

REFORMING OUR FAMILIES

Peter and Lenora Hammond

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Dedication

To our parents: **Robert** and **Ingrid Hammond** and **Rev. Bill** and **Harriett Bathman**. For their love, examples and sacrifices.

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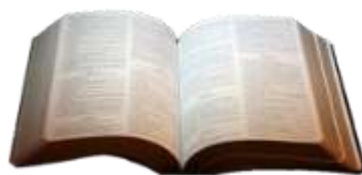
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FOREWORD

by Christopher Klicka

In our world and culture today, our children are at risk. The two greatest weapons of Satan to undermine the faith and spiritual training of our children are the public schools and the media - especially television.

As a father of seven children, and working as an attorney for the Home School Legal Defense Association since 1985, I have personally become aware of this battle that is taking place for our families. Now, more than ever, we need to take heed to the warnings in God's Word and apply His principles in the training of our children.

Peter and Lenora Hammond provide a much-needed message in this book.

Reading this book is like reviewing an index of the Scriptures concerning the temptations and issues that face our children and families and it tells us how to successfully combat them.

Peter Hammond has been on the forefront of the battle being waged for our families. He knows that the most powerful weapon to defeat the power of Satan is the Gospel. Therefore, he has dedicated his life to be a Christian missionary throughout southern Africa, often braving harsh weather, impossible logistics, dangerous territory, and God-hating soldiers and governments. He has delivered thousands of Bibles and Christian materials, in the languages of the peoples, throughout Africa so that many may read the Gospel of Jesus Christ and be saved and live transformed lives. He is truly one of my heroes of the Faith!

The Bible is *"living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12) - *changing people forever. That is the only hope for our families and for raising our children. Wielding the "sword of the Spirit, which is God's Word"* (Ephesians 6:17) alone will give us victory against the rising tide of secular humanism and the idols of materialism and atheism that are sweeping our world.

Peter and Lenora Hammond also have waged a tremendous spiritual battle for their family, their country and throughout the African continent. They are people of prayer who ably wield the sword of the Lord, striking a blow to Satan's strongholds in the culture around the world.

Reforming our Families is a book that is hard-hitting and accurate. Every parent should read this book and meditate on the hundreds of Scripture verses referenced in order to be equipped to successfully wage spiritual battle on behalf of their family.

It is a message of "no compromise" for Jesus Christ. The stakes are too high to sit back and just watch our kids grow up and mix in with the world.

What is at stake is our children's never-dying souls. What can be more important? Also at stake is achieving the goal of raising families to be faithful servants and Christian warriors to contribute to bringing this world under Christ's Lordship.

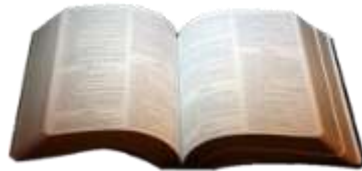
So the Hammonds do not mince words when it comes to protecting the family - they call it as it is. This is not sugar-coated psychology. Peter and Lenora present a realistic picture of the culture that is trying to mould and shape the family into its image. They also provide the

solution: "*training up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*" Ephesians 6:4.

Peter and Lenora love the Lord with all their heart, soul and mind - and they love their children very much. As a result, no matter how busy they are, they are willing to sacrifice the time and effort to shepherd their children's hearts and nurture their souls.

This book is filled with practical tips on how any loving parent can do their utmost for their children. My hope is that many families will read this book and be challenged to work harder - honouring the Lord by raising their children according to Scriptures. This book is an important help for parents everywhere.

Christopher Klicka
Senior Counsel
Home School Legal Defense Association
author, speaker



INTRODUCTION

by Rev. Kjell Olsen

Families are under siege. The devil knows the power of the Biblical Family and is doing all he can to confuse God's clear instructions. In South Africa there has been a continual onslaught on families and there is a whole generation of children growing up who do not understand what a real family is all about. TV "soapies" and locally produced versions create the impression that there is no disfunctional family - anything goes. School text books from the Department of Education undermine family structure by telling children (from primary school level) that families may consist of a man, two men, two women, a single mother, and even a mother and father who are married. (Of course, we should try and be of help and encouragement to single parent families but we should never mainstream the idea that any adult looking after children is an ideal family.)

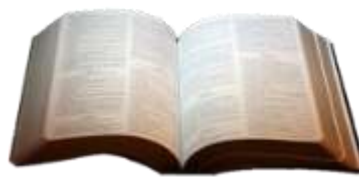
South Africa is suffering from broken families - mostly because fathers do not take up their responsibilities and have got used to the idea that they can cause pregnancies and just abscond. Or, just have inconvenient pregnancies "terminated"!

May the Lord use *Reforming our Families* to strengthen families across the world. The love of God, the sacrifice of His Son, the care and nurture of the Lord for His children; all this should be reflected in family structures. With absentee fathers, careless parents, lawless homes, and no parental love, children struggle to understand the Gospel.

The section on "What Shapes a Family?" is of crucial importance. Read it prayerfully, for it may be the salvation of your family.

The last book of the Old Testament emphasizes God's attitude to the family He seeks "*godly seed*" and threatens "*therefore, let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth*" (Mal 2:14 and 15). God calls marital unfaithfulness "treason". In the last verse of Malachi God promises that the salvation He brings turns the hearts of parents back to the children and the children back to their parents. May this book be part of the "turning" of hearts back to the Biblical family.

Rev. Kjell Olsen
Deputy President, Christians for Truth, South Africa



Chapter 1

RAISING GOD-FEARING CHILDREN

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them." Psalm 103:17-18

The Bible tells us that God seeks "*godly offspring...*" Malachi 2:15. When God established His covenant with Abraham, He said: "*And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant...you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.*" Genesis 17:7-9

A Parent's Priority

As a parent, one of my greatest desires and priorities is to bring up my children *"in the training and instruction of the Lord."* Ephesians 6:4. I am to *"train a child in the way he should go..."* Proverbs 22:6. My greatest concern is that my children grow up to love the Lord with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, and with all their strength. I pray that my children will grow to love, trust, obey, worship and serve God more consistently and effectively than I have done.

We are to ***"tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power and the wonders He has done...so that the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn will tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget His deeds but would keep His commands. They would not be... stubborn and rebellious... whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to Him. "*** Psalm 78:4-8

"Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments." Deuteronomy 7:9

On the day of Pentecost the apostle Peter declared: *"Repent, and let everyone of you be baptised in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you **and to your children**, and to all who are far off, as many as the Lord your God will call."* Acts 2:37-39

"For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations." Psalm 100:5

A Father's Responsibility

As a father I am responsible to ensure that my sons and daughters are raised to become God-fearing fathers and mothers who will in turn raise God-fearing sons and daughters who will themselves become fathers and mothers who will love, honour, trust and obey God. We are to raise disciples who will raise other disciples so that God's generational blessing is passed down and the chain unbroken.

By God's grace, I have been blessed with four beautiful children, two daughters and two sons. My eldest is seventeen. Our youngest is nine. For the benefit of younger parents, let me share some of the practical strategies and tactics which I have sought to employ in discipling my children. I share these cautiously, because my wife and I are still very much learners, and we have much more learning and improving to do. Nevertheless, we have come a long way, battling medical crisis and developmental challenges while engaged fulltime in missionary work, juggling home schooling and many other commitments. Perhaps some of our experiences and practices will be helpful to other parents.

Contagious Christianity

My first priority is to ensure that my children love God and His Word. Some of this can be taught, but most of it is caught. It is not enough for me to teach my children to love and honour God and His Word, it is vital that they see their parents love God and His Word. Our daily example is in many ways a more important teaching tool than our words. So whatever we teach our children, we need to model by example for them.

Sundays are Special

From the earliest, we have strived to teach our children a love and respect for God's Word, for the Church and for the Lord's Day. Children thrive on routine and rhythm. That is why ensuring that our calendar reflects our faith is most important. Habits and routine are a vital part of discipleship. We make time for those things we deem important. God has decreed that we work six days and give the seventh to rest and worship. It was so important to God that He gave us an example to follow, by resting after creating the universe. Setting aside the first day of the week as a special day is good for our body, mind and soul. We need time set aside for relaxation, reflection and restoration. This is a matter of rhythm and routine, but also a matter of revelation and remembrance of the Lord's great works of Creation (Exodus 20:8-11) and salvation (Deuteronomy 5:12-15).

Honouring The Lord's Day

Any relationship needs quality time and we need to devote at least one day a week to developing and deepening our relationship with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Therefore we should do everything we can to protect the Lord's Day from being encroached upon and desecrated. In our family shopping, sports, homework or worldly entertainment are unacceptable activities for any Sunday.

Respecting The Lord's House

Preparation for worship on Sunday begins the day before - ensuring that our children get to bed early enough to be well rested for Sunday worship. We can also encourage our children to respect where we gather for Sunday worship and the Lord's Day by seeing that they wear their best clothes for the Lord's house. And ensuring that we arrive early enough for worship with expectant and teachable hearts and minds.

Applying Sunday's Sermon

After church we seek to discuss with the children what they have heard and learned and how best we can apply these principles of Scripture.

Scripture Memorisation

Scripture memorisation is also a vital tool in discipleship;

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word...I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:9-11

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in your heart richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or in deed, do it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Colossians 3:16-17

If we build our children's lives upon the rock of God's Word, then they will stand in the storms of life that most surely will assail them (Matthew 7:24-27). *"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."* Psalm 119:105

A Gym for the Mind

Some of the memorisation projects that we have given priority to, with our young children, have included: The Lord's Prayer, The Ten Commandments, The Apostle's Creed, and the Evangelism Explosion Gospel presentation. These cover four key areas of life: **How we are to pray** - The Lord's Prayer; **How we are to behave** - The Ten Commandments; **What we are to believe** - The Apostle's Creed; and **How we are to be saved** - the Evangelism Explosion Gospel presentation.

We have found that with repetition even a three-year old can learn to pray the Lord's Prayer. As they grow older a wide variety of key Scripture verses and Psalms are committed to memory. Scripture memorisation is like a gym for the mind. (Those who say that young children cannot memorise Scripture passages are wrong. Young children have a tremendous capacity for memorisation. Those who are not memorising Scripture have often managed to memorise many secular songs, and all kinds of details about pop idols, Hollywood screen idols, sports idols, and other secular obsessions including telephone numbers and e-mail addresses).

Respect for Authority

It is essential that we teach our children respect for authority, starting with their parents and for grandparents, then uncles and aunts, authority in the church and in society. Respect for God, respect for people and respect for property.

Honouring our Elders

God's Law declares: *"Cursed is the man who dishonours his father or his mother. Then all the people shall say Amen!"* Deuteronomy 27:16

"The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, and will be eaten by the vultures." Proverbs 30:17

Our Lord Jesus declared: *"Honour your father and mother and anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death."* Matthew 15:4

Tragically, respect for parents and elders is becoming increasingly rare, even in Christian circles today. Yet, God's Law makes clear that we are to *"rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly"* Leviticus 19:32. Proverbs 23:22 instructs us: *"Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old."*

These are commands not just to young children. No matter what our age, whether we are living under our parent's roof, or running our own household, we are still responsible before God to honour and respect our parents (Exodus 20:12).

"Each of you must revere his mother and father, and you must observe My Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:3

Laying Solid Foundations

In the light of the overwhelming pressures which assail families, and the relentless temptations that surround young people today, parents must take extra-ordinary steps to ensure that our children are raised in the love and fear of the Lord. We need to lay solid foundations and form good habits, which will discipline, disciple, strengthen and prepare our children for lives of godliness and productive service in their congregations, communities and countries.

Reading Time

Before my children could even walk or talk, I began a routine of reading time. It has been a high priority for us to instil a love of reading, especially a love for the Scriptures in our children.

We want to stretch their minds and their muscles, train their hands and their hearts. We want them to love knowledge, and *"the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* For this reason, reading time has been a daily priority.

Invest in Books

We have invested in books. We may not have been able to afford all the technological equipment which is considered essential in many families, we have no hi-fi, etc. And we only recently acquired a DVD and CD players. But we have always had lots of great books. I have regularly made raids on Focus on the Family bookshops, and we've avidly devoured James Dobson and Doug Wilson materials on child rearing and the family. We also obtained and went through the whole tape series on Growing Kids God's Way and the Pearl's No Greater Joy series.

Bible Before Bed

I firmly believe that one of the most important parts of any Christian family with children should be Bible stories and prayer before bed. This has always been an enjoyable and vibrant time of fellowship, either cuddling up together on the couch or on the bed, using colourful story book pictures where possible and regularly asking questions and involving the younger children in these great stories from God's Word.

Scripture Before Supper

It is essential that we establish Bible centred homes. There are many ways that we can do this. As the evening meal tends to be the most important time of fellowship in our family, we have established the principle of Scripture before supper. Sometimes this has included reading a chapter of the Psalms or Proverbs each night, on other occasions we have worked through some kind of devotional book.

Daily Devotions

Sometimes we have maintained a practise of devotions first thing in the morning, on other occasions devotions have been held after dinner. The important thing is that Scripture, Psalms and hymns and prayer should be a daily part of every Christian home. This does not mean that these family devotions need to be long. In fact, particularly in families with small children, we have found it wise to keep family devotions short, cheerful and focused. Children thrive on repetition, and so we can incorporate basic memorisations of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostle's Creed where even the three or four year old children can have an active part in the devotions.

Making Time for Priorities

Many parents will protest that they don't have time for all of this. Well, actually you do have the time - if you severely cut down on TV and newspapers. In the light of eternity, what good have all the multiplied hours spent each week in front of the TV set and pouring through the local scandal rags done for either you or your children? Cut out TV and you will have enough time to disciple your children.

I praise God, that by His grace, one of the best choices we ever made in our home, long before we even had children, was dispensing with TV. Before marriage, we had decided that TV would not be part of our lives. We did save up for and invest in a video machine and we have enjoyed selected videos - critically viewed. However, I am convinced that I just do not have enough time for TV and newspapers as well as quality reading time and discipling my children. When it is a clear choice between films and books, we choose books!

Time Management

Time management is a key part of effective child rearing. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. We plan our calendars, and we plan our week. Priorities come first. First things must be first. Our spiritual priorities come first, our mental exercise is second, and physical exercise comes third. Hiding God's Word in our hearts through Scripture memorisation, daily devotions, Scripture before supper, Bible stories and prayer before bed, worship, evangelism and service, are given high priority. At the beginning of every year I go through my calendar and write each child's name on their birthdate. That is then an appointment and my schedules are planned around these and other important family commitments. If it is important - put it in your diary.

Strengthening Minds and Muscles

Along with the spiritual exercises and soul searching, comes the mental exercises, stretching our minds: reading, memorisation and testing. Even before our girls were ten we were giving them Bible exams and expecting them to sit through lectures, sermons and Bible studies at

our Biblical Worldview Summits and Great Commission Courses designed for adults. Our girls have also participated in The Reformation Society Thursday evening study groups.

Physical exercise and discipline is also important. Sunday afternoons have traditionally involved cycling along the canal or walks in the forest. All of our children have, from very early ages, taken part in mountain climbing. Surrounded as we are in Cape Town by magnificent mountain ranges, even at age four Calvin had climbed the whole way up and down Lion's Head without needing to be carried at any point. At age six both Christopher and Calvin completed marathon seven-hour night hikes up across the full length and breadth of Table Mountain. We have included each of our children in regular gym workouts, swimming and various sports. At 5 years old, Calvin, took to cycling with me when I went for early morning jogs around the neighbourhood. Saturday mornings I've normally gone to the gym with my boys. Our whole family joins in on hikes up Table Mountain and recently Calvin and I conquered Devils Peak.

Self-Discipline

What we are trying to instil in our children is self-discipline. We want them to manage their time and resources wisely, to select their priorities in the light of eternity, to have a work ethic, and to enjoy their work. If we were on a farm they would learn discipline and hard work naturally as part of the daily routine. Raising children in the city requires a conscious effort to teach self-discipline.

Critical Thinking

We also want our children to think critically. We do not want them to just accept anything and be vulnerable to peer pressure. We want our children to be like the Bereans who *"were of more noble character...for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."* Acts 17:11

Renewing Minds

We pray that our children will not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of their minds (Romans 12:1 -2). We want our children to be a positive influence on their friends, not to be people pleasers, following the crowd.

An Attitude of Gratitude

It is also important to us that our children have a positive attitude, to be grateful, first of all to God, and to be thankful to people around them. To count their blessings, to be joyful always, to pray continually and to give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Taking Responsibility

As Christians, it is vital that our children learn to take personal responsibility, to admit failure, to seek counsel and advice. Sulking is never acceptable. They need to be quick to repent and quick to forgive others. Some of the most important words our children can ever learn are: please; thank you; no, thank you; what can I do? and I'm sorry, please forgive me.

Taking Initiative

I want my children to be able to take initiative, to see needs and to volunteer, to be generous and willing to sacrifice for others.

Learning from History

I want my children to know their family history, their national heritage, their Protestant Christian heritage and missionary heritage. They need to be inspired by examples of excellence from the past, to strive to serve Christ wholeheartedly in the present and future. So missionary biographies and history books form an important part of our reading. I have also gone out of my way to take my children to museums, battle sites and historical monuments.

Whole Hearted Love for God

God's Word makes clear what our greatest priority is: *"These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe...so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all His decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life...love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates...fear the Lord your God, serve Him only..."* Deuteronomy 6:1-13

The education and discipleship of the next generation is given as the very first application of God's Law and the highest priority of God's people in Deuteronomy 6:1-13. We are not merely to teach a head knowledge, but a wholehearted love for the Lord. Wholeheartedly, with all our soul and with all our strength. Body, mind and spirit, in every aspect of our lives, we are to radiate and reflect our love for the Lord.

The Lord's commandments should be discussed morning, noon and night. From the first thing in the morning to the last thing at night, God's Word is to be such an integral part of our lives that everything we do with our hands and everything that we think with our minds is to be guided and governed by Scripture. Our homes should also reflect the Lordship of Christ in all areas of life and everything within our gates, even our gardens. People should be able to tell the difference Christ makes in our lives. They should see that we love the Lord and that the Bible governs every aspect of our lives.

