Bob: A child's heart is like good soil. The question is: “What are you planting in your child's heart?”

Dennis: We're recruiting gardeners—

Miss PattyCake: Gardeners.

Dennis: —to plant the seeds.

Bob: Seed-planters.

Miss PattyCake: That's great! Here is what I love about working with this age child—you really never have to talk a preschool child into the existence of God. I tell people: “All you have to do is tell them His name. Ecclesiastes tells us that God has set eternity in the hearts of all men.”

Bob: That's right.

Miss PattyCake: So, for us to plant these seeds, we're only stirring up what I hear in children go, "Oh, that's what His name is—Jesus!" And they get it.

Bob: Matthew is only two-and-a-half years old; but thanks to Resurrection Eggs® and his friend Miss PattyCake, he knows the story of Easter.

Dennis: Who is that right there?

Matthew: Miss PattyCake.

Bob: That's Miss PattyCake. And what has she got a basket of? What's in that basket?

Matthew: Eggs.

Bob: Are those the eggs that tell about Jesus?

Matthew: Yes.
Bob: Yes. What color is that egg there?

Matthew: Green.

Bob: Yes, it's a green egg; isn't it? You know your colors; don't you? And what is that right there?

Matthew: A donkey.

Bob: A donkey? Who rode on the donkey?

Matthew: Jesus.

Bob: That's right. And then, there's this cup right here. Do you see that cup?

And welcome to FamilyLife Today. Thanks for joining us on the Thursday edition. We have our friend, Miss PattyCake, who is in the studio with us today. Some of our listeners will know her from her books and her videos for preschool children. And speaking of preschool children, Dennis, how did I do there with Matthew; huh?

Dennis: I think Matthew was enjoying himself. It's too bad radio doesn't have a camera associated with it.

Miss PattyCake: I think he was sort of a Mr. PattyCake there.

Bob: Do you think there's a new career for me—Mr. PattyCake?

Miss PattyCake: You did well—could be!

Dennis: Mr. PattyCake.

Miss PattyCake: I have a hat just for you.

Bob: Yes, I'm a little afraid of that. We actually have a grandmother in the studio, along with her grandson, Matthew.

Dennis: Libby Strawn joins us.

Libby: Hi.

Dennis: Libby, you said he knows almost all of Miss PattyCake's songs.

Libby: He loves Miss PattyCake—everything about Miss PattyCake.
Dennis: And the Resurrection Eggs—the Easter story?

Libby: I was shocked! He was two in August; and I cannot believe—when I went to visit him in Texas last week, he showed me every egg and told me everything—the soldiers and the dice—

Matthew: I did.

Libby: You know about Miss PattyCake and the eggs; don't you? He loves it.

Dennis: He understands—

Bob: You want the book?

Miss PattyCake: You want the book?—very good, sweetie.

Dennis: —the symbols—


Dennis: —the symbols that are in the story—at two-and-a-half years of age.

Libby: Oh, yes—talked about the dice and the soldiers. He told me, "Jesus died for my sins."

Dennis: Wow!

Libby: And he's two-and-a-half. I'm, like, "I can't believe"—but you were so right. I heard you speaking about what they learn at an early age.

Miss PattyCake: Right. Yes.

Dennis: You know, I honestly believe that Resurrection Eggs, as an evangelistic tool, is perhaps one of the most effective tools to introduce children to the gospel story that we can present. The reason is it's visual. It involves something they can touch—they can open—and it's very, very simple. It's no wonder, Bob—we've now seen more than one million dozen Resurrection Eggs distributed, here in America.

Bob: And for years, parents have been using these eggs with their own children and telling the Easter story. I think Miss Stephanie is here with a set of them.

Miss PattyCake: Oh, you brought some eggs. Thank you very much!

Libby: My grandson just got off the plane, and he's coming to stay with us for six days. And he said, "I cannot go without Miss PattyCake."
Matthew: There's a hand in this orange one.

Miss PattyCake: He knows which one is in that orange egg.

Libby: He said, “There's a hand in there.”

Miss PattyCake: What is that hand?

Dennis: That's the praying—

Matthew: Praying—

Dennis: You folded your hands to pray.

Libby: Yes.

