

# 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. — Psalm 112:1-2



Esauzes Family

**Peter & Kathryn van 't Wout**  
Sheryl (16), Steven (16), Lucy (16),  
Michael (9), Phillip (12), Anne (14),  
Rebekah (7), Timothy (5), Esther (2½),  
Lilly (2½).

## KEYSTONE

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**KEYSTONE** is the journal of Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand, a part of the Home Education Foundation, a Charitable Trust established to promote the concept of home education to the Christian community and beyond.

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*The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom,  
a good understanding have all those  
who do His commandments.  
— Psalm 111:10*

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**It was Henry R. Van Til, in The Calvinistic Concept of Culture (1959) who stated that "culture" is religion externalised. Look at the expressions of our culture today: hatred, violence, murder, infanticide, anti-Christianity, immorality, drugs and other crimes. The religion, the faith which our popular culture externalises is demonic.**

**Oh, Lord, please give us the wisdom and vision to home educate our children for Your Glory. May they not only live and work honourably as Christ-like role models in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation but also fearlessly, tirelessly, lovingly offer them Your Words of eternal life.  
Amen!**

# Editorial

Saints from over a century ago feature prominently in this issue:

William Carey, John Q. Adams and J.C. Ryle. One thing that strikes

me about these Christians is their ability to focus so completely and totally on the task before them.....the self-discipline involved is remarkable. I suppose they did not have the many electronic distractions we surround ourselves with: TV, radio, stereo CD players, videos, movies, etc. But then, they did have other distractions: malaria, insane wives, intense heat. But even without such things, for a boy of 14 and 15 to do what John Q. Adams did is way beyond what we today even imagine possible. Why is that? I suspect our targets are too low.

Diana Waring rang us the other day: they were in Orlando, Florida, speaking to 12,000 home schoolers, and totally homesick for little old New Zealand. Diana, we all miss you, and your family's impact on us will be felt for many years. There is an item about the Waring's and one from the Waring's in this issue, and next issue will have a piece, Lord willing, from a home schooler who has been "liberated", she says, as a result of understanding Diana Waring's messages.

I've already said how impressive is the life of fellow home schooler John Q. Adams. But I would much rather be featuring home educated New Zealanders and their accomplishments. Please write to us with your son's or daughter's success stories, especially those who have gone beyond compulsory schooling years.

There is a "Part 1" under the "In Line with Scripture" column wherein I hope to cover several aspects of the thorny issue of corporal discipline or spanking. It seems there is a lot of faulty thinking around: philosophical opponents wanting to ban it equate it with violence; unthinking traditionalists perceive "giving them a good belt-up" as a necessary and harmless rite of passage; arm-chair psychologists warn against damaging fragile self-esteem. This series will deal primarily with spanking, but remember that spanking is only one aspect of child discipline. The first and foremost is actually parental self discipline.

Over the last couple of weeks I have been with MoE officers at the Lower Hutt Management office and the Wellington HQ and have also been two hours with Rob Williamson, the Home School Unit Manager of the ERO. These and other events have helped me to see that the Home Education laws in NZ are among the best in the world and that at the present time we have a very comfortable environment. In my opinion many of the problems we often hear about — many, but not all — are a result of unreasonable attitudes on the part of a small minority of home educators, and the exaggerated qualities stories take on when told and re-told. My number one suggestion is: if you encounter difficulties with officialdom, first do your homework by calmly ascertaining and identifying the real issues with a knowledgeable home educator. If you have a genuine complaint, go directly back to the agency involved: contact Jim Matheson of the MoE or Rob Williamson of the ERO, both in Wellington. Be firm, but always respectful and friendly.

An email from Singapore informed us that their government is considering a compulsory attendance law. This could stop home education there altogether. Please pray that the authorities would not claw to themselves such a basic and important God-given responsibility as the education of one's own children. Prof. Machen of Westminster Theological Seminary said if we give the bureaucrats our children, we might just as well give them everything else... that when they come for our bank accounts and properties, we cannot logically complain, for we have already made the *big* concession.



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# Christian Home Schoolers of NZ Presents:

**KEYSTONE**, the Journal of CHomeS, which you now hold in your hands!

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**CcedNet**, the Christian Classical home EDucation NETwork email discussion group is for those Christian families who would like to train their children to think and not just concentrate on output. A thoroughly Christian, thoroughly Classical education, is one based on the approach known as the

Trivium. Moderated by Barbara Smith, Trustee of Christian Home Schoolers of NZ. To subscribe send an email to: ccednet@xtra.co.nz.

## The Home Education Foundation Presents:

**TEACH Bulletin** (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home) is a monthly newsletter of the Home Education Foundation. 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 hefnetnz-subscribe@egroups.com.

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# Feature Family

**Peter & Kathryn  
van't Wout**  
of Christchurch



Peter was born in Balclutha and spent his growing up years in Mosgiel, out of Dunedin. His family lived on a small dairy farm, and he still enjoys the outdoor life and doing practical things. Peter has been involved with CEF (Child Evangelism Fellowship) for many years. He (and usually we) has been involved with children's camps for many years too. We also have a Good News Club each Friday evening which Peter has been running for about 18 or 19 years. He is also involved in the leadership of our church. For many years he was involved in the woollen industry and is now yard manager of a firewood & coal yard.

My (Kathryn) parents are missionaries in Congo (Zaire), and I was born and brought up out there. When I was 18, I went to Scotland to do my nursing training. We met in Scotland while Peter was on a working holiday there, and I came out here nine months later. We were married in 1980.

One of my favourite verses is that the Lord "is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think." (Ephesians 3:20). He proved this to us by starting us off with triplets! Lucy, Steven and Sheryl are 16 years old. Over the years the Lord has added more "blessings", and each one is precious. Anne (14), Philip (12), Michael (9), Rebekah (7), Timothy (5) and (more of the "exceedingly abundantly"!)) Esther and Lilly are 2 1/2 years old.

When the triplets were 3 1/2, I was looking in the craft section of the library and came across a book called "Anything School Can Do You Can Do Better." The Lord used that book to introduce me to homeschooling. I also remember a meeting about home schooling that Craig and Barbara Smith organised at that time. By the time Lucy, Steven and Sheryl turned five, I had decided to home school and Peter was happy about that. It was a "preference" at the time, but within about three years we had both come to the decision that this was what the Lord wanted us to do.

I don't remember much of what we did the first year (I had five children five years old and under), but I still have a couple of projects we did, so we must have done something! When Lucy, Steven and Sheryl turned six, we used the ACE program for a year. It worked well for Lucy, was not too bad for Sheryl but was hopeless for Steven!

It was at that time, through certain things that happened, the Lord led us to become part of the ATINZ (Advanced Training Institute of NZ) programme. We have been with ATI since that time - this is our tenth

year.

When we joined ATI, Peter became involved in our home education. ATI helped him to know what he could do and how he could be involved. I have always seen to the "teaching", but Peter has supported and encouraged. When there are problems with the children that I cannot resolve, the next step is to see the "headmaster": Dad. :-)

ATI has been a wonderful tool to help us to raise our children to be "mighty in spirit" for the Lord. It is a very flexible program and can be suited to the individual needs of our family and of each child (when I have the time and energy!). The annual seminar is wonderful for helping us to re-focus. There are many encouraging sessions. ATI does set a high standard, and it is good to have something to aim for! One year I was talking with Suzie Brown who encouraged me by saying that it does not matter so much WHERE we are on the road, but that we ARE on the right road and moving forward!

I need a schedule!! If I don't have a schedule, I always feel that nothing gets done -- and I am probably right! Basically, this is our schedule:

4:30am — Peter has his Quiet Time (without fail)  
5 - 5:30am — I get up for my Q.T. (This is my ideal! If I am "expecting" or have a disturbed night, I may not make it!)  
6:00am — Dad gets the children up  
6:15am — Wisdom Search (Bible reading time with Dad) (Usually I am still having my QT!)  
7:00am — Breakfast  
7:30am — Dad to work and duties time  
8:00am (or as close to it as possible) — "school time"  
— Singing 1/2 hour  
— Scripture Memory 1/2 hour  
Rest of the morning — Maths  
— Assignments  
— Reading programs with the younger ones.  
— Projects  
12 noon -- Lunch & tidy up & clean up  
Afternoon — (I am always trying to be more organised in the afternoon but it keeps getting away from me!)  
— unfinished "school" work  
— other activities: sewing, sports (once a fortnight), paper run, piano practice, crafts, whatever  
— younger ones play: Lego, climb trees, trampoline, cricket or football on the front lawn, etc.  
4:00pm — duties  
5:30pm — dinner & dinner clean up  
7:00pm — Wisdom Booklet / read books  
8:00pm (approx.) — younger ones to bed  
9-9:30pm — older ones to bed  
10pm (approx.) — to bed at last!

Of course we have "interruptions" to our schedule, but that is all part of life. Sometimes we have days deliberately unscheduled so we don't burn out!

Keeping our house reasonably tidy is important to me. We have relatively small living space, and if there is only a "little" mess it looks a lot! During duties time at 7.30am and 4pm the house is tidied properly. (We are

still working on a system to keep bedrooms tidy!) Years ago I made a list of all the cleaning jobs that need to be done. I divided them into daily, weekly and monthly cleaning lists. These are put under seven duty lists: laundry, meal preparation, living room, halls & bathroom, kitchen-dining, dryer, and seventh duty. Each child knows what is required of them - they only have to read the checklist - or ask someone to read it to them. We have good days and bad days, but on the whole the children are good workers. Learning to tidy and clean, prepare meals, do laundry, etc., are all, in my opinion, important things to learn. They are real "life skills".

At the recent Bill and Diana Waring conference they had a session on "Things we wish we had known." Here are some things I wish I'd known:

- It doesn't matter what anybody else thinks about my house, my children, me, what we are teaching, (ERO included!) whether my children can read or not, my children's behaviour, my commitments, whatever
- It only matters what God thinks about all of the above!
- It is alright for my children to be "late" readers.
- My relationship with my children is more important than if they do their maths, written assignment, duties or whatever. (I really have to work on this one!!)
- When I hear new and different ideas - find out from the Lord what HE wants us to be doing.
- It is good to spend lots of time reading books to my children! (I used to but I haven't done so much lately.) (I love reading!)