A Warning

We are commanded in Scripture *"only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."* Deuteronomy 4:9. We need to disciple our children by word and deed, by our lives and our lips, by education and by example - consistently.

Recognise the Threats

In order to do this, we need to be well aware of the threats to our children. There are so many distractions to interfere with the priorities of God, church, family, devotions, home schooling

and service to God's people and His creatures. We need to be aware of the dangers of: aimlessness, lack of planning, lack of direction, time wasting and just drifting.

The Scripture warns us: ***"Do not be misled: bad company corrupts good character."*** 1 Corinthians 15:33. Worldly friends, worldly fashions, worldly music, pagan magazines, TV, newspapers, state schools and the Internet can corrupt and conquer our children.

Protecting Our Time

Our time is so limited. We need to take great efforts to protect our families' time. We need to schedule family priorities into our diary. We need to focus on God's priorities. ***"Only one life, it will soon be passed - only what's done for Christ will last"*** The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. We must put most of our efforts into that which really matters the most.

Courage to Stand Alone

We need to be aware of negative peer pressure and bullies. Our children need to have spiritual backbone and the courage to stand up for their convictions, and to fight for the Faith. They need to be taught to ***"Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you"*** James 4:7.

Temptations and traps of the devil surround and press in on young people today demanding their attention and allegiance: Hollywood stars, rock idols, sports heroes, political leaders, cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, hip hop, rap, rebellion and rock 'n roll, gangster-pimp music, fashions and worldly friends. ***"Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong..."*** Exodus 23:2.

Do Not Allow Technology to Enslave You

We also need to be aware of technology (such as cellphones and computers) encroaching on our lives. Technology is a dangerous servant and a fearful master. We need to ensure that technology is a servant in our lives and not the master. Cellphones and telephone calls should never be allowed to interrupt family devotions and church services. Our children need to know that cellphones should be switched off for prayer meetings, family devotions, church services, etc.

Attitude is Everything

Far more serious is the rebellious attitude that is so often fuelled by much of the Hollywood films and the noise which masquerades as music. ***"Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft"*** (1 Samuel 15:23). Attitude is everything. Protect your child from influences which war against his or her soul.

Educating by Example

My children need to see that I love God and His Word wholeheartedly. They need to see the priority I place upon our family, and our study of God's Word and worship of the Lord. They need to see how I respect my elders, and how I love God's creatures. They need to see that I do not allow myself to be distracted by phone calls when it is time for family devotions.

Character Development

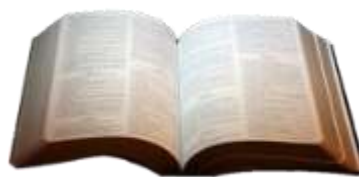
I want my children to learn to be brave, to be dependable, faithful, disciplined Christians of integrity; People of their word who can be depended upon to honour their commitments. They need to learn to be unselfish, to always put personal feelings and interests aside in order to do what is right, to care for the weak and needy and for the lonely. To rescue stray animals, to help those who are in greatest need, and to serve the Lord sacrificially. For me to teach this to my children, they need to see these priorities and principles at work in my life, consistently.

As a father I have a God-given duty to provide for and protect my children, and to be an example to them as I disciple them and train them to be God-fearing Christians who will love and serve God, His people and His creatures wholeheartedly.

"Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments." Deuteronomy 7:9



The marriage of Reformer Dr. Martin Luther to Katherine Von Bora, in 1525, provided the Church with its first model of a pastoral family.



Chapter 2

WHAT SHAPES A FAMILY?

Today things are vastly more complex and the myriad of influences that hurtle towards the family can determine the rise or fall of this institution.

Here are a few *'family shapers'*: How much is your family shaped by them?

Parents

God designed us to be imprinted by our parents and to learn from them how to effectively manage our own families someday. The way the finances, discipline, problems, holidays, or

education were handled in your family will influence how you handle your own. A religious family is not necessarily a Godly one. Being steeped in religious traditions does not mean you have a vibrant and alive relationship with our Lord and Saviour. It is vital that we model for our children what it means to have Scripture governing everything we do. Any decision we make, from education to discipline must be based on God's Word.

Church

Being regular members of a Congregation is certainly a good tradition and an essential part of growth as a family. Finding the right Church is vital to fortify the family and to provide a platform upon which you can teach your children to serve in the Community. Parents must use discernment from Scripture in order to choose a Church that does not fear preaching the Word of God even if it offends. How do you know that your church is the correct one, if another church down the road preaches a different message? Some churches ignore missions and evangelism altogether. Others, as Robert Andrews put it: "concentrate solely on saving the lost outside the church, and have not learned to preserve the fruit from biological reproduction that God has placed inside the church. If we save the world and lose our own children, we start over again every generation without the strength of a Christian heritage". He continues:

"The Bible becomes, for all practical purposes, a book of salvation only; one that tells me how to get to heaven, but not how to live in every area of life on a daily basis".

Media, the Movies and TV

Nothing impacts us like the visual media. We spend countless hours imbibing the world's message instead of feasting on God's Word. Our children and indeed most adults tend to accept the media's portrayal of the traditional family as the norm. This depiction is rarely wholesome and seldom positive. Non-traditional families are viewed by the undiscerning public as normal and we forget what God's original intent was: that of being the building block of Society. For this to happen, we need courageous and God-fearing fathers that are leaders in their home, loving wives and mothers that fear God and raise their children to love God and respect and honour their elders, and an education that illustrates how Scripture speaks to all areas of life. We must ask ourselves: Is anything we believe about our family, love and marriage being shaped by the Silver Screen? The influence of music must not be underestimated either. Carefully crafted lyrics, repeated over and over via the headset of a teenager, begin to take on a reality that shapes the views and emotions of the listener.

Psychology

There is certainly no lack of books available today on the topic of parenting, education, marriage and any other domestic topic imaginable. If you enjoy reading, it is sometimes tempting to pick up a well-designed book, written by a well-meaning author in an attempt to become a better parent or spouse. The problem is that what may be acceptable in the medical or psychological community today may be out of favour tomorrow. Rather than taking in trendy advice, we should search the Scriptures for lasting and truly authoritative instructions.

Peers

We tend to think of peer influence as something that only affects our children at school. But the same is true for parents. If you are unsure about what to do, the natural tendency is to do

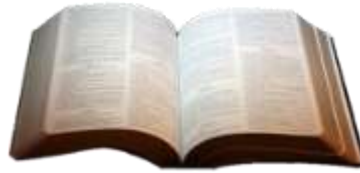
what everyone around you is doing, especially in your church. Measurable results are so far in the future that no one knows whether or not a particular view of family behaviour will produce good fruit. It is also true for education. If you are the product of government education, it is natural to assume your children will turn out just as you did with the same educational approach. The onus is on parents to assume the opposite and seriously look at how the education system has changed and what some of the results are today.

Considering the many hours spent at school, the character of our children is being shaped now more than the mind being challenged academically. Placing children into Christian schools is not an absolute safeguard either. Deuteronomy tells us (parents) to write God's precepts on our (parents) foreheads to hang them on our (parents) doorposts. It would be dangerous to delegate this responsibility to the local Christian school and assume our job is done.

Too often our families are run on a trial and error basis. They become reactors to whatever life hurls at them, rather than initiators who attack life with an overall battle plan. How much better to make use of the blueprint in God's Word than to make what appear to be random choices. Scripture gives clear goals which we should aim for; in fact this should be the vision we have for our family. We cannot expect our children to 'turn out ok' unless we take seriously the Biblical principles of childrearing. It is not good enough to say '*we did the best we could*'.

It needs to be our earnest prayer that we would govern our family according to the clear teachings in His Word. What shapes our family will determine the outcome. Clear Biblical ground rules, goals, and a vision for the future will give our children the security they need to develop into mature, productive and useful citizens. Let us aim to raise children who are willing to make a difference in their communities and who are brave enough to live boldly for Christ. With God's grace, our aim should be to raise children who will fear Him more, love Him more and obey Him more than we do. May God give us this boldness.





Chapter 3

DISCIPLINE or DISORDER

The subject of discipline is more often avoided than properly dealt with, because it conjures up thoughts of abuse, neglect, and a generally unloving home. Even amongst concerned Christian families many questions regarding the correct way to discipline our children remain unanswered. I have yet to know of churches who deal with the subject sufficiently to help parents negotiate this minefield.

God is a God of order and not of chaos, and our homes should reflect this. Scripture speaks to this subject very clearly and it is up to us parents to take heed. Not only will the souls of our children thrive, but our home will be a far more pleasant place for all who dwell therein. So, instead of waiting until our children are older, the process of discipline should begin during the first years of their life.

Perhaps a more pleasant term to use would be 'training'. The Book of Proverbs tells us to train up our children in the way of the Lord, and no training can take place without discipline. A well disciplined athlete is a well trained athlete, similarly with children, well disciplined children are well trained children.

Parents who establish a relationship of trust and respect during the earliest years with their children will have achieved the first step toward child training. We must enjoy our children and cause them to enjoy us. They should bask in our smiles, our approval, our touch, our laughs and our hugs. Children in this environment know that their parents care only for what is good for them. If these are the ground rules, all training will flow from there. One of the first ground rules to have is 'prompt, cheerful, first-time' obedience. If we as parents have to continually repeat ourselves, raise our voices and start to count, then their delayed obedience is the same as disobedience.

Ideally, our reach as disciplinarians cannot exceed the limits of our fellowship with our children. Rebuke should be delivered in an atmosphere of trust and respect. If we lose the heart of our children, then they will have lost the heart to please us. Rebukes and chastisement should not be the constant tone of a home environment; it will only strangle the relationship. Our children must know that we as parents answer to a higher authority our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We ourselves have boundaries, and we should expect our children to adhere to these as well. Unless we teach our children to obey us as their current authorities, how can we expect them to ultimately obey God themselves?

When and if rebellion does occur, the best thing we can do is stay 100% consistent. Our rules should be simple and attainable, but we, as lawgivers, should always win. God has given us 10 commandments, so we should have no more for our children. Establish the 'non-negotiables' and stick to them. Always. This is no doubt the hardest thing for a worn out parent to do at the end of a long day. It has been well said, that often parents need to discipline themselves before they can deal with their unruly children. Our discipline of them

should not be as a result of irritation, or having finally reached our limit. The chastisement of our children should have as its goal the betterment of our children. Their souls are at stake.

If physical punishment is due, it should occur in the privacy of a room. Wildly wacking out at a child walking past is never a good strategy. Take the child to a calm place, explain what the offense was and ask if they understand their guilt. Ask your child to willingly submit by bending over onto the bed and use a slipper with a rubber sole. This has enough flex in it to not bruise the child, but has enough of a sting to be felt. After the spanking, spend time hugging your child and remind him of your love for him. Pray with him and explain that it is your duty to train him or her up into a godly person.

Above all, we must be: Just, reasonable, consistent, and tough. We must also be there, all the time loving, smiling, and demanding compliance as foreman of the home. After all, discipline is a heart issue. We are the shepherds of the hearts of our children for a very short time, and dealing with attitudes of rebellion in a two year old, consistently, will make life so very much more pleasant when that same child is thirteen. I should say here, that it is not too late for parents of older children. Parents need to pray and confess their wrong doings as parents. Ask God to guide you in new strategies for disciplining. Search the Scriptures and get good advice from successful parents you may know. Apologize to your children and tell them that things will be different from now on.

As parents we should be interested not only in the academic success of our children, the sports they play, the school they attend or the friends they have. While these are all important aspects of their life, nothing is as important as shaping godly character. All success is in vain if their character, heart and behaviour does not reflect godly training.

Michael Pearl, in his book "No Greater Joy" sums it up well:

"What can be called success if your children turn out to be part of the world's problem rather than its cure? What satisfaction can there be in the comforts of material success if our children grow up needing counsel rather than being sought after to give counsel? The success of a tree and a man is measured by the fruit that is borne. The fruit of a man or woman is their children; everything else is falling leaves. Let me not measure my giving by the money I spend on them or the educational opportunities my station in life can afford them, but rather, by the hours I spend with them in fellowship. May they graduate from my tutorship to become disciples of the Man from Nazarene. May they learn good and evil from the pinnacle of obedience rather than from the pit of despair. May they have the wisdom to choose the precious, and the courage to reject the trite and the vain things in life. May they always labour for the meat that endures. May they be lovers of God, co-workers with the Holy Spirit, and a friend to the Lord Jesus. And when their trail ends, may it end at the throne of God, laying crowns at the Saviour's feet."

May this inspire us to diligently discipline and train the children God has placed into our care for such a short time.



Chapter 4

MODESTY

Unless you have not left your home in the last 20 years, you will have seen a deterioration in morals, and in particular in the way we dress. As Henry Van Til observed: "culture is religion externalised." By this he meant that the culture of a nation reflects the true faith of that people.

Dress is not neutral. Historically public nakedness went hand in hand with pagan religions. Cultures that worship nature and treasure sensuality tend to dress immodestly (loin cloths and beads for example). Those which make an idol out of material possessions, often fall prey to an enslavement of extravagance and high fashion.

On the other hand, cultures which embrace true Christian piety will seek to make personal holiness the driving standard for their dress code. You, and everyone else, have a dress code. You will have one either by design (your own choice of clothes and style), or by default (because you have let others dictate how you should dress). The way we dress as Christians should not scream: "*Sex!*" or "*Pride!*" or "*Wealth!*", but rather testify to purity, humility and moderation.

We tend to blame the women for how they dress, but I think in doing so we ignore the responsibility of the males. Dads, you need to be more jealous of your women. If your daughter asks you how she looks, don't just peer over the newspaper and say 'um, ok'. Rather, take the time to ask several questions. Ask her to: sit down, cross her legs, uncross

them, stand up again, bend over, and only when you feel that all the 'bases are covered' should you give her your 'ok'.

"I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety..." 1 Timothy 2:9.

Parents should take the time to train and 'dress the heart' before the body is dressed. 1 Timothy 2:9 says that women should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety. The word modest has the general meaning of 'respectable' or 'honourable'. The word shamefacedness denotes 'a state of mind or attitude necessary for one to be concerned about modesty'. The word sobriety has among its meaning the general one of good judgment, moderation, self-control and 'habitual inner self-government'. *"Unaffected modesty is the sweetest charm of female excellence, the richest gem in the diadem of their honour."* (Noah Webster, American Dictionary of the English Language).

Therefore, modesty is not just an issue of how we dress, but more importantly, it is an issue of the heart. We are to train our children in godliness in all areas of life, and this must include clothing. There is little gain if we teach our girls to be great cooks and homemakers, when they are then led to think they can dress the way the world dictates. Scripture speaks to all areas of life, and our outward appearance is part of this. Christian modesty is the inner self-government, rooted in a proper understanding of one's self before God, which outwardly displays itself in humility and purity from a genuine love for Jesus Christ.

"Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law." Romans 13:10

The real debate should not centre around lots of rules and regulations and legalism. On how long the skirts can be, and on whether the ankles can be shown off or not. The debate is between God as Lawgiver or man as lawgiver.

Noah Webster, on defining modesty, says that modesty is synonymous with chastity, or purity of manners. In other words, modesty results from purity of mind.

It is our duty as parents to guide our children to desire purity from the heart, because it is God's way. The last thing I want for my daughters is to dress a certain way for their mom and dad, and as soon as they are old enough, to dress as they please. This would be a reflection of what is in their heart, which would by implication mean that we as parents have failed. As parents, we have about 10 or so years, to dress the heart of the child. This child then will dress her body in a way that reflects the heart.

No doubt many of you have seen girls who have, by all standards, dressed modestly, but have had seductive behaviour. They look as though they are virgins, but behave as though they wish they were not. This is a greater problem because it reflects a heart that is not pure.

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Lest we forget about sons here, may I suggest the following: Fathers, encourage your sons to tell female friends that they disapprove of suggestive clothing. Girls should be told by young men that dressing modestly is the preferred choice - by far. Youth leaders too, should be encouraged to have sessions and discussions on this subject.

Fathers, remember that nakedness goes hand in hand with demon possession in Scripture. In Luke 8 we are told of the man driven by demons and that he was naked. After the power and the grace of Jesus healed this man, he was clothed and in his right mind. Similarly, Adam and Eve were naked in their sin, and God clothed them. It appears that Satan has been trying to strip man of his clothing ever since. Modern swimwear is the epitome of this - by design.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, what was considered lewd and naked in the city, progressively became perfectly justifiable and permissible on the beach. The shift from street wear to underwear as a model cannot be defended. Much of what passes for swimwear covers less than underwear. We have legitimised nakedness, all in the name of recreation on the beach.

So where does the guilt lie? Is it with the women? Or the often-ignorant teenage girls parading the latest immoral trends in an ever increasing desire to be accepted or popular? Or, is it with the men in the pulpits and in the homes? Males no longer lead, but are being led. They have all too often become feminised sex worshippers who follow silver-screen icons instead of God's Holy Word. How sad that so many pulpits and youth leaders today are led by the desires of women and children (and Hollywood) instead of by the Word of God. After all, no one wants to be labelled "*a legalist.*"!

Fathers and Husbands need to consider being more jealous of the women in their lives. For the sake of not only the women, but also for the sake of young men, whose senses are bombarded daily with half-clad women who are like candles among gunpowder. How much harder we make it for these dear brothers when girls dress in a less than wholesome way.

"I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl" Job 31:1

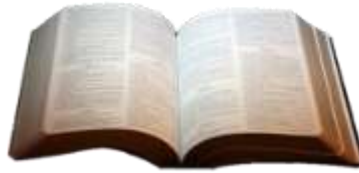
Practically, may I also encourage you to speak to your favourite retail shop. If where you shop for your daughter the available clothes are not wholesome, tell them. Complain loudly. Let them know you are taking your business elsewhere. If enough pressure is put on them they will have to listen and provide modest options.