Miss PattyCake: Matthew, do you remember what did Jesus say when He put his hands together? Jesus said—

Matthew: Yes.

Miss PattyCake: Jesus said—

Matthew: Yes.

Miss PattyCake: That's right! Jesus said, “Yes,” to the Father. And what can you say? And you can say—

Matthew: Yes.

Miss PattyCake: “Yes!” You can say, “Yes,” to Him too!

Libby: What is in that one?

Dennis: Two years old—

Bob: Yes.

Dennis: I'm telling you! What a great illustration of what we're talking about.

Miss PattyCake: That's fabulous.

Dennis: Now, what's in the yellow egg?
Matthew: Cross!

Miss PattyCake: A cross.

Dennis: It's a cross.

Libby: What happened on the cross?

Matthew: Jesus.

Libby: That's right.

Miss PattyCake: What did Jesus do on the cross?

Matthew: For my sins.

Miss PattyCake: For your sins; that's right.

Libby: Listen, I had heard of these eggs; but until my grandson started telling me the story from the eggs, I didn't realize the value of it—but I'm blown away, now. [Laughter] And his grandfather has not seen this yet.

Dennis: And you didn't actually come over to the studio—

Libby: No!

Dennis: —to get on the radio. You actually came over to the office because you live in the neighborhood.

Libby: Yes!

Dennis: Your grandson just got off a plane, and he wanted some Miss PattyCake.

Libby: Yes, he can't—I mean, I thought: “Six days with him—for the first time alone with us—I'll go get Miss PattyCake anywhere I can.” [Laughter]

Dennis: So, you walked in and—

Libby: Here she is!

Miss PattyCake: And I'm in Little Rock today!

Dennis: We deliver.
Libby: I appreciate it very much! It may make my next six days better than you can imagine.

Miss PattyCake: I would love to tell you how much fun it is to see God bring something into reality that has been in your heart and mine, which I know you've seen so many times in your life. But I love the fact that grandmothers constantly come to me and say, "Thank you so much. I now have a way to get the gospel into the home of my grandchildren that would communicate the truth that you find in these eggs," so that even the children are hearing, and the parents are also hearing—what about teenagers?

Bob: There you go.

Miss PattyCake: What a great opportunity. Kids who want to babysit—what if they say: "We are throwing a neighborhood Easter egg hunt. We want all your kids to come,"—and not only they share the gospel—and they can get business.

Dennis: We need some gardeners—some folks who will plant some seeds, and this is the seed that will never perish.

Miss PattyCake: Amen.

Bob: Well, we've got a seed-planter on the line from the Pacific Northwest. Katrina, welcome to FamilyLife Today.

Katrina: Thank you.

Bob: You know, we've been talking here about how most people use Resurrection Eggs with children; but you took a different approach. You had a Good Friday party, and you invited ten of your neighbors to come to your home?

Katrina: Well, several of them were neighbors. Then, there was some of my family and two Christian friends that were there to pray.

Bob: Now, when you invited friends, though, to a Good Friday party, did you tell them that it was to celebrate Good Friday; or did you just say, "Hey, come on over to my house and we're going to have a party"?

Katrina: I told them that it was an Easter party. I told them that it was to play an Easter game, and to bring an egg and that we would color an Easter egg, and bring a goody so that we could have Easter treats.

Dennis: So, after you had the treats, what did you do then?
Katrina: Then, we colored the eggs. I said, “Oh, now we’re going to play the game.” Everyone was very excited about it. I gave them all an egg, and each egg had a number. Then, I said, “Now, I have pieces of paper, and it will require reading.” All I did was cut out a verse that went with each egg. I felt that God’s Word is powerful—so that was all that I was going to do—was to share the eggs and the Word of God.

Bob: So, what did you do after everybody got theirs?

Katrina: Everyone got their egg. Then, I said: “Now, the one with the number one egg, open the egg. Then, let us all see what it is.” And so, they opened it. It was a donkey, of course—that’s the first one. And then, they read the verse. Everyone was like: “Wow, that makes sense,” and, “I didn’t know that that was in the Bible.” And then, we went on to the next one, and the next one, and just kept opening all the eggs, and reading the different verses. People were really getting excited because they didn’t know that that’s what Easter was about! They had no clue.

