

# Foreword

– Rick Whitney

I am thrilled that Steve has written this book. We need more resources like it, written by involved dads.

For several years I have appreciated watching Steve and Kathleen’s practical, common sense at work with their kids. I have appreciated their strong hearts and convictions. And I have especially appreciated their “*Never say we can’t win!*” attitude.

Their children are still young, but the wisdom, and proven daily routines outlined in Steve’s book really do work. The Nelsons are strong in their family schedules and habits, but there is also a whole lot of joy and laughter in their household. When the foundations are strong, you can open up and experience even more grace and freedom as the years roll on. However, you need the foundations first.

Steve’s directness and strength will challenge your thinking. He will stir you up. You might want to talk with him. He would be happy to. He really is a regular guy.

Steve Nelson, as a father and a pastor, desires that every Christian family wins with its own children. And probably the first thing we need to do to win is to believe that we can.

The Nelsons are looking for parents with strong hearts and strong will power.

I think you will be deeply encouraged by this book, especially if you are just getting started with your young family.

*Keep pressing*

***Rick Whitney***  
***Regional Director***  
***Great Commission Northwest***

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— *Laura Polk*

I have had the privilege of knowing Steve and Kathleen Nelson for 13 years, and I lived with them for just over six of those. In that time I learned a tremendous amount and had the time of my life!

I've seen them apply the parenting principles written in this book with only one child, then two, and three, all the way up to number six. While each child has had a different temperament, with different strengths and weaknesses, I've seen that these principles work with each one.

The Nelson children are a joy to be around and a delight to spend time with. Moreover, they are secure, confident, happy children who deeply love each other, their parents, and God. They have character, a solid moral foundation, and get along well with others.

This is not the result of perfect parenting or a perfectly run household. In fact, what I love most about Steve and Kathleen is that they are a living testimony to the fact that you do not have to be perfect to have great kids. They are two of the most authentic, down-to-earth people I have ever known. If you ever visit their house you'll notice that the yard is dead and beyond much help. As you approach the door, if you happen to glance to the right you'll find an accumulation of Christmas trees from years past hidden behind the bushes. Dinners are not elaborate, usually consisting of a casserole, canned biscuits, and a frozen vegetable. De-cluttering means tossing as much as possible into the laundry room and shutting the door. On any given day you can walk into their home and find that a little one has usually forgotten to flush the toilet. This is encouraging to me, because I've realized you don't have to have it all together to produce great, godly kids.

I share all of this with great fondness, as I have learned from them what is important and where to be flexible. Their

home is comfortable, a haven from this sometimes harsh world. It is filled with laughter, chaos, tears, joy, sorrow, “ow-ies”, kisses, and lots of snuggles. Ultimately, you'll find it an “incubator of love,” as one friend put it. I believe that the key to their success is attributed to daily living out God's Word in their home, giving their hearts to their kids and their roles as parents, and balance! There is a balance between love and discipline, work and play, and structure and flexibility, to name just a few.

I now have 2 (almost 3) children of my own and am trying to figure out, like you, how to win in parenting. Thankfully, my husband and I are not trying to figure this out alone. We've been extremely privileged to have Steve and Kathleen, and now their children (who have been an excellent example and influence on children), as role models for our family.

***Laura Polk***

***Friend of the Nelsons***