

Keystone

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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. — Psalm 112:1-2



Featured Family

Craig & Barbara Smith
Zachariah (16), Genevieve (18), Mitchell (6),
Jedediah (11 mo.), Alanson (14), Charmagne (11).

KEYSTONE

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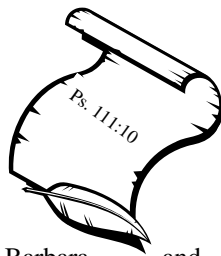
KEYSTONE is intended to inform, challenge, encourage and inspire. The trustees of CHomeS believe that the Christian faith is being undervalued. Christianity alone is fully able to present a world view that is comprehensive, coherent, consistent and complete.

Committed to scholarship, the free exchange of ideas and the need to stimulate reasonable debate

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Editorial



Greetings and praise God from Whom all blessings flow! He has moved His people to enable Barbara and I to give ourselves full-time to the service of home educators. Our efforts will be conducted under the umbrella of the newly formed Home Education Foundation, whose Trustees and Board of Reference are listed on page two. Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand, Inc. (CHomeS), TEACH Publications and HefNet (Home Education Foundation Network) now represent three separate streams of activity flowing from the Home Education Foundation.

Home educators have the opportunity to support the Home Education Foundation and the projects it takes on by subscribing to *Keystone* and/or *TEACH Bulletin*; by investing in a TimeChart (described on back cover); and by making tax-deductible donations, either as one-off or occasional gifts or on a systematic basis. (Donation cards and AP forms are enclosed for this purpose.) The Foundation can also be supported through Telecom and Clear who will both give 5% of your toll bill to the support of home education, without costing you an extra cent. Telecom subscribers can ring 0800 724 665 and ask to support the Home Education Foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Telecom's School Connection Programme. Clear subscribers can ring 0508 888 800 and ask to support the Home Education foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Clear's Friends of the School Programme. Thanks for your support!

The Trustees and Board of Reference will be arranging the activities and projects of the Home Education Foundation into priorities over the next few weeks. Contributors to the Home Education Foundation are invited to comment on items that should be included.

TEACH Forums were held in 1996, 1997 and 1998. These informal get-togethers are a meeting of equals: no person or organisation is "running" them; TEACH Publications is merely acting as facilitator. These forums provide an opportunity to meet with home education leaders from around the country and discuss issues of common concern. Incorporating support groups, publishing newsletters, setting up resource libraries, making submissions, and comparing curricula are a sample of the topics discussed in the past. There are no electives and generally no key-note speakers or children's programme. Past forums have included meetings with an MP and officers from the MOE and ERO. The TEACH Forum for 1999 will be held at Silverstream Park, Upper Hutt on February 26-27. Watch the January 1999 *TEACH Bulletin* for further details and registration forms, or contact *TEACH Bulletin*, 4 Tawa St., Palmerston North.

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The Home Education Foundation Presents:

KEYSTONE

TEACH Bulletin

HefNet

KEYSTONE is the Journal of Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand, Inc., (CHomeS) a charitable trust established to promote the concept of home education. First published in November 1989, **KEYSTONE** is intended to inform, challenge, encourage and inspire by providing a number of regular columns such as Letters to the Editor, Home Educators Did It, Home Education Research, Tough Questions People Ask, Learning Disabilities, Bits of Books, Over a Cuppa and several others. **KEYSTONE** will feature a different New Zealand Christian Home Educating family each issue. The A4 sized, 28-page Journal is published six times a year for an annual subscription of \$28 or two years for \$53.

TEACH Bulletin is a monthly newsletter of TEACH Publications (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home). Articles deal with political developments which may affect home educators, statist and professional trends, correspondence with politicians and educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Published since January 1997, **TEACH Bulletin** has been used to sound legislative alerts, rallying home educators to write submissions to their MPs and Parliamentary Select Committees when legislation unfavourable to home educators was introduced into Parliament. The four to six page newsletter comes out 11 times a year (none in December) for an annual subscription of \$16 or two years for \$30.

HefNet is the Home Education Foundation's email list discussion group. Established in July 1998, this group has expanded quickly and includes home educators with a wonderfully diverse range of political, religious, philosophical, and methodological views. This mix makes for some red-hot yet edifying debates! Subscription is free by emailing the message "subscribe" to hefnet@xtra.co.nz.

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Feature Family



Craig & Barbara Smith

We met in Christchurch where we were being trained in Christian discipleship by the Navigators, got married in 1979 and have lived in Palmerston North ever since.

Barbara grew up on a 3,500 acre high country sheep station in the Hakataramea Valley, 10 miles down a gravel road from Kurow which is 60 miles inland from Oamaru. Highlights of her early days include hand-milking the cows; being isolated for weeks at a time when the river would wash out the road, phone and power, leaving them to cook on an open fire; and jumping from a helicopter into freak snow drifts on the back blocks to look for buried sheep. In Palmerston North she became the Rawleigh products dealer which brought her into contact with many people.

I arrived in NZ on the 1st of January 1973 as a 21-year-old from the vineyards near Fresno, California. After 9 years with NAC and Air New Zealand I joined Barbara in the Rawleigh business. The Lord's blessing on that business was such that it allowed us to devote our entire mornings to the children. Because of this, I did most of the formal academic training with the children while Barbara looked after our babies and our many foster children, so we did not fit the typical pattern of dad away all day and mum managing EVERYTHING at home.

The Scriptures had convinced us of the need for Christian education, and since there was no Christian school in the area, we joined with others to get one going. But when Cornerstone Christian School opened its doors for business, we had experienced so many benefits from teaching at home, we never did send them to the school! The flexibility, tailoring subjects to the children's interests and learning styles, a closer family unit, learning afresh ourselves, the freedom from the school-culture peer pressure — though mixed with weird looks and persecutions from friends, neighbours and relatives — were all too good to give up. In fact, we felt compelled to share the good news with others.

In early 1987 we held the first Christian Home Schoolers of NZ National Conference. It was amazing! People came from Invercargill, Hokitika, Tokomaru Bay (East Cape) and Opononi in the far north as well as points in between, many of them thinking they were the only ones in NZ home schooling. What a thrill it was to meet so many like-minded people! An informal national network was established which has continued to operate to this day.

None of our children have ever been to school, although Genevieve and Alanson have coached and played for state school T-ball teams. Genevieve was on the Manawatu Rep softball team several years running and Alanson is currently 2nd baseman for the under 15

Reps. We made the classic error of changing our home into a school, and wondered why the children's attention span was only 10-15 minutes in the "classroom" but would expand to an hour and a half when being told stories while cuddled on the couch or when doing something WITH us that we like doing ourselves. Out went the workbooks, and in came an eclectic system of delight-directed learning...directed by what delighted one of us parents, usually Craig, and could involve two weeks solid of doing nothing but nuclear physics with all three of the older children together, ignoring the different "grade" levels they were supposed to be in.

