

THE PUPPIES

Our family really wanted dogs. For as long as the kids can remember, they have been asking for a dog. The kids were so excited the day we brought the tiny puppies home. They were six weeks old and very cute. The “men” of the family named the male puppy Hoss, and the girls named the female puppy Luna.

However, the puppies had worms and fleas, and because they weren't yet trained, they peed, puked, and pooped in the house. For a few weeks, our household was in shambles. Pretty much every spare moment was spent cleaning up after the puppies, bathing the puppies, feeding the puppies, and taking them outside. Furniture was moved to accommodate the puppy crate; blankets were reassigned to them. We spent a small fortune in veterinarian fees and meds for Hoss and Luna, not to mention collars, leashes, feeding bowls, special puppy food, puppy treats, and puppy toys.

After a few weeks of puppy madness, we had a family meeting to talk about whether or not Hoss and Luna were worth all the trouble. Now that the kids knew what it meant to be dog owners, my husband and I clearly explained to them that we got Hoss and Luna for *them*, not so that we, their parents, could find something else to fill up our time. The question was, should we keep them or were they too much work for our family?



I'm sure you can guess what the kids decided: a unanimous decision to keep the puppies. Even if it meant less free time, even if it meant less money would be available for other things, even if it meant a lot of work, even if it meant getting up in the middle of the night, even if it meant doing gross things like cleaning up dog poop. Even if it would take a lot of time to train them, they wanted the puppies.

They wanted the puppies because they knew that if they invested in the puppies now by training and caring for them, in a few months they would have some great dogs that would be companions, protectors, and playmates. To my children, the investment was worth it. I'm proud of the kids for being able to see the value beyond the sacrifice.

In Matthew chapter 7, Jesus teaches us about prayer and how to not be afraid to ask God for our needs. He says, "What man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"¹



Hoss and Luna are doing something more than providing companionship to our family. They are also illustrations of how much God wants to help us, care for us, and provide our needs. He wants the best for us, just like we want our puppies to have the best little doggy lives they can. We want them to thrive, to be healthy, to feel secure, to learn, and to have fun. God wants all those things for you, too!

If you have a need, ask God for it. Even if you have a *want*, ask God for it. Remember that you are even more precious to God than a child is to his or her parents ... or than Hoss and Luna are to my kids. Ask, and if it's good for you and within His plan for your life, God will give it to you.

Footnotes

¹ Matthew 7:9-11 NKJV

S&S link: Character Building: Personal Responsibility: Responsibility-2b

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