter. Don't make it an obnoxious... If you are belly laughing, lay on the horn. If you came here alone and it's just you in the car, you can make yourself laugh. Laugh at something and honk the horn. Everybody driving by will see you laughing and honking the horn. I don't know what the police are going to say about this in Branson, but let's at least do it down Shepherd of the Hills.

Look at what Victor Borge said. "*Laughter is the shortest distance between two people.*" Learn to laugh and just make the decision this week. We're going to go into a season of laughter for the next week. Just for fun, we are going to enjoy life with each other. "Yeah, but we have no money in the checking account." "Well then we can't rent a video; we will have to write our own comedy. But we are going to connect through laughter."

2. Hang around funny people.

Some of you have the wrong friends. You're around a lot of serious, somber, negative, critical, toxic people and that's not good; that is not healthy for you.

Early this week, I went to the Christian Comedy Association in Atlanta. I just want to learn how to write humor well and layer jokes. It's like 150 comedians in Atlanta. As I'm hanging around, I'm just laughing and laughing. There were some new comedians there that were trying out some stuff. I wanted to help them. We still encouraged them, but like their dads probably told them, they needed to have a fall back. But it was good just to be around them.

I went golfing a couple of weeks ago. I golf once every four years, but I was with Jerod Hill and Adam Donyes and Joshua Straub. We were terrible. I was terrible, but I can guarantee you of every single golf

group out there, we were the most fun. We were the funnest. No one was having a funner time than we were. We were having a blast. I don't want to get good at this sport for fear...

If you notice most golfers who aren't laughing, I just want to go up and tell them "Listen, you're not a good golfer and I don't care how long you spend out here, you'll never be a pro. So don't take yourself too seriously (see the theme) and don't get mad and throw your clubs and huff off. Laugh. I am; laugh with me as I laugh at you." You see this in sports. People take themselves too seriously. You're not good at this and you're never going to get good at this, so have fun with it.

Friday morning, Gary Smalley was in town. I'm hoping he's at the 11:00 service. We went to breakfast and the goal was just an hour of laughter and that was it. Gary is having some health complications and he's just sitting there laughing and gasping for air.

3. Make a mental note, give it some time, and then go with the callback.

This is very important and this is just for the husbands here. I want to help you because I've learned this even in the last couple of weeks. This is going to sound complicated, but if you don't take any other note, take this one. When something funny happens in your home, make a mental note and give it some time. It's very important to give it some time then go with the callback. The callback in comedy is when you give a joke and then ten minutes later, you bring that joke back up in another joke. You see this in all your favorite comedians and it works in the home. The secret though is a little bit of time in between the events. This is where men really screw up. Something happens that she doesn't think is funny, but we think it's hilarious and we're like "That's rich; that's the laughter Ted is talking about." But right then is not the moment.

Three weeks ago, we were going to a party and Amy was in the kitchen making Brussel sprout salad. She was dicing and chopping and food processing and mixing. She was reducing stuff on the stove. She was doing it out of a cook book, from scratch. She spent over an hour making Brussel sprout salad. She put it in this nice bowl and then I bought her... If you haven't seen these, you've got to go get these, guys. This is a Father's Day gift. I know it will be for the kitchen, but it's this plastic thing. It comes in lily pads and flowers and you put it on top of the bowl and it sucks to the bowl. It forms a seal, but it technically isn't a lid. This is the key to the whole thing.

Amy gets the salad done, complete in the bowl. She gets one of these things I got her for Mother's Day and puts it on the bowl. She picks it up and she is walking over to the refrigerator. What's about to happen is funny, but what she said before what happened happened is even funnier. She goes "This thing is amazing!" As she said that, the bowl fell from the lid, shattered on the floor of the kitchen, and Brussel sprout salad went everywhere. It's not funny that it's just the bowl breaking and stuff going everywhere, but that she said "This is amazing!"

Okay... I made a mental note of what just happened because at that moment, it was not funny at all. I saw a little tear come down her face. She walks off which I'm assuming means Ted is cleaning all this up now. Do you learn at this church or what? You do learn. Scott you were ignorant in these skills up until we started putting them up on the screen here for you to look at. So I clean it up and Carson comes in and asks what happened. I'm laughing as I tell him what happened. So Carson and I are laughing.

About an hour later, which I thought was some time, I went with the callback. She wasn't ready. She did not think it was funny at all. After an hour of making this... And I'm always trying to fix it. I told her we could go to Sunfest and get some potato salad... Potato salad! No.

Let me tell you... I've learned. Now we are laughing with some time for her. For me it was about an hour. For her, sometime is about two weeks. She needed two weeks to recover from it, but once she recovered from it, now we're laughing about it. Right now, the men are being set free in Jesus, as we speak. You can do this. You already do this; you're just missing the time point. Give it some time, but the secret is it's not your time, it's her time.

4. Discover your laugh style.

This is one of the most fun things you can do as a family. Sit around the table and describe one another's laugh style. I have what my family describes as a "slow machine gun laugh" and it builds. Amy has what I call a "silent, patriotic laugh." Every time she is about to get out of control with laughter, she puts her hand over her heart and she leans forward. That's her laugh; that's as big of a laugh as you get from Amy.

Last year, we were at a conference in Atlanta when Jeff Foxworthy did a 30 minute routine. That was the funniest I've ever seen Jeff Foxworthy. It was at the Orange Conference, who does all the curriculum. He did a 15 minute routine on his colonoscopy. I've never laughed harder in all of my life. Amy is sitting next to me. Part of my fun is watching her laugh because I mean for 15 minutes, she didn't breathe. She holds her hand over her heart and she trying to hold it in. I've tried to explain to her that she can't hold in laughter. Women, you've got to let it out. When you hold in laughter, do you know what happens? It turns to cellulite. You need to let it out. See, that was the loudest laugh of the morning. The ladies are laughing out loud now. "I will not let that go to my hips."

Number 4 is very important because we discuss this so much as a family. I told the kids "When we have guests to our home, we can't describe their laughter in front of them. You have to wait until your guests leave and then do it, but definitely don't do it while they are there." We've had some awkward moments.

5. Use laughter to make difficult days tolerable.

This is where we are going to end. Bob Newhart... Do we have any Bob Newhart fans? Here's what he says. *"Laughter gives us distance. It allows us to step back from an event, deal with it, and then move on, not taking ourselves too seriously."*

I'm going to end with a quote from one of my favorite... It's my favorite laughter quote even more than the Chuck Swindoll quote. It's from 19th Century preacher Henry Ward Beecher. He said this: *"A person without a sense of humor is like a wagon without springs. It is jolted by every pebble in the road. Good humor makes all things tolerable."* And all God's people said... Amen.

With that, you are dismissed. Go honk your horn.