We seem to spend so much time in just living and doing the "basics" that I sometimes wonder what we have accomplished and what the children have learnt! I feel as if I am coming to a turning point in the way I "teach" my children, that I am going to do some things differently. Since I have had so many "little" ones, I have not found it easy to do many "hands-on" things. Let's face it, the less mess the less time it takes to clean up! So, I hope to do more "hands-on" things and also more "projects" together as a family.

Lucy, Steven and Sheryl have helped at Good News Club for two years now, and Anne has just started. That involves telling Bible and missionary stories, teaching memory verses, leading singing and doing quizzes. They have also helped as leaders at camp, which is a very worthwhile and "stretching" experience!

As a family we have on occasion sung and quoted Scripture at church and at a "retirement" home. The old people loved it — and we enjoyed it, too.

We enjoy meeting with other home educating families and try to take part in some of the activities organised for the children through H-S support groups. Having a wide range of children, I prefer activities that will

involve everyone. I am very thankful to the mothers who take the time and make the effort to organise activities!

As time passes, our likes and dislikes and interests change. However, at the present time it is like this ...

LUCY likes to play the piano; sewing; loves reading; likes writing; spending time with her friends; learning about animals; netball; swimming; cooking; baking; directing the play we did; cross stitch; gardening.

STEVEN likes basketball; surfing the Internet; working with wood; is interested in an apprenticeship in joinery; has restored furniture; likes tramping; cycling; ice skating; helping with Good News Club; spending money; likes following rugby i.e. the CANTERBURY CRUSADERS - the Super 12 Champions!! (I was told to say that!!)

SHERYL likes to play sports; play the piano; sing; tramping; outdoor activities; cross stitch; getting together with friends; leading singing at Good News Club; being a leader at camp; the play we did; pot plants.

ANNE likes baking; playing sports; getting together with friends; loves reading; likes sleeping; playing piano (sometimes); learning guitar; exercise; being a leader at camp; enjoys writing letters and receiving them!

PHILIP likes lego; roller blading; mountain biking; has a paper run; likes sleeping; sports; watching rugby; playing cricket, rugby and soccer on the front lawn; eating lollies; watching videos (when permitted); playing games on the computer.

MICHAEL likes lego; watching videos (when permitted); climbing trees; gardening; roller blading; going down to post the letters; painting & colouring-in; trampoline; playing cricket, rugby and soccer on the front lawn; lollies; playing games on the computer.

REBEKAH likes climbing trees (she is very good at it!); trampoline; birthdays; roller blading; playing in the playhouse (that Steven made); riding bikes; playing with bricks (Duplo-type); going to work with Dad; gardening; watching videos when allowed; playing in the sandpit; lollies.

TIMOTHY likes cuddles; lollies; climbing trees; chocolate; roller blading; playing with Rebekah and Michael; playing with the bricks; going to the park; making tree huts; trampoline; looking in the letterbox. ESTHER and LILLY like the trampoline; "getting into their big sisters' stuff"; playing with bricks & cars; playdough; dolls; playing with each other; cuddles from Mum & Dad and all their brothers and sisters; bananas; rice bubbles; cuddles in bed with Mum at night; singing; baths; ice cream.

ESTHER likes "riding" the side of her cot, (I couldn't believe it when I found her lying across the top of the end of the cot ASLEEP one time!!); does NOT like

going to bed;

LILLY loves playing with dolls; likes animals & is “good” with them.

Well, that’s a glimpse into our family!

Maybe there is someone reading this who, like me, feels inadequate. You compare yourself with what you see in other home schooling families, and you “fall short”!! I want to encourage you: DON’T compare yourself with others. Every family has its weaknesses and its strengths. The Lord and His Word should be our standard. Obey what the Lord is telling YOU to do. If you are not sure what that is, go to His Word and find out! It is nice to read about what others do, but your family is unique. The Lord has a special plan for YOUR family. And remember, the Lord has promised, “... as thy days, so shall thy strength be...” Deut. 33:25. He will give you the strength to do what He has asked YOU to do, not what He has asked someone else to do!

The Lord bless you!

Peter & Kathryn van’t Wout, Lucy, Steven, Sheryl, Anne, Philip, Michael, Rebekah, Timothy, Esther & Lilly

# The Faith of Us Fathers



## What Difference Can One Person Make?

By Dr. Peter Hammond

(Editor’s Note: This article is primarily about Christians and social action. But I ask, what could be a more powerful social act than home educating one’s own children? Men, have you any idea how powerful and influential your God-fearing family can be under your Christlike leadership? Why do you think the central government of every Western country has such a strangle-hold on the education of its citizen’s children through compulsory and secular public school systems? And why is home education either forbidden outright or usually highly regulated? State education is very effective at emasculating fathers and sidelining mothers in relation to the vast potential they have for grooming the leaders of the next generation, men and women of God, who will, by the Grace of God, have the purifying fire of the Holy Spirit in their bellies, who will chase the devil out of every stronghold he currently holds in our culture and civilisation, taking every thought captive to obey Christ. Read on and re-focus your vision!)

“It’s impossible! It can’t be done! [What about socialisation? What about School Cert.?] Don’t be ridiculous: what difference can one person make?”

Have you ever encountered those kinds of reactions? Anyone who embarks on a challenging enterprise, especially those determined to end legal abortions, eradicate pornography, establish a Christian school or Christian teacher training college, [home educate their own children through secondary level], stop the ongoing slave trade in Sudan or work for national reformation and revival, will encounter those people who seem to believe that they have “the gift of criticism” and “a ministry of discouragement”!

### Should Christians be Involved in Social Issues?

Of course, there are those who maintain that Christians shouldn’t be involved in social issues at all! When you tell them of the abortion holocaust or the pornography plague, they mutter that “all we can do is pray”, “just preach the gospel”, and “it’s a sign of the last days!”

We often suspect that such attitudes are motivated more by laziness and cowardice or a selfish desire to shirk responsibility and hard work than anything else. Certainly those people who resort to such superficial excuses are being disobedient to the clear commands of Scripture: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lk. 10:27); “Go and do likewise” (Lk. 10:37); “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves” (Pr. 31:8);

## Puzzles



1. A bottle and its cork cost a total of 21 pence. The bottle costs 20 pence more than the cork. How much do they each cost?
2. A hunter travelling by train to the forest carries his rifle with him. Unfortunately, this rifle is five feet in length and railway regulations state the maximum length of any baggage item is only four feet. How does the hunter overcome the problem?
3. You have a frying pan which will take only two slices of bread at a time. You wish to fry three slices, each on both sides. Since each slice takes 20 seconds for each side, you can certainly fry them all in 80 seconds, by doing two pieces together and then the third. But can you fry them all in less time?
4. It is obvious that  $2 \times 2 = 2 + 2$ . But these are two equal numbers. What about different numbers? Which set of different whole numbers has the same product and the same sum?

(Answer on Page 10.)

Because of the Hindu practice of Sati, children who had lost their father would also lose their mother and be orphaned at the same time.

The Hindu practice of polygamy compounded the problem. On one occasion, Carey documented thirty-three wives of one man burned alive at his funeral. On another occasion, an eleven-year-old widow was burned on the funeral pyre of her husband.

Lepers were rejected by their families and society and burned alive. Hinduism taught that only a violent and fiery end could purify the body and ensure transmigration into a healthy new existence. Euthanasia was also widely practiced with those afflicted by other sicknesses. The infirmed were regularly carried out to be left exposed to cold and heat, crocodiles or insects, by the riverside.

Carey fought against these and many other evils, including child prostitution, slavery, and the caste system. He publicly criticized the government for inaction and passivity in the face of murder. He organized public debates and spoke out and wrote often on these atrocities. At first, he met with official indifference. The Indian Supreme Court in 1805 ruled that Sati had religious sanction and could not be questioned.

Carey established the first newspaper ever printed in an oriental language, the *Samachar Darpan*, and the English-language newspaper, *Friends of India*. He pioneered mass communications in India, launching the social reform movement, because he believed that "Above all forms of truth and faith, Christianity seeks free discussion".

He undermined the oppression and exploitation of women by providing women with education. He opened the first schools for girls.

It was Carey's relentless battle against Sati, for 25 years, which finally led to the famous Edict in 1829 banning widow burning. He was also the first man who led the campaign for a humane treatment for leprosy and ended the practice of burning them alive.

Carey certainly had a comprehensive view of the Great Commission. He ministered to body, mind, and spirit. Carey introduced the idea of savings banks to India and made investment, industry, commerce, and economic development possible. He founded the Agric-Horticultural Society in the 1820s (30 years before the Royal Agricultural Society was established in England). He introduced the steam engine to India, pioneered the idea of lending libraries in India and persuaded his friends in England to ship out tons of books to regenerate and reform India.

Carey also introduced the study of astronomy into India to combat Hinduism's astrology with its fatalism, superstitious fears, and inability to manage time which all conspired to make people slaves with lives determined by the stars.

Carey was the first man in India to write essays on forestry. He was also a botanist who cultivated beautiful gardens and frequently lectured on science, because he believed "all Thy works praise Thee, O Lord".

William Carey was also the father of print technology in India, building what was then the largest printing press in India, and devised the fonts. In 1812, a devastating fire destroyed Carey's warehouse with his printing presses, paper stock, and manuscripts representing many years of work. Carey's reaction? He resolved to do better translations than the ones that were now ashes, for "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (John 15:2).

William Carey's monumental achievements outshine all his critics, of whom the enemy sent many. He was a dedicated Christian whom God used in extraordinary ways to launch the greatest century of missionary advance, to translate the Scriptures into more languages than any other translator in history, and to save literally millions of lives by his compassionate social action and tireless labors.

We need to follow his example by ministering to body, mind, and spirit and persevering through all disappointments and opposition with an unshakeable faith in God's sovereign power.

