

Keystone

The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers

of New Zealand

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Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth. – Ps 112:1-2

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Dad's Role in the Home and the Home School

by Rev Graham Capill

(The following is the first part of the speech delivered by Rev Graham Capill, leader of the Christian Heritage Party, at the Christian Home Schoolers of NZ National Conference in Palmerston North on Saturday 3 February 1996. The balance of Rev Capill's speech will appear in later issues of Keystone.)

I'd like to thank you for your kind invitation to address you tonight. It is a great honour and privilege to be amongst such a distinguished gathering. I have been asked to address you on the topic: The Dad's Role in the Home and the Home School. I think I should make it clear that this topic was assigned to me, it was not my idea, and I certainly wouldn't want you to think that I am some sort of expert on this issue—I'm not! I am like most other Dads, simply struggling to do my best, and often experiencing failure and difficulties! In many ways, I guess there are reasons to say that I'm not qualified to speak on this issue: I'm frequently away from home and have to leave my wife to it, and although we have done one year of home schooling one of our children, we are really only embarking on home schooling five others this year. The only thing I really have going for me is that I do have eight children – and I guess that gives me some experience of family life!

Having said all that, I want to make it clear that I believe this topic is very, very important. It is a much needed emphasis, not just in the world at large, but also in Christian circles. And why do I say that? Well, I think that there are two reasons: (Continued page 30)

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Keystone is the journal of Christian Home Schoolers of NZ Inc., (CHomeS), a Charitable Trust established to promote the concept of home education through a regular journal, conferences, literature, research projects, speakers, press releases, letters to editors, articles to other publications and by lobbying government officials.

Keystone is intended to inform, challenge, encourage and inspire. The trustees of CHomeS believe that the Christian faith is being undervalued. Christianity is fully able to present a world view that is intelligent, coherent, consistent and complete. Committed to scholarship, the free exchange of ideas and the need to stimulate reasonable debate, **Keystone** may publish articles that will not necessarily reflect the views or beliefs of the Trustees. Original articles and letters are welcomed as is good quality material from other publications providing full acknowledgement is given and copyright respected.

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Editorial



Between untold interruptions, my computer crashing a couple of times and a thick document arriving from the MOE at the very last minute which I decided HAD to be reviewed for this issue (see Desk File, page 16), we have missed the publication date by a couple of days. Check out the advertising enclosed as some of it is only applicable for this month of March.

The Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) is the most popular standardised test for high schoolers in the USA. Books can be bought which tutor you for the various subjects within the exam. A parent has asked if we can locate some of these books, published by Barrons Educational Services, New York, specifically the ones for English Literature and Maths Level 1C. Does anyone know where they can be obtained here in NZ?

Andrew Davies, R.D. 1, Te Kuiti, a Keystone reader, has published a first newsletter commenting on some of the social rot in the schools. Praise God our children are not in these institutions, but so many children of our friends, relatives and neighbours are. He targets especially the Family Planning Association, a crowd I reckon we need to see shut down for the sake of the moral, spiritual, mental, physical and emotional health of those we know still in the system.

Christina Coward and others of the Wellington Home Schoolers Association have done a lot of work in developing resources for their group, and are quite willing to share it with the rest of us. (See page 18.) I am sure there is a lot of similar research and development going on out there in other centres. If you can share some of your findings with the rest of us, Keystone would be happy to print it, so that the Body of Christ and Christian Home Schoolers may all be edified and that grateful thanks and praise may be given to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Who so graciously gives His wisdom to us in abundance and without reproach.

Let us all do some thinking and discussing of the issues surrounding the new requirement that we write annual reports. The MOE is happy to receive proposals for change from us, so let us grab this opportunity and work at formulating some creative and helpful initiatives.

Letters



Jack & Jill

I want to send the enclosed letter to Jill from Porirua. She went to the Home Schoolers Conference in Palmerston North. I could not find her address so could you please write her address on the front of the envelope and post the letter? I really enjoyed the conference, you did a great job in organizing it. Thanks again.

Jack
Masterton

(Names have been changed to guard privacy, which may not be at all necessary as I have no idea what is in the letter. But I thought this was a cute illustration of the fact that so much more happens at the conferences than the seminar titles would indicate!--Editor)

Truly Appreciated

Just a note of acknowledgment for the amazing amount of preparation and effort you both put in for the CHomeS conference. It was truly appreciated by all.

David and Ila Florance
Gisborne

Very Impressed

Please find enclosed our subscription for Keystone. We are very impressed by this publication.

Brian Gee
Hastings

Enjoyed the Activities

Thank you for all your hard work in organising the Christian Home Schoolers Conference last weekend. While we only attended the Saturday, we appreciated the opportunity to meet with other home schoolers and to hear some very good speakers. The children enjoyed the activities organised for them, particularly my 13-year-old son with the science experiments. For him the time wasn't long enough. We all appreciated the catering, that we didn't have to do the hard work ourselves. So thank you again, and our thanks also to those who assisted.

John McCash
Porirua

Didn't They Miss Out!

Thank you for your time, energy, knowledge and love in putting the Home Educators Conference together. I know it has been months in the pipe-line and in one weekend it's all over. (A bit

like a dinner--hours of preparation, gone in 1/2 hour!) We enjoyed it. The children had a ball!!!! We learnt heaps, met lots of lovely new people, and were blessed abundantly by the whole weekend! I can't say thank you all enough. I know the family has sacrificed you and your time over these last months/weeks. Thank you too!! May Christ, and I am sure He does, reward you with many blessings and continue to give you strength as you continue using your gifts and talents to minister to fellow and new home schoolers! May He be gracious to us all as we continue to home school our children! I do feel sorry for those who didn't make it to the conference. Didn't they miss out! Thank you so much again.

Hillary, Diana, Simone
& Gareth Posthuma
Awahuri

Tertiary Tip

Thank you for all your work in organizing the conference. I was only able to attend on Friday, but found that very worthwhile. I just want to add to your "getting into university options." Two of our boys, so far, have taken a polytech course as their sixth form year. For the first, this was what he needed for entry to his polytech course of Software engineering. Our second son took this course last year. When he went into the course he wanted to be a carpenter. During the course he discovered that there are all sorts of things that he can do really well, and that he really enjoys studying. So now he plans to be a polytech tutor. He did really well in the course (every module merited) and this has gained him entry to university this year. The course is: "Ordinary National Certificate in Science and Technology". This course is held at the C.I.T. in Upper Hutt, but there could be similar courses in other places. I should add that my boys are "science" people, so this may be no help for "arts" people. Hope this may be helpful to some.

Lynne Philp
Lower Hutt

Visit Norfolk Island

We would love to meet any Christian home schoolers if any come to our island. This year God has used our silent witness to Him. Several families will talk about our way of life. I am just so blessed God spoke loudly into our lives about home schooling before any of them went to school. Our address is PO Box 434, Norfolk Island, 2899, Australia.

James & Frances Calvert
Norfolk Island

Them & Us

Thanks for the copy of Keystone and your encouraging letter. I commend you for the work you are doing, it is a real example and encouragement to me. Running CHomeS must require a lot of commitment and dedication. Also, dealing with unconverted bureaucrats must have its frustrations. I wonder if I could be so bold as to make a suggestion. In Keystone I detected a "them and us" attitude towards the Commissioner for Children and the MOE. If we adopt this attitude then they will regard us in the same manner. Perhaps the following approach could be adopted with the Commissioner over the spanking issue:

- * commend him for his concern about child abuse and advise that we are equally concerned.
- * offer to help him in his endeavours to deal with the problem.
- * offer to assist him in understanding the difference between abuse and loving discipline.
- * maybe even invite them to your home to see how it is done and the spirit it is done with.

I understand the Advanced Training Institute (through which we homeschool) is designing a child discipline course for parents who are struggling. It will be reviewed and approved by the powers that be so that if parents follow the process they will not be prosecuted for child abuse. This is being prepared for another country but I am sure would be applicable to NZ. I will follow it up and keep you informed. It might be worth sending something like that to the Commissioner.

May the Lord bless you and your family in your service for Him.

Andrew Davies
Te Kuiti

The Bombay Barriers

Thank you again for organizing such a great conference. We thoroughly enjoyed just being there and chatting so easily with so many like-minded people. The seminars were very helpful and reassuring, and I came away feeling greatly encouraged. The Lord certainly knows how to provide "tables in the wilderness" when we need encouraging.

I was sorry there were so few Auckland people there. For Aucklanders anything beyond the Bombay Hills is "abroad". What do you suggest? I wondered about duplicating or nearly duplicating it in an Auckland venue.

Home schooling is certainly mushrooming. I've had a ring from three more families in our area in just the last two weeks. Glenda put an ad in the local Courier and had a lot of phone

calls—even from grandparents who wanted to know some more! I get an uneasy feeling that it's only a matter of time before we have a battle on our hands and feel Christian Home Schoolers need to be more united. I'm sure the vast majority of home schooling families would describe themselves as Christian families. In our little country group there are 13 families and 9 of them are Christian families.