Having six children has provided them with a good environment for being socialised across an age range, and has allowed the four oldest to become personally and intimately familiar with the messy, inconvenient and non-stop requirements of child rearing. A statement by Raymond and Dorothy Moore guided the balance of our curriculum: a challenging academic programme; doing lots of hard, practical work with their hands; and performing service for others.

The children always helped with the business. Barbara got them to count the items of stock out of the box when they arrived, to check them against the invoice, to arranged them orderly and attractively on the shelf. At shows such as the local A & P, they had the opportunity to wait on customers, add the total, give correct change, package and thank them with a smile...and keep a percentage of their personal sales. Genevieve could add the figures in her head and get the correct change out before the customer had finished fumbling with the crumpled up \$20 note.

After 13 years, big changes in the market place meant that the Rawleigh business could no longer support us. We took up market research for three years, as it too can be done from home. All this time the local support group Barbara founded and co-ordinated for 12 years was growing and becoming more sophisticated, demanding more of her time and expertise. The work and the projects that were crying out to be done for home educators on the national scene demanded more and more of my time. We began to realise we had accumulated quite a store of knowledge and experience over the years in running national conferences; publishing periodicals and booklets; marketing resources; giving advice and counsel on all topics to groups and individuals, by phone, public speaking, correspondence, lectures, essays and personal visits; and in lobbying officials at all levels.

But still, at age 45 I realised that in the world's eyes I had no qualifications and no career prospects...it dawned on me that I had unconsciously given those up when I determined, at age 31, to teach the children myself every morning. A friend shared how the Government actually pays old buzzards like me to re-tool at virtually any tertiary institution, so I took on full-time studies at Massey. Barbara took on the full responsibility of tutoring all the children. The work load on top of Rawleighs, market research and CHomeS was more stimulating for both of us but very

heavy. At the end of two years, we were on the verge of total burn-out. When we shared our situation with *Keystone* and *TEACH* subscribers in September 1998, praise God, the responses indicated His people wanted us to carry on serving the home education community in a full-time capacity. What a humbling experience. But we are so excited about being totally focused on home education.

As the older children approached the high school years, we felt they needed more discipline and greater challenges. That was very ably provided through the Carey College Correspondence Programme out of Auckland. The work was difficult, there was a lot of it, the standards were very high, and they graded really hard as well. Our first year was a disaster! But through it Genevieve and Zach learned to motivate and set targets for themselves. Today they are not concerned by huge tasks, for they know how to break them down into manageable bits and complete them on time and at the required standard.

We also found ABeka great for literature and history, Bob Jones for science, Saxon for maths and Scope for grammar and composition. Frequent trips to the library are a must for general knowledge. It has been good in these latter years being able to leave Genevieve and Zach to organise their own studies, but they were able to do that because they had had our undivided attention all during those early years. Alanson and Charmagne not only need the one-to-one tutoring to keep them on track and motivated, it would be a crime to miss out on the once-in-a-lifetime golden opportunity to daily personally build into them those character traits, habits, attitudes, values, wisdom and knowledge we want them to have. We went through a period where we just about lost it, becoming so tied up with organising and doing things for others, but by God's grace and the generosity of His people, we are back on track...I'm loving the two hours I now give to Alanson each morning.

It seems to us now that until 12 or so there are basic skills which must be MASTERED: reading and listening comprehension; penmanship, spelling, grammar, composition and oral communication; and arithmetic. These seem to require intense one-to-one time, not necessarily in a formal way, but they all require disciplines and high degrees of exactness which simply do not happen by themselves. History, art, music, geography, literature, science and more can be lumped into general knowledge and imparted to a range of ages at once through story reading, games, projects, etc., etc. Barbara is currently reading biographies of the great composers to Charmagne (11) and Mitchell (6) while they do the dishes each morning. All three are learning a lot and enjoying the time.

Mitchell joined us when he was five months old, was adopted into our family, and five years later his full sibling, Patrick Jedediah James Strong Smith, came on board. These two may well get quite a different form of education, as we are looking into Classical Christian Education, utilising the Trivium of Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric. We are really excited by what we have read about this approach thus far, and Barbara has

begun her and the children's first lessons in Latin! This is another thing that makes home education so wonderful...we parents are learning and developing as well!

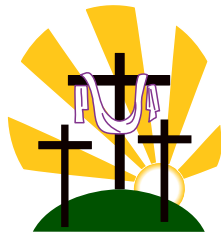
Genevieve, Zach and Alanson are all members of the Air Training Corps, the first two being senior officers. They prepare and deliver lectures in classrooms, at camps and even on tramps in the snow-covered bush. You should see them bark orders to junior cadets on the parade grounds or take one aside for some individual tutoring, encouragement or a dressing down, as the situation requires. They are regularly co-opted for various civic and military projects such as Guards of Honour at ANZAC Day parades by Ohakea Air Force Base and Linton Army Camp. Zach is pursuing a career with the RNZAF.

The children sometimes have more Biblically oriented minds than we do, not being trained in humanistic thought in public school as we were. Genevieve brings us books on Biblical courtship and chaperonage and suggests we had better read them. She was always keen on politics and law. When she was nine years old, she wrote a scathing letter to Finance Minister David Caygill, who was proposing to tax the interest on bank account deposits, advising him to "calm your greedy fingers down a little". Opposition Finance Spokesperson Ruth Richardson was so excited by her copy of the letter that she got Genevieve down to Parliament for the day and onto that evening's national news! At age 13 she began to ask our lawyer for study tips for a career in law. When he began an independent law practice, he immediately thought of Genevieve, and she has been full-time law clerk for him ever since, doing a Legal Executive course at nights.

Charmagne is into Highland Dancing which provides a good measure of training, fitness and discipline... and old-fashioned competition for medals and ribbons.

At a recent lecture Genevieve and I delivered at the local College of Education, the temperature and ferociousness of the students' comments and questions increased as we dwelt on the non-conformist benefits of home education socialisation...that parents would have the major input into their children's development of values, attitudes, etc. Those students thought THEY and the kids in their classrooms had a socialisation programme better than any family. The state system is anti-family to the core. Home education is definitely on the right track.

Fully Equipped



The Influence of Fathers

by Raymond Moore

I'd like to pass on some encouragement to fathers. I could give no better counsel than Paul's letter to his young friend Titus (Titus 2). He suggested that Titus first teach the older men how to behave, those like me who have a greater accountability than men who haven't been over the road so long. But for the same reasons, he included counsel on the responsibilities of the younger men. After all, how old does one need to be before he learns the principles laid out for men, and especially fathers as priests of their household and example to their families? I'd like to scan the last few centuries to help us understand that our influence is much greater than we think.