## Answers to Puzzles

(From page 7)

1. The bottle costs 20 1/2 pence and the cork costs 1/2 pence.
2. He only needs to wrap it up in a package which is four feet long and three feet wide. The five-foot long rifle will fit snugly in the package in a diagonal position. A practical application of Pythagorus' theorem.
3. Call the slices A, B and C. Fry A and B on one side, then swop B for C and fry A on the other side and C on its first side. Now swop A for B and fry the second sides of both B and C. Total frying time is only 60 seconds.
4. There is one set: 1, 2 and 3.  
 $1 \times 2 \times 3 = 6$  and  
 $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ .



# Learning Disabilities



## The ABCs of Learning Disabilities (Part 2)

[In the previous issue of *Keystone* the term "Learning Disability" was defined as a neurobiological disorder in which a person's brain works or is structured differently. Facts about LDs were reviewed; common LDs were described; and signs which might indicate an LD in your child along with what parents can do if such signs are seen were discussed. Part 2 continues:]

### 4. What can I do as a parent?

#### Work with your child at home

Parents are a child's first and best teachers. Show your child that reading can be fun. Read to your child every day. Visit the library frequently. Point out words on billboards and traffic signs as you drive, on food labels at the grocery store, on packages, mail, and letters. Play word games. Set an example by giving your child a chance to see you reading and writing at home.

#### Join with others who care

You are not alone. By joining with other parents and professionals you can increase awareness of the issue, dispel popular misconceptions, help establish educational systems that provide for the needs of children with learning disabilities, and get support for yourself. Look into the organizations in Section 5 for ways to become involved and learn more about learning disabilities.

#### Work with professionals

There are many trained professionals who can help your child. Contact one of the organizations in Section 5 for additional suggestions and information.

#### Professionals who can help

**Audiologist** - measures hearing ability and provides services for auditory training; offers advice on hearing aids.

**Educational Consultant** - gives educational evaluations; familiar with school curriculum but may have a background in special education issues.

**Educational Therapist** - develops and runs programs for learning and behavior problems.

**Learning Disabilities Specialist** - a teacher with specific training and credentials to provide educational services to students with learning disabilities and their teachers.

**Neurologist** - looks for possible damage to brain functions (medical doctor).

**Occupational Therapist** - helps improve motor and

sensory functions to increase the ability to perform daily tasks.

**Pediatrician** - provides medical services to infants, children, and adolescents; trained in overall growth and development including motor, sensory, and behavioral development (medical doctor).

**Psychiatrist** - diagnoses and treats severe behavioral and emotional problems and may prescribe medications (medical doctor).

**Psychologist (Clinical)** - provides psychological and intellectual assessment and treatment for mental and emotional health.

**School/Educational Psychologist**-gives and interprets psychological and educational tests; assists with behavior management; provides counseling; consults with parents, staff, and community agencies about educational issues.

**Speech and Language Therapist**-helps children with language and speech difficulties.

### 5. Where can I go for information?

For those who are connected to the Internet, there is a world of information available. A good site relating to New Zealand is: [www.nzhealth.co.nz/health](http://www.nzhealth.co.nz/health). Here is a long list of non-profit organisations and support groups for many conditions which may relate to learning disabilities. Such a list may also be available from: MediMedia (NZ) Ltd, 3 Shea Tce., Takapuna, Auckland, ph. (09) 488-4278.

Another organisation worth contacting is Parent to Parent NZ Inc. These folks work with families with all kinds of disabilities, syndromes, health problems and special needs. They have contacts all over the country as well as overseas and aim to link families affected by the same condition. Their services are free and confidential.

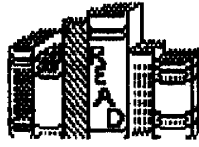
#### **Parent to Parent National Office**

PO Box 234, Waikato Mail Centre  
AMI Building, Anglesea St., Hamilton  
ph/fax (07) 834-1108, Toll-free number 0508-236-236  
email: [p2pnational@compuserve.com](mailto:p2pnational@compuserve.com)

#### **Local contacts:**

Far North, 0800-226-055  
Auckland, (09) 631-5644  
Waikato, (07) 839-1276  
Coastal Bay of Plenty, 0508-727-368  
Central Lakes Districts, (07) 346-3231  
Manawatu, (06) 355-0787  
Wellington region, (04) 496-4612  
Nelson, (03) 546-8973  
Christchurch, (03) 338-0959  
South Canterbury, (03) 688-1518  
Southland, (03) 214-3179

# Bits of Books



## Excerpts from Thoughts for Young Men

by J. C. Ryle (1816-1900)

### **Nothing is so important as your soul.**

Your soul is eternal. It will live forever. The world and all that it contains will pass away--firm, solid, beautiful, well-ordered as it is, the world will come to an end. "The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare" (2 Peter 3:10). The works of statesmen, writers, painters, architects, are all short lived: your soul will outlive them all. The angel's voice shall proclaim one day, that "There will be no more delay!" (Revelation 10:6). Try, I beg you, to realize the fact, that your soul is the one thing worth living for. It is the part of you which ought always be considered first. No place, no employment is good for you, which injures your soul. No friend, no companion deserves your confidence, who makes light of your soul's concerns. The man who hurts you, your property, your character, only does you temporary harm. Your true enemy is the one who plots to damage your soul. Think for a moment why you were born into the world. Not merely to eat and drink, and indulge the desires of the flesh, not merely to dress up your body, and follow its lusts wherever they may lead you, not merely to work, and sleep, and laugh, and talk, and enjoy yourselves, and think of nothing but time. No! you were meant for something higher and better than this. You were placed here to train for eternity. Your body was only intended to be a house for your immortal spirit. It is flying in the face of God's purposes to do as many do--to make the soul a servant to the body, and not the body a servant to the soul.

Young men, God does not show favoritism or respects the honors bestowed by men. He rewards no man's heritage, or wealth, or rank, or position. He does not see with man's eyes. The poorest saint that ever died in a ghetto is nobler in His sight than the richest sinner that ever died in a palace. God does not look at riches, titles, education, beauty, or anything of the kind. There is only one thing that God does look at, and that is the immortal soul. He measures all men by one standard, one measure, one test, one criterion, and that is the state of their souls. Do not forget this. Keep it in view, morning, noon, and night, the interests of your soul. Rise up each day desiring that your soul may excel, lie down each evening, inquiring of yourself whether your soul has really grown. Set your immortal soul before your mind's eye, and when men ask you why you live as you do, answer them in his spirit, "I live for my soul." Believe me, the day is fast coming when the soul will be the one thing men will think of, and the only question of importance will be this, "Is my soul lost or saved?"

### **It is possible to be a young man and yet serve God.**

I fear the snares that Satan lays for you on this point. I fear that he will succeed in filling your minds with the vain notion, that to be a true Christian as a youth is impossible. I have seen many carried away by this delusion. I have heard it said, "You are requiring an impossibility in expecting so much Christianity from young people. Youth is no time for seriousness. Our desires are strong, and it was never intended that we should keep them under such strong Christian control, as you wish us to do. God meant for us to enjoy ourselves. There will be plenty of time for religion in the future." And this kind of talk is only too much encouraged by the world. The world is only too ready to wink at youthful sins. The world appears to think it a matter of course that young men must "sow their wild oats." The world seems to take it for granted that young people must be irreligious, and that it is not possible for them to follow Christ.

Young men, I will ask you this simple question--Where will you find anything of this in the Word of God? Where is the chapter or verse in the Bible which will support this talking and reasoning of the world? Doesn't the Bible speak to old and young alike, without distinction? Is not sin--sin, whether committed at the age of twenty or fifty? Will it form the slightest excuse, in the day of judgment, to say, "I know I sinned, but I was young then?" Show your common sense, I beg of you, by giving up such vain excuses. You are responsible and accountable to God from the very moment that you know right and wrong. I know very well that there are many difficulties in a man's way. But there are always difficulties in the way of doing right. The path to heaven is always narrow, whether we be young or old. There are difficulties, but God will give you the grace to overcome them. God is no hard master. He will not, like Pharaoh, require you to make bricks without straw. He will make sure that the path He requires us to walk is never an impossible road. He never gave commands to man which He would not give man the power to perform.

There are difficulties, but many a young man has overcome them in the past, and so can you. Moses was a young man with passions like yourself; but see what is said of him in Scripture: "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward." (Hebrews 11:24-26). Daniel was a young man when he began to serve God in Babylon. He was surrounded by temptations of every kind. He had few people with him, and many against him. Yet Daniel's life was so blameless and consistent, that even his enemies could not find any fault in him, except "it has something to do with the law of his God" (Daniel 6:5). And these are not solitary cases. There is a cloud of witnesses whom I could name. Time would not allow me, if I were to tell you of young Isaac, young Joseph,

young Joshua, young Samuel, young David, young Solomon, young Abijah, young Obadiah, young Josiah, young Timothy. These were not angels, but men, with natural hearts like your own. They too had obstacles to contend with, lusts to mortify, trials to endure, hard places to travel, like any of you. But young as they were, they all found it possible to serve God. Will they not all rise in judgment and condemn you, if you persist in saying it cannot be done?

Young men, try to serve God. Resist the devil when he whispers it is impossible. Try, and the Lord God of the promises will give you strength in the trying. He loves to meet those who struggle to come to Him, and He will meet you and give you the power that you feel you need. Be like the man whom Bunyan's Pilgrim saw in the Interpreter's house, go forward boldly, saying, "Write down my name." Those words of our Lord are true, though I often hear them repeated by heartless and unfeeling tongues: "Seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).

Difficulties which seemed like mountains shall melt away like snow in spring. Obstacles which seemed like giants in the distance, will dwindle into nothing when you actually face them. The lion that blocks the way that you are traveling and causes you great fear, will prove to be chained and unable to harm you. If men believed the promises more, they would never be afraid of their assigned duties. But remember that little word I press upon you, and when Satan says, "You cannot be a Christian while you are young," answer him, "Get behind me, Satan: by God's help I will try."

#### **Determine as long as you live to make the Bible your guide and adviser.**

The Bible is God's merciful provision for sinful man's soul, the map by which he must steer his course, if he would attain eternal life. All that we need to know, in order to make us peaceful, holy, or happy, is richly contained there. If a young man wants to know how to begin his life well, let him hear what David says: "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word" (Psalm 119:9).