I'd rather like copies of Michael Drake's message, "Real Qualifications for Real Achievements", and yours on "Assessments, RPL & Getting into Tertiary". I've told quite a few people about those two lectures, because I'd been wondering how much longer I could carry on teaching Evan before I had to send him to a Christian school because one or other of the subjects had got beyond me. Those two lectures really reassured me and I talked to Michael afterwards and he said that he (Carey College)—and he was sure Tyndale Park Christian School also—would be open to my taking him over for any subject I felt I could not cope with any more (most probably physics & chemistry.)

Thank you again for all the effort you put into the conference, and also your older children. They did a great job. The children's programme was also a huge success.

Christine Whetton
Clevedon

A Family Together

Just a note to thank you so much for all that you did to give us a wonderful conference. I appreciate all the time and effort that I know would have gone into the organisation.

We all got a lot out of it in many different ways but especially enjoyed going as a family together. We also loved the precious time we spent with you and know the next newsletter will be so much more meaningful being able to put faces to the names.

We have enrolled Pauline with the Air Cadets—she starts this Wednesday!! Thank you Genevieve for your beautiful witness and example.

Hopefully things have slowed up for you and you get time for a rest! But knowing you people something else will have already taken its place! (Amen! You guessed it!--Editor.)

We had the THEN (The Home Educators Network) AGM last week and Margaret Evans and I had shared with (an unbeliever) your positive remarks about her. Her response was, "As a born again atheist, I don't know if I want my name bandied about at a Christian

Conference!!! It was said in jest and I think she appreciated the feedback. Later she nominated me as President and although I protested profusely due to lack of time it was seconded and approved, and assured there would be help at hand. With God's Wisdom and guidance I should be able to manage.

I also got the questionnaire from the Ministry and tried to fill it out. But each time I read it from their perspective I was not convinced that the information wouldn't be used eventually against us, so I ended up "filing" it!

Again many, many thanks, and may the Lord not only bless you abundantly but also give you the Wisdom and energy you need to continue with Keystone without any adverse effects on your family. I have loaned my copies out and am encouraging all Christian home schoolers to subscribe if they want good Biblical principles and want to know what's going on. Bless you heaps. Love in Jesus Name

Ingrid Turner
Hamilton

Certainly Helped

Thank you very much for the time and effort you both put into the conference. I really appreciate it and the conference certainly helped me.

Shelley Buttenshaw
Palmerston North

May God Bless

Thank you very much for all the hard work you put into organizing the conference. We really appreciate it, and we got so much out of it. The seminars were great and it was neat having the opportunity to meet and talk with so many people. We do pray that God will continue to bless you in all the good work you do.

Robin & Christine Dykstra
Linton

Kaiteriteri Home Schoolers Camp

I wrote to you in January with regard to home schooling -- my two boys are 2 1/2 and 6 months. You invited me to the Kaiteriteri camp in your reply to me and I'm so glad you did! I just wanted to thank you for that. My family arrived at the camp just before morning tea on Saturday. We spent worship time with the group and I listened to most of your talk before we left to come home with one very sleepy toddler and a fully asleep baby. I made contact with Phillipa Ashton and imagine that I will be visiting her now and again over the next few years to borrow literature and get ideas, etc. I will also attend some of the organized activities with my boys so that they can make some home school friends,

and they'll be able to explain to people why they're not going to school when they hit five! Thank you once again, both for the invitation and the talk that you gave Saturday. Best wishes to you and your family.

Debbie Ball
Stoke

Great Conference

A great conference--much enjoyed. We appreciate the time & effort you must have both put in to making it worthwhile for everyone.

Gerard &
Caroline Gumm
Napier

stay in one of the baches on our property. Next week, two other families in our cell group are coming for the weekend. Slowly, I believe the Lord is enabling us to start experiencing something of what New Testament Fellowship was all about.

But back to what you were saying about authority. Everywhere we see people rebelling against it as though it is a nasty thing. I think it is a wonderful thing, given out of love for us by a loving God who knows what's best for us (of course like everyone else I struggle with it at

Under Authority

Thank you for your letter and your encouraging remarks. We appreciated what you shared about being under authority. We have known of families who have pulled out of fellowships and done their own thing spiritually, cutting themselves off from the Church body and being a law unto their own selves. Some of these families have ended up going into false cults.

We are still in the Baptist framework, Colin having been called to a budding Baptist church in Kawa Kawa on a parttime basis. He is accountable to a joint Deacon's Court made up of Kawa Kawa & Pahia Baptist Churches, our church not having its own constitution as yet.

We have a regular Sunday morning service at which Colin preaches. However as I shared before, a lot of the life, ministry and witness of the Church takes place in the cell group.

We have been excited over the last week that one of our new families who are also home schoolers have been able to come and

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times too.) I often think that Jesus, when He commended the centurion's faith, was also commending his ability to both sit under authority and be in authority over. It takes faith to do both.

Here's one more idea for what it's worth. Our 11-year-olds and up stay in for our whole service on a Sunday. We are very keen for them to feel included and as important and integral to the fellowship as the grown ups. So last week Colin wrote some questions out for them to help them focus in on the sermon. The young people seemed to really enjoy this and a couple of the parents have asked for sheets next week too!

Colin & Kathy Pyle
Ruakaka

(I abridged Kathy's letter a fair bit, but tried to keep in the really good ideas she expressed. The sheets of questions prepared by Colin for the younger ones to fill out during the sermon sounds great! Kathy sent me a copy, and there were 22 questions....boy, they certainly would keep you focused on the sermon! We have also found the home groups or cell groups to be really beneficial, and have felt so secure with church leadership who care enough about us to pull us up if we get out of line or express concern if they feel we are struggling with something. Again, how we respond to authority, our attitude toward it, is picked up and mirrored by our children. I reckon it really is important for us to ensure we have as proper a Biblical attitude toward authority as we can, as it will effect how we submit to the Number One Authority, our Triune God. What do other readers think? I am keen to hear others' convictions in this area.-- Editor.)

Home School Research



(During 1995 Pamela Shepherd of Christian Teachers' College of Aotearoa New Zealand sent out 100 questionnaires to Christian Home Educators all around New Zealand. She had 49 responses, which is quite high for this kind of voluntary response questionnaire. She has compiled the findings in several forms which are reproduced here and in subsequent Keystone Home School Research articles.)

Formal Instruction

Of all those asked only 27% of you had received formal instruction in parenting. Ideally there should not be a need for parents to attend workshops or seminars based solely on parenting because they should have been trained well enough by their parents to know what responsibilities the task entails. Approximately half of you did not have a desire to do any formal training in this area because you felt that the Word of God, advice from older people and experience are the best teachers.

What I strongly recommend is a course called "Growing Kids God's Way" by Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo.¹ It is very highly commended to me by many parents and home educators who have found that its practical teaching and excellent philosophically Biblical approach to child training is consistent and works well. I personally know several families that are undertaking the

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programme and they all absolutely rave about it. One of the families have six children under eight, another has two over 21 who have "turned out" really well with thanks to the Biblical principles practiced in this course. Another lady I know is a solo mother whose thinking has been revolutionised in regard to Biblical worldview and the whole subject of Christian parenting. These are personal friends of mine so there must be hundreds of other success stories around.

Routine

A collation of wise words on routine

- * Go to bed early and rise early.
- * Make sure that you are right with God at the beginning of the day because lots will happen during the day to tempt you to be very unChristlike.
- * Do all the dishes and beds, washing hung out and other jobs before you start.
- * Start at the same time each day.
- * Plan as if you will have no interruptions, and stay calm during the day when things "happen" as if you have no plans.
- * Work on the "brain strain" sort of subjects in the morning before lunch leaving the things such as art, PE and others for the afternoon.
- * Discourage visitors and phone calls in the morning.
- * Prioritize.
- * Get rid of the TV.
- * Involve children in as much household work as possible.
- * Don't overcommit yourself to other things.

Puzzle

Answer to last issue's puzzle:

1st customer got $67 \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 68$, leaving 67
 2nd bought $33 \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 34$, leaving 33
 3rd bought $16 \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 17$ leaving 16
 So the trader started off with $68 + 34 + 17 + 16 = 135$ eggs.



Whose name is spelled by this rhyme?

Five hundred the first, five hundred the last,
 And five in the middle is seen;
 The first of all letters, the first of all numbers,
 Are evenly placed in between.

All those under 16 who send in the correct answer will go into a draw to be held on 30 April. The one drawn will receive a new book on Amphibians. Send name, address, age & answer to Keystone, 4 Tawa St., Palm Nth.

Difficulties

The key theme coming through in the things that people are finding the most difficult about the course of their day is the fight between sticking with their plans, and letting life take its course with its interruptions and unplanned circumstances. If we commit our plans to the Lord at the beginning of the day, then we will know that though we make our plans, He determines our course (Proverbs 16:9). It comes down to making the most of every opportunity, whether it be formal "schoolwork" or learning how to live in the real world. We know that the real world is crying babies and noisy children playing, we know that meals need to be prepared and the washing brought in; it is just as important that the children learn to cope with life as it is, not as we have been conditioned to think that it should be in the "safe" confines of an artificial environment called school. We need to live with reality.