Rothschild

These were Barons Lionel Nathan and Meyer Amschel de Rothschild, along with Meyer's son, Nathan Meyer. Here, according to a story recently sent to me by my good, Cal-Berkeley friend, Tertius Chandler, is one of

the noblest examples of family closeness the world has known -- in which the father fostered fine character as well as social heroism. Although born in Germany, Lionel Nathan was the first Jewish member of the British Parliament.

They became their century's most distinguished bankers, perhaps the world's greatest professional financiers of all times. Yet rich as they were, their fame centered on their thoughtfulness and generosity to a fault. They provided gifts and loans to save nations like Austria, Brazil and France from bankruptcy, and greatly helped in developing unstable Spanish-American countries in everything from draining marshes to financing defense in wars. Although often disparaged for their wealth, their power was generated by their compassion. They became more powerful than statesmen and kings.

Even Bethmann, a rival banker, had gracious words for them. He insisted that the real secret to their success was their family harmony. None of the brothers "ever thinks of finding fault with another." They "won people's affections here, partly through...general modesty and partly through...willingness to oblige. Nobody leaves (them) without feeling comforted."

Mr Chandler tells the why of this as he sees it: "Having no schooling, these brothers grew up knowing each other. They had the warmth and adaptability that grow naturally in a close-knit home. Having no college, they were on the job early -- before they were 20 -- with its stabilizing responsibilities. Moreover, having no formal education whatever, they were wholly free of pedantic snobbery..."

Here is the essence of great family education, the principal reason so many of our home schooled students today become outstanding skilled workers, business people, and professionals, and are so often accepted on high scholarships into leading universities.

Ansel Adams

Another home-taught man, a photographer peerless in his field, Mr Adams wrote in his autobiography, "I often wonder at the strength and courage my father had in taking me out of the traditional school situation and providing me with...extraordinary learning experiences. I am certain he established the positive direction of my life that other wise, given my native hyperactivity, could have been confused and catastrophic. I trace who I am and the direction of my development to those years of growing up in our house...propelled especially by an internal spark tenderly kept alive and glowing by my father."

Andrew Wyatt

Also educated at home, Mr Wyatt decided to spend time with his children instead of surrendering them to their peers. One of

America's best-loved artists, he instilled in his son the same self-discipline he cultivated in himself, so that today Jamie has stepped into his father's shoes as a dearly-loved painter of American life -- warm, responsive, thoughtful of others around him like the de Rothschild boys of nearly two centuries ago.

Three Top Executives

More recently *The Wall Street Journal* published an article about three high-ranking executives who left their jobs in order to spend more time with their families. Though not into home education, these men, as thinking adults, obviously recognized the results of too little father attention on their children.

Jeffrey Stiefler, father of four, resigned as president of American Express and has now cut back his absence from home to only 60% as much. William Galston resigned as a domestic-policy adviser to President Clinton to renew his relationship with his 10-year-old son, and Glenn McLeod, a senior manager for the Bank of Montreal, cut back to a four-day work week to spend time with his sons. He has found that he has not only been able to build strong relationships with his boys, but has gained new self-confidence as a father, increased his ability to interact with people, become more curious, purposeful and disciplined in time use, and is having a lot more fun.

No wonder that Paul was so clear in his counsel on the behaviour of men as examples: he insisted that they "be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." "Temperate" in the Greek means prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled. The original of "sober", the Greek *nephalios*, suggests "without wine, prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled." "Grave" has a Greek meaning akin to "worthy of respect or honour, noble, dignified, serious." When I read this, I say, "Heavenly Father, please help me!"

In a day when many dads don't even eat with their children, and when they do come home, they are prisoners of TV or the sports page, this is really scary. But faith-filled, loving, patient dads do have reason to hope: They have access to a Father Who will make it possible...if they surrender their fatherhood moment by moment to Him. And that would please His Son, too, in the prospect that they will dine as a family throughout eternity.

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Learning Disabilities



Mainstreaming at Home

by Deborah M.K. Mills

Opportunities for mainstreaming is one of the *advantages* of home educating the special needs child.

The benefits of age-integrated interaction with non-handicapped peers across different learning environments allows our child exposure to "normal" role models and age-appropriate standards of behaviour. Even the government schools see these advantages, and are slowly disassembling the segregated, special education classroom in favour of mainstreaming the students.

As home educating parents, we are in a unique position to see that our child is exposed to Godly role models. We should have control over who our child associates with and in what situations. Many children with disabilities have difficulty learning the social graces, and cannot make a friend on their own. It is our responsibility to make arrangements for our challenged child to have social opportunities that normally would occur spontaneously and without intervention among "regular" children.

Successful interaction has usually been the result of parent involvement on both parts. As a parent of a disabled child, I have the responsibility to educate and inform others. Once I have done that, the response has usually been one of Christian kindness and acceptance of my son. Most people are ignorant of our child's special needs, and as a result are afraid. Parents need to reassure others that our child is more like everyone else than they are not.

Since parental involvement is the key to success, when it comes to mainstreaming on home school park days you need to take advantage of your opportunities. Usually my son sits on the side line of activities and watches the other children play. I know that he would really like to be included in the games. He actually can play most of the games if he had a "buddy" to help him do it in an adaptive way and if the other children pulled back on their competitive edge to allow him to participate. The times he has been included is when I asked the adult in charge if he could play. On those occasions everyone still had a good time as the children on the team followed the example of the adult in charge who graciously took the time to make some minor adaptations to the game rules. This allowed my son to kick, hit or throw a ball without understanding the game. Sometimes they would help him play baseball by standing behind him and helping him hold the bat, hand over hand, hit the ball and then run with him to first base! Scenes like this warm the cockles of a mother's heart, yet it probably wouldn't happen without

and how he feels about it. This time gives you invaluable opportunity to reinforce teaching and vision.

Family devotions, church attendance, and regular prayer for your children still need to figure into your plans and activities. Many fathers have a difficult time determining what they should do in family devotions. Once you have established specific spiritual goals, family devotions become a lot easier to plan. You can use family worship time to emphasize the specific spiritual goal you are working on at the time.

Having spiritual goals and plans is not an absolute guarantee of success. But if you have no goal, you will hit it every time.

The steps of action required of a spiritual leader are not that different from the kind of leadership men are required to demonstrate on the job. We fathers need to exercise at least as much diligence in our spiritual goal-setting, planning and review as we do on our jobs. After all, the stakes are a lot higher.

God is the ultimate foundation of all our endeavours. However, from the perspective of human responsibility, your spiritual leadership is the foundation upon which your home schooling program will be built. You want your children to succeed, so give them a foundation for spiritual success. Be a real spiritual leader.

