

# Keystone

The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers

of New Zealand

Vol. VII No. 3

May 2001

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



Featured Family  
Ian & Dorothy Brown  
Douglas (26), Leanne (19), Steven (24)



## 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.

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

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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.**

# Editorial



I guess we all make them: but I made a biggie in the last issue of *Keystone*, March 2001: I chopped off the last part of the Jellick family profile!! Sorry Mike & Margy. (I've since seen them and apologised in person, and they were very gracious in their understanding of fallible folk like me!) So there are their last two paragraphs:

Home schooling for me is a passion, but I won't tell other people they have to do it or should do it because it has to be for them not me. We are all different. I would find it very hard if my children put their children in school, but I realise they have to believe it's right. I will encourage people all I can if they are interested or struggling, but I don't believe you can say, "you must". My children have helped me as I have helped them. They have encouraged, supported and helped physically as well as emotionally. They have helped me believe in myself. Through the trial of teenage years I used to wonder, "Would we get through?" Just never give up. The world says send them to university to get qualifications and important jobs and travel, but at the end of the day, do these things count? I have a brother who lives in New York, has travelled the world, has an esteemed job and fabulous pay, but does it make him perfectly happy? No. Why should they have to move away to mature, or gain qualifications to feel important, or have great pay to feel worth while? I'm not saying don't do these things, but they are not the be all and end all.

I just hope that all the wealth of information I have gained through home schooling will be of help to others. I hope I have encouraged you in your home schooling. Home schooling is a golden opportunity for your family. Don't accept silver or bronze.

Also in the last issue of *Keystone*, page 18, it read, "Author and Source Unknown". In fact the author was New Zealand's Michael Drake of Carey College in Auckland, and the article can be found at <http://careycollege.com/education/biblicalfoundations/?id=225>. Carey College has developed a thoroughly Christian curriculum by Kiwis, for Kiwis and it is available free of charge on their website: [www.careycollege.com](http://www.careycollege.com), or home educators can sign up for this academically challenging course via their Correspondence Programme. Carey College is at 21 Domain Rd., Panmure, Auckland 1006, ph. +64 9 570-5873, [mld@carey.school.nz](mailto:mld@carey.school.nz).

A live-in Conference exploring Worldviews, defining what constitutes a Biblical one, how to identify your own and why they are so important is planned for Auckland, 7-12 April 2001. Further details to come!

# Contents

## Feature Family

Ian & Dorothy Brown.....p. 5

## The Faith of Us Fathers

Hold Your Family Together.....p. 7

## Learning Disabilities

The Winning of Little Lynny, Pt. 1.....p. 8

## Bits of Books

Duties of Parents by J.C. Ryle, Part 2.....p. 11

## Home Educators Did It

The Taplins of Whangamata.....p. 13

Bernie Vaatstra the Vet.....p. 14

## Exploring God's Creation

Could Noah's Ark Hold All  
the Animals?.....p. 14

## Keystroke

When Is a Student Computer  
Literate?.....p. 16  
NZ Home Education Websites.....p. 16

## Theologically Speaking

Smorgasbord Theology.....p. 18

## Home Education Research

Homeschooling and the Redefinition  
of Citizenship, Part 2.....p. 19

## Teaching Tips

More Than Music.....p. 21  
Learning to Read and  
Reading to Learn.....p. 23

## Over a Cuppa

God's Love is Not a Dog's Love.....p. 24

**It is no coincidence that limitations on the power of the state proceeded with the advance of Christian civilization in the West. It is also no coincidence that the decline of Christianity throughout that culture is accompanied by growing statism and a loss of liberty while license for immorality is offered in its stead. Sin blinds men even to the distinction between liberty and license.**

Mark Rushdoony, "Their Minds Were Blinded",  
*Chalcedon Report*, May 1994.

**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 New Zealand 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 six-page newsletter comes out 11 times a year (none in December) for an annual subscription of NZ\$16 or two years for NZ\$30.

**The Home Education Foundation** is a charitable trust established to serve, promote and strengthen the home education community in New Zealand. Since November 1998 the Foundation has contracted Craig & Barbara Smith (whose six children are all totally home educated) to serve the home education community full-time. They are continuing to build on their volunteer work since 1986 in the areas of publishing (such as *Keystone* and *TEACH Bulletin*), counselling, correspondence with politicians and educationalists, lobbying, researching issues of concern to home educators, running National Leadership Forums (annually since 1996) and National Christian Home Education Conferences (six since 1987), initiating the National Home Education Awareness Week, moderating five home education email discussion groups, producing media releases, speaking at local seminars, hosting overseas speaker tours, and networking among local support groups and with overseas home schooling organisations. Their efforts are conducted under the eye of the Home Education Foundation's Trustees and a Board of Reference which represents 21 locations all over New Zealand.