Feeling Inadequate

I'll start off by saying that a lot of "unqualifieds" are doing a great job. Who decides what we need to know anyway? God knows us inside out, He is the One Who holds all the stores of wisdom, knowledge and understanding; He is the equipper.

If you talk to any state trained beginning teacher and ask them if they feel confident about their new role, their resounding response will be "Definitely not!" You cannot be completely prepared for the onslaught of 30+ children demanding your every second, and the responsibility laid on your shoulders of getting them to take in, remember and use the information and skills that they're supposed to.

Parents have no such training, and no time to consider their fears. You are the expert on your own child and no matter what anyone else says, you will probably be more concerned about his/her development than anyone else. The criticisms of other people and their expectations weigh heavily upon us. We have lived in a world where you just sent your children to school. It is a courageous step to take—claiming back your children from the grip of society; be encouraged, you will reap what you sow.

When asked what subjects do you feel apprehensive about, the responses showed: maths, 20%; science, 15%; English, grammar, language or reading, 20%.

Becoming An Overcomer

Do not feel inferior to the experts. Many of you expressed a fleeting or not so fleeting fear of failure. Don't expect everything to be absolutely perfect all, or any of the time. Your one-on-one attention with your child is a lot more than what they get at school (research shows less than five minutes if they're very lucky). There are strategies for overcoming these feelings. Belonging to a support group is a major one, but a very important one is to be teachable. Your teachable spirit will be observed by your children. You are never too old to learn new things.

Overcoming Fear of Failure

- * Pray a lot!!! It is the Holy Spirit that brings understanding.
- * Keep one step ahead of what the children are studying and doing.
- * Get hold of a supportive friend that you can ask for help and advice.
- * Use the resources that you have access to: public libraries, church libraries, Christian bookstores, local Christian schools, Christian Teachers' College head office in Auckland, CHomeS personnel, and any other home education support agencies you know of. Don't reinvent the wheel.
- * Realise that this is a learning experience for the whole family.
- * Teach your children how to find resources themselves.

Delwyn McAlister has written a resource directory for Christian Home Schoolers in NZ. She may be contacted c/- PO Box 225, Tokoroa.

One Mum said, "I had to keep telling myself, 'You're his mother, you've taught him most of what he knows so far—just carry on being a mother!'"

Make the most of the opportunities that you can: visit art galleries, concerts, exhibitions, go biking, swimming, horseriding, visiting, tramping, walking, discovering, swap areas of expertise with other people, there is so much that you can do that school children never have the time or opportunity to do because of restraints and lack of supervision, transport or the sheer dynamics of large numbers.

Notes: 1. The Mission of Growing Families New Zealand is to provide the Christian community with parenting and family resources that will instil, encourage, and pass on

Biblical values, from one generation to the next. Growing Families International is a non-denominational Christian organisation which has developed and produced a comprehensive, Biblically based parenting curriculum. This material provides parents with the mindset and tools to parent from a Biblical model, and as a result, the opportunity to share in the joys and benefits from parenting more closely aligned to the Creator's original intent. There are three main programmes that make up the curriculum: Preparation for Parenting – this covers the period from birth to six months; Preparation for Toddler Years – covers five to fifteen months; Growing Kids God's Way – this covers eighteen months through to the teenage years. We have new material coming available later this year. These materials are based around teaching sessions presented on video and a comprehensive manual. Audio tapes are an option too. The teaching is designed to operate in a small group setting preferably with an experienced facilitator. These classes should run under the guidance of a local church. There are dozens of groups running throughout New Zealand, and thousands around the world.

For more information:

Auckland—Grant Warner—(09) 817-4572.

Lower N.I.—Michael Hanson—(06) 368-6779 or Jonathan Dann—(06) 356-8294.

South Island—Geoff Gage—(03) 337-0438.

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Tough Questions People Throw Your Way



Our public schools are staffed by well trained professionals who teach according to a modern up-to-date curriculum which is designed to bring children to their full potential that they may easily integrate into today's society and the workforce. How can you deny them these great advantages?

This is a typical statist comment, the kind that would also go on to say that children are our nation's greatest resource and therefore demand the best money can buy. You see, they quite quickly equate children with sides of lamb, butter and other "resources" of our nation which are sometimes sold to the highest bidder, sometimes bartered off to reduce debt and sometimes given away. I resent my children being spoken of in those terms. They also assume that money buys the best.

Well, what exactly is behind the National Curriculum? On April 19, 1987, the then Assistant Director, Resources Development, Department of Education, Wellington, met with a number of leaders of home schooling groups in Auckland. This gentleman stated that his own idealism had been somewhat tarnished after years in the state education system when he realized, in his own words, that education "was not only about children and learning, but also about money and politics." The Christchurch Press of November 5, 1985, had an article about the then Under Secretary of Trade and Industry, Mr Neilson, and his six-point programme for making Labour "the natural party of Government." Point three of this programme called for the introduction "of peace studies into the education system to achieve this end." The idea is to train children in the schools to think a certain way so that when they become voters they will just "naturally" think along Labour political lines and just "naturally" vote for Labour. In a speech at Massey University in mid-1990, Finance Minister David Caygill was reported in the papers as saying that Governments should mould

public opinion, not follow it. He said it was the politician's responsibility to pursue policies that were in the public interest "even when the public disagrees." What better way to mould public opinion than when the public within the state education system is not yet old enough to have its own opinion?! Apparently, both Mr Neilson and Mr Caygill understood what Abraham Lincoln said over 100 years ago: "The philosophy of the classroom is the philosophy of the government in the next generation."

During the 1986 school trials of the draft programme *Keeping Our Selves Safe*, the Police Youth Aid Officer in Palmerston North chaired a public meeting to explain the programme to interested parents at Central Normal School. He was asked why the KOSS programme was targeting potential victims, school aged children, and educating them to understand and recognise perversions such as incest, sexual molestation, rape, exhibitionism, etc., rather than targeting potential offenders and educating them in self control. The constable answered with a shrug of the shoulders and the words, "I guess the children are easier to reach since they are a captive audience in the classroom each day."

A few years ago Massey University Education professor Ivan Snook said that the furore over sex education, morals in the schools, etc., was only a smoke screen. The real issues were power and control: whose were the children and who will control their education? Karl Marx was committed to seeing communism take over the world. He worked out a 10-point plan to see this objective succeed. One of the points was the establishment of free, compulsory and secular state education systems in order to train up the next generation in the philosophy of the state.

Many Christians and other concerned parents were thrilled with the way parents were promised a lot more say in running schools as a result of the changes brought about by the Tomorrow's Schools document. But most were totally misled. It turned out that what Tomorrow's Schools did was to off-load much of the expensive administrative headaches onto volunteer Boards of Trustees who receive token remuneration, while the core curriculum, what was actually being taught in the classroom, remained even more tightly in the control of the Ministry of Education. A quote by Phillip Capper of the Post Primary Teachers Association which appeared in the *Dominion Sunday Times* of 14 October 1990

is one of the most straightforward and honest statements by a professional educationalist one could ever hope to read. He said, "What I would like to see in the political debate about education is a recognition that public education is an exercise in social engineering by definition." And here is a snippet from the *Manawatu Evening Standard* of 4 December 1990. "Unresearched government-decreed practises in schools could socially, emotionally and intellectually deform children, says Christchurch Teachers' College principal Colin Knight. Dr Knight said the education system placed children at risk by continuing to neglect educational research. 'It is of serious concern to me that, despite the far-reaching effects of teaching on society, few educational practices have a sound research basis.' He said changes in what went on in schools were mainly brought about by politically initiated reviews and reports on questionnaires and Gallup polls, by parliamentary debate and political expediency."

The New Zealand public school system is designed and operated according to political considerations. I have no qualms about keeping my children out of such a system.

THE NEW ZEALAND CHRISTIAN WRITERS GUILD

is an interdenominational organisation giving support and encouragement to Christians who love to write and want to improve their writing skills. The annual subscription of \$24 includes 6 issues of the *Christian Writer* magazine.

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For more information write to:

Julie Belding
N.Z. Christian Writers Guild
P.O. Box 65-275
Auckland 1330



Report on the Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand National Conference

2-4 February 1996

by Catherine Duxfield, Ashhurst

Those of you who missed this weekend missed a real treat. As has been the standard in the past, the organization was tops. In fact this conference had been fine tuned from previous conferences to include such things as a children's program, creches, and sleeping rooms for babies. The majority of the conference was held at the Central Baptist Church in Palmerston North, with some sessions being held a short distance away at the Lutheran Church. One very desirable feature of this year's conference was that a photocopier was available free of charge to help with exchanging notes.

Although the main conference began on Friday night, there was an all day Friday program for those people specifically developing support groups. There were about fifty people attending this part of the conference and the format was an informal discussion. Some of the topics discussed were the Ministry of Education's homeschooling survey, exemptions, malicious phone caller, Ministry of Education desk file, ideas for promoting homeschooling, activities for support groups, and support group resource libraries. This was a good time to get to know useful tips on how other centres ran their support groups and overcame some difficulties. It was also a good opportunity to get to know other people involved in running activities, support groups, and giving advice. All this discussion took place in between the very necessary (and very Christian!) eating, and drinking cups of tea etc.