Young men, I charge you to make a habit of reading the Bible, and not to let the habit be broken. Do not let the laughter of friends, do not let the bad customs of the family you live in, don't let any of these things prevent your doing it. Determine that you will not only have a Bible, but also make time to read it too. Allow no man to persuade you that it is only a book for Sunday school children and old women. It is the book from which King David got wisdom and understanding. It is the book which young Timothy knew from his childhood. Never be ashamed of reading it. Do not "scorn instruction" (Proverbs 13:13). Read it with the prayer that the Holy Spirit's grace will help you understand it. It has been said, "A man may just as soon read the Scripture without eyes, as understand the spirit of it without grace." Read it reverently, as the Word of God, not of man, believing implicitly that what it approves is right, and what it condemns is wrong. Be very sure that every doctrine which will not stand the test of Scripture is false. This will keep you from being tossed to and

fro, and carried about by the dangerous opinions of these latter days. Be very sure that every practice in your life which is contrary to Scripture, is sinful and must be given up. This will settle many a question of conscience, and cut the knot of many a doubt. Remember how differently two kings of Judah read the Word of God: Jehoiakim read it, and at once tore the page to pieces, and burned it in the fire (Jeremiah 36:23). And why? Because his heart rebelled against it, and he was resolved not to obey. Josiah read it, and at once tore his clothes, and cried mightily to the Lord (2 Chronicles 34:19). And why? Because his heart was tender and obedient. He was ready to do anything which Scripture showed him was his duty. Oh that you may follow the last of these two, and not the first!

And read it regularly. This is the only way to become "mighty in the Scriptures." A quick glance at the Bible now and then does little good. At that rate you will never become familiar with its treasures, or feel the sword of the Spirit fitted to your hand in the hour of conflict. But store up your mind with Scripture, by diligent reading, and you will soon discover its value and power. Texts will rise up in your hearts in the moment of temptation. Commands will suggest themselves in times of doubt. Promises will come across your thoughts in the time of discouragement. And thus you will experience the truth of David's words, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11); and of Solomon's words, "When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you" (Proverbs 6:22).

I dwell on these things more because this is an age of reading. There seems no end to the producing of many books, though few of them are really profitable. There seems a rage for cheap printing and publishing. Newspapers of every sort abound, and the tone of some, which have the widest circulation, speaks badly for the taste of the age. Amidst the flood of dangerous reading, I plead for my Master's book, I call upon you not to forget the book of the soul. Do not let newspapers, novels, and romances be read, while the prophets and Apostles be despised. Do not let the exciting and sensual swallow up your attention, while the edifying and the sanctifying can find no place in your mind.

Young men, give the Bible the honor due to it every day you live. Whatever you read, read that first. And beware of bad books: there are plenty in this day. Take heed what you read. I suspect there is more harm done to souls in this way than most people have an idea is possible. Value all books in proportion as they are agreeable to Scripture. Those that are nearest to it are the best, and those that are farthest from it, and most contrary to it, the worst.

son's pronunciation was somewhat lacking due to never having a regular tutor and being largely self educated. But in English and French poetry, and Roman and English history, his father doubted if any student had a greater mastery of the subject.

Here are some excerpts from that letter, filled with John Quincy's astonishing accomplishments:

It is rare to find a youth possessed of so much knowledge. He has translated Virgil's *Aeneid*, Suetonius, the whole of Sallust, and Tacitus's *Agricola*, his *Germany*, and several books of his *Annals*, a great part of Horace, and some of *Ovid*, and some of Caesar's commentaries, in writing, besides a number of Tully's orations. These he may show you; and although you will find the translations in many places inaccurate in point of style, as must be expected at his age, you will see abundant proof that it is impossible to make those translations without understanding his authors and their language very well.

In Greek his progress has not been equal; yet he has studied morsels in Aristotle's *Poetics*, in Plutarch's *Lives*, and Lucian's *Dialogues*, the choice of *Hercules*, in *Xenophon*, and lately he has gone through several books in Homer's *Iliad*.

In mathematics I hope he will pass muster. In the course of the last year, instead of playing cards like the fashionable world, I have spent my evenings with him. We went with some accuracy through the geometry in the *Preceptor*, the eight books of Simpson's *Euclid* in Latin, and compared it, problem by problem and theorem by theorem, with *le père de Chales* in French; we went through plane trigonometry and plain sailing, Fenning's *Algebra*, and the decimal fractions, arithmetical and geometrical proportions, and the conic sections in Ward's mathematics ..."<sup>6</sup>

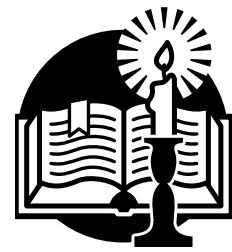
John Quincy Adams enrolled at Harvard law school at age 18, graduating in 1787. He later became an American minister in various European capitals, a U.S. representative and senator, secretary of state, and president.

#### Notes:

1. *The Christian History of the Revolution*, by Verna M. Hall, Foundation for American Christian Education, San Francisco, 1976, p. 602.
2. *ibid.*, p. 603.
3. *ibid.*
4. *The Works of John Adams*, 1854, Vol. IX, p. 532.
5. *The Christian History of the Revolution*, p. 608.
6. *The Works of John Adams*, p. 532.

(From *The Mandate*, Vol 3 No 1 a Chinese publication to reach Chinese students in the USA. By Media House International, PO Box 362173, Melbourne, Florida, USA 32936-2173.)

## In Line With Scripture



**“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.”**

— Proverbs 22:15

### The Corporal Correction of Children, Part

#### 1

by Craig S. Smith

#### We Need More Grandpas

Junior bit the meter man, and then he hit the cook;  
Junior's anti-social now, according to the book.  
Junior smashed the clock and lamp, and then he hacked the tree.  
Destructive trends are treated in chapters two and three.  
Junior threw his milk at mum, and then he screamed for more;  
Notes on self-assertiveness are found in chapter four.  
Junior tossed his shoes and socks out into the rain;  
Negation this, and chapter six says disregard the strain.  
Junior set dad's shirt on fire and upset Grandpa's plate;  
That's to gain attention as explained in chapter eight.  
But Grandpa takes a wooden spoon, pulls junior 'cross his knee;  
(He's read nothing but the Bible since 1933!)

What did Grandpa read in the Bible? He would have read a great deal about how to love, train and discipline children. The other book referred to in the poem was also ostensibly about how to love and train children, but instead of disciplining them, it seemed to emphasise understanding them.

We have here two very different world views which give opposing advice regarding the rearing of children. One world view is found in Grandpa's Bible: that of the Creator God. The other is found in the literature of created humans. In the final analysis, there are only ever these two world views: one from the mind of God, the other from the mind of man (although there certainly is a vast amount of variation in this second one; see also Proverbs 3:5).

Our text says, “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child”. This is a foundational statement about the nature of the child. Jeremiah 17:9 expands on this: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” Children are NOT blank tapes who learn evil from elders, an idea championed by John Locke in the late 1600s. They pick up bad behaviour NOT from the environment, as behaviourists such as B.F. Skinner would advise: it is in their hearts (and in our adult hearts even still) from conception. Children are NOT

little bundles of innocence: they are little bundles of depravity (see Psalm 51:5) and can develop into unrestrained agents of evil unless trained and disciplined according to God's Word. Selfishness, violence, lying, cheating, stealing and other such behaviour are just the child unpacking some of this foolishness from the vast store in his heart. Bad examples such as ungodly parents, siblings, peer groups or television heroes only bring out the worst of the child's innate foolishness and allow the child an excuse for its own bad behaviour...these things do not *cause* the bad behaviour. Each child has its own personalised store of foolishness bound up in its heart. Some seem to have vast amounts of the most amazing variety of dirty tricks, rebellion, manipulation and other forms of selfishness, combined with really cunning and creative ways of inflicting them upon you. Others seem so sweet and innocent all the time. Don't be deceived (which is a weakness of our sinful hearts and minds that takes prominence in situations where we are called upon by our duty to God to rouse ourselves out of the old easy chair and do some unpleasant discipline and training). Visiting us for the first time from the USA 17 years ago, I asked my mum to give her opinion of our child training and discipline practises. She'd observed for some weeks, and we knew we were doing a great job. "You want my true opinion?" she asked ominously. "Well, yes, of course Mom!" "That 3-year-old of yours has you both wrapped around her little finger"!!!! I couldn't believe it! But my mum went on to name example after example of us being pushed around and manipulated by this sweet little girl who we were sure was obedient and respectful in every way. How wrong we were!

The text further says, "but the rod of correction drives it far from him." Three things are immediately apparent: First, a rod is to be used. Second, it is to be used as correction. Third, it is to drive the foolishness out.

The "rod" here may have some reference to ancient symbols of authority or guidance, such as a shepherd's rod or a ruler's scepter. Both are very applicable to this situation, for a shepherd's rod, like a good spanking, is to keep one out of future trouble. And parents, like rulers, must exercise over their children the authority delegated to them, or else be found guilty of abdication, neglect, irresponsibility, etc. A rod is probably not a hand in most cases, though exceptions may have to be made at times.

Spankings are to correct the child, not punish the child. Our culture is quite used to the idea of spankings being referred to as "corporal punishment". This terminology is quite correct in describing the way certain criminals are to be dealt with by the civil government (Deuteronomy 25:1-3). Once public schools came into existence, the teachers, being agents of the civil (secular) government, could not corporeally "correct" to any particular standard (lest they break the secular clause of Section 77), and so simply punished.....usually by caning. It is instructive to note that Section 59 of the New Zealand Crimes Act 1961 (the statute which protects parents from being charged with assault whenever they spank their children) reads as follows:

"59(1) Every parent of a child and, subject to subsection (3) of this section, every person in the place of the parent of a child is justified in using force by way of correction towards the child, if the force used is reasonable in the circumstances.

"(2) The reasonableness of the force used is a question of fact.

"(3) Nothing is subsection (1) of this section justifies the use of force towards a child in contravention of Section 139A of the Education Act 1989."

It says parents are justified in using reasonable force by *way of correction*. This is a legal recognition of a parent's Biblical duty as spelled out in our text. Note: the force used must be reasonable in the circumstances (which appears to include ethnic and familial traditions...see "The Parental Use of Physical Discipline in New Zealand", Parts 1 & 2, *Keystone* Vol. V, Nos. 3 & 4, May & July 1999) and used for *correction*. (Section 139A of the Education Act prohibits anyone from using force "by way of correction or punishment" in any early childhood centre or registered school "unless that person is a guardian of the student or child.")