The Home Education Foundation, Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand and the projects they take on are supported entirely by home educators subscribing to *Keystone* and/or *TEACH Bulletin*, investing in a TimeChart or making tax-deductible donations either by cheque, credit card or by automatic bank payment (ask us for a form). The Foundation can also be supported through Telecom and Clear who both give a percentage (5% & 2.5% respectively) of your toll bill to the Foundation, *painlessly and without costing you an extra cent!* Telecom subscribers can ring 0800 724 665 and ask to support the Home Education Foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Telecom's "School Connection" Programme. Clear subscribers can ring 0508 888 800 and ask to support the Home Education Foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Clear's "Friends of the School" Programme. Please ring today!

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# Feature Family



## Ian & Dot Brown of Loburn

We are the Brown family from North Canterbury. We are Ian and Dorothy, Douglas, Steven and Leanne. Granny and Granddad live in a cottage (built by home educators) out the back. You can also add in Inspire, Star and Winnie (the dogs), along with a dozen sheep and 30 odd chickens. Throw in the turkeys, wild ducks and 9 cows and we have a very large family. We will, however, try and limit this piece to the initial five human members of the group.

Dorothy's family came to New Zealand from South Africa back in the early 1960s. She later went to Sydney, Australia, to attend the Nazarene Bible College there. She completed a Diploma in Theology (distinction) with an emphasis on education. While in Sydney she met and later married Ian Brown, a local also attending the Bible College. He was studying for a Diploma in Theology (honours & distinction), after which he was ordained as a Minister. After a time in Sydney they came across to New Zealand to assist in a church in Christchurch. We never went back and are now living in Loburn, North Canterbury, where we are kept occupied with biblical counselling, preaching and working with home educators.

We have 3 children, 2 boys and a girl. Our eldest is now 26, with the other son 24 and daughter 19.

We have officially been home educating for 15 years. It was way back in 1987 when we took our two sons out of school and decided that we would educate them at home. Our daughter Leanne was 5 at the time and had not yet started school. That, however, was not our first go at home education.

Our first brush with home schooling was in 1982 when our sons' first school closed down when the teacher became pregnant with her second child! It was a very small school, only 15 students at its biggest, and the boys only attended between one and three days a week. Even with this small amount of attendance the boys were well ahead of those their same age, both doing classwork 3 years ahead of their age.

Although not wanting to send our boys to another school, home education was almost unheard of at the time. Nevertheless, we gained an exemption and began to home educate them. Only a couple of months later the boys were back in school after a well meaning (but wrong) teacher friend convinced us that his school was the right place for them to be. Ian had no concern as to whether they were home educated or went to school, so off they went. Looking back we now realise how important it is for the father to have a conviction that the children be home educated. Having a conviction

about it means that the mother will usually get the support she needs. Although Douglas and Steven only stayed at that school six weeks (it was that bad) they didn't get back to home education until just over four years later.

At the end of 1986 Leanne was 5 years old and had undergone operations to regain her hearing. As a 5 month old she had gone deaf and had 2 operations to recover it. This had delayed her development and combined with learning disabilities made her unready for school. At the same time, Steven was attending both school for his everyday schooling and SPELD for help in overcoming his learning disabilities. This had so caught our attention that Ian became active in the running of SPELD, becoming Treasurer and then National Vice-President of the organisation. He spent many days in Wellington before select committees advocating greater assistance for children with learning disabilities. Having seen how schools coped with learning-disabled children gave us very little confidence in their ability to effectively teach either Steven or Leanne.

The younger two got exemptions from school at the beginning of 1987, and Douglas followed after one term of secondary school in the same year. Douglas was given an exemption to work rather than the usual exemption from attending school. The only stipulation was that he was not allowed to work in a factory until he was 15. This was when he was 12! Leanne has never been to school, an achievement that is becoming more common these days but still unusual in that she is now 19.

One thing that was noticeable was how quickly their friends dropped off. Living in the country as we do, there is always going to be some driving to see friends, but even the boys' good friends soon disappeared. For us this was not a problem as we saw the bad effects of school wear off and nice young boys come through. Having been asked the "socialisation" question more times than we care to remember, we have come to the conclusion that it really is irrelevant. Until children are much older (mid-teens), our experience has taught us that the children do not really need much company with other children. In fact, the kids spent more time with adults than with children. We saw this reflected in the greater maturity and confidence of our (and others who did this) children, as well as their ability to converse with everyone from toddler to octogenarian with equal ability.

We started up with a home-made curriculum by just going into Whitcoulls and buying books that seemed suitable. That first term was really enjoyable, but when we took Douglas out at the end of it we panicked. We thought high school must be difficult to teach. So we looked around for a curriculum to use, and as we only knew of ACE that went that high, we went onto it.