The main conference began on Friday night with a time of singing. This was the way all the main sessions began. The address on Friday night was taken by Craig Smith and probably the most memorable part of this talk for me was that so many things we do only last for a short time but the things we do for the Lord last forever. Afterwards we went home to meet our billets. Although not a scheduled part of the conference the times that we had at home talking with the two families we billeted were every bit as valuable as the conference itself. It is really

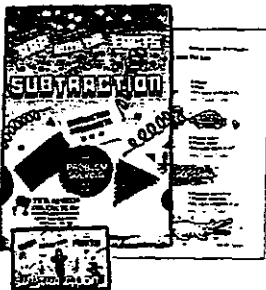
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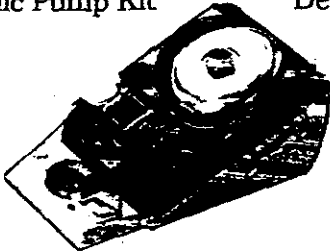


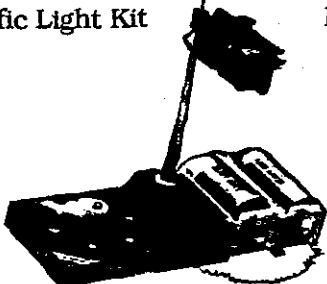




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great to know that we are all so very different and yet we have the same goal - to raise our children for the glory of God.

On Saturday over four hundred people attended, of which a significant number were children. The day was structured with four groups of five electives each, a main address given by Graham Capill, times of singing, and, of course, a lot of wonderful food, copious cups of tea and coffee, and plenty of fellowship. The electives covered a wide range of topics and the ones I attended were taken by people who were really knowledgeable and experienced in their field. Several of the electives and the main messages were recorded on video so that those of you who had to miss the conference may still be able to catch up on some of the information. In the late afternoon, while the barbecues were heating and more food being prepared there was time to browse over some of the curriculum material on display, talk to people using those curricula, and time to buy all sorts of goodies (mostly books) at the stalls. After a very full day it was time to take our families home, tuck the children in their beds, and sit up talking to our billets until the small hours of the morning.

You may wonder what the children were doing all this time. We generally only saw ours at meal times! The babies and small children had a choice of two creches, one at each of the venues, so that they could be near their parents. They were given various activities and little craft projects to do. The older children were divided into several groups according to their age. Some of the activities that kept the children busy were sports, mathematical puzzles and concepts, crafts, Air Training Corps action, variety program, visits to the Science Centre, visit to the museum, trip to the Fire Station, and a puppet show. For the teens there were also chemistry experiments and a trip to Surfside Internet C@fe. So, as you can see, our children had a pretty full weekend also.

Sunday was a much more relaxed day with time in the morning to attend various church services and then an informal discussion/information sharing time in the afternoon. People were given the opportunity to tell about some of the lesser known programs they were using and to answer questions about their programs. Some of the programs discussed were Seton Home Study School (a Catholic program), Christian Light Publications (a Mennonite program), Ruth

Beechick's materials and The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (Polytechnic correspondence courses).

Throughout the weekend it was evident that many prospective and new homeschoolers were helped by the conference. For me personally, I was assured that the program we are currently using for our children is the best one for our family. I enjoyed the times of learning about other programs, other ways of doing and organizing things, and most importantly meeting people. Both Graham and I were able to renew old friendships and make new friends. Our children also have made some close friendships.

Teen Opinion

by Matthew Evetts, 15 years, New Plymouth

How many of you readers went to the national home schoolers conference? Not enough, I would say, because it's one of the best things I've been to in a long time and probably the best Christian function I've ever been to. It was suitable for all age groups and catered for many different types of people.

There are many things that made it a truly outstanding conference. For one, and most important, you didn't get bored out of your brain, but could interact with people and go to the seminars of your choice. There was also some really good stuff on for young people.

O.A.C. ministries (Open Air Campaigners) catered for us teenagers and they were spot on. Lots of cool games and at one point we had a time where we could talk about any of the challenging questions that were on sheets handed around; a time not to be missed--really excellent.

Another thing important to a teenager is his stomach. I tell you what--that was fully catered for with excellent food being served throughout the day and plenty of it too!

I myself went to four seminars and a chemistry workshop. They were all really good. The speakers knew how to get their message across and they were all very knowledgeable. Anybody could ask questions which is very good for taking notes and finding out that little bit extra.

I went to the two computer and education talks which were both spot on for all those people who are into computers or are just plain interested.

Michael Drake's seminar on getting into tertiary education was a real eye-opener to what goes on in the education system and how easy it is for us home schoolers to get higher education by taking the right moves.

Craig Smith was also very good, covering the same general subjects as Michael Drake, but went over ground we had not yet been near -- another excellent talk.

What I found most wonderful was when we all sang together and had fellowship: it was so special. I invite you for the next time to the teaching, loving, sharing world of the Palmerston North National Home Schooler's Conference.

Report of the Top of the South Christian Home Schoolers Camp 1-3 March 1996

by Julie Baker, Brightwater

Home schoolers camp--golly, what had we let ourselves in for? A camp with 25 home schooling families, a new experience for us! Did we need special clothes or to be conversant in a special type of lingo?

Bethany Park was the chosen venue, a picturesque, well equipped, organised camp at Kaiteriteri, north-west of Nelson.

"We have the whole place to ourselves," was the happy greeting we received on arrival. This in itself caused problems--where to pitch the tent...On the hill? Near the river? Under a tree?

Once pitched it was time to venture into the camp's main hall and face such unknowns as the "camp timetable" and "job roster". A welcome meeting with a hot cup of tea and an introduction to Craig & Barbara Smith, the visiting celebrities, soon allayed any fears. Old friends met old friends, new friends met new friends and old friends met new friends and we were all brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus sharing a common aim.

Craig gave a series of talks during the weekend

ranging from "Why Christian Home Schooling" to sessions dealing with Assessment (an increasingly popular subject with Ministry of Education), entrance to tertiary education, R.P.L. (Recognition of Prior Learning) and organising support groups. Barbara threw in lots of helpful and constructive suggestions.

The main thrust of these talks was the importance of teaching our children Biblical truths and wisdom and not concentrating on academic achievement. It is better to roll up our sleeves "dare to be different" and be participants rather than modelling ourselves as teachers in a classroom.

The enthusiastic and informative talks meant that parents were totally occupied while the younger members of the family were involved in various children's programmes.

The inevitable rain that started gently falling on Saturday lunchtime turned into a deluge and touch rugby became a new water sport. Those not participating tried the hydroslide. Nobody's spirits were dampened (although the tents were) and on Saturday night we were all involved in a "games night" which ranged from manouvering sweets from one end of the hall to the other via a team of twenty to a neat number in balloon popping.

On Sunday before Craig's session we heard a heart tugging tale from David & Sue Bryan who ran a World Vision unaccompanied children's camp in Zaire.

Mixed in the recipe for the weekend were brilliant periods of praise and worship, all meals cooked by camp staff and plenty of time for talking and sharing ideas. A resource corner displayed various curricula and Craig & Barbara encouraged everybody by being constantly available and open and bringing great ideas like Certificates in Dish Washing and inviting MP's to dinner.

A huge "Thanks" is due to Pat & Philippa Ashton of Motupiko and their team for organaising such a wonderful weekend. Next year's preparations have already begun, plans are underway and it's bound to be a success--so book now--and NO you don't need special clothes or be able to speak a certain type of lingo.

Correspondence with Politicians & Educationalists



There has been plenty of action of late. Rather than reproduce the letters, I will quote the relevant bits and make appropriate comments.

MOE Home Schooling Survey

First up is the reply I received from the MOE to my question about the purpose of those questionnaires that went out at the beginning of February. Our concern was that in commercially based market research an uninterested, outside organisation is commissioned to do the questioning, so as to more certainly guarantee privacy and anonymity. In this case it is the MOE's own research staff who are doing the research. Their assurances of anonymity were therefore not very comforting. We also asked why, apart from curiosity, the MOE wanted all this information. Let me quote Kathy Phillips, Senior Manager of National Operations in the MOE in a letter to CHomeS dated 30/1/96.

"I understand the point you make about the purpose of our survey. While I can appreciate that some people may look for hidden motives in Ministry actions, I hope you will accept my assurance that *in this instance* the Ministry simply wishes to improve its knowledge of the homeschooling environment." (Emphasis added.)

Reading this out at the CHomeS National Conference with the appropriate emphasis allowed us all to have a good laugh together. We actually spent a large chunk of time discussing how to respond to the questionnaire on the Friday of the conference, and decided it wasn't worth worrying too much about.

Annual Reports To Be Required

Next was the letter we all would have received saying how supervisory allowances would now be handled by the Early Childhood and Schools Resourcing Division at National Office. This centralizes all payments from one office. Notice how it also puts those of us who have elected to receive this allowance under the loving care of the "Early Childhood and Schools Resourcing Division". So we are being treated somewhat as are schools, which we most definitely are not.