Spankings are further meant to drive the foolishness, the sinful manifestations, out of the child's personality so that they do not become permanent fixtures. If the foolishness and sin are not driven out, but simply left to simmer inside, what do you suppose happens? The child matures in foolishness and grows into a fool. Read through the book of Proverbs for some sober warnings against such a thing. It is so bad that at one point the Scriptures declare: "He who spares his rod hates his son." (Proverbs 13:24).

The objective behind spanking is to train, to correct, to discipline. It is not retributive, it is not vengeful: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord" (Romans 12:19b). God's law requires the entire community was to take a hand in stoning capital criminals to death — with the exception of parents if it is they who turn their child over to the civil authorities. (Compare Deut. 17:7 with 21:18-21). Parents DO NOT have life and death powers over their children.

Because we each have this foolishness, we can easily identify with our children and help them see it is something we all must struggle with. Our job as parents is to drive the foolishness out until such time as the child can toss it out himself. It is a problem the child and the parent together can point out, identify and deal with together: often children are very perceptive in spotting parental inconsistencies (foolishness), and parents should be thankful — and repentant — when their children do point these things out. We therefore do not label our children "bad"; they and we see that there is bad in them, but with training they will master it.

# Exploring God's Creation



## Naturalistic Explanations Are Hopelessly Inadequate

by Walt Brown

### The Planets and Moons Say No

Many undisputed observations contradict the current theories on how the Solar System evolved. One theory says planets formed when a star, passing near our sun, tore matter from the sun. More popular theories hold that the Solar System formed from a cloud of swirling gas, dust, or larger particles. If the planets and their 63 known moons evolved from the same material, they should have many similarities. After several decades of planetary exploration, this expectation is now recognized as false. According to these evolutionary theories:

- All Planets should spin in the same direction, but Venus, Uranus, and Pluto rotate backwards.
- All 63 moons in the Solar System should orbit their planets in the same sense, but at least six have backward orbits. Furthermore, Jupiter, Saturn, and Neptune have moons orbiting in both directions.
- The orbit of each of these 63 moons should lie in the equatorial plane of the planet it orbits, but many, including the earth's moon, are in highly inclined, or tilted, orbits.
- Since about 98% of the sun is hydrogen or helium, Earth, Mars, Venus, and Mercury should have similar compositions. Instead, much less than 1% of these planets is hydrogen or helium.
- The sun should have 700 times more angular momentum than all the planets combined. Instead, the planets have 50 times more angular

momentum than the sun.

### The Earth Isn't Molten

If the earth formed by gravitational accretion (the infalling of small rocky bodies), heat released by the impacts would have made the earth molten. Had the earth ever been molten, dense, nonreactive chemical elements such as gold, which is almost twice as dense as lead, would have sunk to the earth's core. Since gold is found at the earth's surface, the earth was never molten, and it did not evolve by gravitational accretion. If the earth did not evolve by gravitational accretion, it may have begun in nearly its present state.

### The "Evolution" of Planets

Contrary to popular opinion, planets should not form from the mutual gravitational attraction of particles orbiting the sun. Orbiting particles are much more likely to be scattered or expelled by their gravitational interactions than they are to be pulled together. Experiments have shown that colliding particles are much more likely to fragment than to stick together. Similar comments can be made concerning the improbability that particles orbiting a planet will ever grow into a moon. This is why the particles in the rings of Saturn, Jupiter, and Uranus show no evidence of clumping into larger bodies.

Despite these problems, let us assume that pebble-size to moon-size particles somehow evolved. "Growing a planet" by many small collisions will produce an almost nonspinning planet, since the spins imparted by impacts will be largely self-cancelling. All planets spin, some much more than others.

Growing a large, gaseous planet (such as Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, or Neptune) far from the central star, is especially difficult for evolutionists to explain for several reasons.

First, gases dissipate rapidly in the vacuum of outer



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space, especially the lightest two gases--hydrogen and helium, which comprise most of the giant planets.

Second, because gas molecules orbiting a star do not gravitationally pull in other gas molecules, a rocky planet, several times larger than the earth, must first form to attract all the gas gravitationally. (The hydrogen and helium on Jupiter are more than 300 times as massive as the earth.) This must happen very quickly, before the gas dissipates.

Third, stars like our sun--even those which evolutionists say are young--do not have enough orbiting hydrogen or helium to form one Jupiter.

Based on demonstrable science, gaseous planets and the rest of the solar system did not evolve.

### Origin of the Moon

Naturalistic theories on the moon's origin are highly speculative and completely inadequate. The moon did not spin off the earth, nor did it congeal from the same material as the earth since its orbital plane is too inclined. Furthermore, the relative abundances of its elements are too dissimilar from those of the earth. If the moon formed from particles orbiting the earth, other particles should be easily visible inside the moon's orbit; none are.

One might argue that the moon was captured by the earth or blasted from the earth by an extraterrestrial collision. These events would have placed the moon in a very elongated orbit. Today, the moon is in a nearly circular orbit. Most people, even scientists, do not appreciate the difficulty of placing a satellite in a nearly circular orbit. For an artificial satellite to achieve such an orbit, several "burns" are required at just the right time, in just the right direction, and with just the right thrust. How could this have happened to our Moon? Well, naturalistic evolutionary ideas would propose a highly improbable encounter with another gravitational body near the earth--a body that has since disappeared. Further compounding such an improbability is the need for this to happen to the other 62 moons in the solar system. Worse yet, the tidal forces act to elongate even further the moon's orbit. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the moon (a) was captured, (b) was blasted from the earth by an extraterrestrial collision, or (c) somehow began orbiting the earth billions of years ago. Its orbit is too circular. The only hypothesis left is that the moon was created in its present orbit.

### Moon Recession

As tidal friction gradually slows the earth's spin, the laws of physics require the moon to recede from the earth. This recession has been observed since 1754. Even if the moon began orbiting near the earth's surface, the moon should have moved to its present distance in several billion years less time than the 4.6 billion-year age that evolutionists assume for the earth and moon. Consequently, the earth-moon system must be much younger than evolutionists assume.

### Moon Dust and Debris

If the moon were billions of years old, it should have accumulated a thick layer of dust and debris from

meteoritic bombardment. Before instruments were placed on the moon, some scientists were very concerned that astronauts would sink into a sea of dust--possibly a mile in thickness. This did not happen. Very little space dust and debris is on the moon. In fact, after examining the rocks and dust brought back from the moon, scientists learned that only about 1/67th of the dust and debris came from outer space. Recent measurements of the influx rate of meteoritic material on the moon also do not support an old moon.

### Crater Creep

A tall pile of tar will slowly flow downhill, ultimately spreading into a nearly horizontal sheet of tar. Most material, under pressure, "creeps" in this way, although rocks deform very, very slowly. Calculations show that large, high-rimmed craters on the moon should flow downhill and level out in only tens of thousands of years. Large, steep-walled craters exist even on Venus and Mercury, where gravity is greater, and temperatures are hot enough to melt lead. Most large craters on the moon, Venus, and Mercury are thought to have formed shortly after the solar system formed. These bodies appear to be quite young, since their craters show no sign of "creep".

### Shrinking Sun

Since 1836, more than one hundred different observers at the Royal Greenwich Observatory and the U.S. Naval Observatory have made direct, visual measurements that suggest that the sun's diameter is shrinking at a rate of about 0.1% each century or about five feet per hour! Furthermore, records of solar eclipses indicate that this rapid shrinking has been going on for at least the past 400 years. Several indirect techniques also confirm that the sun is shrinking, although these inferred collapse rates are only about 1/7th as much. Using the most conservative data, one must conclude that had the sun existed several million years ago, it would have been so large that its heat would have destroyed life on earth. Yet, evolutionists say that a million years ago all the present forms of life were essentially as they are now, having completed their evolution that began a thousand million years ago.

During the last 30 years, one of the most perplexing problems in science has been the lack of solar neutrinos. Neutrinos are extremely light subatomic particles produced in nuclear reactions inside stars, including the sun. If all the sun's heat is produced by nuclear fusion, the earth should be bathed in three times as many neutrinos as scientists have consistently measured. However, if much of the sun's heat is due to its shrinking by gravitational collapse, then the lack of solar neutrinos would be explained. But such a gravitational collapse could not have been going on very long.

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<http://www.creation-science.com/>)*

# Tough Questions People Throw Your Way



## How can you stand having your kids around you all day and not be out there seeking your own fulfillment?

by Carol Munroe of Auckland

Home-schooling is so much a part of our lives, it is impossible to imagine what our lives would have been like without it.

When we were first married 20 years ago, we had never heard of the word, but it seems like right from the beginning God laid on our hearts to home educate our children. I just could not bear the thought that at 5 years old a child should leave the influence of home and be exposed for the best hours of the day to a situation totally outside parental control, where morality would be taught (or not), and where God would be considered irrelevant to life. It made no sense for God to entrust children to our care only to have us turn them over to someone else to be a major influence *at five years old!* So we just never sent our first child to school! That was at a time when it was a bit “hippy” to do it, and we were looked askance at for a while.

Now we are at the stage where we are beginning to see some fruits for our labour, and although we have many years to go (our youngest is six), we know that the benefits are there, whereas in times past it was perhaps harder to see. In fact, there are so many advantages in home-schooling it is hard to figure what is most important.

### Life Skills

We found that life skills are learned almost by osmosis. After each child was born the “formal” or bookwork part of our lives fell by the wayside for about six months, as I was just too exhausted to handle my normal routine. But the children learned about how to handle crotchety babies, to be flexible, change nappies and enjoy a new addition to the family. How awful to have to send siblings off to school when a new baby is in the house — all that getting-to-know-you time in the baby stage is lost. At home, it was another part of education — life — that children at school are not exposed to in full measure.

In a home-schooling situation, our children see us warts and all and we can’t hide that from them. It is a constant challenge to model godliness and be the example of Christ to them -- showing patience under stress, calmness under pressure, making decisions based on Biblical principles -- they see it all. We believe that

academics are important, but more important than anything is to build godly character.