Dennis: Well, you went on through the eggs. I understand that there was one particular guy who thought you had rigged an egg for him.

Katrina: [Laughter] Yes—that was my new neighbor. He had not been here very long, and we had had some interesting conversations. He was upset when he found out that I was a Christian. He had told me in our last conversation—which ended up with him leaving—saying: “Well, God is just going to have to prove it to me. He’s going to have to show me because I don’t believe it.” And the verse that he got was doubting Thomas. [Laughter] I could not even look at him when he was reading the verse because I was just—I had goose bumps all over.

Bob: Now, you hadn’t rigged this; right?

Katrina: Not at all.

Dennis: He, of course, read the passage that talks about Thomas saying, “Unless I shall put my fingers in the nail prints in His hand, I won’t believe.”

Katrina: And I said, “I guess that’s your proof.” He was very bewildered after that experience and had a lot of questions. And then, two days later, he prayed to receive Christ.

Dennis: How about that?

Katrina: It was exciting.

Dennis: Katrina, thanks for encouraging all of us in our own Christian witness around the Easter season.
Katrina: Thank you.

Bob: You know, it is so cool to hear the different ways that people have found to use this tool over the years—whether it is with adults at a party for neighbors and family members—or the primary use, I guess, is using it with kids.

In fact, you remember this, Dennis, a number of years ago, we had children come join us in the studio. Along with the children we invited were two of my sons—Jimmy and John—who, at that point, were very young. Today, they are both grown and married. But we went through the story of Easter with them, using the Resurrection Eggs, and had a chance to hear how they responded to the story and to the tool.

[Recorded Audio]

Dennis: Well, we've asked you all to come and join us today because we're going to have an object lesson.

Child: Object?

Dennis: An object lesson. Yes, we've got some objects that are hidden in some Easter eggs.

Child: Are they Resurrection Eggs?

All: Resurrection Eggs.

Dennis: It's a fun lesson. It really is. It's about the story—

Child: Yes, my dad hides them.

Bob: So, you've played with these Resurrection Eggs before? Oh, really?

Dennis: That was Elisa. What are you learning about, Elisa? What are the eggs all about?

Elisa: Jesus's resurrection.

Dennis: About the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Dennis: Who wants to open this egg?

Children: I do!

Dennis: Oh, man, we've got all kinds of volunteers, Bob.
Bob: We do.

Dennis: We'll start with Elisa. This is a purple egg; and right now, Elisa is opening it. She's pulling it out.

Child: Glass—the glass—

Child: It's broken.

Child: —was that at the Last Supper?

Dennis: That's exactly right. So, Jesus, by lifting the cup, was reminding us that God is our protector. Okay, we've got another egg here.

Bob: Jennifer, you're going to open this. [Sound of egg opened] Oh, good.

Dennis: Man.

Bob: What is it?

Child: Praying hands.

Bob: Praying hands. Why do you think there are praying hands in that egg? Jimmy?

Jimmy: Oh, it's when Jesus prayed in the garden, asking God if it was possible for him to bypass dying on the cross.

Dennis: But did you know—while Jesus was praying, what were His disciples doing? Who knows the story of that? Meredith, what were they doing?

Meredith: They were sleeping.

Dennis: Did they sleep just one time, or how many times did they go to sleep? Do you know?

John: Ten.

Dennis: Ten times, John? You know, John, your dad is a great Bible teacher. [Laughter] I think we need to go to another egg here, Bob.

Bob: Let's go on to the next egg. Okay, go ahead and open that up.

Child: Crown of thorns.

Dennis: Crown of thorns—do you know what that represents, John?
John: They made fun of Him by, like, giving Him crowns of thorns and stuff like that.

Child: They gave Him a purple robe.

Dennis: Right. They were mocking and making fun of Him; weren’t they?—just like John said.

John: That’s what me and Dad talked about today at breakfast.