This is probably only an administrative thing, of no consequence in itself. But, you know, these kinds of things have a habit of coming back to haunt us via urgent suggestions from bureaucrats for moves to simplify and bring things into line by adjusting one thing or another for the sake of logic or consistency. (As, for instance, when politicians caved in to demands from homosexuals that their perversions be declared legal activities, it became logical and consistent to further demand that discrimination against practitioners of these now legal activities be declared illegal.)

But the second issue in that letter, that the MOE will require annual reports from the end of October for every home educated child holding a certificate of exemption, is one that we need to seriously debate and respond to. Let me quote the letter at length:

"This year the Ministry will be instituting a system of annual self-evaluation by home schoolers.

"In the last week of October, this office will send you a letter asking you to report on what you feel you have achieved in the past year.

"Please understand that this is not meant to be a detailed report covering all the topics that have been mastered in each area of your curriculum. What the Ministry is looking for is a short statement of about one and a half to two pages in which you explain the progress that your child has made during the last twelve months. (Note: A separate report will be required for each child if you are homeschooling more than one child.) This report will give you the chance to communicate your successes. You will be asked to concentrate on the particular skills that you feel your child has gained during the past year.

"Although for most homeschoolers the report will occur at a different time of year from the statutory declaration which is completed prior to the payment of the homeschooling supervision allowance, the report should be seen as an adjunct to the declaration. Together the two documents will enable the Ministry to remain satisfied that you are teaching your child 'at least as regularly and well as in a registered school'."

The MOE's Homeschooling Desk File (more on this document later) has this to say about these annual reports: "A thorough, detailed report on

all facets of the past year's work is not required. It will be sufficient if the parent shows some perception of what has been achieved."

I have spoken to Derek Miller at MOE head office, and he confirmed that, as the letter says, the reports are needed so the Ministry may remain "satisfied" that we are teaching as regularly, blah, blah, blah. Mr Miller said that this requirement was put on them by the Audit Office because the statutory declarations are not enough by themselves, and that even those home schoolers who do not receive the Supervisory Allowance will also be required to make these reports. This word "satisfied" is the same one used in the Education Act. It occurs to one such as I with a sceptical mind that to remain satisfied could mean an ever-increasing number of requirements to the point where conformity to the National Curriculum is required.

So one concern is that by going ahead and writing these reports we may set a precedent whereby the MOE can ask us to do something and we will obediently jump through the hoop.... and I will say it: we will jump through the hoop in order to continue receiving this government handout called the Supervisory Allowance. Mr Miller said refusal to write the report MIGHT effect whether one receives the SA or not.

Now this report in itself does not seem to be much. We write what we feel is significant and nothing more. No specific requirements at all, except that it be 1 1/2 to 2 pages long. But I wonder if any child in any registered school has so much recorded about his progress on an annual basis. And how could they know that what is written bears any resemblance to reality?

The MOE is not all that happy with these reports either. It is a lot of extra paper work no one really wants. They have said they are quite open to ideas from us. Neither the reports, the SA or the statutory declarations are LEGAL requirements: they are all MOE policy decisions. I believe each family must, should and will do as it believes is best for itself, and I would be the last one to say all home schoolers have to act the same way or believe the same way in any given situation. But I will do what I can to ensure home schoolers get a reasonable picture of what is going on and some of the likely future consequences of our actions today. This is one of the main reasons Keystone exists.

So please write with your thoughts, ideas and convictions on this issue. We really do need to help each other on this one as it is a very complex issue, and requires more than a knee-jerk reaction. Praise God we have until October, which is seven months or a whole three issues of Keystone away!

The MOE's Homeschooling Desk File

Late last year the MOE very kindly sent a number of home schooling leaders around NZ a copy of the DRAFT Homeschooling Desk File. This in an internal document of the MOE to which branch offices can refer to ascertain the official policy on how to deal with home schoolers within that branch office's catchment area. The FINAL copy of this Desk File is now complete and has been sent to those same leaders for their reference.

I felt I should make a few comments to Keystone readers about my first impressions of this desk file (DF).

Regarding Rights the DF says:

"Some parents will see it as their right to homeschool their children. It is important to understand, however, that there is no unfettered right to homeschooling, though all parents have the right to apply for a certificate of exemption to enable them to educate their children at home. Put another way, parents have a right to educate their children at home, but the exercise of that right is subject to the Secretary being satisfied that the children 'will be taught as least as regularly and well as in a registered school'".

Parents do not have a blanket right to home school, but later on this document states plainly that children have a right to an education. The question arises, "Exactly who is in charge of handing out these rights?" The wording of the DF makes it sound as though it is the civil government through acts of Parliament. As it may prove to be a rather difficult exercise to convince the civil government to "give" us parents the unfettered right to home school, I for one feel mightily inclined to declare that providing a thoroughly Christian education for my children is MY GOD GIVEN DUTY. Woe to me if I do NOT fulfill this duty. As it happens, home educating them is the best means available, and therefore I feel I MUST home educate them.

So here is a situation where a parent is convinced

he must act in a certain way, but the state does not AUTOMATICALLY recognise his right to act in that way. So what do we do? I see three options:

1) We can go ahead and fill in all their forms until they are satisfied. Although they may require more and more in the future, it is a way to exercise our "right" and at the same time allow them to fulfill their statutory duty to be satisfied our children are being looked after educationally. (Whether MOE personnel are competent to do so is another issue entirely.)

2) We can refuse to fill in any forms or write any reports, claiming that they do not have a Biblical mandate to hamper us from fulfilling our duty to God regarding the education of our children. It could well be true that they have no Biblical authority in this area, but they do, at present, have the civil authority in this area. Romans 13 tells us to obey the civil authorities. In the USA some years ago an Amish gentleman, Mr Yoder, refused to obey the civil authorities who demanded he send his children to the state school. He was threatened with fines and jail terms, but would not be bullied into submission. He took it all the way to the Supreme Court, and they decided that according to the US Constitution, Mr Yoder's religious CONVICTIONS could not be compromised by civil regulations. Mr Yoder was seen to have a conviction about this because he demonstrated that NOTHING, be it inconvenience, money, loss of friends or family, NOTHING would induce him to change his mind. The US Constitution PROTECTS religious convictions of this kind. Are religious convictions of this kind protected here in NZ by our laws? I do not know. Does anyone out there have a lawyer friend who would care to comment?

3) It seems to me that the problem stems from Section 20 of the Education Act which requires ALL children 6-16 years to be in school or hold an exemption certificate. So we could lobby to change this section of the Act. Or our children could attend classes but be so completely disruptive that they are permanently expelled. That could be accomplished by them standing respectfully by their desk and reading something OUT LOUD and respectfully declining to obey the teacher when requested to stop. But that seems rather messy and a lousy testimony when there are other options available.

So I am inclined to say we investigate if we have legal protection of religious convictions, and also how we might change Section 20 of the

Education Act. Perhaps we can also do some thinking along the lines of providing some form of self-policing that would satisfy the MOE. For example, perhaps the MOE could be "satisfied" according to the Act when a family who is a member in good standing of a legally constituted local support group whose liaison officer, appointed for the task, has talked to the family and examined their curriculum and is willing to sign a statutory declaration, in addition to the statutory declaration signed by the family, that the family is abiding by the requirements of the act (the "regular and well" clause).

Attending a school parttime:

"It is not actually illegal for a school to allow non-enrolled students to attend but most schools would feel uneasy about such an arrangement because it is unclear who has the legal responsibility for non-enrolled students...Note, however, that it would be possible for a group of parents to come to an arrangement with a school to provide tuition to homeschooled students outside school hours...The school has authority to charge fees for such tuition."

Shifting to another address:

In the past you had to apply for a new exemption certificate. No more: the old one still applies. However you do need to inform the MOE of your new address.

Taking your child out of school:

"If you so desire, you may request the school to pass on to you the records that have been kept of your child's progress."

Science Award Trust

This is a volunteer group who award really nice certificates and top quality badge awards for accomplishments in various fields of science. Aimed at students from Form 1 to 4 it is also rewarding and profitable for older and younger students. Based on hands-on activities selected from a folder of ideas, most easy to do at home, a certain number of activities suitably done qualifies for the award. Areas include Astronomy, Geology, Entomology, Energy, Optics, Zoology, Meteorology, Human Biology, Conservation, Electronics and 10 others. Ideal for support groups, though single families can operate it at only \$5 per badge. Write for Introductory Information Kit, Science Award Trust, Box 12299, Christchurch.

The English Certificate Society of NZ, Inc.

The Wellington Home Schoolers Association say this organisation provides a source of practical English including exams. Each skill is evaluated separately and the certificate indicates the candidates actual level of attainment. Topics tested: Oral Language-Listening & Speaking.

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Wellington HSAssn. uses the exams for their 14-year-olds as an experience in sitting exams as the exams are set for 5th form pupils who are not expected to be able to gain better than 40% in the School Certificate English exam. Cost to register your group is \$22.50 and each student who sits the exam must pay \$25. There is a Teachers Resource Manual available for \$44 and past exam papers also. Contact:

The Administrator,

The English Certificate Society of NZ Inc.

PO Box 87017,

Meadowbank, Auckland.