For our boys this was a disaster. We found it to be too repetitive and it didn't suit us at all. As the course was so much self-administered by the boys, we found that Dorothy was turned into a policeman rather than a teacher. When the boys quickly became bored with it,

it became a matter of ensuring that the work assigned got done, come what may. This went on for a year to 18 months, by which time we had become tired of the struggles to get the boys to work, so we changed courses.

We began to use ABeka and Bob Jones University text books. These turned out to be wonderful, especially the ABeka texts. We decided to allow the boys to follow their own interests. With a little guidance the boys soon took off in both the amount of work done and their love of learning. Without really knowing it, we were doing an almost unschooling approach, while maintaining some semblance of structure.

At one point Douglas, our resident night owl, was beginning his school work at 9pm and continuing through to 1am. He loved this approach, and his amount of learning continued to grow. In fact at times both boys outstripped our own knowledge in some areas.

This did not bother us much as we had found out soon after finishing ACE that the boys were able to source information for themselves, both becoming proficient in using both a library and other people as information sources. At this time the local National Library allowed us to take boxes of books out at a time, and the boys spent hours each day reading. Most of the rest of the day was spent playing out on the farm or down the river at our bottom farm boundary!

About this time we also had the boys working around the farm and the home. Early on both sons gained experience in many of the jobs that needed doing, such as fencing, mustering, raising pigs and bobby calves. This developed their sense of responsibility and dependability. In addition they were well trained in household work, something they still do to this day! The whole family worked first thing in the morning (not too early though!) to get the house and farmwork done, and this was repeated in the early evening.

Around 1989 we attended an Institute in Basic Life Principles Seminar, conducted by Bill Gothard. We enjoyed this and were intrigued to hear of their home education programme. We decided to go onto it, despite having little information, and became one of the first six families in Christchurch to join ATI. The boys enjoyed the wisdom booklets, and the areas of learning they encouraged us to look into, as we did also. Leanne was not so enthusiastic about it as the level of learning was beyond her abilities at the time.

We stayed on ATI for six years, at which time we felt led to leave and pursue other forms of teaching Leanne. By this time both boys were working and were unable to continue with it. Now only schooling Leanne, we followed an eclectic programme of subjects that have interested her or been needed by her. Our resource range has been broad, using ideas or books as they came to light or became necessary.

We have finally come to the realisation that a set curriculum is not needed to be successful home

educators. If there is a library nearby and knowledgeable friends around you, it is easy to home educate. Understanding this has, nearing the end of educating our own children, made us far more relaxed in our approach to teaching our children.

This year Leanne has been undergoing a programme of brain repatterning run by Essential Learning Systems that has had noticeable success already, and we are hopeful that her disabilities will be less of an influence on her in the future.

While home educating our children, we have felt it very important to be involved in supporting other home education families. Because of this we have spent a great deal of time in organising, running and assisting with home schooling events and groups. We were founding members of Canterbury Home Educators, with Dot being the first President. We now help run the South Island Home Educators, giving information and support around the South Island.

It has been our experience that this has been extremely enriching, if sometimes frustrating, and we encourage everyone to become involved with a local group of home educators. In our view those home educators that get together on a regular basis not only gain more from their own home education, but they tend to not get discouraged and send their kids back to school.

We have also seen the benefit of including children in the organisation and presentation of home education events. This has given the children experience in organisation as well as letting other families see just what home educated children are capable of. It is our experience that children who have been home educated for a good part of their school life are far more capable in all areas than an average school pupil.

Douglas is interested in most things. He is particularly fascinated with global politics, history of all kinds, people and sports. He has played soccer on and off since he was 9, as well as working at public speaking from the same age. For him this has been the equivalent of playing a musical instrument. He completed the exams set by the New Zealand Speech Board through his teenage years, gaining Honours in his Grade 8 exam. For this exam he was also awarded the New Zealand Speech Board Scholarship, which is awarded to the best Grade 8 or Associate level performance exam of the year.

He started full time work for our insurance brokerage in 1990, doing his school work in the evening. This continued until 1995 when the business was sold, and Douglas went onto a law course run by ATI. This took him to the USA and beyond. He completed the first year of this course but found himself not wanting to continue. Over the next three years he was able to visit the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Russia and Germany at various times, concluding with a 4 month stint of work experience with a law firm in Dublin. At the beginning of 1998 he returned home to

*(Continued on page 26: Brown)*

# The Faith of Us Fathers



## Hold Your Family Together

by Craig S. Smith

The Industrial Revolution took dad away from the home where he traditionally worked with the entire family on the family business. Community Schools and then State funded Compulsory Schooling took the children away from home for longer and longer periods of time each day and for more and more weeks each year. Social pressure, increased mobility and erratic economic opportunities separated the nuclear family from the extended family, especially the grandparents. State subsidised Early Childhood Educational institutions supported by aggressive promotional campaigns drew the little ones out of the home. At last it was Feminism and the pressures of the economy that took even mum away from her home. I was a door to door salesman, wholly dependent on commission sales for an income, for 13 years until 1995. I can tell you honestly that I didn't bother to start knocking on doors until 3:30pm each day, for prior to that time there simply was no one at home. Our cities have many streets lined with lovely houses — but all of them empty for much of the day.