[Studio]

Bob: And, you know, that’s the way it’s supposed to work; isn’t it? That we, as parents, are supposed to, according to Deuteronomy 6, talk with our children about the things of God when we walk along the way, when we rise up, when we lie down, when we’re having breakfast, when we’re working out in the garden—these are the kinds of subjects that ought to be on our tongue at all times as we train up our children. It’s so critical for them to know the Easter story—to know the essence of the gospel—Jesus’ death, His burial, and His resurrection.

We were actually first introduced to this whole concept of Resurrection Eggs by Barbara Craft, who was a guest on FamilyLife Today, back in the middle ’90s. She had been making her own sets of Resurrection Eggs and giving them to friends and to neighbors. She brought a set in for us, and we talked about them on FamilyLife Today. That’s where they were first introduced to our listeners.

A couple of years after that, Barbara and her husband Roger went on a trip to New York—we had a project that we were working on where we were using Resurrection Eggs to share the Easter story with children who were living in the inner city. We asked Michelle Hill, who is on our team, here at FamilyLife, to give us an update of what happened during Roger and Barbara’s time in New York a number of years ago.

[Recorded Audio]

Michelle: Say, “Coney Island”—and the images that might come to mind are crowds of folks spending summer afternoons, strolling on the boardwalk; escaping to New York’s very public beach; perhaps, playing one of the penny arcades that adorn streets with exotic names like “Ocean Parkway” or “Neptune Avenue”; or even risking a ride on the historic 1927 Cyclone rollercoaster.

But Coney Island shelters more than just amusements and a carnival atmosphere. Right on Coney Island—there on Mermaid Avenue, of all places—just two blocks from the famous Riegelmann Boardwalk are the offices of Salt and Sea Ministries. Salt and Sea Ministries is a mercies ministry and food pantry headed by Debbie Santiago.
Debbie: My ministry here started out with children. That's where my heart is—that's where I get my excitement and my pleasure from doing—is just to be involved and to be where Jesus would be. It's so difficult living here. There are so many needs—and to get a child, at a young age, and to let them have an interest in Christ, and then to be a part of that blossoming—that's what I love doing.

Michelle: Angels by the Sea is a New York hotel, but it's not just any hotel. Angels by the Sea is a welfare hotel, mostly populated by single mothers, homeless people, and other folks who have fallen on hard economic times in the New York City area. It is here, in the midst of very difficult circumstances, that Debbie worked—using Resurrection Eggs—provided by FamilyLife.

Debbie: What we do—at Angels by the Sea—is about eight years ago, they closed up the Balfour Hotel that we were ministering in—in Coney Island. I was looking for another welfare hotel to minister in because I saw the need of hundreds of children under one roof who were neglected, abused, weren't paid any attention to. So, I started on a search. It took four months of lots of prayer and fasting for them to finally let me in here.

When we first started to come in, we were allowed to be here for one hour a month, underneath a stairwell. In that hour, we had to come in, present the gospel, pray with people, distribute whatever God had provided, and then be out of here. Every time we came in, people would be cursing at us and grumbling at us. It was only through God's success stories—the changed lives—that people in the hotel started opening up doors for us because they saw God's impact on people's lives.

Michelle: Roger and Barbara Craft traveled to New York City in 1998. They had a burden to share Christ with lost kids at Angels by the Sea, and to do that they brought lots of Resurrection Eggs. They spent time with Debbie Santiago and saw, firsthand, Debbie's work with Salt and Sea Ministries at Angels by the Sea.

Roger: When we went there, we went there just to love these kids. And you know, they don't see a whole lot of love. This was a tool to show them that, not only do we love them, but Christ loves them. And you know, just the attention that they gave to us and just wanted to be around us just makes you want to weep. And as you looked at the crowd, you saw very few men there; and it really touched your heart.

Barbara: They just wanted to be loved. They were easy to love; okay? And that love was in my heart to love them. So, it was just a mutual bonding; you know? It was just these kids—just clamoring all over us—but there was an older girl in our group. Alex was her name, and she knew the story. She would fill in for us, and she would be the one that I knew would take those eggs and share them.