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In Line with Scripture



**What shall we conclude then?
Are we any better? Not at all!
We have already made the charge that Jews and
Gentiles alike are all under sin. — Romans 3.9**

by Chris Kavanagh & Craig Smith

In the first two chapters of Romans, the Apostle Paul very clearly demonstrates how the whole of mankind is under the influence of sin. The Gentile world, he says, has been reduced to worshipping the creature rather than the Creator by idol worship. Not only this, but that residual knowledge of the true God, built into every human being by God, has actually been suppressed by man in his native state. This knowledge is never enough to save a man or woman, because salvation is found in no one else, and there is no other name in the world given among men than the name of Jesus by which we must be saved (Acts 4.12).

But what about the people of God? Are they still sinful by nature? Paul argues that they are, in Romans 2. It is not enough just to have the law of God he argues, you have to keep it as well, and in that the people of God also fall short. This is our own experience too - the good we want to do, we are not able to do.

It is not difficult to believe the Scriptures when they tell us of the inherent sinfulness of man, because it is something we can see all around us. Yet challenges to this teaching have been made and still continue. One says that human nature is basically good, and that it is just a matter of a decent upbringing, proper education and a good start in life to make people into honest and upright citizens. This idea is very popular, and has been in some shape or form a dominant idea in Western culture for about 200 years. Two world wars, decades of genocide and dispersion of whole peoples has done little to shake the faith in the goodness of human nature.

Another is the false doctrine of perfectionism. This tells people that Christians can become perfect in this life, or if that is too hard to swallow, then at least very good. Good enough, in fact, to be unaware of having sinned for long lengths of time. Now it is undoubtedly true that Christians can and should grow in holiness, but even the regenerate, converted people of God retain enough of the old nature in this life to give the lie to the doctrine of perfection. Only the grace of God is strong enough to overcome human sinfulness.

When we are asked for the umpteenth time about how our children are socialised, do we snap or return with a really sarcastic reply? Do we not remember that we too are ignorant of other facets of life and that our ignorance is a source of frustration to others? When relations criticize your home education efforts for being (what they perceive to be) disorganised and disjointed, do we get angry and defensive, or go smug on them and look down our noses? This is sin.

Some of us will remember quite well how daft we used to think home education was. But we recognise now our faulty attitude was due to ignorance and misconceptions and not having had anyone explain and demonstrate both the practical and Scriptural commendations. Let each of us be the one to gently and lovingly lift the veil from the minds of those around us who still view home education as some fringe movement.

Do we let our children's childishness get us angry and frustrated? What do we expect from them? Is it more than they are physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually able to cope with? They are little sinners with a whole bundle of foolishness bound up in their hearts which must be removed (Proverbs 22:15). Modelling sinful behaviour (impatience, yelling, name-calling) back at them is not going to help.

Sure we have to tend to the toddler and the washing and the lunch preparation, so why can't those kids just do their assignments like we told them? Well, maybe our homes can get as distracting and as noisy as a classroom making it next to impossible for them to concentrate. Maybe we, at times, lose sight of the most valuable opportunity that home education affords: to spend vast amounts of time interacting with our children, rather than expecting them to spend vast amounts of time interacting with work books and bits of paper.

While they are doing assignments, what are we doing?

Puzzles

Which word most nearly means the *opposite* of the one in brackets?

- (white) black gloomy dirty coloured inky
- (gigantic) normal small minute little big
- (love) reject hate despise loathe detest
- (happy) bored serious lachrymose sad pensive
- (wrong) just fair equal right equitable
- (guilt) ignorance innocence virtue morality incorruption
- (agree) dispute argue contradict differ debate
- (cowardice) rashness imprudence courage caution boldness
- (proud) unimportant obscure humble servile bashful
- (head) bottom pedestal toe body foot

Which word has less in common with the others?

- bud leaf flower stem root
- warp weft weave wool silk
- beaker pottery cup glass mug
- marble granite stone sandstone pumice
- aeroplane wheel rope idea house
- imagine write dream think meditate
- Venus Mars Sirius Uranus Saturn
- sherry riesling brandy vodka burgundy
- sigh sniff cough gasp talk
- cloud lake sky snow stream

(Answers on page 22.)

Housework? Changing the baby's nappies? Gardening? Maybe it would be more profitable for our students (and our total educational programme) for them to be helping us do those things. Do they really NEED to be doing that bookwork? Then maybe we could do it WITH them, enriching the task and enhancing the learning with our own life's store of wisdom and experience. Maybe the washing and gardening can wait until later as part of P.E. or Home Economics or Horticulture? Maybe we can have a late lunch.

We no longer have a show home. It is part of the price we pay for our home education curriculum materials. One of the more expensive resources is not only costly, but is hard to find, and we use lots of it for our programme every day. It is called time. Time spent with our children means time NOT spent with the other (perishable) things that clutter up our lives. We are sinners when we value our things more than we value our children.

This is not to say we are not to value things.....the seventh Commandment assumes the propriety and necessity of personal private property. The Lord's parables commend good stewardship of physical property. But there is such a thing as getting our priorities out of order and then getting impatient and frustrated with the children (a top priority) when their requirements interfere with our attention to our property (a low priority).

Yes, we know we are frail, imperfect creatures. In fact, we do at times feel deserving of pity. We do receive, and desperately need, the Lord's pity (Psalm 103:13), for if He were to deal with us as our sins deserve, we would be lost (Psalm 130:3). Do we then extend such pity, or even as much as empathy and understanding, to the unbelievers with whom we have to deal? Are they not even MORE worthy of pity? If we are frail and imperfect, we who are indwelt by God's Holy Spirit, who have a knowledge of the Scriptures, who are upheld in prayer by other saints, how about those whose very lives are suspended above the fiery furnace by the thinnest of threads and every moment in danger of plunging forever into its abyss should the Lord remove for an instant His mercifully sustaining hand?

Well did our Lord bid us to pray for our enemies, for they need it more than we! When we feel put down by callous neighbours, slighted by disapproving relations or intimidated by Review Officers....it should remind us of our most privileged position in Christ, and stir us to send up fervent prayers for their salvation.

May He Who has called us from the dominion of darkness into His marvellous light guide us into conduct so becoming to the Gospel, that they may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven.

Tough Questions People Throw Your Way



Why Do You Insist on a "Christian" Education?

by Craig Smith

Ultimately there are only two approaches to education; or to medicine or social welfare or entertainment or politics or philosophy or whatever. One is Christ centred or Christian. The other is human centred or humanistic. This is part of God's creative order. There is a war going on. There are only two sides. And the war goes on until one side wins. We already know which side is going to win. And we are endeavouring to make ourselves, our families and our lifestyles clearly identifiable as being on Christ's winning side. The Lord Jesus Himself said, "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters." (Luke 11:23.) So why settle for something less than the best?

You Reap What You Sow

The Rev. Edmund Opiz said, "There is something wrong with our system of education because there is something wrong with our theory of education." Because the NZ state education system, founded by an Act of Parliament in 1877, was based on a faulty theory of education, it is by definition a faulty system of education and is now producing a faulty product. This is known as reaping what you sow. It does take time for what is sown to germinate and grow to maturity when its fruit will be clearly recognized. The problems within the NZ education scene today have their roots way back in that Education Act of over 120 years ago.