May God give us, as parents, the wisdom and insight needed to train our children to make the right choices from the start. If however we have failed, may we ask for forgiveness and start afresh, by encouraging our sons and daughters to 'dress the heart'.

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."
Hebrews 10:24



Armed Pilgrims in New England walk warily through the snow to worship on the Lord's Day.



Chapter 5

BULLYING - A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

"Anyone who claims to be in the light, but hates his brother is still in the darkness." 1 John 2:9

The Bible warns us that: *"Envy rots the bones"* Proverbs 14:30 and *"Pride only breeds quarrels"* Proverbs 13:10

The Word of God warns us of *"The ruthless...mockers...with an eye for evil..."* Isaiah 29:20

The Bible tells us of Esau who held a grudge against his brother Jacob (Genesis 27:41), and of Joseph's brothers who hated and bullied their younger brother to such an extent that they betrayed him and sold him into slavery to Egypt. *"They hated him and could not speak a kind word to him."* Genesis 37:4

The Lord Jesus taught: *"The world hates Me because I testify that what it does is evil."* John 7:7

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first." John 15:18

"Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him." 1 John 3:15

Permissive Parenting

The Bible records cases where permissive parenting enabled bullies to rise up, such as Eli's sons, Jacob's sons, and King David's son, Absalom. King David's great love for his son, Absalom, led him to overlook the many failings and weaknesses of Absalom, dealing graciously with him, even after his crime of murdering his half-brother. Meanwhile, Absalom's hatred for his father stirred up such dissension that it resulted in intense conflict and even dragged Israel into civil war. Many thousands died in the ensuing conflict (2 Samuel 18:7-8).

The Curse of Cowardice

Almost as hurtful as the cruelty of bullies, is the sense of betrayal, which many feel when those that they thought were friends remain silent and inactive on the sidelines. Like the priest and the levite who walked by on the other side of the road, while the man remained bleeding on the ground, all too many friends and fellow students choose to keep their distance, or stand silent and inactive on the sidelines (Luke 10:30-33).

This is the very opposite of loving our neighbour as ourself and doing unto others as you would have them do to you (Luke 6:31).

There are always bullies and I had my share of taunts, teasing, being kicked, tripped, poked with injection needles while at school assembly, and being beaten black and blue by gangs at school. Now that I have children of my own, I have to help them handle the inevitable bullies they face as well. What has always concerned me is the unwillingness of many parents and teachers to recognise, or deal with, their children or students who are vicious bullies.

"Fear of man will prove to be a snare..." Proverbs 29:25

"Do not be afraid of any man..." Deuteronomy 1:17

"But the cowardly...shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Revelation 21:8

A Culture of Violence

Educationists are reporting that violence amongst school children is increasing. Many teachers are complaining about the violent character and destructive habits of so many of the children they are assigned to work with. As one put it: *"They come saturated with the popular culture, foul mouthed language, resentful attitudes toward anyone in authority and arrogant disdain for learning. Their parents give them no support..."*

As Norman Cona, the headmaster of Thembaletu High School in George said: *"Not a day goes by when a fight doesn't break out. Children no longer respect their parents, teachers, one another or even animals."*

Dr. Harriet Klopper, a criminologist in Pretoria, has concluded that the media is playing a key role: *"It is estimated that children see more than 8,000 murders and 100,000 violent acts on T.V. before they reach high school."* Up to 80% of computer games aimed at youngsters between the ages of 8 and 14 realistically portray blood, beheadings, mutilation and death in graphic colour, with all of the associated sound effects. *"And heroes who die in these games come to life again, which teach children that violence has no consequences."*

Electronic Child Abuse

Do you approve of adultery and fornication? Would you enjoy watching criminals beat their victims senseless? Could you regard graphic violence or brutal murders entertaining? Would you want your children to learn from immoral or occultic teachers?

Of course not! We would be indignant at any such suggestion.

Yet, how often do we spend time unthinkingly watching such evils on T.V? And how often do our children sit in front of the T.V and watch such vile and violent programmes? Have you noticed how many of the children's cartoons depict graphic violence, immorality and occultism?

Which of us would allow a stranger to come into our home and rearrange the furniture? Yet, daily we allow strangers on the television, or through magazines and music, to reorganise our thoughts. Strangers have become the greatest influence on the mental and emotional development of our children through T.V. And superficial, sensational and immoral material predominates in the modern entertainment industry. It is producing an increasingly selfish, superficial, mindless and immoral society.

All of this is most valid and needs to be faced up to and dealt with, along with the violent videos, DVDs, computer games and angry, rebellious, aggressive rap, rock, and hip hop "music." One also needs to look at the role of the state schools themselves. ***"A tree is known by its fruit"*** (Matt. 12:33).

By the time the average child completes high school, they will have spent 15,000 hours in school, watched between 15,000 to 30,000 hours of television and listened to over 10,000 hours of music.

The influence of parents and churches in the upbringing of most children today is declining at an alarming rate. The disintegration of many families, absentee parents and a general absence of discipline have created a vacuum. Violent and immoral films and videos, throbbing pulsating noise masquerading as "music" and pornographic magazines, websites and SMS sites are filling the void in the aimless and meaningless lives of all too many young people.

"Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind..." Romans 1:28

What we see influences what we think and what we think influences what we become and what we do. Ideas have consequences. Actions flow from thought patterns. What form of education is moulding your child's thought patterns? What entertainment and news media is filling their minds?

"Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil" Ephesians 5:15-16

The Paganisation of our Youth

The selfishness and short sightedness of modern society is seen in litter strewn, graffiti vandalised communities. The filth, pollution and destruction of the environment in which our children play and grow up is also reflected in the self-mutilation and body piercing of a growing number of confused young people. Pierced noses and eye brows, tongue studs and belly rings, along with acid rock and rap should be a wakeup call to any parent. But, incredibly, all too many parents seem oblivious to the sullen, self-destructive, rebellious attitudes that go along with this kind of body mutilating, mind-rotting and soul destroying sub-culture.

"Another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what He had done...they followed and worshipped various gods...they provoked the Lord to anger." Judges 2:10-12

In the face of these threats to our young people, how have the schools responded? Have they taken the opportunity to shape minds, morals and characters to love their neighbour as themselves, doing unto others as they would want to be done unto? Are our schools teaching respect for God, respect for parents, respect for people and property?

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Psalm 111:10

Or have our schools been pouring fuel on the fire by teaching that man is a product of evolutionary chance? By replacing Bible education with sex education, removing prayer and tolerating pornography? Teaching that violence is an acceptable solution to the problem of an "unwanted pregnancy" by killing the preborn baby through abortion? By promoting situation

ethics, values clarification, alternative lifestyles, self-actualization and sexual experimentation? Effectively - to use and abuse others for our own convenience?

"The fool says in his heart, 'there is no God'. They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good." Psalm 14:1

A Meaningless Existence in a Chance Universe

In a sense, the violence confronting us in our schools today is an inevitable result of rejecting the truth of Creation, absolute standards of right and wrong, the Ten Commandments, the teachings and golden rule of Christ, and the meaning, purpose and ethical foundations that comes from Christian education.

Evolution, with its *"from goo to the zoo to you"*, *"from mud to monkeys to man"*, *"a whole lot of time and a whole lot of nothing made everything"* science fiction fairy tale with its *"survival of the fittest"* breeds bullies.

Educationalists today are saying *"At school kids should be taught exactly what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, how to treat others with respect and how to insist on their rights without infringing on the rights of others. All schools should have psychologists to help... kids who have become involved in crime or violence often need intensive, long term therapy...emotional intelligence tests..."* They are deluding themselves if they think that this can possibly work. Secular Humanist education with its *"you come from nothing, you are going nowhere, life is meaningless. There are no moral absolutes"*, philosophy, cannot possibly even understand the problem of bullying, let alone deal with it effectively.

Reclaiming our Youth for Christ

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ" Colossians 2:8

Historically, only Christianity with its teaching on the inherent sinfulness of man can diagnose the problem, and prescribe the solution.

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates." Deuteronomy 6:7-9

We as parents are responsible before God to disciple our children. From the time we wake up to the time we go to sleep, the Word of God is to govern our conversation and our actions. At home, or on the road, we are to talk about God's Word. We are to teach our children to memorise Scripture, especially the Ten Commandments. Everything we do with our hands, or think with our minds, is to be ruled by the Word of God. And our goal is to ensure that:

"Your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all His decrees and commands." Deuteronomy 6:10

1. Are you doing everything possible to ensure your child, or children, are learning to love and obey God?

2. Are you discipling your children, or grandchildren, by instruction and by example?
3. Do you regularly pray for your children?
4. Do you regularly pray with your children?
5. Are you regularly reading the Scriptures to your children?
6. Are you training your children in Bible memorisation?
7. Are you bringing your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4)?

Nearly 500 years ago, the great German Reformer, Martin Luther, warned: **"I am much afraid that schools will prove to be wide gates to hell unless they diligently labour to explain the Holy Scriptures, engraving them on the hearts of the youth. I advise no-one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not constantly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt."**

"Know therefore, that the Lord your God is God: He is the faithful God, keeping His Covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His Commandments." Deuteronomy 7:9



Daniel in the Lion's Den



Chapter 6

RESPONSIBLE EDUCATION

No matter where you live, if you have children of school age, you will have grappled with the whole concept of how best to educate your child. For some the question is an academic one, for others it is a matter of proximity to where they live or work. Others still consider the size of the classroom, or how well the sports programme is organized, but what we should really be considering is whether or not God's Word is honoured and obeyed in the classroom.

The shaping and moulding of your child's mind cannot be left in the care of individuals that do not share your worldview. Michael Pearl says "To teach biology in an environment that denies the Author of life is like eating an egg while denying the chicken. To teach history apart from God is to praise the sculpture and deny the sculptor. To learn science and mathematics apart from the omnipotent God is to throw out the computer and do your computations with a roulette wheel."

When your children spend an average of seven hours, five days a week, at school, and when you consider sports and homework, precious little time is left to spend with them.

As Christian parents, a good place to start is by asking ourselves what our own worldview is. Scripture is clear about this, and while there is room for disagreement of nonessentials, God's commands must be clearly obeyed regarding the education of our children. Armed with this knowledge, the most logical question to ask is whether or not your school is in agreement with this Biblical Worldview. We tend to have higher and stricter standards for the babysitters we employ some evenings than we do for the teachers that teach our children every day. To assume that the exposure of 40 hours a week in an institution that does not reflect your worldview will not affect your child is folly at their expense. Doing the basic maths will show that our children spend more time amongst teachers, coaches and peers than they do with you. It is therefore essential that the philosophy espoused by your local school be in agreement with yours.

Even a Christian school, staffed by sincere Christian teachers cannot stem the tide of secular humanist textbooks. Removing objectionable material, memorising Bible verses and singing hymns in assembly are only cosmetic tokens of Christian education. It is not enough to merely baptise secular curriculum, and in fact it should be rejected by Christian educators seeking to offer a serious Biblical education.

Another serious, though more complicated, question is the style in which your children are being taught. Dorothy Sayers, in her well known essay, "The Lost Tools of Learning" said: *"The sole true end of education is simply this: to teach men how to learn for themselves; and whatever instruction fails to do this is effort spent in vain."*

Educating groups of 30 children at a time means that routine structures and discipline must be incorporated for this to function. The school bell either brings to an end any creative work in progress or mercifully ends a very boring lecture. Children move like herds of sheep from one activity to the next. In the home environment, creativity and expression can flow freely. Most of the academics required of even high school age scholars can be accomplished in half the time it takes in a school setting. The result of this style of learning is a self-disciplined, self-governing student.

We live in an instant, media saturated society. Without intervention on the part of wise parents, our children will learn that the totality of life's meaning can be found in a sequence of images flashed before us in high- resolution colour. We have a generation that wants learning to come through fun. Our children are entertained to death and then we wonder, in confusion, why they determine that truth has become a barrier to the pursuit of a blithe and happy life.

So, the onus is on us as parents to ensure that the education they receive is compatible with our beliefs.

In South Africa, to be sure, there are still some great schools that are run by godly principals and dedicated teachers; but they are stemming an ever increasing tide which is becoming more and more overwhelming. Some families have the option of private schools and even great Christian schools. Sadly there are very few of these, and many are either too expensive, too far away, or the waiting list is too long. Fortunately, we have the privilege now of another option: Home schooling.

When I tell people I am home schooling four children, the response is varied. Some just stare in disbelief. Others shuffle awkwardly. Others still, look anxiously at my children to see whether or not they are social misfits incapable of carrying on a coherent conversation. Well, perhaps it is too soon to say with my children, but I am encouraged by the results I have observed in other home educated families as well as the research I have read.

Most moms respond by saying something like *'I am not cut out to handle my children all day'; or 'I do not have that kind of stamina'; or 'what about sports'; or 'but how do your children learn social skills'; or, 'how do they make it into university?'* These are valid and important questions, but first things first.

My experience is that we need to, as parents, decide on a good strategy for raising our children - before we can decide on a good strategy to educate them. Scripture is the best manual for raising our children, but there are also some great books and resources out there to help us along the way. I believe this is where we must start. If we have disobedient children who ignore our instructions day after day then it is no wonder we cannot wait to send them off to school. However, if good ground rules have been laid, and everyone plays by these rules, then home schooling can be a very successful adventure. After all, if our children are not taught to obey us, then how can we ever expect them to ultimately obey God?

Home schooling provides an opportunity for a superior education for a variety of reasons. Allowing children to work at their own pace is reason enough. This works well with the student who is slower at mastering some concept as well as the child who is quick to catch on. Each home schooling set up is as unique as each family. Many families make use of a variety of curriculums, because their children are all so different.

Home schooling should not be entered into on the spur of the moment just because you are fed up with little Suzie's teacher. Nor should it be attempted just because you feel your child is bullied, a slow learner or otherwise disadvantaged in his current school environment.

For home schooling to be successful, you need to be convinced as parents that it is the right thing for you to undertake. If you are not, you will really battle to weather the storms that will inevitably come. The ups and downs, the frustrations, the sacrifice of your time and the nagging question about whether or not you are giving your child all he or she needs will be part of the package. But the rewards are worth it. The home schooling families I have observed have some of the most well-adjusted children. The interaction between the ages and between the generations is smooth and natural. Intelligent conversations are the norm, compassion for each other is common and the ability to manage time is a natural by-product. Research done in the United States shows clearly that home-educated children are sought after by many leading universities.

The last, and one of the most common, hindrances to home schooling for many parents is the feeling of inadequacy to teach. You do not need any fancy qualifications to teach your children. You need to learn to *'think outside of the box'*.

May God give us wisdom as we consider the education of our children. The schools will not one day, answer to God for the education of your child. You will.



Chapter 7

WHY BOYS FIGHT AND COMPETE

How do we know when it is permissible for boys to fight? When do we determine that an altercation was justifiable and when it was not? A boy fighting off a kidnapper is surely to be praised, but a boy reducing himself to a fistfight over the last sweet is to be disciplined. As parents we must instruct our boys to fight in a life-threatening situation and not to fight when the issue is petty and when a higher authority is just around the corner in the kitchen who can adjudicate the dispute.

The best way, as with all things, is to go to the Word of God and discover what it has to say about fistfights in the grey areas. For example, what about the consistently determined bully at school, or what if a friend is getting unjustly hammered by someone and when there is no hope of adult intervention?

The Christian faith is not pacifistic. We are given a glorious vision of victory in Scripture, when spears will be beaten into pruning hooks. A time will indeed come, when men will no longer have to study war, but in the meantime our boys need to be instructed in the art of warfare, fighting and self-defence. We cannot wait until boys are fully-grown; the training must start at a young age. Future men need to learn when, where and how to fight.

In Matthew 5 we see that not only is murder forbidden, but also anger without a cause. Boys who fight for entertainment, or who fly off the handle at things which are no provocation at all are in need of discipline. This must be detected at an early age, as it is an attitude which manifests itself in a variety of ways.

Boys must be taught never to fight for trivial reasons, and they must not be motivated by a personal disdain that is evidenced in the desire to wound through name-calling. Boys must also be taught that they may not fight unless the fight is consistent with their love for their enemies. The heart of the Christian ethic is for individuals to be reconciled to God. Personal vengeance always escalates out of control, but strict justice can be administered by a civil magistrate according to God's Word.

As parents we must be clear in our teaching that our personal enemies must be loved. At the same time we as parents can instruct our sons that a bully can and must be restrained when there is no other way to stop the abuse. In this case, the son is the deputy of his father.

War at Play

Many adults are concerned over boys playing war with toy guns and swords, but boys are training at something men are called to do. This is as honourable as girls mothering baby dolls. We must however make sure that Biblical rules apply even here. Boys should never treat a toy gun carelessly because it is not real. Boys playing war with boys should be allowed to blast away with the best of them. However, if a lady comes over to visit the young boy's mother, is standing in the hallway, and the boy comes up and tries to blow her away, the young warrior's mother should haul him off to the bedroom to be tried for war crimes. The visitor was a civilian and non-combatant. Mother should be schooled in the principles of Just War theory, and she should enforce the rules. Boys must also be trained in the use of real firearms. They should be fanatics about gun safety, and the rules of gun safety should apply whether the gun is real or not.

Athletic Competition

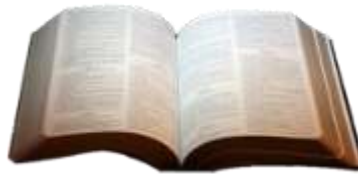
This is really mock war, and many valuable lessons can be learned in the context of disciplined athletic competition. In the world of sports involving children, egalitarianism runs rampant. Winning and losing is said not to be important as long as every child comes out of the game feeling good about himself. It is quite true that a competitor should not care about winning more than he cares about glorifying God. Although it sounds crass, the point of playing a game is to win it - and this is how young men should be trained to glorify God. Winning is most certainly not everything - but it is the point of that particular activity. There is nothing wrong with encouraging our sons to win at competitive sports, as long as good sportsmanship is demonstrated. In a team context, the individual's skills help the whole team win, and this in of itself teaches valuable lessons.