It is rare to find a family unit where each member draws strength and purpose from being part of that larger entity (the family) perceived by each member to be of more worth than him or her self. The politically correct propaganda of egalitarianism has transformed the definition of "family" in some quarters to a mere *ad hoc* collection of individuals — such as flatmates even, with no legal or blood ties at all — wherein each demands his or her own rights and autonomy.

Christian families composed of Mum and Dad (who are legally and happily married) and their natural and/or adopted and/or fostered children are becoming increasingly uncommon. Then to find such an entity living in the same town as both sets of grandparents and any other relatives, all of whom are on more than just speaking terms, where the grandparents would never dream of sporting the bumper sticker that reads, "We're spending our grandchildren's inheritance", is most unusual indeed. And should a Christian family actually find itself in such an advantageous position, what is most likely to be its lifestyle? The children are at school and after school activities, and Mum and Dad are run ragged each week with various church and community commitments on top of their regular jobs. Even on Sunday the children are often off to creche, children's church or Sunday school, or sitting with their friends in the back pews and then off to join the youth outreach. Hands up those who remember seeing an entire family sitting all together for an entire worship service? Such separation is demonstrably unhealthy for the

family unit. Many of us have difficulty seeing exactly why this is so, for we have very little idea of the forceful powerhouse an integrated family unit could be, since few of us have ever seen one in action. I've only seen wee glimpses....but enough to whet my desire to see more.

If our family experience is anything to go by, there is a direct relationship between time spent with the family as a whole and family harmony and happiness. My mother is 77 years old. She has lived and travelled extensively on every continent except Antarctica. Yet those 14 months she spent on the road, being recently widowed, with every thing that meant anything to her — us five children and those possessions we could carry in the VW Combi — were the happiest and most carefree of her whole life. We five siblings developed from a pack of squabbling brats who fought each other at every opportunity into a well-organised team who could find directions, secure lodgings and buy groceries in four different languages and tote our own considerable volume of belongings (while holding the 2-year-old's hand) from vehicle to hotel room in one trip!

Our 9-year-old is a particularly good barometer of family unity. When we are too busy to spend a good amount of focussed time with him, he acts up. Oh, he is great at absorbing the "I'm too busy right now" line without causing a problem, for he understands the pressure of deadlines. But he also knows a fob-off when he gets one, and he then becomes a right royal pain. It is usually then we notice that those daily rituals of all being present at meals, not answering the phone during the devotions, washing dishes together, reading aloud together, having some daily formal and/or informal instruction time, etc., have been either totally abandoned or compromised beyond recognition. Re-establishing them also re-establishes sanity and harmony and security and happiness.

One ritual we established a few years ago was to have devotions after every meal, not just once a day, and to include the singing of Psalms & hymns. This has at times, when I have been sharp enough and with it enough to capitalise on the opportunity, allowed for our family as a unit to discuss eternal truths, debate current events, face and weep over personal shortcomings, evaluate Biblical ways of dealing with conflicts, etc.

Another ritual we took up with great gusto was for me to read to the children in the evenings. Let me tell you, it is very exciting to see a 20 year old daughter and an 18 year old son getting out sewing or model kits in eager preparation for an extended time of listening to their "old man's" voice. It puts the battle over the "tyranny of the urgernt" ("I've really got too many deadlines facing me to spend an evening reading"), and over the conflict between "the one and the many" ("I was looking forward to spending some time alone, not entertaining a crowd") into perspective....especially now that those two older ones are gone overseas. What happened to all those plans I had of things I was going to do with them but never had time for?

Make time for your children, dads. Cultivate an attitude as in Longfellow's poem below. Plan in the time, guard it jealously, so that, as it says in Psalm 127:5, you will not be put to shame when you speak with your enemies in the gate, for your children will all be standing shoulder to shoulder there with you.

### The Children's Hour

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Between the dark and the daylight,  
When the night is beginning to lower,  
Comes a pause in the day's occupations  
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me  
The patter of little feet,  
The sound of a door that is opened,  
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,  
Descending the broad hall-stair,  
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,  
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:  
Yet I know by their merry eyes  
They are plotting and planning together  
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,  
A sudden raid from the hall!  
By three doors left unguarded  
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret  
O'er the arms and back of my chair;  
If I try to escape, they surround me;  
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,  
Their arms about me entwine,  
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen  
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
Because you have scaled the wall,  
Such an old moustache as I am  
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,  
And will not let you depart,  
But put you down into the dungeons  
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,  
Yes, forever and a day,  
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,  
And moulder in dust away!