Science Fair Pack for Home Schooling Support Groups

The Wellington Home Schooling Association has produced a pack loaded with ideas and information on how to set up a Science Fair for your local group. Included is information such as where to get resources, ideas of how to set up various activities, the type of venue to look for, what logistical snags to be aware of, how to schedule the day and alternative ways to run the programmes. They suggest a 3-part Day: First, exhibits showing scientific investigation done at home, as in a typical school science fair. Next a science technology challenge, wherein groups compete to solve a problem given specified resources in a set time. Finally, a science trail where individuals go through a course and conduct simple experiments on the way, recording their answers as they go. It makes for a very full, fun and exciting day!

Order your Science Fair pack (~\$8-\$10) from:
Wellington Home Schoolers Association
201 Melbourne Rd.
Island Bay
Wellington

Teaching Tips



Improving Performance

by Sharyn Wylie, Wangamui

It is 4:30pm and I enter the kitchen to start preparing the evening meal. Our two young sons are in the playroom working on a Lego project. I enjoy their happy conversation and consider how well they play together and co-operate, despite the differences in age and personality. They build airports, dockyards and other elaborate projects with Lego. As time passes, my reverie is broken. What is that I hear? I glance at the clock. It is 5pm. A tremendous argument has arisen over some minor aspect of construction. Nothing can be done to settle the disagreement. All peace talks break down before they even get to the table. The solution is simple. Close the playroom and separate the boys until after dinner. A short time after the meal, two happy boys report that the problem has now been resolved amicably. Could the playroom now be reopened?

This scene occurred so often in our home that you could almost set the clock by it. So what went wrong at 5pm? Their blood sugar level had dropped. In layman's terms -- they were hungry! I had four solutions to the problem: I could serve our main dinner at noon, serve afternoon tea, serve dinner at the earlier time of 5pm or separate the boys from 4:30 until after dinner. I chose the fourth solution. Often they would beg to be allowed to continue their project but too often when I weakened and allowed them to continue, I regretted doing so. Of course the problem has decreased now that they are older, but 5pm remains a potential time for trouble.

The police will tell you that accidents and scenes of family violence most often occur at meal time. This is when satan likes to strike. Not only are your children more likely to become disobedient, but your own patience will be low. This is the time when you may be tempted to throw in the towel, and send them back to school. The person whose blood sugar falls below normal becomes progressively more irritable, grumpy, moody,

depressed and unco-operative. If the level drops dangerously low, blackouts or fainting may occur. It is important for the home schooling family to understand this principle. With regular meal times of a sustaining nature, and a sensible schedule, much family strife can be avoided.

A person who has not eaten for 12 hours has 80 to 120 milligrams of sugar in about 100cc of blood. This is known as the fasting blood sugar level and varies according to the type and amount of food eaten at the previous meal. (The average level is 90 to 95 milligrams.) As the supply of blood sugar falls, the person experiences weariness and later fatigue. When the level reaches 70 mg, hunger sets in and when the stomach starts to grumble, the level has fallen to around 65mg. One of the problems with blood sugar levels is that an undesirable level is reached before hunger sets in.

There are a number of incidents in the Bible which refer to the problem of low blood sugar levels. It would be quite dangerous for the average person to undertake a forty day fast, but Jesus was no ordinary person. The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert. "After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." (Matthew 4:2, NIV) This is not stating the obvious. When a person begins to fast, they initially experience unpleasant symptoms such as hunger and headache, but as the fast continues they begin to feel better and the hunger pangs cease. The body draws on its reserves and fasting is no longer so difficult, though of course normal work activities should not be entered into. After many days hunger returns. Now the person fasting must resume eating or starvation will take place. Jesus had reached this crucial point. If He did not eat now, He would certainly starve to death. The temptation to turn stones into bread must have been very strong, but Jesus did not fail us, quoting Scripture instead.

Jacob understood the result of low blood sugar and used it to his advantage by encouraging Esau to give up his birthright as the firstborn son. (Genesis 25:27-34.) Although Esau was wrong to make such a vow, he could not have been so easily persuaded had he not been so hungry at the time. Later we read in Genesis 27 that he regretted this decision.

King Saul on the other hand, had no understanding of blood sugar levels. He sent his

men into battle without any food to sustain them and very nearly had his own son Jonathan executed. (I Samuel 14:24-45.) David, however, knew how important it was to feed his men and keep up their morale. He was willing to break Jewish law to do so, (I Samuel 21:1-6) and Jesus agreed with what he did. (Matthew 12:3-4.) Our Lord was well aware of the dangers of low blood sugar. We read in Mark 8:1-9 that He fed the four thousand people before they left for home lest they should faint on the way.

Our home schooling morning begins with a Bible reading and prayer. We then move on to mathematics, English and music practise. If there is still time before lunch, we tackle corrections. Our youngest son had been in the habit of having a bowl of porridge for breakfast for years. He never asked for or appeared to need any morning tea, but the time came when that changed. When we began math corrections, a subject he enjoys, at 11:30am, he could not understand the simplest concept. Facts he normally knew, seemed to have never been learned. He would break down in tears or have other angry outbursts over his math. Thinking that perhaps this was too academic a subject to tackle at this time of the day, I tried scheduling his organ practise. This was something he normally managed with joy, despite numerous errors. However, at the 11:30am time, learning a new piece was something he just couldn't handle. He became so frustrated that he would give up. In fact his ability to read even the simplest notes and find them on the organ seemed to be non-existent.

Of course, eventually I realised that his blood sugar level was simply too low to perform any sort of academic work. If I wanted him to work until lunchtime, I would have to remind him to have morning tea or schedule lunch at an earlier time.

As Lendon Smith, M.D., points out on the film, "Sugar", "I found out in my research that the brain is the busiest organ of the body. A fourth of the blood supply goes right to the brain and there's no storage for energy in the brain. So it has to have the right amount of water, oxygen, sugar, amino acids and all the other components that service the brain flowing through it at any one time, and if one of those supplies slips, like the blood sugar drops, then the brain doesn't work." Dr Smith went on to say, "So when a teacher is confronted with a child in her

classroom who didn't eat a proper breakfast, she's just talking to a spinal cord." He explains that the cortex, the top part of the brain has to be completely and properly nourished all the time or it simply will not work properly. And that is precisely what I discovered at 11:30am. Because our son had gone so many years without needing morning tea, I often forgot to remind him to have something. When we began to work around 11:15am he "disintegrated" and seemed to have no more ability to learn than a monkey. Our normally intelligent son could not master the simplest concept no matter how carefully I tried to explain it to him. But as Dr Smith points out, I was no longer trying to educate our son with a brain that worked. I was just talking to a spinal cord, and I certainly wouldn't expect a spinal cord to understand mathematics or play music.

The prudent mother will make certain her children eat on time. The Christian walk is a disciplined one. Eating at regular times is just one part of that discipline. With young children the need is even greater. And let's not forget Dad. He should not be confronted with the day's problems the moment he gets in the door, unless they are very pressing. Let him have his dinner first and after he has eaten, quietly explain what has gone wrong. He will then be in a position to give wise counsel.

Some years ago a mother phoned me because she thought her son may have an allergy or food intolerance. She told me that he enjoyed school and was normally very pleasant to have around, but when he

arrived home from school it was a different story. The school day is long for young children, so it is natural for them to arrive home out of sorts. But to daily arrive home in such a state, the mother decided, meant something else was wrong. I asked her what her son took to school for lunch. The answer was honey sandwiches, everyday. I explained that although honey is a food for bees, we should only use it as a sweetener. I suggested she include protein in his lunch: cold meat, canned fish, cheese, eggs, peanut butter. (Home schooling mothers can also serve baked beans or a legume soup.) She immediately changed his lunches and her lovely

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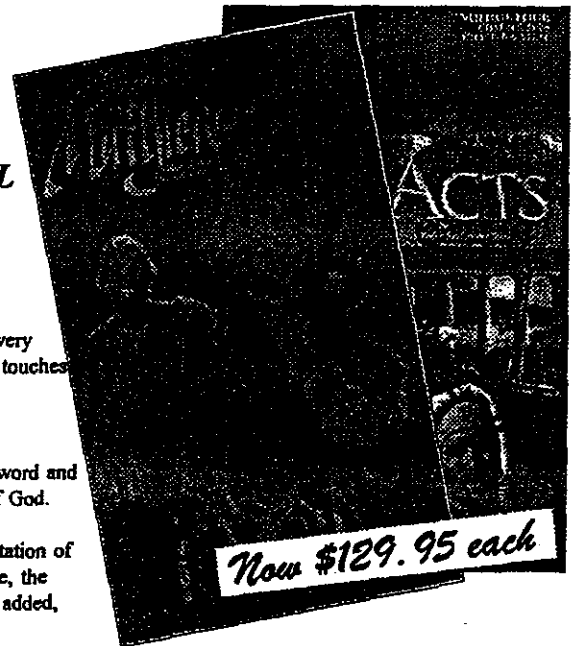
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son returned.

Last year a mother consulted me with a similar problem. Her son enjoyed school and did very well academically, but after school you couldn't live with him. She was supplying him with a good lunch, but further investigation disclosed that he did not eat the lunch. The teachers insisted the children stay seated for only ten minutes before they could go to play. Like many young children, he did not want to miss out on his playtime.

