

In Isaiah 54:2,3a we read, *Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left...*

"Stretch your tent curtains wide." "Lengthen your cords." "Spread out to the right and to the left." These words all have to do with getting

WIDER

But what about "Strengthen your stakes"? Why is that in here? Well, in order to support a larger tent, you need stronger stakes.



The little tent you might use for a fun fort has tiny stakes.



A tent big enough for your family to go camping has stronger stakes.



And a huge canopy big enough for your family reunion would need the strongest stakes of all!

God says that the family - His family - is going to grow! We're going to need a bigger tent! That means we need **strong** stakes.

1 Timothy 4:7b-8 says *train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.* Practicing spiritual disciplines is good for now and for eternity!

There are many spiritual practices that can help us strengthen our stakes. Below are just a few. Choose ONE or TWO that you would like to use to get stronger this month. Tell someone else in your family what you've chosen so they can check in with you to see how **strong** you're getting!



Read your Bible. Choose one time each day that you can read for five minutes from your Bible or from a Bible Storybook. Breakfast? Bedtime? Afternoon snack? You decide!



Pray by speaking to God. Imagine God is sitting on the chair in your living room. What would you like to tell Him? Is there anything you want to ask? You can talk to God with your eyes closed or open, your hands folded or not. He just loves to hear your voice!



Pray by listening to God. Close your eyes or find one thing to look at. Let your hands be still. Take three slow deep breaths. Notice how quiet your body is. Now just listen. Is God saying anything to you today?



Serve God by serving others. Does your neighbor need help putting her trash out on trash day? Does your church need someone to water the plants? Could you and your family help at a food bank? When we help God's children (that's everyone!), we serve God.