# Learning Disabilities



## The Winning Of Little Lynny (Part 1)

By Tom and Sherry Bushnell

[The Bushnells run NATHHAN, a support organisation in the USA for Christian families home educating children with special needs. Their daughter Lynny was born to a 14-year-old Indian girl who had been raped by her brother. When contractions started, she was told to leave the cardboard and palm leaf shack and not to come back with a baby. The only place she knew to go for help was a Christian mission home where she delivered the baby girl, but soon left taking baby along. Before going home she put the baby in a ditch, dropped a large rock on her head and fled. A farmer found the baby next morning and took her to a Christian orphanage who named her Gauri. She was diagnosed as blind and possibly deaf and was released for adoption.]

Our family had 4 boys and had adopted Sheela, who is blind, from India. We prayed about getting a sister, who was also blind, for Sheela.

With 8 miscarriages over the last 5 years in order to have our last son, we had gone through infertility testing and progesterone injections for 11 weeks. It had

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## The Duties of Parents (Part 2)

John Charles Ryle  
of Liverpool, 1816-1900

*Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*—Proverbs 22:6

### IV. Train with this thought continually before your eyes — that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered.

Precious, no doubt, are these little ones in your eyes; but if you love them, think often of their souls. No interest should weigh with you so much as their eternal interests. No part of them should be so dear to you as that part which will never die. The world, with all its glory, shall pass away; the hills shall melt; the heavens shall be wrapped together as a scroll; the sun shall cease to shine. But the spirit which dwells in those little creatures, whom you love so well, shall outlive them all, and whether in happiness or misery (to speak as a man) will depend on you.

This is the thought that should be uppermost on your mind in all you do for your children. In every step you take about them, in every plan, and scheme, and arrangement that concerns them, do not leave out that mighty question, "How will this affect their souls?"

Soul love is the soul of all love. To pet and pamper and indulge your child, as if this world was all he had to look to, and this life the only season for happiness — to do this is not true love, but cruelty. It is treating him like some beast of the earth, which has but one world to look to, and nothing after death. It is hiding from him that grand truth, which he ought to be made to learn from his very infancy — that the chief end of his life is the salvation of his soul.

A true Christian must be no slave to fashion, if he would train his child for heaven. He must not be content to do things merely because they are the custom of the world; to teach them and instruct them in certain ways, merely because it is usual; to allow them to read books of a questionable sort, merely because everybody else reads them; to let them form habits of a doubtful tendency, merely because they are the habits of the day. He must train with an eye to his children's souls. He must not be ashamed to hear his training called singular and strange. What if it is? The time is short — the fashion of this world passeth away. He that has trained his children for heaven, rather than for earth — for God, rather than for man — he is the parent that will be called wise at last.

### V. Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible.

You cannot make your children love the Bible, I allow. None but the Holy Ghost can give us a heart to delight in the Word. But you can make your children acquainted with the Bible; and be sure they cannot be acquainted with that blessed book too soon, or too well.

A thorough knowledge of the Bible is the foundation of all clear views of religion. He that is well-grounded in it will not generally be found a waverer, and carried about by every wind of new doctrine. Any system of training which does not make a knowledge of Scripture the first thing is unsafe and unsound.

You have need to be careful on this point just now, for the devil is abroad, and error abounds. Some are to be found amongst us who give the Church the honour due to Jesus Christ. Some are to be found who make the sacraments saviours and passports to eternal life. And some are to be found in like manner who honour a catechism more than the Bible, or fill the minds of their children with miserable little story-books, instead of the Scripture of truth. But if you love your children, let the simple Bible be everything in the training of their souls; and let all other books go down and take the second place.

Care not so much for their being mighty in the catechism, as for their being mighty in the Scriptures. This is the training, believe me, that God will honour. The Psalmist says of Him, "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name" (Psalm 138:2); and I think that He gives an especial blessing to all who try to magnify it among men.

See that your children read the Bible reverently. Train them to look on it, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, written by the Holy Ghost Himself — all true, all profitable, and able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

See that they read it regularly. Train them to regard it as their soul's daily food — as a thing essential to their soul's daily health. I know well you can not make this anything more than a form; but there is no telling the amount of sin which a mere form may indirectly restrain.

See that they read it all. You need not shrink from bringing any doctrine before them. You need not fancy that the leading doctrines of Christianity are things which children cannot understand. Children understand far more of the Bible than we are apt to suppose.

Tell them of sin, its guilt, its consequences, its power, its vileness: you will find they can comprehend something of this.