One of our children was witness to an argument Mark and I were once having. I have at times “a volatile personality” (politically correct for “bad temper”, due to Irish background and thus beyond my control!!) and this little note was handed up to me. It was a page from a phone message pad, and it read thus:

TO: mummy.

MESSAGE:why are you shouting at daddy all the time?

FROM: andrea

PHONE:478-7696

Everything was filled out nicely although misspelled. It brought us up with a round turn, I can tell you! Mark kept it as one of our “precious things”, a humbling reminder that we are constant examples whether we like it or not. While our children have seen us when we disagree, they have also seen us having a hug in the kitchen, holding hands, laughing together, and standing as one when our backs are against the wall. Consequently they will enter marriage realising that at times couples do disagree — sometimes very strongly - *but what is more important than anything is to talk it through*, and hang in there in the tough times.

Marriage is for life and there is tremendous stress on marriages these days. We want our children to enter marriage knowing that it is “till death us do part”, and we want them to know that every worthwhile marriage goes through hard times and takes work, but they are to be in there for the long haul.

### Relationships

As our children have become teenagers, I have enjoyed a different stage in our relationship, I remember someone saying to us years ago when our children were young - “You wait. They are O.K. now but when they get to be teenagers, you’ll find out all about it”. I half expected them to grow horns on their 13th birthdays, but it never happened! In fact, in a number of ways it is BETTER having teenagers because they can discuss issues and think and work things out -- all the more reason to home-school through the high-school years, because it is that time that their faith takes on real meaning, and they see how the Bible applies to all of life.

A couple of years ago we went through *Understanding the Times* by David Noebel, where every area of life — philosophy, law, biology, politics, etc., was looked at through the grid of a Biblical worldview, and we studied at the same time the other worldviews -- Marxism, Humanism, New Age — and how they have influenced the world in which we live. It is alarming that so much worldly thinking has permeated Christianity, and we are not even aware of it. It was an exciting time discussing these issues with our teenagers and seeing their understanding of the faith deepen as they learned the relevance of the Bible to every area. What thrilled me was seeing the two children arguing points as they tried to nut out what the BIBLE said, where the world influences our thinking, and the need



to yield every thought captive to Christ. We had some very exciting discussions!

Teaching the children at home has enabled us to become good friends with our children. We talk about things, and we as parents are the first port of call in difficulties rather than their peer group. Last year Andrea (16) read Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. I had read somewhere that this book was one of the most significant literary works ever written, so I picked a copy up in a second hand book shop and determined to read it. It was fascinating and I could hardly put it down. Andrea wanted to read it too, being an avid reader from an early age, so I passed it on, and when she finished, asked, "What did you think of it?" Then followed a discussion about the characters in the story, whether Anna was justified in her behaviour, the consequences of sin, double standards, was Anna a hero or antihero, the attractiveness (or repulsiveness) of the other characters, whether life is really like that -- all sorts of perceptions and insights as a result of reading the book.

It crossed my mind later that there would be very few adults that you could have this kind of interaction with, and here is a 16-yr-old understanding it and wanting to learn through it. Where else does that sort of parent-child interaction take place apart through home education?

An exposure to good literature helps a child appreciate quality. This year Andrea enrolled in a full bursary course through correspondence ("I want a challenge, mum!") and one of her subjects is English. She has recently been studying NZ poets and some of the material she calls "disgusting", and "Why do we have to study this stuff?" She has developed an appreciation for the good, and home schooling has allowed us to influence her tastes. I remember reading somewhere that it is not enough merely to keep your children from the bad -- you have to expose them to what is good. (*Children of a Greater God* by Terry Glaspey is an excellent book on this, although some have criticised it as being "too intellectual"). Music has always played an important part of our lives, and our children, naturally, have all developed a love for the classics (and some easy listening) because the music is there and they have grown up with it. None of the children so far has shown any interest in modern "rock" music, because they know that loud noise is not music. At school, even Christian children have been heavily influenced by rock bands without really thinking what kind of things these groups are promoting, just because their peers think it is "cool", and it is unthinkable not to be "cool".

Home-schooling is a calling for the long term just like parenting. In fact, there is not much difference is there? We need to remember that there are "stages" in life, and we cannot -- if ever -- have perfection. This goes for our children as well -- I have learned that there is growth taking place, that what is true now may not be true tomorrow, and behaviour problems can be worked on and maturity is the goal.

### **Character Building**

It used to worry me that our children were quiet, "not outgoing", and they had not had many opportunities to make friends their own age. Adult peer pressure comes into play here. I had been told that David (now 18) was socially immature and it was because he was home-schooled and he needed to go to school to be socially developed! Mark says the next time somebody tells him their children go to such-and-such a school, he will ask them, "What do you do about socialisation?" Our son David will never be a social whiz, but it was interesting at a Church camp where there were children of the same age and home-schooled (similar interests), there was no problem making friends at all. In fact, we hardly saw him! Now, as he is at university, he is always talking about people he has met, and there is certainly no evidence of personality problems because he has been home-schooled. He has taken to it like a duck to water. I heard a while ago a helpful perspective on this "shyness" issue and I mention it because another home-schooling mother shared she had had a similar experience with one of her children, so it is not uncommon. The world has an "ideal" that we must attempt to conform to -- outgoing, life-of-the-party type, good at sport, leader, strong, etc. We need to realise that God deliberately did not make all people like that, and that in fact quieter people sometimes have depths and can be more solid and mature. There is nothing wrong with being quiet, and as home-schoolers we seek to enhance our children's strengths and build their characters with the God given personalities the children have.

### **Enjoying Our Children**

Like all home-schooling parents, we enjoy our children. Sometimes as I am cooking tea and may be a bit tired or pressured this beautiful music comes drifting out through the kitchen as Andrea plays the piano -- our favourite hymns one after another -- God and God Alone, Wonderful Grace, The Servant King, Majesty -- and my heart is lifted with praise and worship as I cannot help but sing. Or coming home and finding Amy(14) has cleaned the whole bathroom without having been asked (she'll fetch a good bride price!), Jonathan (12) cuddling up and holding my hand -- in public! or irresistibly having to join in when he is just rolling on the floor with laughter, little Cam (6) covering my cheek with kisses, saying, "I love you, mum". Children are indeed a gift from the Lord, and home-schooling has enabled us to develop the kind of close relationships and memories that we would never have had if we had chosen to send our children to school. We praise God for the privilege and opportunity it has been.

# Letters



## Something Missing

I cannot help feeling like something is missing in NZ since Diana and the family have left. The experience of meeting Bill and the children was such an encouragement for all H/S families. We were able to get a look at what it is about H/S families that motivates us to carry on through the tough days. There is that saying ... "a family that prays together, stays together" after meeting the Warings, I would like to add ... "a family that learns together, stays together". What an honour to be part of the influence in my 9-year-old's life, and sit next to her while her eyes lit up as she listened to Diana talk of Ancient Civilizations and the Bible! This is what homeschooling is all about, and the Warings and everyone involved in their tour of NZ should be congratulated on reminding us all of this.

Judith Weakley  
Taupo

## Wonderful and Challenging

We are into our 2nd year of home schooling our four children. It has been wonderful and challenging so far but also a very good choice for our family. I have enjoyed Keystone. Thanks for your commitment and very hard work.

D & S Wye  
Blenheim

## Science Fairs

I have been asked by the NIWA Auckland City Science & Technology Fair to alert home schoolers to science fairs. Of particular interest is that the Auckland fair has come to respect home schoolers as a result of some very consistently good participation. Some years ago we had to fight to get home school projects included, but now they are asking me to contact you to make sure you know about it! I can't speak for all fairs - some may not be as open as Auckland, but that openness has come about because of the quality of entries - almost every year for the last four or five years we have had a home-schooler included in the prize list. So anyone interested should get in touch with their local fair. If you don't know where to go, start with the Royal Society's science fair web page: <[www.rsnz.govt.nz/education/science\\_fairs/index.php](http://www.rsnz.govt.nz/education/science_fairs/index.php)> It is very out-of-date, but you will be able to find a local contact there even if it does tell you it is a 1998 list! If you want ideas, here is a good place to start: <[www.egroups.com/group/innovative-teaching/294.html](http://www.egroups.com/group/innovative-teaching/294.html)> I hope later this month to put up some items on our web page about how to do projects. If you want to be notified when that happens send me a message.

Michael Drake - Carey College ph: (09) 570-5873. Email - [mld@carey.school.nz](mailto:mld@carey.school.nz)

(More Letters on page 25)

# Teaching Tips

## Nature Study Drawings

by Michele Moore  
Christchurch



Charlotte Mason's plan that children make a study of nature by drawing the treasures they discover in the outdoors has been most enjoyable for our family. Our skills have improved quickly. We first endeavour to obtain clear line diagrams in pencil, such as are required at university level, with labels written horizontally. We then proceed to colour these carefully with water colour pencils. Afterwards we paint them in with water. This is a far easier technique than traditional watercolour painting, for the wet work can be done inside far more easily than in the field. (We got a set of 24 colours for each child as "The Warehouse" have these now for \$5.99 or less on special.) A true scientific diagram ought to have one or more names of the specimen, the name of the artist, place where it was found (which could be a map reference) and the date. We have found A5 paper a much more suitable size to handle and to fill. Just a small project each time and very satisfying.

# Over a Cuppa

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**CHRISTIAN MAIL ORDER**

Charles Sykes is the author of *Dumbing Down Our Kids*. He volunteered the following advice to high school and college graduates. In his book he talks about how the feel-good politically-correct teachings created a generation of kids with no concept of reality, and set them up for failure in the real world. It seems to me these rules have also been forgotten (or never learned) by many adults.



## What Kids Don't Learn in School:

**Rule 1** - Life is not fair. Get used to it.

**Rule 2** - The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

**Rule 3** - You will NOT make 40 thousand dollars per year right out of high school. You won't be a vice president with a car phone until you earn both.

