

Preach it, Chef Kimball

By [Debra Bendis](#)

May 22, 2012

When the latest issue of *Cook's Illustrated* comes through the door at my house, I know better than to grab it. First dibs go to my husband. Unlike me, he won't just "feast" on the photos of cakes, BBQ ribs and soufflés. He'll actually read the recipes, select one, shop for ingredients and prepare a meal--and that's where I come in. Gratefully pulling a chair up to the table and ready to appreciate the chef's latest creation.

But later I do pick up the magazine and look for the editorial written by the magazine's founder and the host of TV's *America's Test Kitchen*, Christopher Kimball. Kimball writes as well as cooks, and he reminisces with tenderness and a fine-tuned eye about playing outside in southern Vermont as a kid, and about sharing community in the same area as an adult.

His work reminds me of John Gould, who wrote for the *Christian Science Monitor* from his family farm in Maine, and of Verlyn Klinkenbourg, who [writes](#) for the *New York Times* from his New York farm. (See also an urbanite's sarcastic denunciation of Klinkenbourg's "nature-based musings" at [Gawker](#).)

In the May/June issue of [Cook's](#), Kimball reveals still another talent: he preaches. Yes, he admits, "I'm a preachy type and so, for years, I have occasionally acted as lay minister at our small Methodist church."

Kimball quotes 1 Corinthians as his text: "When I became a man, I put away childish things," and acknowledges the hallmarks of adult behavior: long-term thinking and personal responsibility. But other aspects of childhood, he muses, are very much worth keeping. Given the freeroaming adventures that he enjoyed and describes, the bits worth keeping are wonder, curiosity and a sense of play.

Kimball celebrates these "childish" things. The challenge is to make sure our children do. They will need a) an outside world to explore and b) our nudge to get them out the door.