For example, Section 77 of the Act, referring to primary schools, says, "the teaching shall be entirely of a secular character." It has been said that originally the word "secular" meant "non-sectarian", the understanding being that the education would be Christian nonetheless. (I have been unable to find this definition in any dictionary from any time period, so would suggest this represents a coup for the unbelievers of the time.) But having endeavoured to sow this neutral sort of idea toward Christian doctrine into the Act, the term "secular" has grown and matured to mean something very different. "In the absence of any ruling by the courts," writes then Minister of Education David Lange on 23 February 1988, (and later confirmed by Minister of Education Lockwood Smith in a letter dated 15 April 1993) "the department has in practice taken the term (secular) to mean 'without any form of religious instruction or observance'." Religion can be mentioned or referred to but religious instruction or observance is out. That certainly does not describe a Christian

approach to education. It is an approach which sees Christianity as a separate and optional field of study. Maths, English, History and Science can all be totally understood and mastered without any element of Biblical Christian instruction or observance. In other words, the human mind can comprehend these things without God's help. This is the humanist approach.

The Humanist Approach

It is, in fact, exactly the same approach recommended to Eve by the serpent in the Garden of Eden. She was presented with a sort of neutral approach toward God's command regarding the fruit of the forbidden tree. She fell for it. Take what God said, sure, but don't limit yourself to that. The serpent gave some interesting alternative ideas about the fruit, and Eve even added some of her own. (First mistake.) Instead of remaining totally submissive to God's unerring, infallible Words on the subject, she placed those Holy Words alongside these new alternatives from both the serpent and herself. She treated them all the same. (Second mistake.) She judged their merits according to her own mind. (Third mistake.) And her own human mind made its own choice. (Fourth mistake.) This is the humanist approach. Note the process. Collect as many facts, opinions and ideas as you can, regard them as all having equal value, weigh them up and make your choice. Note also the consequences. Absolute disaster for the entire human race.

This is precisely the approach taken today in the state classroom, with one important difference. The child is still presented with a large amount of information and encouraged to make his own choice. But because of the secular clause in the Education Act, Christian concepts of absolutes, right and wrong, accountability to God, life after death are not included in the information presented. The original serpent himself didn't have it so easy. He would definitely approve.

The humanist teaches that maths is a human invention, whereas Christians know it is God's invention and man has discovered it. The difference is that as a human invention, it is tentative and can be changed and modified to suit. Absolutes are not necessary. Two plus two does not have to equal four when we modify the system. The problem humanists run up against, however, is that this "human invention" of maths matches all of nature so perfectly and is even consistently applicable in outer space and on other planets. If it is simply a human device, there is no logical explanation for this. Why, it is almost as if everything had a common origin and were tied together in some kind of harmonious unity. Morris Kline, a prolific modern writer about mathematics, says, "It behooves us...to learn why...mathematics has proved to be so incredibly effective...Mathematics is man-made... (Yet) some explanation of this marvelous power is called for." Richard Courant, formerly head of the mathematics department at what used to be the world's center for mathematics, the University of Gottingen, remarked, "That mathematics, an emanation of the human mind, should serve so effectively for the description and understanding of the physical world is a

challenging fact that has rightly attracted the concern of philosophers." Albert Einstein summarised the problem thus: "The eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility."

In English the humanist will by and large dispense with spelling and grammar as long as one is able to communicate. Accuracy is not a desirable goal, as it tends to reflect the idea of absolutes, an attribute of God which humanists would rather avoid. His method of dealing with absolutes is to shoot himself in the foot by making the absolute declaration, "There are no absolutes."

The humanist approach to history is to assume the meaninglessness of the whole line of events, viewing them as chance unrelated happenings. In fact, history has been dumped in favour of the "value-free" approach to human events known as "social studies". Because one society and its values are just as good as any other, we will have a look at the lot and get ideas of different life values which we may decide to adopt for our own lives.

The humanist approach does have a morality. It is like a smorgasbord. You pick and choose your own values and standards, you chop and change them according to your situation at the time. And so in sex education and AIDS education and Keeping Ourselves Save Programmes, children are given "all" the "facts" about contraceptives, discuss "safe sex", are told where to get free advice and supplies, how to obtain an abortion and where to find friendly, non-judgmental people to counsel you in this area, what constitutes a sexual approach, incest, exhibitionism, molestation and rape. "Facts" such as "incest, rape and sex outside of marriage are wrong" are not presented because they reflect Christian absolutes, and our education system is legally required to be "entirely of a secular character". They will say that certain things are "inappropriate", but that finally the child has to decide for himself. The humanist approach is to give the child all the "facts" (as they see the "facts") and then encourage the child to make his own "responsible" decisions. But Christians know that until the child has had developed and trained and disciplined into him a moral framework with which to judge the facts, he is unable to make responsible decisions, because he is unable to process all the facts according to any consistent or logical frame of reference. He can only arrange the facts as he would food from a smorgasbord, heaping on some that appeal and leaving others on the side. That's why so many young peoples' lives today resemble a dog's breakfast.

The Christian Approach

The Christian approach is described and contrasted to the humanist approach throughout Scripture. Proverbs 3:5 is a very succinct summary: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding." See also Isaiah 1:18-20, Psalm 1, Colossians 2:8, 3:1-3, I John 2:15- 17, Romans 8:1-11, 12:1-2, Galatians 5:16-26, Ephesians 4:17- 24, John 3:16-21. God's words and man's words are intrinsically different. One is the Creator speaking. The other is the thing created speaking. "For My thoughts are not your

thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.'" (Isaiah 55:8-9.)

Educationalists have warned us about trying to balance the two. Speaking of the U.S. Government's policy of taking a neutral rather than a Christian approach to education, A.A. Hodge wrote the following back in 1887: "It is obvious that the infinite evils resulting from the proposed perversion of the great education agency of the country cannot be corrected by the supplementary agencies of the Christian home, the Sabbath school or the church. This follows not only because the activities of the public schools are universal and that of all the other agencies are partial, but chiefly because the Sabbath school and the church cannot teach history or science, and therefore cannot rectify the anti-Christian history and science taught by the public schools. And if they could, a Christian history and a Christian science on the one hand cannot coalesce with and counteract an atheistic history and science on the other. Poison and its antidote together never constitute nutritious food. And it is simply madness to attempt the universal distribution of poison on the ground that other parties are endeavouring to furnish a partial distribution of an imperfect antidote."

Note how Mr Hodge assumed a neutral approach was of necessity an anti-Christian approach. This is so. There are, after all, only two approaches.