**Rule 4** - If you think your teacher is tough, wait until you get a boss. He doesn't have tenure.

**Rule 5** - Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for burger-flipping; they called it opportunity.

**Rule 6** - If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

**Rule 7** - Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes, and listening to you talk about how cool you are. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

**Rule 8** - Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life has not. In some schools they have abolished failing grades; they'll give you as many times as you want to get the right answer. This, of course, doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

**Rule 9** - Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off, and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. Do that on your own time.

**Rule 10** - Television is NOT real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

**Rule 11** - Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one

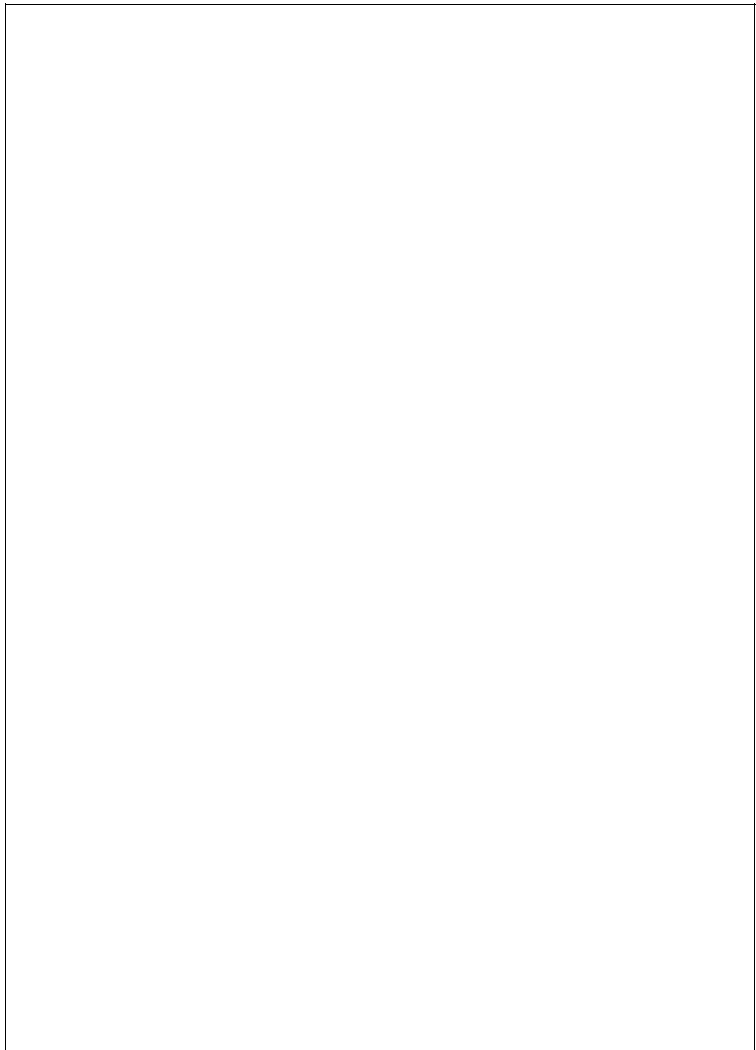
## Garbage in the Salad

If you have spiritual indigestion and a sick testimony, maybe it is because you have allowed too much "garbage in the salad".

One day as a mother was scraping and peeling vegetables for a salad, her daughter came to ask her permission to go to a worldly center of amusement. On the defensive, the daughter admitted it was a questionable place, but all the girls were going. They did not actually think it would hurt them. As the girl talked, she suddenly saw her mother pick up a handful of discarded vegetable scraps and throw them into the salad. In a startled voice she cried, "Mother, you're putting the garbage into the salad!" "Yes," said her mother, "I know, but I thought that if you did not mind garbage in your mind and in your heart, your certainly would not mind a little in your stomach." Thoughtfully, the girl removed the offending material from the salad, and with a brief "Thank you" to her mother went to tell her friends that she would not be going with them.

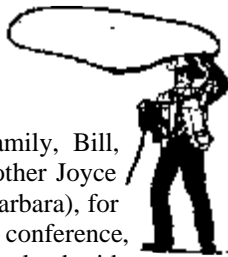
## CHomeS Round Up

### Waring Conference



# in Christchurch

by Chareen Rushworth



We were hosts to the Waring family, Bill, Diana, Isaac, Michael, Diana's mother Joyce and Zach Smith (son of Craig & Barbara), for the weekend of the Christchurch conference, 24-26 March, part of their New Zealand-wide tour.

They arrived at about 5 pm after spending the afternoon at the Antarctic Centre. So it was wolf down our dinner and off to the conference venue. That evening Diana and her three children (Isaac, Michael & Melody) opened our weekend with a beautiful song and then Diana did a work shop called "Beyond Survival". It was wonderful listening to her share her experiences of homeschooling with us. She encouraged us not to try and follow a perfect formula because God has made us all different. Therefore, what works for one family might not work for us. That really set a lot of people free. Sometimes we try and put too many things in little boxes, and that sort of thinking should be avoided in home schooling. So should the thought that "home schooling" is putting school into our homes, for that is not what it is all about. She really encouraged us to enjoy our children as children and stop wishing them into adulthood. She also encouraged us to develop friendships with our children, to take the time to listen to them and to have proper conversations with them. We should give our children our very best and not just save our best for our friends when we have them over. Diana also looked at different ways to structure our home schooling.

It was a great first evening to the conference...in fact, we only got to bed after midnight with us all getting to know each other and having a "jam" session on the guitars.

On Saturday we were responsible for purchasing 22 loaves of bread and 50 litres of milk on our way to the conference. Bill opened the morning doing a workshop called "Different Strokes for Different Folks". He and daughter Melody did a few skits and then launched us into a very interesting time. Very basically, there are four different learning styles, and each of us uses mainly one of these styles to learn.

The first style is the "thinker". They often see everything in black and white and are only interested in the facts. These learners basically learn very well using textbooks and can study on their own. Next he introduced to us the "feeler". These people love the people connection; they need to have others around so they can learn. They best learn history, for example, by reading biographies, and they need to find out how you are before they can get on with the business of learning. Next he introduced us to the "intuitors". These learners always seem to have their minds off somewhere in the clouds thinking of a good idea. They always seem to be changing something and dreaming up new inventions. Bill explained how a good strategy

for parents to cope with such a learner is to have a blank book for them labled "Projects". Whenever they get that far- away dream look, get them to write their idea down and come back to it after they have finished with the current assignment. Next he introduced us to the "sensor". This is the type of learner who needs to take things apart and play with everything before they have learned about it. And to make things a little more complex, each of these four types of students usually favours one of three ways to absorb information, namely: sight, hearing or touch.

There were two Question and Answer Panels after morning tea, and after lunch Diana did a workshop called "History via the Scenic Route". In this she showed us we can look at history by skipping quickly over the top of the bare facts, as you do in a typical textbook; or we can take our time and get to know the real people that lived then by way of biographies. To make it even more accessable, we can incorporate the five senses (i.e., sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste) on our journey through history. For example, with taste we can make a period dish for dinner. Later Diana did another seminar, "Ancient Civilizations and the Bible". This was my favourite as she gave us an historical over-view in chronological order of many of the discoveries of ancient civilizations that confirm the authenticity of the Bible. She helped us stop and think about what our Bibles say about those times in history.

We then had dinner (which was my responsibility). We had a barbeque tea and salads. God was faithful and multiplied the food so we had enough to go around which took a huge weight off my shoulders. Diana went home to rest as she puts so much into her presentations that she was exhausted. That evening we had a young peoples' panel. This was very interesting as there were students aged between 15 - 26 who were home schooled and now busy in universaty or Polytech or have completed their studies and now had jobs. We asked them all sorts of questions, and they lay all our fears to rest as to how our children will get into tertiary education, etc.

On Sunday we all went to church, came home for lunch and then were off to tour Willowbank and show our guests kiwis which was wonderful. That evening we shared about life in Africa and went to bed late.

The relaxed timetable of the conference allowed for the teenagers to go sailing Monday morning and for us to have lunch together before going to the conference. First up was a panel that afternoon called "What We Wish We'd Known". That was interesting. We broke for afternoon tea and then Diana did a workshop called "The Hilarious Homeschool". This was fun as she spoke about teaching your family healthy humour and laying ground rules, such as never make humour at someone's expense and don't pick on other cultures in the sense of put down and making out that you are better. She told heaps of funny stories and put us all at ease about teaching our families healthy humour.

Our final session was called "Unlocking the Middle

Ages". This too was an interesting workshop as she gave us many tidbits of interesting information and really encouraged us to look at history as a vehicle for studying everything else since everything happened in a time frame of history.

Diana and her children finished with two songs and it was home and bed. We all came away encouraged and happy with the time spent together.

Diana has a website: [www.dianawaring.com](http://www.dianawaring.com) where one can read her Highly Irregular Newsletter. Bill and Diana have authored two good books namely *Beyond Survival* and *What We Wish We Knew*, both recommended reading. They have also co-authored a few curriculum resources.

These resources and books are available in New Zealand from Christian Education Services in Auckland (55 Richards, Ave., Forrest Hill). You can also subscribe to the Diana Waring History Alive email discussion group at [dwha@egroups.com](mailto:dwha@egroups.com).

## Bill & Diana Waring's Farewell Address: A Snapshot of Home Education in NZ

*(abridged and edited transcript of 1 April address)*

### **Veterans & Servants**

Diana: You have a number of veteran home schoolers in NZ, and that's good news. These kind of folks have a lot to share with you: a lot of experience, a lot of wisdom, success stories. You also have servants in the home school community. There are people that we've met around the nation who are willing to work on behalf of other home schooling families; who are willing to say, "Sure, I'll organise a support group; sure I'll put on a conference", who are willing to spend a lot of extra time in sitting down to talk to people just thinking about home schooling, support group leaders, people willing to organise camps and do all that work; so you have servants here in NZ. I'd like to encourage you to appreciate them, to say thank you, to recognise what they're doing, and to encourage you to become one of those servants for the home schooling community as well.

### **Dad's Teaching Their Passions**

Something that seemed typical is the home schooling dads who we saw who were teaching their passions to their children: teaching them what they did, having them come alongside and working with them. We saw examples of this over and over and over again. You home schooling dads: take advantage of the opportunity to introduce your children to those things which you love. Whatever it is, take them along, let them grow with you. Invest yourself in your children. We've seen dads doing it and it's wonderful.