The home schooled child is in the unique position where an optimum learning level can be achieved. Not only is the home schooling mother able to adjust eating habits to suit her particular child's needs, but subjects can be scheduled accordingly. The next time World War III breaks out in your home or your child "disintegrates" over some simple task, stop and look at the clock!

(Sharyn Wylie has been home educating her sons for many years. She is a co-ordinator of the Wanganui Home Schooling Support Group and a Counsellor for the Wanganui Allergy and Hyperactivity Awareness Association.)

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Rev Graham Capill, Leader
Christian Heritage Party
P O Box 4480, Christchurch
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Theologically Speaking



Religion

by Craig S. Smith

There are two things to remember about this term, "Religion", that will help us home educators train our children in Godly wisdom. First, that everybody has a religion of one kind or another. Second, that there are ultimately only two religions.

Even unbelieving sociologists confirm that all cultures of all times have had a religion of one sort or another. But what exactly is "religion"? My Oxford Dictionary, Bible Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Theology all found the word very hard to handle. However, it is usually defined as the human practice stemming from some sort of belief in the divine.

Non-theistic evolutionists have tried to say that it is some sort of development to meet some sort of need, or something clever con men thought up to exercise power over people and secure an easy income. But these explanations assume, without actually saying so, that mankind does have that "God-shaped vacuum" within. Otherwise the need would never arise and the con man would not be able to con anyone. So even the unbelieving evolutionist does acknowledge, although begrudgingly, that human nature is inescapably religious. After all, that is the way the Creator created us.

There is another understanding of "religion" that is very helpful to us home educators as we endeavour to pass on to our children a concept of why other people we meet do what they do. One definition in my Oxford is, "Devotion to some principle; strict fidelity or faithfulness; conscientiousness." Notice there is no reference to the divine. Self-conscious atheists and agnostics I have met have been fairly articulate about what they believe...that is, they could explain why they believed as they did with a lot of confidence and clarity. These people are religious because they are devoted to some set of principles, and are conscientious about it, even if those principles can be summarised as "Me". Ultimately even the common man in the street is as religious as a priest (no disrespect intended)

since he will and does operate according to SOME set of beliefs or concepts about the nature of reality and the way things work. Whatever that set of beliefs is, even if they are contradictory (and they probably are), that set of beliefs is that person's "statement of faith", his "creed", his religion, even if it supposedly does not acknowledge the existence of God or any kind of supernatural.

Now although some would have us believe life is terribly complex, it is really fairly simple at the foundations. All the world's philosophies, religions, belief systems, creeds or what ever can be divided into two simple groups. One is Biblical Christianity, wherein trusts in the only true God, the Creator. The other group is everything else, all of which by definition trust in some thing which is created: man or some man-made idea or institution. This is known as the religion of humanism. Even atheistic, secular humanists refer to their belief system as a religion.

The Bible itself says there are only two kinds of people, and you will find that concept all through Scripture, even in John 3:16 (those who perish and those who have eternal life). Knowing there are only two, really makes life easy: you answer all the others in roughly the same way, that is, either focusing upon their misunderstanding of Christ, His finished work, His Divinity, etc.; or focusing upon the fact that they ultimately trust in man or some human agent for salvation. The Muslim, the Hindu and all the rest practise a religion of salvation by human works; the atheist and agnostic are trusting that their own human speculations regarding the non-existence or unknowability of God are correct. In either case, they are ultimately trusting in man or some other created thing. Biblical Christianity is on the opposite end of the scale, as true Christians trust in God the Creator.

Now this idea of religion, that everybody is religious and that there are really only two religions, Biblical Christianity and humanism; this idea of religion is useful to us home educators as it helps us to easily evaluate ideas that are presented to us in books, on TV, on radio talk-back, in lectures, in conversation. It is easy to recognise where other ideas are coming from as there are really only two possibilities: from the Creator God or from some thing which He created. When we can evaluate ideas in this way, no matter how they are wrapped up, we

will be less likely to be deceived. Also, we can more easily evaluate OUR OWN thinking as to whether it is Biblical or too tainted with humanism to be compatible with a life of faithful obedience to God.

We must watch our own thinking very carefully since most of us parents have been trained to think like humanists in our public school classrooms. This is why we must strive all the more to re-train our minds to think God's thoughts after Him, allowing His Word to continually flush out the garbage as we read, study, memorize and meditate on the Scriptures. The objective is to take every thought captive to obey Christ (II Corinthians 10:5). Not only do we parents need to be able to think this way, we must train our children to think this way, and show them how to easily distinguish between right thinking and wrong.

The issue we must face today in our pluralist society in the areas of education, literature, entertainment, medicine, justice and all things else is not whether it is right for us Christians to force our religious values on others. The issue is whose religious values will we accept being forced upon us.

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Strengthening Support Groups



Becoming a Legal Entity

There are definite advantages to your local support group becoming an incorporated legal structure. Companies and Partnerships are set up for profit-making activities. Incorporated Societies (IS) may be for profit-making or charitable purposes. Incorporated Charitable Trusts (CT) are strictly for charitable purposes. This article will only consider the last two charitable options.

As an Incorporated Society with charitable status or as a Charitable Trust:

- *Your group is able to apply for grants and loans
- *Your group is exempt from paying any banking fees or taxes on profits
- *Donations over \$5 to your group by an individual or a company are tax deductible for that individual or that company
- *Gifts to your group are exempt from gift duties
- *Land gifted to your group is exempt from conveyancing duties
- *Your members will not be personally liable for the debts of the Society or Trust
- *You cannot pursue private profit for your members, but you can employ them and pay expenses related to work done for the group
- *You can enter into contracts with Government bodies
- *You do not have to file a tax return

Some of the differences are:

Size:

- IS--minimum of 15 members
- CT--minimum of 2 trustees

Members:

- IS--made up of members
- CT--trustees run the trust for the benefit of others

Decision Making:

- IS--done by members at General Meetings and by committees
- CT--done by the trustees

Accountability:

- IS--officers elected by members and committees are accountable to members
- CT--Trustees are not accountable in a specific way

Dept. of Justice Requirements:

IS--must keep good records and send annual accounts to Dept of Justice

CT--must act within the law covering trusts but there are not any particular reporting requirements

Winding up:

IS--surplus assets may be divided amongst members

CT--surplus assets must be distributed to other charitable organisations or as directed by a court order

As a charitable organisation, either IS or CT, your aims must fall into one or more of these categories:

- *the relief of poverty
- *the advancement of education
- *the advancement of religion
- *other purposes of benefit to the community

Fuller information is available from the Dept. of Internal Affairs or through a local LINK office or Community Development Officer.

A lawyer is not necessarily required for you to set up an IS or a CT. Their fees will probably vary according to how much of the setting up work you do yourselves.

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Both Telecom and Clear operate a "Friends of the School" scheme wherein any private phone subscriber can nominate any school (or home schooling support group that has an incorporated legal structure) to be the beneficiary. Each time that subscriber makes a toll call, 5% of the cost is automatically credited to the nominated beneficiary. The subscriber does not have to have any contact with the beneficiary whatsoever and can reside at the opposite end of the country. School kids in uniforms stand in shopping malls asking strangers to nominate their school as a beneficiary. Only about 25% of subscribers have been signed up so far, so there is a huge potential just sitting out there waiting to be tapped. You will need a form for potential benefactors which shows the details of the group benefitting and has a place for the benefactor's name, address, phone number and signature. That is the sum total of the benefactor's involvement! It costs him nothing at all. It costs you the time to sign him up and give the details to the phone company and nothing more. Contact:

Colin Little
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For any of the above contact: Linda Ingles, ph. (09) 411-8804,
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Video Tapes of Christian Home Schoolers' Conference, 2-4 February 1996, Palmerston North.

Tape One: (A) Real Qualifications for Real Achievement by Michael Drake.
(B) Assessments, R.P.L., Getting Into Tertiary by Craig Smith.

Tape Two: (A) Getting Started: What Do I Do? by Craig Smith
(B) Dad's Role in the Home and the Home School by Rev Graham Capill.

Tape Three: Why Christian Home Schooling? by Craig Smith.

Tape Four: (A) Chemistry & Physics Experiments by Graeme Stewart.

(B) The Importance
of Creation Science
to Your Home
School Curriculum
by Renton
Maclachlan.

(C) Guidelines in
Choosing Your
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XL	Black	___	X	\$23.00	=	
8	White	___	X	\$19.00	=	
10	White	___	X	\$19.00	=	
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Over a Cuppa



Politics

I have been close to the coalition talks between the Christian Heritage Party and the Christian Democrats, and I can say that things are looking very promising. The *Dominion* of 13 March said, "National would not support anti-abortion policies as the price of a coalition deal with Christian parties after the election." Well, the dirty dogs. Let's pray that whichever party ends up with the most seats finds themselves in desperate need of the Christian parties to hang onto power, and that anti-abortion policies will be the price!