The Christian approach is very unfashionable. It is intolerant of that which is wrong. It is one-eyed, narrow minded, biased toward the Scriptures, simple concerning evil and wise in what is good. It is black and white. It is divisive since it recognises and looks for right vs. wrong, saved vs. lost, good vs. bad, moral vs. immoral.

Critics say the Christian is out of touch with reality and that Christian education shelters children from the real world. Well, not long ago I was reading some Creation Science literature and discovered that my old childhood friend the Brontosaurus is worse than just extinct...he never even existed in the first place. Brontosaurus is nothing more than the result of over-zealous paleontologists and museum exhibit staff slapping together bones before determining for sure that they all represented the same creature. But any educator who does not view the child from the Christian perspective is just like those over-zealous paleontologists in that they compose, and teach to, a philosophical definition of a child which doesn't exist.

They say that the child is an animal, a product of blind, chance, meaningless evolution and survival of the fittest. Although we may see a lot of this survival of the fittest philosophy in action on the state school playground, the Christian approach acknowledges that the child was created by God for a particular purpose.

The humanist believes the child is born neutral, a blank tape, or perhaps even basically good. All the evil is learned from society, especially from those who hold

intolerant, black and white, judgemental views and superstitions....code phrases meant to refer to Christians. Christians know that the child is not neutral but is a born sinner in need of discipline, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness since it does not come naturally.

So although it was a shock to discover that Brontosaurus is a type of dinosaur that never even existed, it is even more shocking to discover that so many NZ classroom teachers are tailoring their teaching methods, class objectives and subject content to a type of child that likewise doesn't even exist! The net result is surely to be that our children will graduate as a herd of functional Brontosauri, believing that they are "children" the like of which exist only in the theories of evolution-believing secular humanists. How can such children ever hope to cope in the real world when they are so sheltered from reality in the classroom? Exactly who is sheltering whom?

Conclusion

What is the difference between humanist and Christian education? "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God,'" (Psalm 14:1), while the humanist educator, as in Mr Lange's definition of "secular", effectively says it out loud! "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments" (Psalm 111:10). Yet with God legislated out of the state classroom, the students who sit in that classroom haven't got a chance to grow in true wisdom. What is the concerned parent to do? He cannot hope to debrief his children and undo the damage done after each day in the state school. He must now have his turn to make a responsible decision. Either shell out for a private Christian school, or really do his whole family a favour and teach them at home. Home education is growing rapidly in NZ, among Christians and non-Christians alike. As Christian parents begin to reap the fruits of humanist education in the lives of their own precious children, they realise that Cristian education doesn't cost....it pays!

At all costs, parents must demand the right for themselves to determine what kind of education their own children shall have. Otherwise, just as Professor J. Gresham Machen warned back in 1926, "If liberty is not maintained with regard to education, there is no use trying to maintain it in any other sphere. If you give the bureaucrats the children you might just as well give them eveything else." "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:21).

Letters



South Islanders Seek Pen Pals

Esther Ward

165 Duffs Rd.
R.D. 2, Rangiora

Age: 10

Interests: Puppets, reading, gymnastics, arts & crafts, animals, Dynamite Bay, Girls Brigade.

Sarah Midgley

15 Rinaldi Ave.

Pines Beach

Kaiapoi

Age: 7

Interests: Swimming, body surfing, roller-blading, biking, mini-hockey, artwork, experiments, ballet, playing with little sister.

Catholic Newsletter

The number of Catholic families in New Zealand who are choosing to educate their children at home is increasing. As support and encouragement for them a newsletter has recently been established. The content of this newsletter is specifically Catholic and in line with the teachings of the magisterium of the church. The newsletter is available on a donations only basis from:

Marietta
ph. (07) 849-9491

Americans Seek Pen Pals

We are a group of American Christian home schoolers who would like to develop Pen-Friends with other Christian home schoolers in other countries. If anyone in your group would be interested, please get in touch with us and we will be glad to get things set up for names and addresses to be exchanged. We think that this would be a wonderful way for our children and even moms to learn of other countries, situations and home school ways, not to mention the writing experiences they will achieve, along with sharing our love of the Lord!

We hope to hear from you soon!

Debra Stephens
W.H.E.A.T.
Woodforest Home
Educator's Association of
Texas
738 Academy Lane
Deer Park, Texas 77536
U.S.A.

Teaching Tips

by Tracey Cremer
Auckland



Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. — Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV)

I began homeschooling full of confidence in my ability to teach and in my love for my children. Images of my children sitting at my feet listening to me with rapt attention lasted about half an hour.

Unwilling to admit defeat this early in the picture, I accepted with great relief the government's offer to educate my children via correspondence, and was then faced with trying to make them do it. The favourite game in our house became How Poorly Can I Do This and Still Get Away With It. My role was reduced to one of making them do it. I played the game too: when I couldn't get them to do it I made them phone their teacher and explain to her why not! She's very impressed with my boys telephone skills! After six months of utter boredom I decided I couldn't possibly do any worse, and applied for exemptions.

And so began the nightmare. I still had visions of my children wanting to learn what I wanted to teach. Once again I was making them do it, and I am horrified when I remember the tactics I used to try. I knew that all I was doing was teaching my children manipulation techniques, but it was so difficult to let go of.

I took hold of the verse: If any-one seeks wisdom, let him ask of God...then I read everything I could get my hands on, Christian and secular, in the hope that someone, somewhere had the answers I was searching for. Slowly but surely our gracious Lord showed me where I'd gone wrong.

My first lesson was simple: the way I teach is not the way my children learn. I am a visual learner and I love to read and write...my children do not!

I found out who my children are and how they each learn by asking them heaps and heaps of questions. I stopped assuming that what had worked for me would work for them. It took time and effort on my part, but the rewards have been amazing.

One of my sons (6 yrs) is a kinaesthetic/

auditory learner, and must be able to touch it and take it apart as well as hear it in order to learn it. He learns especially well from videos which he listens to, occasionally looking at the pictures if he wants to see it as well. Teaching him to read was challenging (because he would never look at the words!) until we discovered 'finger phonics', which involves an action for every sound, and has videos to watch that have taught him far more than I was managing to. He can now sound out words independently and is beginning to read for himself.

Another of my children (9yrs) is a visual/kinaesthetic learner, who needs to see it and take it apart, but finds reading instructions a complete waste of time. He prefers finding things out for himself by trial and error, learning from his own mistakes.

Now that I was (still am) learning how to present the material in a meaningful way for my children the Lord had another lesson for me: I was standing in my children's way. He knows them and loves them far more than I and I needed to trust him with them. He began to teach me about natural learning/ child-led education/ unschooling - call it what you will.

As I watched my young daughter (16 months) grow from a baby to a toddler, God would gently remind me that I hadn't taught her how to do anything - He had. I provided the environment that she needed, but he taught

her to sit, to crawl, to walk, to climb. I began to notice the God given order of nature, how all of creation is preprogrammed for excellence, and if we nurture it and protect it, it will grow naturally as God intended.