### **Parents Who Really Like Their Children**

I've seen moms who really like their children. Now

this isn't exclusive to NZ, but it really was precious. In so many of the homes we stayed in, you could just see such an enjoyment of the children.

### **High Turnover Down Under**

The statistics for New Zealand show that there are about 1,000 who start home schooling each year and about 1,000 who drop out each year. Most of those 1,000 who quit probably are not graduating from home school. They jump in and then they jump out. I would like to encourage you to see the long-term effects and benefits of home schooling. It's just like planting a seed. How long does it take to get it from the seed to the fruit, like an apple? It takes a long time, but is it worth it? Absolutely.

### **Well-Functioning Families**

We've seen families who function together as families, who absolutely have fun together as families, who work together, who share together, who eat together, who prepare food together, who clean up the house really quickly before the guests arrive together, who say, "Sure we don't mind if you have our bedroom." Everything is together. It is the essence of home schooling.

### **Unfounded Fear over Paper Qualifications**

Another concern we have, reflected in a lot of the questions we have had, is to do with School Cert, bursaries, qualifications, how do you get into university. What we've seen is a lot of fear. You are like pioneers in getting the universities and employers to look at your home schooled students. We have met some of the young people in NZ who don't have bursary and don't have School Cert and are doing fantastically. They are getting into universities and getting into programmes you are not supposed to be able to get into. In the USA we've seen every major university open their doors and change the requirements for home schoolers. And they love home schoolers because our kids have learned how to think and how to work independently. They do very well in university situations. They do very well in the work place. And they do very well in starting up their own businesses, by the way.

Bill: In the States we've seen parents go to jail because they wanted to home school. You in New Zealand don't have to face that.

Diana: You just need to teach employers and universities what home schoolers are. It's not a them and us, it's a matter of they don't understand, they don't know us

### **Supportive Support Groups**

We've seen in NZ support groups who really support each other in wonderful ways. Support groups are really helpful...when you're honest and work with each other. Look for opportunities to serve each other. Look for a chance to encourage one another. We all need encouragement, we all go through times when we think one has to be crazy to do this

### **Maori Home Schooling**

I was really excited to meet some Maori families home schooling. When in the US I talked to a pastor who works with Native Americans, and he felt that home schooling was going to be a powerful tool for good among the Native Americans. I think home schooling is the most powerful thing to happen in families in the last couple of hundred years. It's restoring people. It's restoring children. It's restoring parents in all kinds of ways. We've seen that here and I'm very excited about it.

Bill: Encourage your Maori neighbours. They have a tremendous uphill battle in home schooling. You who are not Maori are free to do whatever you want. You have several generations behind you of those saying, "Be pioneers, do your thing, be strong." The Maori population has several generations behind them saying, "Get along, put your kids in school so they can get that education, learn the language, 'Walk into the future backwards' as it is commonly expressed, doing things in a certain way because this is how we've always done them." So support your brown neighbours. Help out. They have an uphill battle that you don't face. They've got strengths and things they offer that you'll never understand. They've got strengths they bring to your community that are unique. Kia ora.

Diana: I want to talk about Craig and Barbara (Smith) for a minute, because what you have in them are full-time advocates working on your behalf with the MoE and the ERO, watchdogs if you will of what's going on in Parliament, staying up on all that stuff, And they condense it down in the *TEACH Bulletin*. The *Keystone* magazine that these two put out, in my mind is head and shoulders above any other home schooling magazine in the world. It's far better than anything in the US. And I've read them all...*Keystone* is the only one I enjoy.

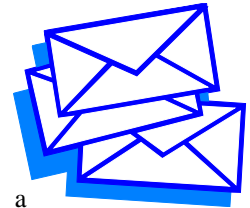
Craig and Barbara have volunteered their services for a number of years. They're doing this full-time now, but they only can do it as people like you support them by subscribing to *TEACH Bulletin* and *Keystone* and just sending in gifts of love saying thanks for working for us. So you have remarkable laws, remarkable freedoms for home schooling, and remarkable people defending you.

Craig: As many of you pioneers would know, there are servants out there among the home school community the like of which we just can't get over. New Zealanders really are a breed apart, who'll just give their shirts off their backs. We've just seen that over and over again.

Barbara: We might have informed people, but it's been the work that you out there have done that's kept the climate here in New Zealand the way it is.... representing *yourselves* in Parliament and with all the different agencies.

Diana: As a final thing, thank you. Thank you for letting these crazy Americans come and talk to you; for receiving us. I remember the first weekend I was here you guys laughed at my jokes! This is cool! I just

# Letters



## Appreciation

You guys are doing such a fantastically great, brilliant and amazing job - I really appreciate your commitment, leadership and passion.

Mary Anne Abplanalp  
Auckland

## Thank You

Just a quick note to say "THANKYOU" so much for all your pioneering work within New Zealand's homeschooling circles. Our family joined the homeschooling fraternity at the beginning of this year, with our 13 year old son, Sam (soon to be followed by his younger brother, I suspect!). I attended the workshop at Windsor Park last Saturday and actually sat in on the session you both facilitated with Mary-Anne Abplanalp & Carol Munroe.... it was inspirational .... THANKYOU.

But what was also so special for me that day (being one term old in the homeschooling adventure), was to be amongst all those wonderful, diverse people; to listen to and enjoy the Waring family; and to catch a glimpse, through their acknowledgement and affirmation of you two, just what a significant contribution you have made to homeschooling and the right to homeschool in New Zealand. I feel we are travelling far more smoothly "in the wake" of your commitment and passion - THANKYOU for all your "ice-breaking" work over all the years and as you continue .... we are indebted to you.

Loran Reid  
Auckland

really have appreciated the way you have responded to our family, you've let us come into your heart, you've come into our heart. We'll never be the same. Thank you for letting us come and be a part of this. We are honoured and privileged to be here. It has been unbelievable.

# Theologically Speaking



## “The Safest Place to Be Is in the Centre of God’s Will”

(The following is taken from the Presbyterian Network, and was written by Rev T A McKeown. Editor Craig Smith gives some implications for home schooling and home school families in the next column.)

Rev McK — I am a missionary in Colombia, South America. As you might expect, I receive lots of questions and comments related to security and safety on the field. Someone once said that “the safest place to be is in the centre of God’s will”, and I frequently hear this expression within missionary circles in Colombia as well as from some of our supporters.

However, after studying Scripture, and ministering in this context for many years, I have felt compelled to modify this saying for my own use: “The most fulfilling, joyful and peaceful place to be is in the centre of God’s will”. But it is not necessarily the safest.

It seems to me that the Bible is full of examples of God’s people *often* - not occasionally - being placed in unsafe, uncomfortable, and dangerous situations. Take the life of the Apostle Paul. He was shipwrecked at least twice, almost drowned and unjustly imprisoned. He received multiple floggings almost to the point of death, was stoned and left for dead once, mobbed and let down over the wall in a basket at night. He was afflicted by a bothersome “thorn in the flesh” and was even bitten by a poisonous snake while trying to dry out by a campfire after a shipwreck! And then there is the case of our Lord Jesus, who was betrayed by his own disciple, taunted, ridiculed and nailed to a cross on our behalf.

I was present at a missionary meeting held within days of the release of two missionaries who were kidnapped in Colombia about 10 years ago and held for some 60 days. The main message that these two brothers in Christ communicated to us, after having read the whole Spanish New Testament to each other over and over again (five times if I remember correctly) during their captivity, was the overwhelming amount of danger and suffering experienced by God’s people in the Bible. They expressed surprise at the way this new message jumped out over and over to them during their captivity. And these men were neither novice missionaries, nor new Christians.

I often hear people pray for my safety and that of my family despite the fact that I have repeatedly asked them that they do not focus so much on our “safety” but on our “faithfulness” in whatever circumstances our Sovereign God might call on us to minister. Most prayers in Scripture focus not on the safety and personal benefit of believers but on the power, majesty, testimony and victory of God over His - and of course

our - enemies.

Biblical reality dictates that there are indeed times in which God will lead us into the valley of the shadow of death, where our prayer needs to be for our faithfulness as reflections of His light and saltiness in this needy world.

I want to urge my fellow Christians to use extreme caution in allowing the infectious and deadly “health, wealth, prosperity and personal comfort Gospel” to become our motivator in seeking His will for our earthly lives. The Lord calls us to obedience in spite of the costs - not to personal comfort and safety! Oh how I pray for the Lord of the harvest to raise up more labourers to go into His fields no matter what the personal costs might be.

Ed. Smith — The present Queen Elizabeth II never went to school. She was privately tutored, *groomed* from her earliest days *specifically* to become the ruling Monarch of a world-wide Empire. You have to admit, she is one of the best in public decorum, dress, bearing, diplomacy, never putting a foot out of place. Not so her children. What a disastrous mob! But then, they all attended schools where they were groomed for...well, just observe their lives.

We Christians have the responsibility to groom our children for lives as Ambassadors for Christ, appointments with global responsibilities and eternal consequences. A safe calling? A cushy number? How cushy is it to bear the *message* of reconciliation to the people who are at fault...telling them they are condemned sinners? How safe is it to try to *minister* this reconciliation to those who violently hate the light and who scramble for the darkness whenever the light of Christ exposes them...especially when this exposing light is shining forth from the very life of the one trying to minister? Do we think the training of our children for this ambassadorship is going to happen all by itself? No. We have to get serious and realise that the stakes are too high, that the time is too short. The God we serve has already paid a vast price to secure us as His own so that we would do the job. Every child can make tremendous progress with masses of one-to-one time. Even young minds, because they are created by, and in the image of, the Ultimate Mind, are surely capable of far more than we normally imagine. Just read a few biographies of some heroes of the Faith. (See page 7). Yes, these minds are corrupted by sin, and therefore, like the rest of the child, the mind needs consistent discipline. Are we so occupied? Or are our efforts directed toward helping our children secure the kind of lifestyles that are approved by and fit in with our surrounding culture: materialistic, insular, hedonistic? Let us not fritter away the time, but rear children who are two and three times more active, capable and effective...and fearless...than we are. If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31).

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