In summary, there are times when boys must be taught to mute their natural energy, but at other times another set of manners requires a release of energy. These channels in which aggressiveness can flow should be well defined and established. We see here the benefits of organized sports and military training.

Even on the playing field, 'manners' are still important. When aggressiveness overflows the banks, or when there are no banks (restraints), we have a major problem. Boys should learn at a young and tender age what God requires of Christian men.



"If you don't have a sword - sell your cloak and buy one!" Luke 22:36



Chapter 8

WHY WOODEN SWORDS AND PLASTIC GUNS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR BOYS

If you have been blessed by having sons, or if you deal with boys in a school context, you have no doubt wondered: why is it that this gender gravitates to weaponry?

We live in a world where the identity of the two sexes is so marred that little distinction is made anymore. Indeed to even suggest that significant differences should exist is to be accused of being outdated in ones thinking. What then, is true and Biblical masculinity?

As much as it may distress us, our boys are future men. Raising boys takes a lot of courage and consistency and we need to look to the Scriptures to find our model for masculinity. Manhood is where boyhood should be aimed. William Mouser, in his book *"Five Aspects of Man"* points to five clear distinctive features of the masculine constitution: Lords; Husbandmen; Saviours; Sages and Glory bearers.

Lords

Man was created to exercise dominion in the earth. The charge which God gave in this regard is frequently called the cultural mandate. Right from an early age, boys want to conquer and subdue, even if the terrain is only the backyard.

They are in training after all, and should be encouraged to become men who exercise dominion. They should be learning to be lords in the earth, and should be adventurous and visionary. This is difficult to do when they are only surrounded by videos and computers. If you have no backyard find a park, and let him conquer!!

Husbandmen

Man was created not only to conquer, but also to make the conquered land flourish. If the dominion mandate were taken in isolation, men would end up basing a culture on piracy and freebooting. So, if you are going to subdue the land, you must settle down on it! A great many lessons can be learned in the back garden. A rich farmer was once rebuked for having his sons work in the fields when they did not have to. His reply was that he was not just raising corn, but raising sons. Our boys need to learn to be patient, careful and hardworking.

Saviours

Boys have a natural inclination to rescue and save. Our greatest example of a Saviour is of course Jesus Christ. The ancient serpent was the tempter who brought the occasion of sin before Adam and Eve. Men who follow Jesus Christ, the dragon slayer, must themselves become lesser dragon-slayers. This is why it is absolutely essential for boys to play with wooden swords and plastic guns. Boys have a deep need to have something to defend, something to represent in battle. To beat your swords into ploughs prematurely, before the war is over, will leave you ploughing for those who kept their swords. The peace that will be ushered in by our great Prince will be a peace purchased with blood. As our Lord sacrificed Himself in this war, so must His followers learn to do. Our boys must therefore learn to be strong, sacrificial, courageous and good.

Sage

A man who is great in wisdom, is a sage. We must therefore teach our boys the masculinity of study, of learning, of books, of intellectual discussion. We must not let them pit one aspect of masculinity against another. When this is allowed to happen, a boy who naturally loves sport can too readily dismiss poetry or reading as effeminate. We must gird up the loins of the mind. This is a discipline possibly unpleasant at the time, but nonetheless essential. Boys must therefore be taught to be teachable, studious and thoughtful.

Glory-Bearers

This aspect of masculinity is seen in the fact that men are the glory of God. (1 Cor 11:7) The glory of man, whose glory she is. The head of every man is Christ, and the head of every woman is man (I Cor. 11:3). The Bible assigns one kind of glory to men, and another to women. This is not meant to be in competition to one another, but to complement one another.

Because this is true, boys must be instructed on how to grow up into glory and how to fulfil their responsibility to be representative, responsible and holy.

In summary, we should have a pretty good idea of where we are headed with our boys. These future men need to learn how to be aggressive and adventurous, they are learning to be lords of the earth. We want them to be patient and hardworking, they are learning husbandry. We want to instil in them a hatred for evil and to have a deep desire to fight it. They are learning

what a weapon feels like in their hands. We should want boys to be eager to learn from the wise, as they become wise themselves. We should want them to stand before God, in the worship of God, with head uncovered.

They are the image and glory of God.

Raising boys takes a lot of faith. This is good because the presence or absence of faith reveals whether or not we have a Biblical doctrine of our future. The faith exhibited by wise parents of boys is the faith of a farmer, or a sculptor, or anyone else engaged in the work of shaping unfolding possibilities. It is the faith of someone who looks at the present and sees what it will become through grace and good works. Let us immerse ourselves in Scripture and see, then, how to raise our future men.

(This chapter is based on the book 'FUTURE MEN' by Douglas Wilson)



Chapter 9

HOSPITALITY

"Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." Romans 12:13

New Testament writers Paul, Peter, John and the author of Hebrews make hospitality a Scriptural command, in fact, a duty. Why was this considered so important? What does it have to do with Christianity? The first Christians viewed themselves as part of a worldwide brotherhood and they knew they were a persecuted minority in a hostile world. *"Little pockets of early Christians survived,"* writes C.S. Lewis, *"because they cared exclusively for the love of the brethren and stopped their ears to the opinion of the Pagan society all round them."*

Hospitality, therefore, became one of the most significant, practical expressions of this worldwide family of brothers and sisters, and thus became one of the birthmarks of early Christianity.

In the rush of today's modern lifestyle, hospitality is often one of the last things on our list of priorities. To offer hospitality means sacrificing time, family, possessions, home, finances and our privacy. The rewards though are lasting and far reaching. The simple act of hospitality can offer friendship, acceptance, fellowship, refreshment, comfort and love in one of the richest and deepest ways possible for humans to understand. Unless we open our homes to one another, the reality of the local church as a close-knit family of loving brothers and sisters is only a theory.

Could it be that our churches today often feel cold and uncaring because hospitality is a dying art? How long do folk attend a church before they get invited over for a meal, or even a cup of tea? Could it be that we are losing that distinctive, the one that so ably characterized the early Church? How are we as Christians different from the pagan, cold and hostile world? Two hours of fellowship on a Sunday morning is hardly enough to grow in friendship and brotherly love. We need to get into one another's homes to build relationships and accountability. For new Christians, the home can be a launching pad for discipleship. What can create a more comfortable and secure environment after a morning of instruction at Church than the warm fellowship around a meal afterwards? What a perfect time for questions to be answered and new faith to be strengthened.

We were not created to live alone. Since the dawn of time and throughout history, the value of friendship has been constant. Friends can either provoke others to holiness or encourage in wickedness. It is usually one or the other. How important then, for a new Christian to be surrounded by believers in a relaxing and accepting home environment. The more we grow as Christians, the more we desire holy companionship.

The Commands of Hospitality could include the following passages:

A living Sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2,13)

A Joyful Exercise (1 Peter 4:7-9)

Entertaining Strangers (Hebrews 13:1-2)

Advancing the Gospel by providing an indispensable service for the Lord's messengers (Luke 10:7-8; 3 John 5-8)

Ministering to the poor (Luke 14:12-14)

A practical vehicle for exercising one's gifts. (1 Peter 4:9-10)

Unexpected rewards and blessings (Hebrews 13:2)

Love in Action

Hospitality then, is love in action. It is not to be left to chance, but should be planned and pursued. It should not be perceived as a dread or burden but as a privilege and as part of service in His kingdom. Remember that you may be entertaining angels unawares. The

benefits for our children are immense as well. If our children grow up in a home where guests are frequent, they will in turn learn to serve and give of themselves as well.

Their horizons will be stretched in ways that few other things can, especially when hospitality is offered to people from other cultures, like visiting missionaries.

In today's world, a kind deed performed for a stranger is seen as a rarity, and even written about in the newspaper. Not too long ago these acts were considered part of civilized society. This is a symptom of cultural disintegration, and if we as Christians fail to understand and apply the commands of hospitality in the covenant community, our churches, like our culture will eventually die.

If you are feeling convicted in this area, remember that giving hospitality does not need to be a threatening situation. It is not just for gourmet cooks, folk with perfect homes, and perfect children. To be hospitable refers to our reception and treatment of others, and has little to do with our culinary skills. If our general disposition is one of self-absorption, irritability, disinterest and complaining, then our inclination to invite others into our home will be non-existent. Inviting someone for a meal after church for example can be as simple as a picnic in the back garden, a relaxing braai or enjoying a delicious stew that was prepared the day before.

The good news is that hospitality is an art that can be developed over time. Start by inviting friends or neighbours you have known for years, and then move on to inviting strangers and new Christians.

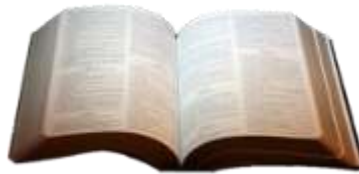
Building Relationships

To become more hospitable then, we should start with prayer. We must ask God to help us focus on others and on relationships and not so much on tasks. May we be willing to give God our homes and our time. Let us ask God to use us in this fading art of hospitality. The rewards will be rich, lasting, deep, and will strengthen our church community in ways not thought possible.

"Do not forget to entertain strangers for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it" Hebrews 13:2



A nineteenth century scene outside St. Pierre (The church where Swiss reformer John Calvin ministered) in Geneva, on the Lord's Day.



Chapter 10

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Habits and routine are a vital part of discipleship. We make time for those things we deem important. God has decreed that we work six days and give the seventh to rest and worship. This was so important to God that He gave us an example to follow, by resting after creating the universe.

"By the seventh day God had finished the work He had been doing; so on the seventh day He rested from all His work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy..." Genesis 2:2-3

Why does our week consist of 7 days? Why not make it 10 or 12 for that matter? The Basic Everyday Encyclopaedia states: *"The seven day week came in from Old Testament sources and the Christian influence."*

The seven-day week is a testimony to the fact that God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th. The fact that Sunday, the first day of the week, is our day of rest instead of the Jewish Saturday, is a weekly reminder that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week.

For that matter, the reason why we date our years as we do, this being the year 2008 AD, is a monumental testimony to the incarnation of Christ. The birth of Christ utterly altered the way we measure time. He turned aside the river of the ages out of its course and lifted the centuries off their hinges. Now, the whole world counts time as before Christ (BC) and AD

(Anno Domini), in the year of the Lord. It is ironic that even the most vitriolic atheists have to acknowledge the centrality of Christ every time that they write the date!

In fact, the Revolutionary Convention, during the French Revolution, attempted to abolish the Christian calendar and introduce a 10-day work week, counting the years from the establishment of their "*Republic*", beginning 1792. It needs hardly to be pointed out that they failed.

The French Revolutionary and atheist, Voltaire, declared: "*If you want to kill Christianity, you must abolish Sunday.*" (To show how God has a sense of humour, the Geneva Bible Society bought Voltaire's house and printing press to produce Bibles in French!)

As Christians, we should repent for allowing the Lord's Day to become so encroached upon and desecrated by shopping, sports and worldly entertainment. D.L. Moody observed: "*No nation has ever prospered that has trampled the Sabbath in the dust. Show me a nation that has done this and I will show you a nation that has got in it the seeds of ruin and decay. I believe that Sabbath desecration will carry a nation down quicker than anything else.*"

Any relationship needs quality time and we need to devote at least one day a week to developing and deepening our relationship with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on My holy day; if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honourable, and if you honour it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance..." Isaiah 58:13-14

Setting aside the first day of the week as a special day is good for our body, mind and soul. We need time set aside for relaxation, reflection and restoration. It is a matter of rhythm and routine, but also a matter of revelation and remembrance of the Lord's great work of Creation (Exodus 20:8-11 and Salvation (Deuteronomy 5:12-15).

By ordering our week to set apart the Lord's Day as a special day for the family to rest and worship the Lord - we proclaim to the world that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and He is Lord of our lives.

Resting one day in seven is also healthy - spiritually, emotionally, physically and economically. It is good for businesses, good for families and good for any country.

"Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the Seventh Day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God..." Exodus 20:8-9

God has given this commandment, like all the other commandments, for the benefit not just of Christians, but of society in general. "*We ignore the Sabbath at our peril. We keep it to our inestimable benefit.*" Professor Verna Wright

The pattern of having one special day of rest and worship in every week, does not come from the giving of the Law (Exodus 20), but from the time of creation (Genesis 2:2). The practice of one day of rest in seven began as a gift from God at creation, and was later made a commandment from God as well. This Day of rest and refreshment was to benefit servants, visitors and one's animals as well (Exodus 20:8-11). This Day of rest was also given as a reminder that God is the Creator and the Redeemer.

The early Christian Church gathered for worship *"on the first day of the week"* (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10).

"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another..." Hebrews 10:24-25

Aside from it being a Day of rest, remembrance and worship, the Lord's Day also is a day of hope.

"There remains, then, a Sabbath rest for the people of God." Hebrews 4:9

Every Lord's Day, when we spend time with God's people in worship, fellowship and ministry of the Word, we are reminded that we have something even more glorious and wonderful to look forward to in eternity.

Some Christians reject any suggestion that Sundays are special, claiming that we are not *"under Law but under grace"* and therefore free to do as we please. However, that suggests that the Lord's Day is some kind of terrible bondage. God's commandments should not be seen as limiting our freedom, but on the contrary, as giving us great freedom to enjoy God's best for our lives. The Law brings an obligation, but grace brings in opportunity. The only people who would find the fourth commandment as some kind of bondage are those who have never really understood its purpose.

Listen to some of these insights from great leaders of the past:

"Sunday is a divine and priceless institution, the necessary pause in the national life. It is the birthright of every British subject, our responsibility, privilege and duty to hand on to posterity." Sir Winston Churchill

"Experience shows that the Day of rest is essential to mankind - that it is demanded by civilisation as well as Christianity." Theodore Roosevelt

"On the Lord's Day, Christians should, in honour of the resurrection of the Lord, defer all worldly business." Tertullian

"The profanation of the Sabbath is an inlet to all impiety. Those who pollute holy time will keep nothing pure." Matthew Henry

"There is nothing in which I would recommend you to be more strictly resolute than in keeping the Sabbath holy; and by this I mean, not only abstaining that Day from all unbecoming sports and common business, but from consuming time in frivolous conversation, which often leads to a sad waste of this precious day." William Wilberforce

"The city will be safe if God be truly and devoutly worshipped and this is attested by the sanctification of the Sabbath..." John Calvin

"A man shall show his heart and life, what they are, more by one Lord's Day than by all the days of the week besides. To delight ourselves in God's service upon His holy Day gives it better proof of a sanctified nature than to grudge at the coming of such days." John Bunyan

The pioneer inventors of the aircraft, the Wright brothers, had this to say: *"We were brought up to have respect for the Lord's Day ... we would never fly on a Sunday."*

Of course, our Lord Jesus taught that it is good and right to do works of mercy on the Lord's Day (Matthew 12:11-12). Christians have always recognised that there are necessary emergency services, which are required to do good on the Lord's Day. We don't abandon speed restrictions on the roads simply because the police and emergency services have to go faster. We make laws that will be for the good of society in general, and then discuss the necessary exceptions.

The point is - the Lord's Day should be a special day without any commercial activities. We are to make every effort to ensure that the minimum number of people are forced to work on Sundays. Nobody should be forced by legislation to go to church on Sunday, but it would be right for governments to make legislation to keep people free from commercial obligations on Sunday. Just as there is legislation such as compulsory wearing of seat belts for motorists and crash helmets for motor cyclists, against drug abuse and other protections, it would be appropriate for the state to pass legislation, allowing people the freedom not to work on Sunday's, although, no government may tell people what to do with their free time.

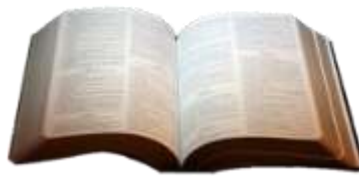
Benjamin Disraeli, the former Prime Minister of Great Britain, declared: *"I hold the Day of rest to be the most valuable blessing ever conceded to man, it is the cornerstone of civilisation."*

Eric Liddell, the Olympic gold medallist whose refusal to run for the main Olympic race on a Sunday, was the subject of the film Chariots of Fire, declared: *"There are many people today who think of those who honour Sunday in the old-fashioned way as killjoys. They feel that during the years of youth they ought to have a chance to 'have their fling'. Give me the Day of rest, when all that savours of organised games can be put to one side, and all of life's joys will be greater because of it. To me personally, it is a time of communion and fellowship with God - a time of quiet, in fact, a time of recreation and fellowship with God. I believe that Sunday as we have had it in the past, is one of the greatest helps in a young man's life to keep all that is noblest, truest and best. That is why I say: young person, stand for the Lord's Day, for by losing it you will lose far more than the Day: you will lose the Spirit that it stands for."* Eric Liddell went on to win an Olympic gold medal for a race he had not specifically trained for, and then became a missionary to China, dying in a concentration camp.

Bishop J.C. Ryle wrote: *"My advice to all Christians is to contend earnestly for the whole Day against all enemies, both without and within. It is worth the struggle. The Sabbath breaking of the present day is one among many proofs of the low state of vital religion. The observance of a Sabbath Day is part of the eternal Law of God. The Sabbath is Gods ' merciful appointment for the common benefit of all mankind."*



King Alfred the Great encouraged reading and Church schools throughout his kingdom.



Chapter 11

VIDEOS, GAMES AND T.V.

Almost all of us have had this distressing experience. Perhaps you read a positive review of the film, or the title in the poster attracted you. You might have even seen the trailer advertising the film. It seemed to be a promising production. As a result you took your children or friend, to the nearby cinema, and paid for the tickets, or you rented the DVD.

The lights dim, the screen lights up and you settle back expecting some refreshing entertainment, emotional upliftment, or at least some harmless diversion. Instead, you find your ears assaulted by foul language and the profane use of the Lord's Name. Sexually arousing scenes assault the senses, followed by shocking depictions of graphic violence.