Tell them of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His work for our salvation — the atonement, the cross, the blood,

the sacrifice, the intercession: you will discover there is something not beyond them in all this.

Tell them of the work of the Holy Spirit in man's heart, how He changes, and renews, and sanctifies, and purifies: you will soon see they can go along with you in some measure in this. In short, I suspect we have no idea how much a little child can take in of the length and breadth of the glorious gospel. They see far more of these things than we suppose.

As to the age when the religious instruction of a child should begin, no general rule can be laid down. The mind seems to open in some children much more quickly than in others. We seldom begin too early. There are wonderful examples on record of what a child can attain to, even at three years old.

Fill their minds with Scripture. Let the Word dwell in them richly. Give them the Bible, the whole Bible, even while they are young.

## **VI. Train them to a habit of prayer.**

Prayer is the very life-breath of true religion. It is one of the first evidences that a man is born again. "Behold," said the Lord of Saul, in the day he sent Ananias to him, "Behold, he prayeth" (Acts 9:11). He had begun to pray, and that was proof enough.

Prayer was the distinguishing mark of the Lord's people in the day that there began to be a separation between them and the world. "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:26).

Prayer is the peculiarity of all real Christians now. They pray — for they tell God their wants, their feelings, their desires, their fears; and mean what they say. The nominal Christian may repeat prayers, and good prayers too, but he goes no further.

Prayer is the turning-point in a man's soul. Our ministry is unprofitable, and our labour is vain, till you are brought to your knees. Till then, we have no hope about you.

Prayer is one great secret of spiritual prosperity. When there is much private communion with God, your soul will grow like the grass after rain; when there is little, all will be at a standstill, you will barely keep your soul alive. Show me a growing Christian, a going forward Christian, a strong Christian, a flourishing Christian, and sure am I, he is one that speaks often with his Lord. He asks much, and he has much. He tells Jesus everything, and so he always knows how to act.

Prayer is the mightiest engine God has placed in our hands. It is the best weapon to use in every difficulty, and the surest remedy in every trouble. It is the key that unlocks the treasury of promises, and the hand that draws forth grace and help in time of need. It is the silver trumpet God commands us to sound in all our necessity, and it is the cry He has promised always to attend to, even as a loving mother to the voice of her

child.

Prayer is the simplest means that man can use in coming to God. It is within reach of all — the sick, the aged, the infirm, the paralytic, the blind, the poor, the unlearned — all can pray. It avails you nothing to plead want of memory, and want of learning, and want of books, and want of scholarship in this matter. So long as you have a tongue to tell your soul's state, you may and ought to pray. Those words, "Ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2), will be a fearful condemnation to many in the day of judgment.

Parents, if you love your children, do all that lies in your power to train them up to a habit of prayer. Show them how to begin. Tell them what to say. Encourage them to persevere. Remind them if they become careless and slack about it. Let it not be your fault, at any rate, if they never call on the name of the Lord.

This, remember, is the first step in religion which a child is able to take. Long before he can read, you can teach him to kneel by his mother's side, and repeat the simple words of prayer and praise which she puts in his mouth. And as the first steps in any undertaking are always the most important, so is the manner in which your children's prayers are prayed, a point which deserves your closest attention. Few seem to know how much depends on this. You must beware lest they get into a way of saying them in a hasty, careless, and irreverent manner. You must beware of giving up the oversight of this matter to servants and nurses, or of trusting too much to your children doing it when left to themselves. I cannot praise that mother who never looks after this most important part of her child's daily life herself. Surely if there be any habit which your own hand and eye should help in forming, it is the habit of prayer. Believe me, if you never hear your children pray yourself, you are much to blame. You are little wiser than the bird described in Job, "which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear" (Job 39:14-16).

Prayer is, of all habits, the one which we recollect the longest. Many a grey-headed man could tell you how his mother used to make him pray in the days of his childhood. Other things have passed away from his mind perhaps. The church where he was taken to worship, the minister whom he heard preach, the companions who used to play with him — all these, it may be, have passed from his memory, and left no mark behind. But you will often find it is far different with his first prayers. He will often be able to tell you where he knelt, and what he was taught to say, and even how his mother looked all the while. It will come up as fresh before his mind's eye as if it was but yesterday.

Reader, if you love your children, I charge you, do not let the seed-time of a prayerful habit pass away unimproved. If you train your children to anything, train them, at least, to a habit of prayer.

## VII. Train them to a habit of always speaking the truth.

Truth-speaking is far less common in the world than at first sight we are disposed to think. The whole truth, and nothing but the truth, is a golden rule which many would do well to bear in mind. Lying and prevarication are old sins. The devil was the father of them — he deceived Eve by a bold lie, and ever since the fall it is a sin against which all the children of Eve have need to be on their guard.