Embracing natural learning was a massive step of faith. I have learnt that God gave each of my children an insatiable curiosity, and if I nurture it and follow the timetable he gave them, instead of squashing it with my own (or even worse the governments) timetable, life is so much more fun.

Taking the pressure off my boys to learn my way has resulted in some amazing learning experiences for all of us, and now they both want me to teach them some stuff from books. I am still learning how to learn from and with them.

My schedule now is far more relaxed: I spend a maximum of an hour a day in one-on-one "teaching" with each of my children, and the rest of the day they are free to follow their own interests. I am always available to my children, and we learn about life as it happens. I try very hard not to bore my children, and I am learning each day how marvellously we are made and how loving and kind our Creator is.

I learned the hard way that work "produced" and able to be shown to others is no guarantee of any learning besides how best to keep Mum (or ERO) happy.

(Tracey and husband David home educate their children Samuel (9), Benjamin (6) and Christy-Ann (16mo.) with their many pets in Auckland. They own Cremer Engineering Ltd., employing a total of 9 people. Says Tracey, "God continues to bless our business even during the recession, and we have learnt many, many lessons running it....but that's another story....")

Answers to Puzzles on page 16

Opposites:

- | | | |
|-----------|------------|--------------|
| a. black | b. minute | c. hate |
| d. sad | e. right | f. innocence |
| g. differ | h. courage | i. humble |
| j. foot | | |

Odd One Out:

- root:** The other parts of a plant are all above ground.
- silk:** The other fabric terms all begin with "w".
- pottery:** The others are names of drinking vessels.
- stone:** The others are names of particular types of rock.
- idea:** The others all refer to tangible objects.
- write:** The others are all mental activities.
- Sirius:** The others are planets of our solar system.
- vodka:** The others are all made from grapes.
- talk:** The others are all non-verbal.
- sky:** The others refer to different forms of water.

Exploring God's Creation



The Incredible Lens Technology of Trilobites

by Charles Stammers
BSc(Hons), PhD(MechEng)
University of Bath

Trilobites are a class of marine arthropods which are often well preserved and of striking appearance. They are believed to be extinct. They are mostly between 10 and 50mm long although a few species attained a length of 750mm (2 1/2 feet). Trilobites are characterized by a ridged carapace, or shell, made of chitin, divided into three lobes which give the class its name.

While most trilobites had eyes, a number had none. A common form of trilobite eye consisted of an array of rods known as ommatidia, each of which pointed in a slightly different direction. The array was protected by a transparent membrane, or cornea. Similar eyes are also found in insects and crustaceans.

However, within the family Phacopidae, there were trilobites with an eye of a fundamentally different nature, the aggregate or schizochroal eye.

Trilobites are mostly found in Cambrian rock, which evolutionists claim was laid down hundreds of millions of years ago. Most people mistakenly think that these were much simpler creatures than today's. This is not true. The aggregate eye, for example, reveals remarkably precise design. Details show us that this trilobite eye, far from being "primitive", was constructed on the basis of precise optical engineering principles which people discovered only a few centuries ago. The upper lens is of calcite and the lower of chitin which is shaped to correct the ray pattern emerging from the calcite lens and to focus all rays on a common point.

Dr Levi-Setti, an authority on trilobites, says, "Trilobites had solved a very elegant physical problem and apparently knew about Fermat's principle, Abbé's sine law, Snell's laws of refraction and the optics of birefringent crystals..."

It is pointless to talk of "natural selection acting over millions of years" as the cause of this brilliant design. With a PhD and 52 publications in the field of engineering, I know intelligent design when I see it.

(From Creation ex nihilo, Vol. 21, No. 1, Dec 98, p. 23, available from Answers in Genesis, PO Box 39005, Howick, Auckland, annual subscription of four issues for NZ\$32.)

Over a Cuppa



The High Calling of Motherhood

A Jewish proverb reads, "God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers".

When 600 university students were asked to write on a piece of paper the most beautiful word in the English language, 422 wrote the word mother; 112 wrote home.

In an ideal home, the mother has a bountiful ministry. She conducts a university, a clothing establishment, a laundry, and a restaurant. At the same time, she is police, health, and truant officer. She is president of a little state called "home" where she has to face all the problems of the economy. As president of a bank, she must study how to make ends meet.

She is God's greatest preacher, the most effective teacher, indispensable companion.

You ask me what is the most urgent need in the world today, and I reply, without hesitancy, "Mothers". The babysitters are doing the best they can, but they can never substitute for mothers.

Let wives and mothers glory in the divine right of home making, and many ills of the day will find remedy. The divorce rate would rapidly decline. Juvenile delinquency would decrease, and public institutions for the correction of criminals would be emptied. Strength of character would be the hallmark of Christian civilisation.

Mother, you guide the destiny of your child, your country, and the world. Will you dedicate yourself anew to your high calling? The world has a good supply of women, but desperately needs more mothers.

(Condensed from Morris Chalfant, Bible Advocate, 5/96)

The Effects of Music

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) November 12, 1998-- Early musical training appears to improve memory for words, according to a study in the November 12th issue of the journal *Nature*.

Researchers at The Chinese University of Hong Kong gave a series of verbal memory tests to 30 female students who had had at least 6 years of music lessons before age 12, and 30 who had had no music training.

"We found that adults with music training learned significantly more words than those without any music training," the researchers, Agnes S. Chan and colleagues, write. "Music training in childhood may therefore have long-term positive effects on verbal memory."

A recent issue of *BBC Music Magazine* reports on an interesting study involving music and two groups of mice. 'One was exposed to classical music for 10 hours a day, the other to heavy metal. The former made it through a maze in 90 seconds, while the hard rock mice took half an hour. The project was curtailed after the hard rock mice killed each other.' Any questions?"

-- *WGBH Magazine*, Box 200 Boston, MA 02134, <http://www.wgbh.org>

~~Children learn more in school and are likely to be nicer to one another if they are played pleasant, calming music such as Alinoni's "Adagio in G minor", research published last week showed.~~

On the other hand, if they listen to exciting, aggressive music such as John Coltrane's "The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost" their performance plummets and they are apt to become more anti-social.

"In a world where music is readily available, the need to understand its effect on our behaviour and cognitive processing has become increasingly important" the researchers said. — From *The Weekly Telegraph* (a weekly British international newspaper).

(Thanks to Delwyn McAlister and Denise Walmsley for these contributions.)

How About These for E-mail Signatures

Any dead fish can tumble downstream..