Your mind reels as though punch drunk as you ask yourself: *"Why did none of the reviews or previews warn us? What should I do now? Do we walk out? Do we complain? How can I ensure that I don't subject my loved ones to this again?"*

Influence and Impact

Researchers calculate that the average child watches over 2,000 hours of films, videos and TV each year. Approximately only up to 7% of this will feature what is described as *"strong redemptive or Christian worldview."*

Movies and television programmes are powerful tools of communication. They plant emotional images in our minds, influence our purchases and our lifestyles, shape our standards, and direct our hopes and dreams.

Our Lord Jesus told stories, Parables, in order to help people understand the Kingdom of God. Hollywood tells stories through film, television, videos, DVDs, radio and other mediums.

As Dr Tom Snyder writes in his book *Myth Conceptions*: "Stories matter deeply. They make a profound difference in our lives. They bring us laughter, tears and joy. They stimulate our minds and stir our imaginations. They help us escape our daily lives for a while and visit different times, places and people. They can arouse our compassion or empathy, spur us towards truth and love, or sometimes even incite us towards hatred or violence... Different kinds of stories satisfy different needs. For example, a comedy evokes a different response from us than a tragedy. A news story on page one affects us differently from a human interest story in a news magazine, or a celebrity profile next to the movie listings... Although different stories satisfy different needs, many stories share common themes, settings, character types, situations and other recurrent patterns. They may even possess a timeless, universal quality."

Many stories focus on one individual, typically a heroic figure, who overcomes trial and tribulations to defeat some kind of evil or to attain some positive goal. Through these stories we can gain insights into human nature, reality, truth, motives, meanings, values, and principles.

A World War of Worldviews

"Every story has a worldview - a way of viewing reality, truth, the universe, the human condition, and the spiritual world. A story can have a Christian worldview which shows people's need for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word, the Bible, or it can have a secular humanist worldview that explicitly, or implicitly, rejects the Christian worldview. By examining the worldview of a story, or film, we can determine the moral, philosophical, social, psychological, spiritual, theological and aesthetic message that the story conveys" (*Dr Ted Baehr, What Can We Watch Tonight?*)

Learn to Discern

How then are we to judge whether a particular film is appropriate?

By what standards can we select a film?

How can we protect our families, and ourselves, from destructive influences in the media?

Countless psychological, sociological and neurological studies have concluded that *"violence in the mass media is contributing to increased violent behaviour amongst children and teenagers."* Other studies have found that *"viewing sexual images in the media leads to increased sexual activity amongst children and teenagers and increased deviant behaviour, including rape."*

A recent medical study reported by the National Cancer Institute found that *"viewing drug use in movies and TV programmes leads to increased drug use amongst children."*

A long term study, released in 2002, led by Geoffrey G. Johnson of Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute studied children in 707 families for 17 years. Their report claimed "overwhelming" evidence that adolescent young adults who watch television for more than 7 hours per week are up to 200% more likely to commit an aggressive act in later years. Their report claimed that films such as Hannibal, Scream, American Pie 2, Queen of the Damned, the Harry Potter series, and others, can have *"a tremendously negative impact*

on the lives of children and teenagers... These types of movies and programmes are nothing more than visual terrorism."

Serial rapist and mass murderer, Ted Bundy, in his television interview with Dr James Dobson the night before he was executed, acknowledged that pornography had played a critical role in leading him to murder as many as 28 young women and children. Reflecting on the many years he had spent in prison with violent criminals, Bundy observed: *"without exception, every one of them was deeply involved with pornography, without question, without exception, deeply influenced and consumed by an addiction to pornography. The FBI's own study on serial homicides shows that the most common interest amongst serial killers is pornography."*

Dr Victor Cline's research has shown that *"sexually suggestive theatrical movies increases (men's) aggressive behaviour towards women."*

The 1987 US Attorney General's Commission On Pornography *"carefully details the conclusive research demonstrating that sex and violence in films and on television leads to rape, child abuse, and increased divorced rates in our society."*

Studies on teenage suicide conducted at Columbia University and the University of California at San Diego which was published in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine: *"conclusively demonstrated that movies, television programmes, and even news reports, involving teenage suicide led to a 7% increase in the number of teenage suicides during the week following such programming."*

We seem to be seeing a return to the days of the blood sports in the Roman Coliseum when people demanded increasing decadence and violence. The insatiable lust of the public for the spectacle of gladiators fighting each other, slaughtering unarmed innocents, and even degrading sexual orgies in the arena, are now being produced in films and TV programmes.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing" Edmund Burke.

Redeem the Media

We need to redeem the media by supporting good films and refusing to support the bad.

World Vision has reported that, on average, Christians spend 6.6% of their income on entertainment, but only 1.2% on church, missions and ministries.

The media are merely tools of communication, just as the telephone is a tool of communication. Like other tools, these mass medium of entertainment may be used for good or for evil. The printing press can print Bibles or pornography. A hammer may be used to build a church or to hit someone over the head.

The movie industry needs money to survive. If we redirect our investment away from supporting bad entertainment to investing in good entertainment, the industry will have to make more good movies and fewer bad ones.

Christians all too often go to bad films and miss good ones because of sin, peer pressure, curiosity, deceptive advertisements and lack of guidance.

We need to be soaked in the Scripture, well studied on the Biblical Worldview, and have an adequate understanding of the false teachings of humanism, to recognise errors when presented to us.

Subscribe to **Movieguide**, read Christian books on worldviews: *The Battle for Truth, Biblical Principles for Africa, South Africa - Renaissance or Reformation?, Make a Difference, The Biblical Worldview Manual, What Can We Watch Tonight?, The Media Wise Family and The Culture Wise Family.*

"Give Thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and evil..." 1 Kings 3:9

Every worldview has a doctrine of God, doctrine of man, doctrine of salvation, doctrine of the Church, doctrine of History, doctrine of the future, doctrine of the nature of reality, and doctrine of knowledge.

Harry Potter films for example have an occult, new age worldview that subtly encourages children to dabble in witchcraft and sorcery. Harry Potter teaches a nature based, polytheistic religion that confuses the spiritual world of God with the natural or physical world. It has no doctrine of salvation, or forgiveness of sin, and believes human nature is basically good instead of inherently sinful.

In contrast to the Harry Potter series, the Lord of the Rings reflects a Christian understanding of reality. In Middle Earth there is a clear distinction between right and wrong and there is clear accountability to a sovereign, holy God, who is Lord of the universe. Here wielding vast supernatural power is seen as a temptation that should be shunned and is best left up to God.

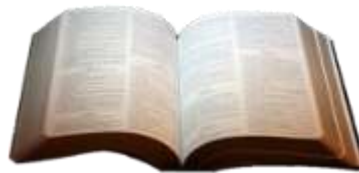
"But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." Matthew 18:6

Redeem the time. Be very selective and discerning about what media you expose your family or yourself to. Shun the bad and choose the best.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's Will is, His good, pleasing and perfect Will." Romans 12:2



This picture commemorates the time Martin Luther locked himself in his study for 4 days to get some peace! Here Katherine had the door removed off its hinges.



Chapter 12

MINDS, MORALS & MOVIES

There is tremendous power in art and entertainment to change lives and shape society. Through the mass communication media - newspapers, radio, films, videos and TV - ideas and values are promoted that transform history. The media can be used to inspire great sacrifice and service. It can also influence people to commit terrible acts of cruelty and carnage.

"Whoever controls the media, controls the culture." Dr. Ted Baehr

"Whoever defines the word, defines the world." John Locke

"The pen is mightier than the sword." William Shakespeare

A Question of Time

In households with television, the average child sees between 15,000 to 30,000 hours of television before leaving school! (*Nielsen Media Research*). During the same time period the average child will spend from 11,000 to 16,000 hours in school and less than 2,000 hours of quality interaction with their parents (*The Media-Wise Family by Dr. Ted Baehr*). Many children spend more time watching TV before reaching age six than they will spend with their fathers throughout their entire life!

More Real than Reality

To most young people films are more real than reality. Movies show you what to do, how to do it, when to do it, why to do it and how to feel about it! Children learn by teachers presenting information and behaviour, repeating the information and behaviour and

rewarding the accurate feedback of the information and/or behaviour. Television presents, repeats and rewards behaviour even more than teachers or parents do, because it occupies more time, delivers more information per minute and it is often exciting, entertaining and captivating. So what are films and TV programmes presenting?

Do You Know What Your Child is Watching?

Violence

The average child, in a home with a television, by the time he or she leaves school, will have seen from 800,000 to 1,5 million acts of violence, including 192,000 to 360,000 murders depicted on television (*US News & World Report 15 April 1996*).

Immorality

The average child who watches TV sees 240,000 to 480,000 sexual acts, or references to sex (including kissing, caressing, foreplay and intercourse), by the time they reach seventeen years old. (This does not include sexual acts or references they will see or hear in other media.) Premarital fornication and adultery on TV outnumbers sex within marriage by eight to one (*Media Research Centre*). Very seldom are movie or TV characters shown to reap the consequences of their actions. The heroine rarely gets pregnant and the fornicators never seem to be afflicted with herpes, gonorrhoea, syphilis, AIDS or any other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's).

Entertainment or Exploitation?

Dr. Ted Baehr in *The Media-Wise Family* has documented some of the tragic consequences of this irresponsible and exploitative media diet of immorality and violence:

Eric Smith (13 years old) who loved reading Stephen King novels and watching gruesome slasher movies, lured four-year-old Derrick Robie into the woods, bludgeoned his head with rocks and sodomized the dead body.

Scott Edward May, a seventeen year old obsessed with slasher movies, the occult and heavy metal music, attacked a girl during their first date. As she closed her eyes for a good night kiss, he stabbed her. They had just seen the movie *"The Cutting Edge."* *May told the police that he had had an urge to kill since childhood "I like knives... I like to go to the movies a lot. A lot of people get stabbed in the movies. I really liked the Texas Chainsaw Massacre. A lot of people got stabbed in that. "*

Fifteen-year-old Jason Lewis murdered his parents. Police found that Lewis worshipped Satan and along with three friends, had formulated a plan to kill all their parents and to copy the cross-country murder spree portrayed in Oliver Stone's *"Natural Born Killers."*

After being arrested for murdering an eighty-two-year old man, Christopher Smith (18 years old) shouted at the TV cameras: **"I'm a natural born killer!"** echoing the words of actor Woody Harrelson in the movie *"Natural Born Killers."*

The same week that *"Silence of the Lambs "* won the Academy Award for *"Best Picture "*, a young man decapitated his handicapped mother and yelled *"I'm Hannibal the Cannibal!"* as he was led away by the police (Associated Press, 26 March 1993).

After watching *"Jungle Fever"*, a thirteen year old boy raped his eight year old female cousin.

Dr. Robert Kubey in his *"Media Use and its Implications"* study noted that the primary messages of the media seem to be: *"Materialism; For everything there is a quick fix; Young is better; Violence is acceptable; Sex is only good outside of marriage; Religion is unacceptable."*

Research indicated that people over 40 years old watch an average of six films a year in cinemas (Most of which are all ages or family films). Teenagers watch an average of 50 films a year in cinemas (80% of which are age restricted). Teenagers also watch another 50 movies a year on video (*Teenage Research Institute, Wheaton, IL*). This does not include broadcast television, video games, computer games, CDs, comics, magazines and the Internet.

Music Television (MTV) available in some homes by satellite is by far the worst form of media for teenagers. MTV averages 1,500 sexual acts or references per hour! (*US NEWS and World Report.*)

"I often wonder: Do movies influence the world, or does the world influence movies? What's influencing us more than we know is MTV!" Matthew Broderick

No less a media authority than Ted Turner (of CNN) has declared that *"everything we're exposed to influences us...Those violent films influence us, and the TV programmes influence us. The weaker your family is, the more they influence you... The problems with families in our cities are catastrophic, but when you put violent programmes before people who haven't had a lot of love in their lives, who are angry anyway, it's like pouring gasoline on the fire."* (*Los Angeles Times* 3/4/1994).

Over 3,000 psychiatric, psychological, medical, paediatric and sociological studies have researched the effects of the mass media on behaviour. The influence of the mass media on violent behaviour is now so thoroughly documented as to be irrefutable. (*Media- Wise Family*)

Illogical and Absurd

Even media executives are now acknowledging the media's role in contributing to violence in society. However, Michael Medved, an orthodox Jew who is a famous movie critic in the USA, reported this humorous, true story which gives us a disturbing insight into the thinking of many decision makers in Hollywood:

"After I criticized the irresponsible behaviour of the movie industry, one panellist, furious, replied that while Hollywood is always blamed for the bad it does, it's never given credit for its positive impact. 'You don't acknowledge that a movie like Lethal Weapon III saved thousands of lives'" he said.

"I couldn't recall a life-giving message in this blood spattered thriller, so I asked what he meant.

"Well," he replied, 'in that movie, right before the big chase scene, there was an intense, three-second close-up showing Mel Gibson and Danny Glover fastening their seat belts!'"

"He was suggesting that people would immediately imitate what they saw for three seconds, but the rest of the movie's ultra-violent 118 minutes would have no influence at all. Isn't that contradiction illogical and absurd?" (Hollywood's Three Big Lies)

Child Abuse

It is very traumatic for young children to be introduced to sexual activity through explicit magazines, movies and videos. The invasion of pornographic materials into South Africa has been accompanied by an explosion of sexual crimes, including rape.

One judge, who presided over 1,000 child sexual abuse cases found that all but four included pornography. He concluded that pornography fuelled and assisted the seduction process that led to molestation.

("Report on the Use of Pornography by Sexual Offenders," Report to the Federal Department of Justice, Canada).

Without pornography the child molestation would not have occurred, or been possible to accomplish (*Don't Touch That Dial*).

The link between pornography and prostitution has also been repeatedly established (*"Youth Prostitution in Child Sex Rings" Report*). Yet in South Africa, only the ACDP has consistently voted against all pornography.

As Marilyn Monroe mused: *"Hollywood is a place where they'll pay you \$10,000 for a kiss and fifty cents for your soul!"* (Movieguide)

Gregory Peck commented: *"Generally, my characters were dignified and brave men who did their duty stoically. Today, the heroes are the anti-heroes of yesterday. They're motivated by hatred, greed and violence. They are rude, vulgar, ill-educated and incapable of making an effort because they are totally selfish and devoid of morals."* (*The Cognac Film Festival*).

Foul Language as a Weapon

And why are so many films so vulgar and crude? Studies have found that typically less than 7% of people curse on the job and only 12% curse in their leisure time. Yet many Hollywood scriptwriters would have us believe that normal people use profanity and obscenity in regular conversation. The famous Marxist professor Marcuse, of Sorbonne, advocated the use of foul language as a weapon with which to attack bourgeois society. Marcuse inspired many of the most renowned communist revolutionaries of the Twentieth Century. Even Jane Fonda studied under him. (*Media- Wise Family*)

The Gramsci Strategy

Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci was a co-founder of the Italian Communist Party. Gramsci declared that to capture the Christian West one needed to *"Marxise the inner man... to alter the Christian mind to turn it into its opposite in all its details so that it would become not merely a non-Christian mind but an anti-Christian mind."* This meant getting individuals to think about life's problems without reference to Christianity and the Laws of God. Gramsci advocated a quiet revolution: *"Everything must be done in the name of man's dignity and rights, and in the name of his autonomy and freedom from outside restraint. From the claims and constraints of Christianity above all."*

Gramsci's slogan was "*Capture the Culture!*" And many Marxists in Hollywood continue their "*long march through the institutions of the West*" using art to influence politics. (*Capturing the Culture: Film, Art and Politics* by Richard Grenier)

Hidden Agendas

Oliver Stone, who directed *Platoon*, *Salvador*, *JFK* and *Nixon*, regularly inserts his political bias into his movies. Stone bluntly declared: "*America has to bleed. I think the corpses have to pile up. I think American boys have to die again. Let the mothers weep and mourn.*" (*New American*)

Similarly actress Jane Fonda (*Agnes of God*) and director Costa-Gravas (*Betrayed and The Music Box*) design their films to attack Christianity and/or to promote atheism, or even communism.

Martin Scorsese (Director of *The Last Temptation of Christ* and *Cape Fear*) and Paul Schrader (Scriptwriter of *The Last Temptation* and *Showgirls*) both used to be theological students. Scorsese is an apostate whose intense hatred for Christianity is vented in his vile films.

But, of course, most films aren't that blatant. Most scriptwriters, directors and actors don't have such an obsessive anti-Christian axe to grind. Most are far more subtle, but they still have a message.

Nor can one rely upon age restrictions as a reliable guide. Even "*all ages*" family films can contain an anti-Christian message. In a blatant distortion of history, Disney twisted the story of Pocahontas to promote new age paganism. In fact, the main reason Pocahontas is famous, is because she was the first Indian convert to Christianity to be baptised in North America. Not that anyone seeing the Disney film would realise that!

Many Disney animated films are full of witches, demons, sorcerers, spells, genies and goblins, but there is scarcely a mention of God. If prayer is depicted then invariably it's not to God, but to "*wish upon a star!*"

So what is the solution?

Clean The Screen

1. It is important that we **recognise** that immoral, violent, occultic and pagan films, videos, TV shows, magazines and computer games present a serious threat to the development of our children.

"Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them."
Ephesians 5:11

2. **Read** up on the Biblical issues and the actual history so that you can recognise deception in the media. Read: "The Media- Wise Family " and "The Culture-Wise Family" by Dr. Ted Baehr. Subscribe to Movieguide, 2510-G Las Posas Road 502, Camarillo, CA 93010 USA. Visit <http://www.movieguide.org>

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ"
Colossians 2:8

3. **Obtain** video documentaries that will help you alert your family, friends and congregation to the deceptions and dangers in many films: *"Hollywood vs. Religion "*, *"Learn to Discern "*, *"Hells Bells "*, *"The Media Wise Family"*, *"Death by Entertainment"* and *"The gods of Entertainment"*.

"They are to teach My people the difference between the holy and the common and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean." Ezekiel 44:23

4. **Be selective** in your viewing choices. Take control over what is filling and forming your children's minds. Rediscover the joy of reading great books. Set proper priorities. Relegate films and videos to a subordinate position - below exercise, hiking, worship, fellowship, evangelism and service.

"Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them."
Ephesians 5:11

5. **Refuse** to waste your time, or money, on immoral, anti-Christian films, but rather choose to support good, quality family films that honour God, such as: *Ben Hur, The Robe, The Ten Commandments, Chariots of Fire, The Sound of Music, The Mission, Christy, The Prince of Egypt, Gods and Generals, Luther, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Amazing Grace*.

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy think about such things." Philippians 4:8

6. **Pray** for wisdom (James 1:5) and discernment (Proverbs 3:21). Learn to think critically. Teach your children Godly discernment. Discuss the film, its characters and message in the light of the Bible:

Who is the hero? What kind of role model is the hero?

Who is the villain?

What kind of message does his character portray?

What is the basic message of the film?

How does the film treat Christians, the Church and the Bible?

How is the family portrayed?

What is the premise that drives the film?

How is love portrayed?

How true is the film to history?

How is the conflict resolved in the film?

What is the worldview of the film?

Does good triumph over evil?

Would you be embarrassed to sit through the film with your parents/your children/or the Lord Jesus?

What would you have done differently - if you were the main character in the story?

"So give Your servant a discerning heart ...to distinguish between right and wrong..." 1 Kings 3:9

7. **Speak up** for moral, God honouring entertainment and speak out against blasphemous, degrading and exploitative productions. Write to, or phone, producers of TV programmes, and scriptwriters, directors and producers of films (**Movieguide** regularly publishes these details with their film reviews). Be sure to praise the good as well as to protest against the bad.

"Who will rise up for Me against the wicked? Who will take a stand for Me against evildoers?" Psalm 94:16

Get informed. Be discerning. Every time you purchase a cinema ticket, rent or buy a video or DVD, you're casting a vote. Be sure that you only invest in family-friendly and God-honouring movies.

"Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil" Ephesians 5:15-16





The *Schlosskirche* (The Castle Church) in Wittenberg, where Reformer Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses that launched the Reformation.



Chapter 13

REFORMING MUSIC

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Colossians 3:16

Frequently one hears the refrain: "The Bible doesn't give any guidelines for music. It's all a matter of taste and preference." However, the Bible speaks to all areas of life, and music is no exception.

"Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God." Ephesians 5:17-21

Music is to be melodious. We are to sing as unto the Lord. It is to be wholehearted. The content is to be Scriptural, with the Psalms predominating. It is to be in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thanksgiving for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ is to characterise it.

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him." Psalm 28:7

"Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. Praise the Lord with the harp; make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy." Psalm 33:1-3

Worship is the natural response of a Christian. When we are saved, God puts a new song in our heart, and we cannot help but rejoice and praise the Lord, with melody, with instruments, skillfully, and with a shout of joy.

"I will praise you, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your Name, O Most High." Psalm 9:1-2

Music is to be the overflow of a regenerate heart, it must be wholehearted, it must focus on the marvellous works of our great God and Saviour, and it should be characterised by rejoicing.

"Be exalted, O Lord, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power." Psalm 21:13

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the mud and clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. He has put a new song on my mouth praise to our God; many will see it and fear and will trust in the Lord." Psalm 40:1-3

And the Lord is to be praised even in the worst of circumstances. Paul and Silas, even after having been seized and attacked by a mob, and beaten with rods, unjustly thrown into prison, their response was to sing praises to God. ***"But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the prisoners were listening to them."*** Acts 16:25

"I will sing a new song to You, O God; on a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to you." Psalm 144:9

"I will sing with the Spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." 1 Corinthians 14:15

"Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honour of His Name; make His praise glorious. Say to God, 'how awesome are Your works! Through the greatness of Your power Your enemies shall submit themselves to You. All the earth shall worship You and sing praises to You; they shall sing praises to Your Name.'"' Psalm 66:1-4

Evaluating our Music

In the light of these clear Scriptural principles, how does our music measure up? Does the praise and worship in our congregation meet the Scriptural standards? And what about the music we listen to in our home, or while travelling?

"WE SOLD OUR SOUL FOR ROCK 'N ROLL "

Far from praising and honouring our Lord Jesus Christ, many of the popular secular bands openly blaspheme Christ, exalt the breaking of every one of the Ten Commandments, and some, such as Black Sabbath, openly proclaim their allegiance to Satan.

One of the albums of Black Sabbath is entitled: "We Sold Our Soul for Rock 'n Roll". One of the lyrics in their song Nativity In Black is a love song from Satan: *"Some people say my love cannot be true, please believe me, my love, and I'll show you, I will give you those things you thought unreal...your love for me has just got to be real...look into my eyes, you 'Usee who lam, my name is Lucifer, please take my hand!"*

Antichrist Artists

Kurt Cobain has been reported to have decorated his home with blood spattered baby dolls hanging by their necks. The inside of his band, Nirvana's, album, In Utero has pictures of chopped up babies. Cobain has been reported to have spray painted "abort Christ" and "God is gay" around his neighbourhood.

Jefferson Aeroplane produced a most blasphemous song "The Son of Jesus" which spews out their hate of the Lord Jesus by claiming He was involved in the occult, had illegitimate children by Mary Magdalene, and that God the Father was sexually attracted to Jesus' daughter! These are just a few examples of the many multiplied thousands of blasphemous, anti-Christ elements pervasive in secular Rock, Hip Hop and Rap.

Copying the World

But what about contemporary Christian music? Incredibly, many contemporary music performers sing songs from these very secular artists, and adopt and adapt songs from them. Many even copy the world's looks and lifestyles.

"WE HAVE CREATED A MONSTER"

Stan Moser, former head of Word Records, and CEO of Star Records, was one of the pioneers and most important executives in contemporary Christian music. After 26 years in the industry, he walked away from contemporary Christian music and in an article in Christianity Today (*We Have Created a Monster*) Mr. Moser freely admitted: *"There is a growing chasm between CCN and the Church between what's actually happening in the real world of ministry, or even in the music ministry of the Church, and what we're doing in Contemporary Christian Music. In fact, I would probably be more inclined to call the industry commercial Christian music rather than Contemporary Christian Music...To be candid, I look at the majority of the music I hear today and think it's virtually meaningless ...we as an industry weren't running away from the Church at that time, but I do think we walked away...so we could still basically, get rich. Materialism, a lot of it, crept in and started affecting our values..."* (Christianity Today, May 20, 1996)

Michael Card acknowledges: *"...we started with little root in the Church, and now we're bearing the fruit of that separation... there's a big accountability gap in the industry as a result of the lack of connectedness to the Church."* (Christianity Today, Can't Buy Me Ministry, May 20, 1996)

Mass Marketing Music

In an interview in Christianity Today, Michael Card was quoted as observing: *"The lyrics of a good number of the songs don't portray anything specifically Christian - ...not a lot of the big songs are identifiably Christian...what happens to the message when we start giving the music to as many people as possible?"*

"There is an essential part of the Gospel that's not ever going to sell. The Gospel is good news, but it is also bad news: You are a sinner and you are hopeless. How is a multi-million dollar record company going to take that? That's a part of the message, too, and if that's taken out and it frequently is in Christian music it ceases to be the Gospel." (Can't Buy Me Ministry)

The Praise of Men vs. the Praise of God

The great Reformer Martin Luther warned of this nearly 500 years ago: "We should praise God with both word and music, openly proclaiming the Word of God through music...he who believes earnestly cannot be quiet about it. But he must gladly and willingly sing and speak about it so that others may come and hear it. And whoever does NOT want to sing and speak of it shows that he does not believe it. "

"They did not confess Him...for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."
John 12:42-43

It is clear from the Scripture that all music should be for the praise and glory of God. However, it seems that many Christian concerts seem to be everything but that. Here are a few reports of reactions to some major Christian artists and bands: *"As teenager shrieks fill the Dallas Convention Centre moments before DC Talk took the stage Friday night, one of the relatively few grownups in the sold out crowd observed this is just like The Beatles!"; "His concerts draw hundreds of thousands of fans each year, mostly teenage girls who scream out their affection for him non-stop throughout... to his fans, Smith is the absolute greatest there is bar none..." (Inside Music)*

Idolatry in Music

As Keith Green wrote: *"Why do we idolise Christian singers and speakers? We go from glorifying musicians in the world to glorifying Christian musicians. It's all idolatry... Satan is getting a great victory as we seem to worship these ministers on tapes and records and clammer to get their autographs in churches and concert halls from coast to coast." (So You Wanna Be A Rock Star? by Keith Green)*

"Now, the industry is celebrity driven. The song is almost irrelevant. The focus is on the person and songs have become disposable...the direction and value system are getting worse faster than any of us can imagine. "(Can't Buy Me Ministry)

"Sometimes people give us a hard time because we don't mention God on stage...but we feel that our calling is to get people interested in our music, interested in us..." (Ghoti Hook, HM magazine)

"God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." Luke 16:15

There is tremendous power in music, and whenever any minister of the Gospel questions a form of music or challenges popular trends in music, he will experience much abuse, hostility and an explosive reaction.

"For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" Galatians 1:10

The Message, the Music and the Musician

Christian music should always emphasise the message the Word of God not the music, nor the musician. Christian music is not meant to be entertainment, it is not a performance, a concert or a talent show. Music is to be worship, a ministry as unto the Lord.

Dr. Frank Garlock has written: *"Contrary to popular opinion, sacred music is not for entertainment. Christian music is first and foremost a vehicle for praise unto the Lord."* (*Music In the Balance*)

Church father, St. Augustine, observed: *"When I am moved by the voice of him that sings more than the words sung, I confess to have sinned."*

However, much of what is presented as Christian music today not only emphasises the musician, but the medium completely overwhelms the message. In all too many cases the message is vague, ambiguous, obscured or incomprehensible.

Martin Luther emphasised the importance of avoiding worldly influence and ensuring that the message is clear: *"But I would like to avoid any new words or the language used at court. In order to be understood by the people, only the simplest and the most common words should be used for singing; at the same time, however, they should be pure and apt; and further, the sense should be clear and as close as possible to the Psalm."*

Sounding like the World

Fanny Crosby, a prolific Hymn writer who produced over 9,000 songs of praise, despite being blind, was only converted at 45 years old. Before this she wrote many secular songs. This is what Fanny Crosby wrote about mixing Christian hymns with worldly music: *"Sometimes I need to reject the music proposed for my songs because the musicians misunderstand that the Fanny Crosby who once wrote for the people in the saloons has merely changed the lyrics. O my, no. The Church must never sing its songs to the melodies of the world."* (*What's Wrong With Christian Rock?*)

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

"When Christian music carries the beat, instrumentation, and exact sounds of the lost crowd, it results in confusion and shame ...it is shameful to use musicians who in shallow songs daze instead of praise, who entertain instead of train... that transfer the worship owed to Christ to concert hopping, money hungry entertainers who have never left the world far enough behind to stop sounding like it..." (*Shame*, By Dr. Hal Webb)

Defining Music

Music is composed of three main components: Melody, harmony and rhythm. By definition, if any of these three elements are absent, then it is no longer music, but noise.

Melody

Webster's Dictionary defines "melody" as: *"An agreeable succession of sounds; a succession of sounds so regulated and modulated as to please the ear. To constitute melody the sounds must be arranged according to the laws of rhythm, measure or the due proportion of the movements to each other... to make melody in the heart, to praise God with a joyful and thankful disposition, ascribing to Him the honour due to His Name."*

Amadeus Mozart declared: *"Melody is the very essence of music."* (Wordsworth Dictionary of Musical Quotations)

"Melody is the main thing; harmony is useful only to charm the ear." Joseph Haydn (Wordsworth Dictionary)

Melody is the horizontal line the notes follow on the music score. Without the melody line, there is no music.

Harmony

Webster's dictionary defines "harmony" as: *"That union of different sounds which pleases the ear; or a succession of such sounds, called chords."* Harmony is the vertical line where the notes meet on the music score.

Rhythm

"Rhythm" is defined by Webster: *"Variety in the movement as to quickness or slowness ...the proportion which the parts of the motion have to each other."* Rhythm is the movement in music, the beat that holds everything together.

Noise Masquerading as Music

Webster defines "musical" as: *"Melodious; harmonious; pleasing to the ear..."* By these definitions, much of what passes for music today would be more accurately described as noise.

The greatest musicians in history have agreed that melody is the very essence of music, but in much of contemporary music the rhythm, or the beat, has taken over and the melody and harmony has either become obscured or vanished.

"The rhythm in Rock is the dominant part of the sound. The heavy emphasis on the beat is what distinguishes Rock from every other type of music." (Frank Garlock, Music In the Balance)

Even Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones has been quoted as admitting: *"It's a noise we make. That's all. You could be kind and call it music."* (The Rolling Stones -An Illustrated Record, by Roy Carr)

"I'M A SLAVE TO THE RHYTHM"

"The sexuality of music is usually referred to in terms of its rhythm - it is the beat that commands a directly physical response." (Sound Effects, Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock 'n Roll)

"Rhythm is the element of music most closely allied to body movement, to physical action. It's simple patterns when repeated over and over can have a hypnotic effect on us." (The Enjoyment of Music by Joseph Macklis)

When rock star Michael Jackson was asked why he made filthy sexual hand gestures on stage he replied: *"It's the music that compels me to do it. You don't think about it, it just happens. I'm a slave to the rhythm."* (The Evening Star, 11/2/93)

While Rock music emphasises the beat, the Bible emphasises music as melody (Isaiah 23:16; Isaiah 51:3; Ephesians 5:19).

Celebrating Ugliness

Instead of focussing on attractive, uplifting and beautiful sounds and themes much of the modern industry celebrates ugliness.

"...popular music seems terminally hostile to any sound traditionally associated with music." (Hole In Our Soul - The Loss of Beauty and Meaning in American Popular Music, by Martha Bayles).

The Voodoo Connection

The predominance of the drums in Rock music is noteworthy. Rock music emphasises hard driving beat. The drum is central in Rock, Rave, Rap and Hip Hop.

"Drums represent the beat of the heart and are played to summon up magic powers." (Marinda Bruce-Mitford, The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols)

"Pagan dances and rituals are always accompanied by the incessant beat of drums. Rhythm plays a major role in these demonic activities." (Satan's Music Exposed, Lowell Heart)

"The idea that certain rhythm patterns or sequences serve as conduits for spiritual energies, linking individual human consciousness with the gods, is basic to traditional African religions ...Rock 'n Roll can ultimately be traced back to African music of a primarily spiritual or ritual nature. In a sense Rock 'n Roll is a kind of voodoo..." (Rock 'n Roll An Unruly History, by Robert Palmer)

"Today's drummer differs but a little from the shaman in his incessant beating out of a rhythm, and likewise often enters into a form of trance while performing." (The Secret Power of Music, by David Tame)

Little Richard, the self-professed architect of Rock 'n Roll readily admits Satan's control and influence in his life and Rock music: *"My true belief about Rock 'n Roll is this: I believe this kind of music is demonic... a lot of the beats in music today are taken from voodoo, from the voodoo drums." (The Life and Times of Little Richard, by Charles White)*

Instruments for Worship

It is noteworthy that while the Bible lists many kinds of instruments for music, drums are never mentioned.

"...For the music in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, stringed instruments and harps for the service of the house of God..." 1 Chronicles 25:6

"Praise God in His sanctuary...praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the lute and the harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150

The drum was a very common instrument in Egypt and the lands around Israel at that time and yet drums are never mentioned as instruments for believers to use in worship. Christian music should emphasise the melody, not the beat. Christian music should feed the spirit and not the flesh. Christian music should be rooted in Scripture and focused on glorifying God.

Pleasing God

"Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Who then, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God." Romans 8:5-8

"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." John 4:24

"Therefore come out from among them and be separate says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Romans 12:1-2

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Col. 3:16-17

"Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song. And His praise in the assembly of saints." Psalm 149:1



Dr. Martin Luther regularly led his family in the singing of Psalms and hymns.



Chapter 14

TEENAGERS - RESPITE OR REBELLION?

Anyone, who dares trod the wonderful path of parenthood, will eventually come across people telling them one of the following: "oh, this is nothing, wait until they are teenagers!" or "you think this is bad, when they are teenagers, it will be much worse!" or "oh, don't worry about the rift between you and your teenage son / daughter, this is normal after all!"

Are the teenage years a time for parental abdication or do they present an exciting challenge? Are they marred by rebellion or are they a respite and reward for faithful parents?

Parents, who consider themselves average, capable guides of their offspring thus far, are suddenly found wondering what happened to their loving daughter, or their balanced and cheerful son. What suddenly happened to the children God entrusted us with, seemingly overnight?

The teen years are filled with monumental insecurity. They are neither children nor adults and they feel vulnerable in just about every area. They worry about appearance, clothing, having the right friends, or even the correct haircut. Their very understanding of life itself is in question. They worry over whether or not they will be able to express themselves appropriately in social situations that loom larger than life. Teenagers worry over every expression of their personality. Will friends consider them funny, serious enough, sporty or even intelligent? Just about every time they leave their home for school, church, youth or sports the list of social do's and don'ts runs across their mental screen. Few things strike greater fear in the heart of a teenager than being rejected!

Our opportunities as parents during this time should not be missed. This is not a time to tune out because we feel helpless, or because our guidance is shunned. While his need for direction has never been greater, he will resist overt attempts on our part to be involved.

It is unlikely that a child raised in the fear of the Lord, and who has a genuine desire to serve Him will be openly defiant or rebellious. We parents need to tell the difference between rebellion against God ordained authority and mere personality differences. Serious teenage rebellion has deeper roots. Rebellion against parental authority manifests itself very early in our children. A defiant one year old used to getting his way will not suddenly grow into a loving and considerate teenage gem. He will continue to insist on things done his way or else!

Only now, the stakes are higher. She could get pregnant. He could do drugs. Rebellion in a teenager has often been latent all along. It is of utmost importance for us to see this in our children early on. Learn to detect a bad attitude when they are toddlers and deal with it decisively! Never kid yourself, or make excuses for your child.