Only think how much falsehood and deceit there is in the world! How much exaggeration! How many additions are made to a simple story! How many things left out, if it does not serve the speaker's interest to tell them! How few there are about us of whom we can say, we put unhesitating trust in their word! Verily the ancient Persians were wise in their generation: it was a leading point with them in educating their children, that they should learn to speak the truth. What an awful proof it is of man's natural sinfulness, that it should be needful to name such a point at all!

Reader, I would have you remark how often God is spoken of in the Old Testament as the God of truth. Truth seems to be especially set before us as a leading feature in the character of Him with whom we have to do. He never swerves from the straight line. He abhors lying and hypocrisy. Try to keep this continually before your children's minds. Press upon them at all times, that less than the truth is a lie; that evasion, excuse-making, and exaggeration are all halfway houses towards what is false, and ought to be avoided. Encourage them in any circumstances to be straightforward, and, whatever it may cost them, to speak the truth.

I press this subject on your attention, not merely for the sake of your children's character in the world — though I might dwell much on this — I urge it rather for your own comfort and assistance in all your dealings with them. You will find it a mighty help indeed, to be able always to trust their word. It will go far to prevent that habit of concealment, which so unhappily prevails sometimes among children. Openness and straightforwardness depend much upon a parent's treatment of this matter in the days of our infancy.

# Home Educators Did It



## The Taplins of Whangamata

by Alan & Vicky Taplin

Our son Scott, 17 years old, homeschooled for 5th & 6th form. Scott used the ACE programme for the first year, and then when he turned 16 in March 1999, swapped to unit standards through the Correspondence School as an adult student. In January 2000 we approached the one-and-only autoelectrician in Whangamata and he was interested in taking on an apprentice. Scott worked for a three month trial period and was then accepted into the Hamilton Polytech pre-apprenticeship six month programme in automotive engineering. This was despite having very little in the way of formal qualifications. A big plus was Andrew (Scott's employer) guaranteeing Scott one work experience day a week (paid) and a job at the end of the course if his marks were satisfactory. Scott was also able to show that he had been involved in a wide variety of community activities (e.g. Surf Lifesaving, Air Training Corp, Touch Rugby) and had a good employment record in his part time work over the last five years. Being a small town (4,500) means that your character and work habits are well known and probably count for more than the ability to acquire academic qualifications, especially in this line of work. Scott had planned to go to university to pursue his passion for computer work, but is pleased to have been offered the apprenticeship -- he sees this as a stepping stone and intends to specialise in electronics within the autoelectrical field. He has been very motivated on his course to date and achieving 100% in most of his tests - knowing that he is guaranteed a position at the end of the six months is probably a good incentive to work hard.

Bevan, our 15 year old, found homeschooling a drag when it came down to school work, not helped by using the ACE programme -- he knew there would always be another book to do when he had finished that one! He has been homeschooled from Form 2. This year we applied for another exemption in order for him to attend a local Hospitality course. He enjoys the social interaction and hands-on type of work. However he is hugely influenced by the other, more worldly type of student on the course and we have paid the cost in social and anti-family terms. His catch cry seems to be FREEDOM. At present he has completed Level 2 and is working on Level 3. We are encouraging him to enrol next year at either Hamilton or Auckland polytechnics in order to complete a qualification as a chef. Entry criteria for the course here was practically non-existent, and because he is only 15, he does not pay any fees for the course. Nor does he receive an allowance. (Scott has a student loan for his fees, but because he is not yet 18 does not receive any allowance

either.)

We received some good advice a couple of years ago to tap into the community's resources and establish contact with potential employers. This has worked well for both the boys. For our family, the academic outcome of homeschooling has not been as important as being able to instill in the boys a healthy work ethic and community involvement and responsibility. Time will tell how well established that is.

We have a daughter who has just turned 5 and she is missing the boys during the day. We had thought she would be better off at school so she would have more interaction with children her own age, but after 2 days, changed our minds very quickly!

### **Bernie Vaatstra of Dunedin**

Looking back from the closing stages of second year vet science, getting into vet school here at Massey, Palmerston North, was rather more straight forward than I had imagined it might be.

The initial stages involved getting some high school qualifications at the end of my home school days, and no little apprehension on my part, as I had no idea of acceptable standards of learning. However, my parents had everything in hand and sent first my elder brother Justin (home educated since 13), and later myself (at home since age 11) all over the country to sit S.A.T. exams (run by the American College Board). My fears were further allayed when Justin gained entry into law schools in Wellington, Christchurch and Otago with no trouble at all.