Michelle: According to Debbie Santiago, the kids love the eggs. They proved to be an effective tool in sharing the gospel.
Debbie: Here, at Angels by the Sea today, I saw the Resurrection Eggs have—make the children so excited to be a part of it. I saw the children in different groups. I saw them excited about the gospel and about the resurrection story. I saw them when they got to the last egg, and it was empty! The excitement that that is—that's my favorite egg, too, by the way—and I just saw, besides the excitement—I saw their love for Jesus growing because, as they would open each egg, and they would visually see, and they would have something to hold in their hand—I think what's going to happen with that is—it's going to stay in their minds and stay in their hearts. That's going to linger on.

It was wonderful for me to see and be a part of just everyone's excitement about who Jesus Christ is and then to share that with others. It was a wonderful day for me.

[Studio]

Bob: Well, our thanks to Michelle Hill for the update on what took place, a number of years back, when we sent Roger and Barbara Craft to Coney Island with the sets of Resurrection Eggs to share the message of Easter with those children. At that point, what they had in those cartons weren't eggs, they were seeds—they were seeds of the gospel.

Miss PattyCake: Amen.

Dennis: This is a great seed because these are the seeds of eternal life. What a great way to introduce children to the greatest story ever told, and the Easter season—hear me on this—the Easter season is not like Christmas.

Miss PattyCake: No.

Dennis: People aren't overwhelmed with a lot of things. They may get caught up with an Easter dress or a new pair of shoes, but they need the message of Easter now more than ever.

Bob: Well, and for more than two decades now, a lot of our FamilyLife Today listeners have been sharing that message, using the Resurrection Eggs. Our team has put together a special set of 20th Anniversary Edition Resurrection Eggs for this year, and the booklet that comes with it is both in English and in Spanish. So, it can be used in a variety of settings. If you'd like to order a set of Resurrection Eggs or find out more about this tool, go to FamilyLifeToday.com and click the link, in the upper left-hand corner, that says, “Go Deeper.” You can order Resurrection Eggs from our website.

We have other resources available to help you share the message of Easter. We have Miss PattyCake's Easter Eggstravaganza DVD. That's available. We have resources that Barbara Rainey has been creating to help make your home more beautiful during the Easter season and to help you share the message of Easter with your children and with others who come into your home during this season of the year.
Again, go to FamilyLifeToday.com and click the link that says, “Go Deeper,” up in the upper left-hand corner of the screen, for more information about the resources that are available; or call 1-800- “F” as in family, “L” as in life, and then, the word, “TODAY.” Order your Resurrection Eggs from us over the phone. I should also mention that they’re available in a lot of local Christian bookstores; and many Wal-Mart® stores have Resurrection Eggs this year, as well. So, again, go to FamilyLifeToday.com for more information; or call 1-800-FL-TODAY.

You know, the message of Easter is at the heart of our faith, as Christians; and our faith is at the heart of strong, healthy, godly families. At FamilyLife, we really believe that, for families to function the way they were designed to function, we have to have our relationship with God functioning as it was designed to function, as well. That’s why we spend time talking about these kinds of themes on this program. Our goal is to effectively develop godly families.

We believe godly families can change the world, one home at a time. We appreciate those of you who are partners with us in this ministry, as supporters of FamilyLife Today. We could not do all that we are doing without your support; and we want to say, “Thank you,” to our Legacy Partners and to those of you who stop by, from time to time, to offer financial support for this ministry.

During the month of April, when you make a donation, we’d like to send you, as a thank-you gift, a set of three cards designed to help you pray more effectively for family members. There is a card for husbands to help you pray more effectively for your wife, a card for wives to give you help on praying for your husband, and then, a card for moms and dads to use in praying for their children. These prayer cards are our thank-you gift to you when you donate to FamilyLife Today this month.

Go to FamilyLifeToday.com. Click the button in the upper right-hand corner that says, “We Care.” You can make an online donation. Or you can call 1-800-FL-TODAY—and make a donation over the phone—just ask for the prayer cards if you donate using the phone. Or you can request the prayer cards and mail a donation to FamilyLife Today at P O Box 7111, Little Rock, AR. The zip code is 72223.

Now, tomorrow, we’re going to spend some time considering why the message of Easter is the central message of our faith—why it’s so important. We’ll talk about that tomorrow. Hope you can tune in.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, and our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our host, Dennis Rainey, I’m Bob Lepine. We will see you back next time for another edition of FamilyLife Today.

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