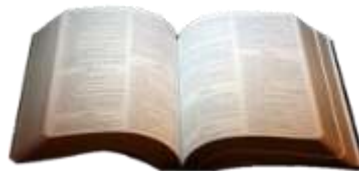
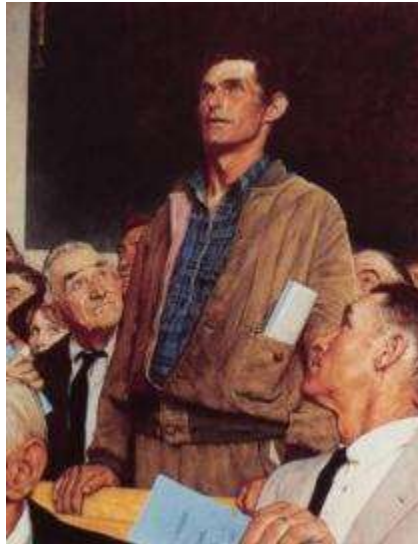
If the rebellion in a teenager appears to be sudden, we tend to look around for reasons. We blame a move, a new school, or this or that friend. I Corinthians 15:33 tells us, "Evil Company corrupts good habits." This is true, and the company our children keep has to be monitored very carefully. This must include the music, magazines and films they absorb. But we cannot simply excuse rebellion in our teenagers because they "fell in with the wrong crowd." Unfortunately the chances are, they sought them out! Tedd Tripp in his book *Shepherding a Child's Heart* says: "I am persuaded that rebellious kids may embolden each other, but rarely does a teen who is in heart submission become rebellious by virtue of the influence of another."

If God entrusts us with children, we should strive daily to teach them the ways of the Lord. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 tells us how. Teaching our children to love the Lord our God with all their heart, soul and strength, and to impress these things on them all the time is vital if they are to mature into godly teenagers. This can take place in any number of contexts during the brief time we are given as parents. Proverbs 1:7-14 helps to further guide us in our parenting adventure. The fear of the Lord is indeed the beginning of wisdom. This applies to our children as well as to ourselves. We teach more by example and by modelling Christ-like behaviour than through our words.

Instructing our children to fear the Lord, obey their parents and to shun wicked company is the basic survival guide to successful parenting. If these three ingredients permeate every conversation with our teens, we can expect the favour of the Lord to rest upon our efforts. Scripture tells us this is so. Fortunately, we parents do not need to be perfect. We simply need to be transparent people of integrity who are willing to model for our children what it means to be in sincere submission to our Lord and Saviour. To expect our teens to rebel is to invite a self-fulfilling prophecy.

If you are reading this and thinking "it is already too late, what can I do now?" turn to the Lord in prayer. Turn to Him in repentance and prayer with your family He can make a crooked path straight and He can heal broken relationships. Your teen needs you now more than ever.

May it be our daily prayer that the teen years will be filled with excitement, variety, thrills and unexpected adventures. God is merciful and will grant us mutually enriching relationships with our teenagers if we follow His Instruction Manual. The teen years can be years of respite, both for them and for us parents. May we seek to find pleasure in their company and may our relationships with them be characterized by joy and acceptance instead of disapproval and admonition.



Chapter 15

A HEART FOR GOD THE GREATEST GIFT WE CAN GIVE

Christ, our Saviour, gave us the ultimate gift of eternal life by taking our sins upon Himself. He died for us willingly, and this is a gift no one can take away from us as believers. So what can we give in exchange? Especially to our children?

When King Solomon was asked what gift he would want most, he asked for wisdom. I wonder what we would ask for, if asked the same question. What do we think of when we think of our children's needs? Do we lament the fact that they do not have the latest in technology, or that they are not attending the greatest schools, driven there in the newest cars?

What should concern us most when we think of training our children? Do we consider academics, sports or maybe the correct social behaviour? Surely the best thing we can do is to teach them to discern right from wrong according to the Bible. If we manage this, we have accomplished much. A consistent pattern of choosing wisely will ultimately give our children happiness and fulfilment. The book of Proverbs is full of instruction regarding wisdom. It tells us repeatedly to seek wisdom and to despise foolishness. How do we impart this upon the hearts of our children?

The sad reality in our prisons is that they are filled with men and women who were never taught how to be discerning. Juvenile correctional facilities are filled with young people to whom no one modelled a consistent pattern of good choices. Daily, wise decisions turn into patterns, and good patterns turn into habits that will stay for life.

Paul Tripp, in his book: *Age of Opportunity, a Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens* says that teaching our children to have a heart for God should be our chief aim. He adds, "True godliness flows out of the heart and produces a harvest of good fruit in a person's life. What you will see in a teenager who has a heart for God is a catalogue of behaviours, attitudes, relationships, and activities that reflect a personal pursuit of God."

How do you know your child is genuinely interested in the things of the Lord? Do your children come to church because they must? Do they come because this is where all their friends are and it is a time of socializing? Or do they come to church because they truly desire a growing relationship with their Creator? Paul Tripp suggests we look for the following signs:

- There will be an independent life of personal worship and devotions
- There will be a desire for corporate worship and instruction
- There will be a desire to pursue fellowship with the body of Christ
- There will be a relaxed and open willingness to discuss spiritual matters
- They will approach decisions from a Biblical perspective

These things should not be looked for in a legalistic manner and of course they will manifest themselves differently in each child, but they are the basic components of a child who has a heart for God.

We as parents of course must model this behaviour. How do we make decisions? How do we face life's challenges? Do our children see us search the will of God in all of our decisions? Do they see us making choices based on Biblical principles? Are we swayed by the latest trends in parenting, education or worship? If something is wrong, do we speak up? When our children see us wrestling with the things of this world, in the light of God's Word, they too will learn to approach life's hurdles in the same manner.

"A fool is wise in his own eyes ", Proverbs tells us. There is wisdom in counsel. If we ask for help with a problem we are facing, our children will learn to do the same. Every difficulty we are faced with in life has a solution in Scripture. The Word of God speaks to every area of life. The greatest gift we can give our children is a heart for God that longs for wisdom.

Biblical wisdom will give our children the tools to cope with anything that comes their way. As children, teenagers, young adults and then as young marrieds, a wise and discerning heart, who truly thirsts for God's will, will genuinely find peace. No amount of material gifts we can give our children will be as valuable.

May God give us strength and wisdom to give our children this gift: Fear God and not man.



America's first foreign missionaries - Adoniram and Ann Judson. All of Judson's five children who survived grew up to distinguish themselves in Christian Service.



Appendix 1

CRITIQUE OF MODERN YOUTH MINISTRIES

by Christopher Schlect

Young people have a far greater capacity for spiritual and social maturity than we tend to give them credit for, and parents have been given the responsibility to see that this capacity is realised. The church today does not expect what it ought to from children and their parents, and this can be attributed, at least in part, to a flawed concept of youth ministry.

It was in connection with my own employment as a fresh out-of-college youth minister that I first began to question whether or not my work was Biblically sanctioned.

Before the mid-1800's time was arranged according to significant events. Prior to the 19th Century, birthdays were neither mentioned nor celebrated. Age wasn't even included in the 1850 census it simply wasn't considered to be important. It wasn't uncommon to graduate from a university at age 17, or age 28, or any age in between. Students matured at their own rates. The one room schoolhouse was the norm. In social gatherings, children mingled with people much older than themselves.

Horace Mann changed this first in the classroom by fastening students to a fixed learning pace. Consistent with the onset of evolutionary thinking, progress had become synonymous with the passage of time. For the first time ever, students were segregated by age.

At the turn of the 20th Century, Granville Stanley Hall was championing his "*Recapitulation theory*." Using social applications of Darwin's work in biology, Hall suggested that individuals evolve through the same stages through which human history has evolved. "*The child repeats the race*," he wrote, "*This is a great biological law*." Hall associated infants and toddlers with pre-savage periods of human history; he consequently counselled parents and teachers to leave their young children to Nature and encourage play, which fosters motor development. A crisis transition period led to the pre-adolescent years of 8 to 12, which were likened to the early pygmies and other savages; these children could be drilled and disciplined in school.

He claimed that another period of crisis came at adolescence, which he deemed the most critical period in one's life. Hall viewed adolescence to be the most important of his dubious stages so important, he believed, that teens ought to be separated from those older and younger than them. Moreover, like most evolutionists, Hall also taught that each generation is, or should be, superior to the previous one, and therefore needs to break free from those which precede it.

In practical terms, this thinking has come to mean that rebellion is youth's destiny. Hall, and many social psychologists after him, viewed this rebellion as a positive thing. In short, G. Stanley Hall invented adolescence.

Even in the church, we have established a pattern of perpetual regress that is tearing down the last vestiges of maturity that our fathers laboured to achieve. Evangelical churches are honouring divisions that have existed in our culture for less than a century divisions which have no basis in either Scripture or common sense. These divisions breed immaturity because they hinder young people from associating with, and learning from, their elders.

Rather than admonishing our young people with Paul's mandate, "*Flee youthful lusts*" (2 Timothy 2:22), we provide a forum for youthful lusts to be pursued. We have compromised standards in the name of relevance.

We must therefore reject the appalling notion of the model youth minister as a recently graduated extrovert who looks and acts just like a high schooler himself. Responsible youth ministry in the church involves teaching and exhorting parents to raise their children Biblically (Deuteronomy 6:7; Ephesians 6:4).

In 1 Samuel 2, we read of the high priest, Eli and the detestable practices of his sons who had been raised in the Temple. Eli fell far short of his responsibility for the oversight and discipline of his sons. Because Eli was an unfaithful father, God judged him accordingly. He also provided a poor example for Samuel, whose sons also turned out badly (1 Samuel 8:1-3).

Sadly, many parents today shun their parental responsibilities just as Eli did. This is evident by the thriving day care industry and overcrowded public schools. Evangelicals condemn this breakup of the traditional family, but have ironically advanced programmes that further erode family values in the church.

Scripture clearly places the responsibility for child rearing on fathers: "***And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord***" (Ephesians 6:1-4). Many parents believe that they are "*doing their job*" by seeing their children off to a youth meeting. Most do little or nothing more. Fathers are responsible for directly overseeing their children in spiritual matters.

Effective youth ministry is the father's task; he has the responsibility to establish a godly atmosphere in the home. Fathers must be leaders in worship, prayer, reading and studying the Bible and in fellowship with other saints. Fathers, through abdication, are bringing their children up in practical atheism.

What can be done?

First, the elders should provide other fathers with examples of godly child rearing in their own households (1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6).

Second, fathers should be taught their household responsibilities and how they might be practically met. Fathers are shepherds in the home to lead their families in worship, doctrinal instruction, prayer and Bible reading.

Third, Biblical standards of fatherhood must be established and protected. Our cultural revolt against maturity tempts us to lower our standards in child rearing. We may think we are doing well so long as we do better than the pagan world around us, but God never patterns His norms after human culture.

Standards are maintained in the church by looking at God's Word, not by looking at the world. The saints must have the courage to practice, encourage, admonish and rebuke wherever Biblical standards of fatherhood are not met. Without a restoration of proper fatherly authority, any effort towards Reformation will be fruitless.

1. Therefore, we must discourage peer association at times when family association should be central. Do not allow a pew full of high school buddies in church. Family should sit together. Always give important family events priority over youth functions.

2. Youth should attend adult Bible studies and prayer meetings, especially those that their parents attend. After all, many of them sit through hours of vigorous instruction daily at school; the Scriptures are as relevant to young people as they are to adults. In time they will grow comfortable with not being the centre of attention.

3. Organise social events around families. For example: invite households to birthday parties instead of just adults or youth. Girls should attend baby and bridal showers, boys should attend men's breakfasts.

4. Avoid triteness. Youth ministries are notorious for triteness in Gospel messages, skits and games. If it edifies readers of all ages, then it does not compromise in truth. Throw away titles like: *"Billy's Witness in Gym Class"* and collect *"Pilgrims Progress"* and *"Robinson Crusoe."* Similarly try to avoid children's songs about Pharaoh's army doing *"the dead mans float"* and *Noah's Arky Arky* should be avoided. Nobody is too young for Psalms and good hymns.

5. It is important that the children's dependence upon the youth minister should be transferred back to the parents. A good intermediate step towards this end is to develop parent/child Bible studies. Children must associate instruction with parental authority. The youth minister should begin deferring to parents whenever possible. As a youth minister I adopted a policy of refusing to counsel kids on matters that hadn't first been discussed with their own parents.

Deferring to the parents puts healthy pressure on them to attend to their responsibilities and this teaches youth to honour their father and mother. It is parental counsel that children must seek (Proverbs 1:8).

Utilitarian standards must not be set above Scripture. Success in the youth ministry must not be sought to the compromise of what God has revealed. A Covenantal blessing of godly children is guaranteed first to parents, not to youth ministers (Proverbs 22:6; Acts 2:39).

Ministering to children of unbelievers need not be as difficult as it seems. These children should be drawn to associate with Christian families, rather than Christian youth ministries. Invite them over to dinner, then they can participate as a guest in the family's regular worship. Bring them to Sunday worship, pray for more opportunities to minister to the guest's entire family. I have known entire households to come to Christ in this manner as faithful children begin to honour and submit to their ungodly fathers and mothers as God called them to (Ephesians 6:1-3).

It should be evident that we are not advocating the abolition of youth ministry. To the contrary, we desire that youth ministry grow and flourish the way God intended it to. That means that youth ministry must return to the home where it belongs.

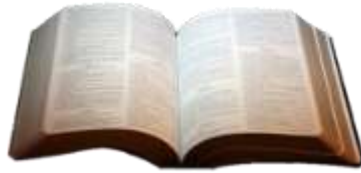
Godly families are a gift from the Lord.

"Children are a heritage from the Lord... happy is the man who has his quiver full of them." Psalm 127:3-7

The above is abridged from: *"Critique of Modern Youth Ministry"* by Christopher Schlect, published by Canon Press, PO Box 8741, Moscow, Idaho 83843, USA.



English Pilgrims in America hold the first Thanksgiving Feast.



Appendix 2

TEEN CHURCH - BENEFICIAL or DESTRUCTIVE?

by Annamarie Bettisworth

The current teen church trend has sparked a controversy among Protestant churches as to whether or not it is Biblical and edifying to the church body. Many parents have reported sending their teens to youth group parties hoping to strengthen their Christian walk. Apparently, nothing productive occurred, unless you would count loud rock bands and endless card games to be among them.

One home-schooling leader in Tennessee was shocked to find the mid 20's youth pastor engaged to a 16 year old, who was promoted to co- leader. Cases of youth pastors committing adultery with their students (practically their peers) has also provoked criticism. The most concerning to parents is the humanistic, permit-all attitude prevalent in youth groups today. Condoning the questionable lifestyles and behaviour of those in the youth groups with excuses like: *"Hey, at least they're at church having fellowship!"* is all too common. ***"Those who walk with the wise become wiser still but the companion of fools suffers harm."***
Proverbs 13:20

Many youth groups are not distinguishing between evangelism and discipleship. In an effort to reach unsaved teens, youth groups are watering down their lectures and outreaches to tolerant, accept thy neighbour, entertainment style services. This creates a dilemma for those attending. Who's saved and who isn't? Creating such a seeker friendly environment has evidenced damaging results. Teen pregnancy rates among churchgoers are now nearly identical with those of unchurched teens according to research done by Josh McDowell. Many church teens can't even tell the difference between right and wrong, as documented in his book *"Right from Wrong."* Youth groups should be focusing on *"take up your cross and follow Christ"* instead of *"what's in it for me?"* entertainment.

Rather than producing a harvest of faithful Christians, the entertainment saturated youth ministries of our churches are resulting in superficial converts. Instead of instructional materials, edifying films and desperately needed resources, many teen church rooms are filled with pinball machines, pool tables and video games. The worship service has been replaced with flashy lights, loud rock bands and watered down *"love-songs."* Outreaches and evangelism have been replaced with *"Pumpkin Halloween Night"*, *"Pajama Night"*, water-skiing trips, and mall shopping *"fellowship."* In an effort to bring in worldly teens, the youth ministry has let the world seep into the church through the front door. Rather than encouraging youngsters to ***"flee youthful lusts"*** (2 Timothy 2:22), many youth ministries provide a venue for youthful lusts to be pursued.

Many churches have neglected teaching proper family leadership (now shelved as *"old fashioned"*) and have sought to fill the gap with teen church and youth pastors. It has become normal for teens to leave church early or, worse still, not even attend main Sunday morning

worship services at all, because they have their *"own church."* The Bible teaches that the father is the head of his family, directly accountable to Christ for his children. One mother of six shared that she was shocked after hearing that the youth pastor had singled out her daughter and said: *"I know you can't really open up to your parents, so I'm here to listen to whatever you can't share with them."* Unfortunately, this is quite common. More Protestant churches are hiring youth pastors to become counsellors and buddies with the teens. After all, isn't a complete stranger better able to guide a teen than his own parents?

We must reject the prevalent notion of the model youth minister being a recently graduated extrovert who looks and behaves as badly as a high schooler himself. The leadership of the family should be the father's responsibility, not the children's ministry or youth group's.

The Bible never mentions teenagers. In fact, the word teenager was never mentioned in any dictionary until the middle of the 20th Century. According to the Bible, children grew up into adulthood, not eternal teenhood. *"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put childish things away."* It has only been in the last fifty years and heavily influenced by evolutionary social theory that age segregation has been practiced in churches. Instead of being trained into righteousness, many teen ministries are leading their flocks into worldliness. However, the Bible never mentions any *"teen"* years or youth ministries in which to *"find yourself"* and embrace your *"uniqueness."*

What can be done? Youth should attend all church services with their families. After all, the church is **one** body. *"For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: as also is Christ."* 1 Corinthians 12:12

All ages/abilities should be integrated into the church, because all ages and gifts can be used to glorify Christ as **one body**.

The youth are part of the church of today, not only the church of tomorrow. Serving the elderly, assisting the less fortunate and training for the mission field, will prepare the younger members for leadership by firmly establishing them in their faith.