Both the *Dominion* and the *Manawatu Standard* of 14 February mentioned how Commissioner for children Laurie O'Reilly has jumped on the "anecdotal evidence" bandwagon regarding reviews of home schools, saying "SOME children's educational needs MAY not be met." This is hardly a moral imperative!

She shouldn't have said it, but she DID! Retiring Governor-General Dame Cath Tizard was quoted in the *Dominion* of 16 January "that she believed New Zealanders could apparently no longer rely on the state school for an excellent education."

It is taking a while, but people in high places are starting to notice what we've seen for years!

Since the end of February there have been three truancy officers in Masterton stopping any child on the streets, with or without parents, between 8:30am & 3:30pm Monday to Friday. Our country's compulsory school attendance laws AUTOMATICALLY cause children to be suspect for simply walking down the street during the day. I reckon we need to change Section 20 of the Education Act.

Marxism/Communism/Socialism offer something which Christianity cannot provide: freedom from responsibility.

ACE Materials

Accelerated Christian Education Paces and keys are now available on the open market at A\$6 each. Order from ACE Australia Ltd, PO Box 5470, Brendale M.D.C. Qld 4500, Australia, ph.

(Continued from page 1)

1) The Role of Men Has Been Changing Over the Past Two Decades. There are several factors that have brought that about.

i) The feminists have certainly played a part in bringing about those changes. They have done their best to undermine anything that resembles male dominance. And of course, Dad's role as head of the home certainly falls into that category. They have portrayed husbands and fathers as dictatorial, dominant, having a gender advantage over women, having a financial advantage over women; while men have relegated the role of women to that of being barefoot, pregnant, and in the kitchen! And I have to say, that there has been some justification for those generalisations. But what has happened is that feminism has institutionalised this change in role for men. It is now a question of political correctness. No doubt, many of the things I will say tonight should not be heard on the lips of a politician! But I have to say, that to be a woman is fast becoming an advantage in getting highly paid jobs. TV programmes are now full of role reversals and specialise in challenging traditional roles...all in an attempt to entrench these changes to men and women's roles! So, feminism has, I believe, played a part in changing Dad's role.

ii) I would also say that there has been a tendency for men to relinquish responsibility for their children as belonging to the domain of their wives. Of course, men excuse this. They will tell you that as the head of the family it is their prerogative to delegate responsibility as they see fit, but what has really happened is that many men just don't want to know what's happening in their families. They're not informed as to what the children spend their time on, they don't know what they're reading, they don't know what they're watching, or what activities they're engaged in. Too often men have a standard reply, "Oh, ask Mum dear....she knows what's happening."

The law has changed to reflect this sad abrogation of responsibilities. Under the common law, men used to be held responsible for their children, but in the late 19th century, when it was clear that many men were neglecting their duties to their children, the law was changed to hold the wives as responsible. These days that evidences itself on almost every form one has to fill in for government departments, they usually ask for the "care givers" name, and pay all

money into that person's account! So that too has had an influence on these changing roles.

There is one other thing that I think I am duty bound to identify as a cause of changing Dad's role, and that is:

iii) Too many men, in my opinion, are spineless, gutless, wimps who are simply passing themselves off as men! I'm not speaking about men needing to fulfil the macho image that many people think of as necessary to be a "man". In fact, later on I want to say that that is totally the wrong picture of Dad! But what I am trying to convey to you is that fact that too many men don't know what they believe, don't think about any issue particularly deeply, they certainly can't lead, and are often double minded! When I look at some Dads I'm not surprised that the feminist movement has progressed so well! Instead of leading, they are constantly led, instead of showing initiative, they are content to play with their latest toy, it is as if they are quite happy to exist in some sort of dream world! Well, to be quite honest, I think that that too has brought about a change in the role of husbands and fathers. And surely, these things demand our attention. But I said there were two reasons why this topic is so important.

2) Because of the Impact of Single Parent Families.

De facto relationships and divorces have sky rocketed in the last decade or so. When it came to marriage, the social engineers of the day started to question the need for such an institution. They introduced the concept of de facto relationships -- and they promoted these relationships as "trial marriages", and said it would reduce the number of divorces because you could "try before you buy". The only problem is, it didn't work! In five years, 1986-1991, de facto relationships increased 40.7%. But that hasn't meant less divorce. In 10 years, 1981-1991, de facto relationships doubled. In 1981, one in 10 marriages broke up in the first 10 years of marriage. In 1991, one in six marriages broke up in the first 10 years of marriage. Today we have 161,856 people living in a de facto relationship -- over a quarter of our homes are now single parent homes! We have an average of 176 divorces a week!

I want to put it to you, that you can't have that level of instability in homes without it having an impact on the roles of mothers and fathers! As

marriage break up has become so common, the idea has evolved that one partner can manage just as well as two. I want to say, there are many single parent families "out there" who are doing a tremendous job -- they cope amazingly well, they really do all they can for their children, and in many ways have provided very good homes for their children. I don't want to denigrate them in any way. But we have to be objective about the current situation. Studies have made it very clear that children in single parent homes, generally do not do as well as those from two parent homes. The statistics show that these children obtain fewer years of education, are more likely to drop out of high school, are more likely to have lower educational attainments, become part of lower socio-economic classes, marry earlier, and are more likely to have children out of wedlock. They are also more likely to commit delinquent acts and engage in drug and alcohol use!

And so, I want to put it to you, there is an urgent need to understand afresh the roles of Mum and Dad, recognise that God has intended families to have both a Mum and a Dad, and learn just what He expects from each, as they complement each other in the task of raising their children!

So for these two reasons -- the changing role for Dads brought about by feminism, relinquishing their own responsibilities, and being rather spineless; and the challenge brought about by having so many single parent homes these days -- makes this a very topical and very important issue!

So where do we start in trying to grasp what the role of a Dad is to be in the home? Well, we need to start by defining the topic. The topic, as I understand it, isn't just about fathering, it is about how this male fits into home life as a whole. It is about his relationship with God, his wife, and his children -- because Dad lives in a context of these relationships, does he not? I want to put it to you, that no passage of Scripture better addresses the overall relationship between these people than does Ephesians 5:22-6:4. I think we should read that passage together. It is not my intention to preach a sermon on this passage or to go through this in exhaustive detail. What I do want to highlight for you is the specific classification of Dad's role in the home -- Paul describes the husband and father as the "head" of the home! In doing that, he immediately brings into play the imagery of the human

ACTION STATION



- 1) Read through the advertising straight away as some of the really good deals offered are only good until the end of March. So hurry to select and make your orders.
- 2) Video tapes of the Christian Home Schoolers Conference in Palmerston North just last month are now available. See page 27 for details.
- 3) Read the material about the Home Schooling Annual Reports and Desk File, pages 15-16. Do some serious thinking and discussion with others over the issues, and please share your conclusions with Keystone readers. I think most home schoolers would like to make a united response to the MOE. If we can come up with something good, let us consider presenting to them our own alternative proposals to help them to be "satisfied".
- 4) Read the article on becoming a legal entity, discuss it with your support group, order the more extensive information pack from the Department of Internal Affairs, and see about incorporating.
- 5) Consider having a look at Andrew Davies newsletter. See Editorial page 3 and write to Andrew at R.D. 1, Te Kuiti.
- 6) The Science Award Trust on page 17 looks like a really good deal. Get your support group to order an information pack.

body, does he not? The "head" doesn't do all things that the body is involved in, some things are left to the arms, legs, lungs, heart and so on. In fact, the head can't function without some of the other organs, the head needs blood, and for the blood to be revitalised with oxygen, it needs lungs, and for blood to circulate, there needs to be a beating heart and so on. But the "head" does control and direct the many voluntary functions of the body, does it not? The spinal cord acts as the main trunk route for carrying messages to and from the brain - the brain provides the initiative for the hands to move or the legs to walk. The head contains the mouth piece, and houses the eyes and ears, it is the source of thought and properties such as knowledge, wisdom and creativity.

And so Paul defines the role of the husband and father as being the "head" of the home, not that he is to do everything or can do everything. He

can't function, in fact, without the other members. But he is to be the eyes that watch over the body, the ears that listen to the other members and to what's going on around the body, and he is to play a central part in communicating within and outside of the body.

Now we need to be quite clear on the nature of headship. It is not the ability to be dominant, nor is it the ability to "rule". It has no connotation of "power" or "strength"...that is simply not even implied in the imagery of being the head, is it? Yet many people tend to think it is. The moment you mention that Dad is the HEAD of the home, people think of him as being the boss! In fact, Paul goes out of his way to dispel that possibility by referring to another image, that marriage between the husband and wife is to reflect the relationship of Christ to the Church. And again, I don't want to give a detailed explanation of that image and I will come back to this later, but what is the essence of that relationship? Is it not love? Concern? Is not Christ being vitally interested in His churches' welfare?

In fact, as soon as you start to consider the relationship of Christ to the church, one can't but help to think of the pictures of that relationship found in the Bible. Think of Hosea, of what unflinching tenderness he lavished upon Gomer his wife. Even though she went after other lovers and was an adulterer, he went and bought her back, and restored her to her former position of honour. That, my dear friends, is the concept of "headship" Paul has in mind as he considers the role of Dad in the home!

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