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-`.,,.,><((((*>`.,,.,><((((*>.,,.,' -`.,,., ><((((*>;
<°))))><.`-`.GO AGAINST THE FLOW!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Yes, as a matter of fact I am a....
wide eyed, sanctified, blood bought,
Spirit taught, Bible totin', Scripture
quotin', Satan bashin', sin trashin',
Christ followin', pride swallowin',
Truth conveyin', faith walkin', Gospel
talkin', bonafide big time believer and
proud of it!" (Romans 1:16)

The Truth About Santa Claus: An Engineer's Perspective

Part I — Demographics

There are approximately two billion children (persons under 18) in the world. However, since Santa does not visit children of Muslim, Hindu, Jewish or Buddhist religions, this reduces the workload for Christmas night to 15% of the total, or 378 million (according to the Population Reference Bureau).

At an average (census) rate of 3.5 children per household, that comes to 108 million homes, presuming that there is at least one good child in each.

Part II — Logistics

Santa has about 31 hours of Christmas to work with, thanks to the different time zones and the rotation of the earth, assuming he travels east to west (which seems logical). This works out to 967.7 visits per second. This is to say that for each Christian household with a good child, Santa has around 1/1000th of a second to park the sleigh, hop out, jump down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the presents under the tree, eat whatever snacks have been left for him, get back up the chimney, jump into the sleigh and get on to the next house. Assuming that each of 108 million stops is evenly distributed around the earth (which of course, we know to be false, but will accept for the purposes of our calculations), we are now talking about .78 miles per household; a total trip of 75.5 million miles, not counting bathroom stops or breaks.

This means that Santa's sleigh is moving at 650 miles per second --- 3000 times the speed of sound. For purposes of comparison, the fastest man made vehicle, the Ulysses Space Probe, moves at a poky 27.4 miles per second, and a conventional reindeer can run (at best) 15 miles per hour.

Part III — Mass

The payload of the sleigh adds another interesting element. Assuming that each child gets nothing more than a medium sized Lego set (two pounds), the sleigh is carrying over 500 thousand tons, not counting Santa himself.

On land, a conventional reindeer can pull no more than 300 pounds. Even granting that the "flying" reindeer could pull ten times the normal amount, the job can't be done with eight or even nine reindeer. Santa would need 360,000 of them. This increases the payload, not counting the weight of the sleigh, another 54,000 tons, or roughly seven times the weight of the Queen Elizabeth (the ship, not the monarch).

Part IV — Physics

600,000 tons traveling at 650 miles per second creates an enormous air resistance --- this would heat up the reindeer in the same fashion as the space craft re-entering the earth's atmosphere. The lead pair of reindeer would absorb 14.3 quintillion joules of energy per second each. In short, they would burst into flames almost instantaneously, exposing the reindeer behind

them and creating deafening sonic booms in their wake. The entire reindeer team would be vaporized within 4.26 thousandths of a second, or right about the time Santa reached the fifth house on the trip. Not that it matters, however, since Santa, as a result of accelerating from a dead stop to 650 M.P.S. in .001 seconds, would be subjected to acceleration forces of 17,500 gs. A 250 pound Santa (which seems ludicrously slim) would be pinned to the back of the sleigh by 4,315,015 pounds of force, instantly crushing his bones and organs and reducing him to a quivering blob of pink goo.

Part V — Conclusion

Therefore, if Santa did exist, he's dead now.

(author unknown)

Five "Must-Read" Books

by Chris Kavanagh, Palmerston North

I recently saw a copy of the Moore Theological College (Sydney) magazine, where various of the staff members had been asked what five books they thought every Christian should read, and this set me thinking what five books I would nominate. Here they are, in no particular order:

The Institutes of Religion - John Calvin. A basic theology from the Reformation. Calvin is very readable, and you might get some surprises.

Confessions - Augustine of Hippo. Augustine's spiritual autobiography in which he traces the winding way in which he went from pagan professor of rhetoric to Christian believer. Written after many years of Christian experience, he traces God's ways in the conversion of a soul through his own life.

Works of John Owen, vol 6 - John Owen. Owen was the foremost of the English Puritan writers. He is very practical in his writings, and well worth the effort of reading his cumbrous 17th century English. Volume 6 (of 16) of his works contains his Exposition of Psalm 130, on forgiveness, and works on sin and temptation.

History of the Reformation - T M Lindsay. Lindsay was a Scots professor of church history around the turn of the century. His history covers the Reformation in Germany and in other countries. He has a fair, though sympathetic account of the Anabaptists, and a very clear account of the theological differences between Calvin, Luther and Zwingli.

Expository Thoughts on the Gospels - J C Ryle. Ryle was the Anglican Bishop of Liverpool at the end of the last century, and spoke and wrote against the rising tide of liberalism he encountered all around him. His exposition of the four Gospels is very sound and practical.

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programmes treat family members as individuals, and family law has relinquished most of its overt attempts to promote any particular ideas about family life.

Liberalised divorce certainly alters the nature of the contract it terminates. Lacking the power to bind future behaviour, the incentive to invest resources in a relationship is undermined. But it is simplistic, as much as opportunist, to believe that — having rubbed out the prescriptive content from family law — divorce reform also abolished, at a stroke, the meaning and significance of marriage as an organising factor and reference point in people's lives and any influence this might have upon attitudes and behaviour.

This is the latest variation on the way in which dominant opinion has been running ahead of the statistics in its eagerness to announce the demise of the family.

What has been repeated ad nauseam is that only a tiny, unrepresentative minority now lives in the conjugal,

nuclear family, or even that this exists only on cornflakes packets or in the imaginations of those set upon projecting a nostalgic ideal onto the real world. However, even if they are a shrinking majority, married-couple families in the UK still accounted for 71% of those with dependent children in 1994. But, if the form cannot be denied, the next move is to void it of substance, by presenting marriage as meaningless and inconsequential. Co-habitees, who make up 11% of those with children, can then pass into the lead as the expression of "the new model" and emerging alternative ground on which to base family relationships, which is "outgrowing marriage in importance".

(Another side) of family disruption and contraction tends to be low rates of participation in community activities and organisations on the part of lone mothers and single men compared to married women and fathers. The role of family man is not just a protective against bad behaviour, it is also the basis of a positive contribution to the community. Its absence may weaken general processes of care and education in society, through which one generation exerts itself on behalf of another. Committed kinship is the foremost reservoir of altruistic social involvement, and shapes the moral capital of the next generation.

While the effects of family breakdown are already apparent, acceptance of the end of marriage and decline of the family is premature. The first step towards recovery is to stop describing social changes as though they were inevitable.

(From Cutting Edge, Sept/Oct 1998, No. 37, NZ Education Development Foundation, 50 Acacia Ave., Riccarton, Christchurch, logan@nzedf.org.nz)

Editor's Comment: As Patricia Morgan indicated, the sociologists behind national and private social policy

planning and implementation view the institutions of marriage and the family merely as transitional forms along the continuum of evolutionary development. Home educators are front-line troops in the defense and preservation of marriage and the family, not because they work better, but because they are right!

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