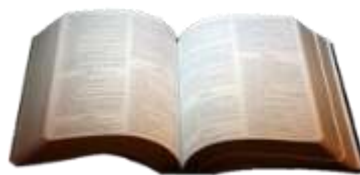
It really shouldn't surprise us when so many teenagers leave the church after high school. They just can't seem to make the transition into the *"adult church."* Those that stay in church will usually attend their own college service or young singles groups. The church is one body with many members, not many categories with many groups.

The best way for teenagers to step into roles in the church is through ministry, outreaches, evangelism and service. The church is designed to train believers for the work of the ministry. No ministry should do the work for the believer! *"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it"* Children and teenagers should not be in their *"own church"* until the day when they are deemed ready to sit in a sanctuary service. Parents should be raising up their children in fear of God, in fellowship with **all** believers and under the instruction of the pastor. Those that are raised committed to their local church are more likely to remain disciples of Christ.

Under the leadership of parents and elders, the youth can be equipped for the spiritual battles ahead. By allowing our youth to share their ignorance and immaturity with each other as they see fit, we are undermining the authority and stability of our churches. Just as a member of the body exposed to the elements will eventually weaken and make ineffectual the whole

body; so will the spiritual life of the youth if we allow unBiblical practices such as youth groups and other special interests groups to have such unchallenged authority.

Scripture places the responsibility for youth ministry on fathers (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Ephesians 6:1-4). Church social events should involve families. Youth ministry should be returned where it belongs - to families and fathers.



Appendix 3

A TEENAGER LOOKS AT MODESTY

by Andrea Hammond

We, as teenagers, often tend to associate modesty with old grannies wearing their old-fashioned frocks, stockings, and out-of-date shoes. But that isn't what modesty really is. Sure they support that and dress accordingly to how they feel they should dress, but just because we're told to dress modestly, doesn't mean we have to be unfashionable or frumpy. Standing up and making a stand against immoral and skanky dress wear gives us a chance to be different and create our own dress style! My "style" is constantly changing and evolving, but I have one basic sort of rule that I use as a guideline: BE DIFFERENT!

I love layers. Winter is my favourite time of year because it gives me a chance to experiment with different layering techniques! My favourite colours are red and black. You will see me wear clothes in those colours more than others.

I heard somewhere that a good way to be different and unique is to find one specific thing that you entangle into all your outfits. For example: always wearing a red ring on your middle finger on your left hand. Or always wearing a black and pink button bracelet... maybe you have this thing for cows, like me, so you can incorporate that into your dress wear too! I have a couple of cow socks so I always wear those when I'm wearing shoes, I also have one or two cow tops that I wear... so anyway, however you decide, or not decide, to do it... it's such a fun way to stand out! I constantly get the "cute socks" comment and it shows people do notice and appreciate different-ness.

I'm no real example of being different because I'm not 100% random or different and I don't really stand out from the crowd. But I kind of want to! I hate to be stuffed into a category of average teenagers. I don't want to be associated with the skanks of this generation. I want to honour God's commands to dress modestly and not only be wholesome, but different! It isn't really that hard, and it's not like I completely disregard what the fashion or style is, quite the reverse... I love to look around and see what's "in" for the season, and if I like anything that's out there I'll try to mix it in with what's "in" for me! Try it sometime; it's actually a really fun exercise to put into practice...

I know for a fact that guys prefer girls who dress modestly. Sure, they enjoy the view they get of the girls who show off their bodies, but they definitely do not respect them and godly, uplifting, and wholesome men wouldn't consider a long-term relationship with that girl because they just aren't the quality they're looking for. I think they subconsciously realize, as well, that good looks never last. So while you may be jealously eying that model's toned stomach and perfect legs, know that, someday, the man God has intended for you will love you for who you are inside and not how you appear optically.

I've asked just about all of my male friends whether they prefer girls in skirts or jeans. Almost unanimously they all say us girls look far better in skirts because it makes us look more feminine.

There's another thing, femininity! The one thing that separates us from the guys is the fact that we're female! We must be proud of the fact that we're different from them and we should enhance our natural beauty with clothing that flatters us and not with an almost t-shirt or something that almost covers our backside like most girls now days wear. Mini-skirts and strappy shirts do not feminize us or enhance our beauty. They, instead, demoralize us and make us vulnerable to abuse and misuse. By that, I'm referring to the future with this guy. When he's with you and not distracted with something else, he admires your body and will be charming and sweet cause he knows that that way he will get what he's craving. Yet when he's preoccupied with other things and his mind is elsewhere, not thinking about your body, and you come in asking him for a favour or whatever he will most likely get annoyed and shout something along the lines of "Go away! Can't you see I'm busy?!" You discover that this guy that has appeared so adorable and perfect is actually really rather shallow. It becomes blatantly obvious that he respected your physique rather than the real "you"! Is that honestly what you want?

There's this book that I read called *Secret Keeper* by Dannah Gresh. I learnt from her that we, as females, have a secret power. And that secret power or allure is modesty. She says, "Modesty is the source of this delicate yet formidable power, making it a power in and of itself. It's delicate because it can be so innocently given away without your even knowing it. It's formidable-or difficult to deal with or control-because once you've mastered it, no man

will be given access to the full secrets behind your allure until you so desire." Isn't that amazing? The more we cover, the more enticing we are!

In Genesis 2, God surveys His fine creation and finds everything just right. He uses the word *good*.

"The Gestalt Theory teaches a graphic designer to control a viewer's time by forcing the person to mentally complete a visual image. Because completing the incomplete intrigues the brain, it will always pause to finish an unfinished picture. What does a guy see when a girl walks by him wearing a long, tight skirt with a slit all the way up the sides? He sees past the fabric, because the slit invites him to finish the picture. This is simple visual science."

Dannah continues, "How do you think this theory works when a girl wearing a tight T-shirt with her belly bared walks down the road past a guy? Yikes! Because he sees an incomplete picture of her body, he is compelled to complete it. The thrill not of what is seen, but is yet to be seen is what actually tempts him. His imagination kicks in. It's just how the brain works, especially for guys."

"Fact: It's much more tempting for a guy to see a girl dressed in today's skimpy fashion than it would be to see her naked.

So, for all you girls who shudder and picture those grannies when you hear the word modesty, try instead to think, "be different and fun!" It doesn't have to be boring, it can be really stylish too... just as long as it's your style and not the world's!



Anne Askew - a Daughter of the Reformation, who courageously gave her life for the Gospel of Christ.



Appendix 4

TRUE LOVE WAITS

by Jerusha Olsen

Sex is everywhere: the movies, books, TV, music. It seems even insurance companies can't be advertised without some sexual connotation attached somewhere. Most magazines have detailed columns on how to be a better lover or what to expect for better sex. Sex is supposed to be the great litmus test in "becoming a man or a woman". How did we get here?

Less than a century ago in the West, (even less than that in many areas of Africa) moral value systems were very different. Virginity was highly prized; teenage pregnancies were the exception rather than the norm; STD's were virtually unknown and HIV and AIDS were non-existent.

Change came about mostly during the late 1950's and through the "Flower Power Era" when music groups especially introduced the rather novel ideas of "free love" and "Make Love, Not War; Make Babies, Not Bombs". Suddenly the idea of sex belonging within a marriage relationship became old fashioned, conservative and backward. Sex became the past-time of choice, much as an exciting carnival ride. The Sexual Revolution had begun, and it would make its mark on the world as surely as the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

Then came the consequences. "Virginity" almost became a swear word. Teenage pregnancies sky-rocketed. Names like "HPV", "Genital Herpes", "Gonorrhea" and "Syphilis" became the hushed phrases spoken only in the absolute privacy of the doctor's office and the diagnosis hidden as safely as money in a Swiss bank vault. HIV and AIDS started their inexorable trek of death through the continents. In our age, we are paying for the choices made in the Sexual Revolution.

In late 1993, two things happened that would begin to alter the way millions of young people think of sex. First, the Surgeon General of the USA had condoms sent to high schools across America, because "young people can't control themselves." Richard Ross, a youth pastor in Tennessee, got to hear of this and felt outraged that young people's power of choice was so disregarded. Secondly, two Junior High girls in his youth group came to him complaining that they felt stupid being the only two virgins in their school. Ross told them that he felt sure that there were many more virgins around, but because of peer pressure they felt too afraid to be open about their choice not to engage in sex. Seeing the need for a support structure for young people, Ross, along with a few others founded an abstinence organization called True Love Waits. Within a short week, the idea of standing up proudly for sexual purity before marriage, had fired up Baptist churches throughout the US and within the next few months the message reached a few enthusiastic young people in Zululand, South Africa.

Since that September in 1994, True Love Waits has been spreading throughout Southern Africa and to date, over 420,000 pledges for premarital abstinence have been signed by singles all over the country. It's as if, contrary to popular opinion, young people are saying that they're tired of being told that they're controlled by their hormones. They are tired of a life of shallow sex that only leads to guilt, fear and the feeling of being used. More and more young people are realizing that the pleasure of sex only lasts a few minutes, whereas the consequences may well last for years.

The birth of True Love Waits marked the beginning of what we're now calling "The Abstinence Revolution". It's the voice of millions of young people throughout the world

calling for a better moral lifestyle. For many, it is a way of going back to basic moral values that their societies held dear in times past. Most importantly, the Abstinence Revolution is calling singles back to God's original design for sex. It reminds young people everywhere that sex is not a toy or a game. It's an incredibly powerful act that binds two people together and it belongs in a relationship that has been sealed by an "I do!" Only in marriage is sex without guilt and fear, but rather it is fulfilling, beautiful and the reward of total commitment to each other. Sex itself is not bad. Sex is good. In fact, it is so good - it's worth waiting for!

If you are a virgin, then know that you're not alone. Your virginity is precious and indescribably valuable. Don't be another example of the celebrity who, when asked to describe how/when she lost her virginity said she'd lost it at 16 - but desperately wishes she'd waited.

If you're not a virgin and you know that you've been living a life of shallow sex and cheap thrills, you don't have to live that way anymore. You can change. You don't need to wait for New Year's to make a resolution that lasts only as long as your self-control does. By signing a TLW pledge, you're making a statement that signifies that what's past is past, but by the grace of a forgiving and cleansing God, you're changing your lifestyle today.

True Love Waits-South Africa is a fast growing organization. In fact, TLW-SA is the second largest TLW organization in the world! TLW-ers visit schools, universities, youth groups and churches across the country, encouraging other young people to choose the abstinence before marriage lifestyle and the young people are responding positively.

Contact:

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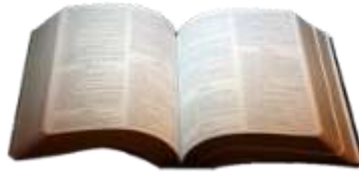
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The Founding Father of the United States of America, General George Washington, with his family at Mount Vernon.



Appendix 5

ARE YOU GRATEFUL?

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Martin Luther observed that we exhibit a degree of thankfulness in life in reverse proportion to the amount of blessing we've received. In *Tabletalk*, Martin Luther wrote: *"The greater God's gifts and works, the less they are regarded."* The blessings of life, health, freedom and food are not really appreciated unless they are lost or threatened. Because sunrises and sunsets occur daily, they are taken for granted.

Ralph Waldo Emerson observed that *"if the constellations appeared only once in a thousand years, imagine what an exciting event it would be. But because they are there every night, we barely give them a look."*

Similarly, the blessings of rain are barely appreciated unless one has been through a drought. A hungry man is more thankful for his morsel than a rich man for his heavily laden table. A lonely woman in a nursing home will appreciate a visit more than a popular person who has a party thrown in their honour. A Christian who has suffered under persecution for decades and receives his first copy of the Holy Scriptures will be more thankful for this one book than we are for all the Christian books, Bible translations and magazines that overflow our shelves.

Helen Keller said: *"I have often thought that it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days for some time during his early adult life. It would make him more appreciative of sight and of the joys of sound."*

There are at least 138 passages of Scripture that deal with the subject of thanksgiving. We are commanded: *"Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His Name."* Psalm 100:4

"Give thanks to the Father Who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light." Colossians 1:12

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." Colossians 3:15

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Plainly it is God's will for us to be joyful, prayerful and thankful.

"No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks." Ambrose

"It ought to be as habitual for us to thank as to ask." C. H. Spurgeon

It has been said that a thankful heart is the parent of all virtues. It is also true that a lack of gratitude is a root sin.

"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness...for although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened." Romans 1:18-21

Here, failure to give thanks to God is the root sin that leads to futile thinking and foolish, darkened hearts.

In Luke 17:7-19, we read of the ten lepers that were healed by the Lord Jesus. When one of them, a Samaritan, threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him, the Lord Jesus asked: *"Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"*

In our mission's experience we've also found that barely 10% of those we help or sponsor will bother to express their gratitude either verbally or in a letter or card. Evidently gratitude is something of a rarity.

In 1 Timothy 3:1-5 the apostle Paul gives a list of some of the most terrible sins including: *"People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, **ungrateful**, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, traitorous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a form of godliness but denying its power."*

Here ungratefulness is listed in the middle of a litany of horrible sins.

One of the first lessons good parents seek to teach their children is to say *"thank you"*. It takes character and courage to admit being in debt to others. It is humbling. However, those who cannot admit their indebtedness to others, cannot learn, nor can they seek forgiveness.

Failure to express gratitude is more than immaturity and rudeness, it is ungodly. We are commanded to honour our parents, our elders and our leaders. It is a sign of maturity to acknowledge indebtedness. Anyone who has learned anything is in debt to somebody else. We are all in debt, firstly, and mostly to God Himself, for our life, health, food, talents, family, friends, opportunities and for our salvation itself. We are also in debt to past generations who have sacrificed for the freedoms we now enjoy: Reformers, martyrs, pioneers, missionaries, soldiers, parents, teachers, pastors and so many others have sacrificed for our benefit.

Those who do not take advice don't think they have anything to learn. They are often the same people who have a problem expressing a genuine heartfelt gratitude to others. It is a sign of pride to be ungrateful. It reveals an unwillingness to acknowledge a debt to others.

Instead of the Christian character of gratitude, our present culture prefers to promote an attitude of entitlement. This is the very opposite of gratitude. It builds on pride and covetousness, it is fuelled by bitterness, greed and envy. All too many in the present humanistic society take things for granted, demand to get rather than seeking to give.

"One man gives freely, yet gains even more, another withholds unduly but comes to poverty."
Proverbs 11:14

A grateful mind is a great mind. *"Be thankful, therefore, for the least benefit and thou shalt be worthy to receive greater."* Thomas k Kempis

"Give thanks to the Lord, call on His Name; make known among the nations what He has done... Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever." 1 Chronicles 16:8, 34



Peter, Lenora, Andrea, Daniela, Christopher and Calvin.



BIBLIOGRAPHY AND OTHER RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Bringing the Gospel to Covenant Children by Joel Beeke, Reformation Heritage Books

Christian Modesty and the Public Undressing of America by Jeff Pollard, Visco Forum

Future Men by Douglas Wilson, Canon Press

No Greater Joy (1, 2 and 3) by Michael and Debi Pearl

Praise Her at the Gates by Nancy Wilson, Canon Press

Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning by Douglas Wilson

Reforming Marriage by Douglas Wilson, Canon Press

The Heart of Homeschooling by Christopher Klicka, Noble Publishing

To Train up a Child by Michael and Debi Pearl

The Culture-Wise Family by Ted Baehr and Pat Boone

RECOMMENDED MAGAZINES, WEBSITES AND COURSES

American Vision - www.amencanvision.com

Books on the Path - www.booksonthepath.com

Cape Home Education - www.capehomeed.org.za

Christian Action - www.christianaction.org.za

Christian History - www.christianhistory.net

Christian News from CFT - www.cft.org.za

Focus on the Family - www.family.org

Frontline Fellowship - www.frontline.org.za

Homeschooling Today - www.home-schooling-today.com

Joy! magazine - www.joymag.co.za

No Greater Joy - www.nogreateijoy.org

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World Magazine - www.worldmag.com



About the Authors

Lenora Hammond is a home schooling mother of two daughters and two sons. She is the daughter of pioneer missionaries Rev. Bill and Harriett Bathman. Lenora was born in England and raised in Austria. She undertook her teachers training at Northern Arizona University, studied at Capenwray Bible College in England, worked at the Tauenhof Bible College in Austria and served as Junior High Minister at Bethany Community Church in Arizona before joining Frontline Fellowship in South Africa.

Dr. Peter Hammond is a missionary who for over 30 years has pioneered evangelistic outreaches in the war zones of Mozambique, Angola and Sudan. Peter is the Founder and Director of Frontline Fellowship, the Director of the Christian Action Network and the Chairman of The Reformation Society. He is the author of Victorious Christians - Who Changed the World, Answering Skeptics, Practical Discipleship, Faith Under Fire in Sudan, Holocaust in Rwanda, the Great Commission Manual, Putting Feet to Your Faith, In the Killing Fields of Mozambique, The Greatest Century of Missions, Biblical Principles for Africa, The Discipleship Handbook, Slavery, Terrorism and Islam, The Greatest Century of Reformation and The Power of Prayer Handbook. He has co-authored or contributed to: Fight for Life, Make a Difference, The Pink Agenda, Character Assassins and South Africa - Renaissance or Reformation? He is the Editor of both Frontline Fellowship News and the Christian Action magazine, as well as a Contributing Editor of JOY! Magazine.

Peter was born in Cape Town (in 1960) and brought up in Bulawayo (in what was then war torn Rhodesia - now Zimbabwe). He was converted to Christ in 1977, worked for Scripture Union and Hospital Christian Fellowship, served in the South African Defence Force and studied at Baptist Theological College, Cape Town. Peter and Lenora have been blessed with four children: Andrea, Daniela, Christopher and Calvin. As a family they love animals and have rescued and adopted many stray cats, They enjoy the outdoors and often hike in forests and climb mountains. They enjoy reading, history, ice skating and evangelism.