On excellent advice from my folks, I spent the next year working, living at home with my whanau in Dunedin. When many moons had passed, I made initial contact with Massey student services: "Sorry mate, but we don't usually accept S.A.T.s and to my knowledge we've never had any homeschoolers at Massey." This didn't infuse me with a great deal of confidence. I applied anyway, and with my S.A.T.s in English, maths, physics, chemistry and biology, was accepted with equivalent status. So much for the Massey information desk.

The next step was to make the 40 or so students who are selected out of around 225 for the full BVSc after first semester. I have to say that at this stage, the benefits of home education were apparent. It teaches one to be self-motivated about study and to work things out without constant supervision. I noticed that a lot of the students fresh out of high school were thrown off-balance by the sudden change in teaching techniques, whereas this is exactly what I was used to. I made it into BVSc, and looking back now, I can see that despite my concerns along the way, God laid it all in place. I am most grateful to my wonderful parents, with their example of perseverance and hard work, prayers and encouragement, and to everyone in my Church here in Palmy, as they made my transition from home to the wide world that much easier.

# Exploring God's Creation



## **Could Noah's Ark Hold All the Animals?**

by Stanley E. Taylor and Paul S. Taylor

A growing number of scientists believe that geological evidence indicates our world has undergone a catastrophic flood. This is causing them to question whether or not the Biblical account of Noah's ark could be true. Many people are rereading the Biblical description of the Ark to ascertain the feasibility of such a vessel to fulfill its designated purpose in light of present day knowledge of both zoology and our present day knowledge of shipbuilding.

### **How Big Was Noah's Ark?**

"And God said unto Noah... Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and thou shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of... the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make in the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it." (Genesis 6:14-16)

Most Hebrew scholars believe the cubit to have been approximately 18 inches [0.457m] long. This means that the ark would have been 450 feet [137.25m] long, 75 feet [22.88m] wide and 45 feet [13.73m] high. Noah's Ark was said to have been the largest sea-going vessel ever built until the late nineteenth century when giant metal ships were first constructed. Its length to width ratio of six to one provided excellent stability on the high seas. In fact, modern shipbuilders say it would have been almost impossible to turn over. In every way, it was admirably suited for riding out the tremendous storms in the year of the flood.

These dimensions are especially interesting when compared to those given in the mythical, Babylonian account of the Ark. Here the ark is described as a perfect cube, extending 120 cubits [180 feet or 54.5m] in all directions and with nine decks. Such a vessel would spin slowly round and round in the water and from the standpoint of stability, would be a disaster.

### **Was the Ark Big Enough to Hold the Number of Animals Required?**

The total available floor space on the ark would have been over 100,000 square feet [9,302.5m<sup>2</sup>], which would be more floor space than in 20 standard-sized basketball courts.



The total cubic volume would have been 1,518,000 cubic feet [43,069.6m<sup>3</sup>] -- that would be equal to the capacity of 569 modern [USA] railroad stock cars.

Now comes the question, how many land dwelling air breathing animals would have had to be taken aboard the ark to survive the flood?

According to Ernest Mayr, America's leading taxonomist, there are over 1 million species of animals in the world.

However, the vast majority of these are capable of surviving in water and would not need to be brought aboard the ark. Noah needed to make no provision for the 21,000 species of fish or the 1,700 tunicates (marine chordates like sea squirts) found throughout the seas of the world; or the 600 echinoderms including star fish and sea urchins; or the 107,000 mollusks such as mussels, clams and oysters; or the 10,000 coelenterates like corals and sea anemones, jelly fish and hydroids; or the 5,000 species of sponges, or the 30,000 protozoans, the microscopic single-celled creatures.

In addition, some of the mammals are aquatic. For example, the whales, seals and porpoises. The amphibians need not all have been included, nor all the reptiles, such as sea turtles and alligators. Moreover, a large number of the arthropods numbering 838,000 species, such as lobsters, shrimp, crabs and water fleas and barnacles are marine creatures. And the insect species among arthropoda are usually very small. Also, many of the 35,000 species of worms as well as many of the insects could have survived outside the Ark.

### **How Many Animals Needed To Be Brought Aboard?**

Doctors Morris and Whitcomb in their classic book, *The Genesis Flood*, state that no more than 35,000 individual animals needed to go on the ark. (In his well documented book, *Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study*, John Woodmorappe suggests that far fewer animals would have been transported upon the ark. By pointing out that the word "specie" is not equivalent to the "created kinds" of the Genesis account, Woodmorappe credibly demonstrates that as few as 2,000 animals may have been required on the ark. To pad this number for error, he continues his study by showing that the ark could easily accommodate 16,000 animals.)

But, let's be generous and add on a reasonable number to include extinct animals. Then add on some more to satisfy even the most skeptical. Let's assume 50,000 animals, far more animals than required, were on board the ark, and these need not have been the largest or even adult specimens.

Remember there are really only a few very large animals, such as the dinosaur or the elephant, and these could be represented by young ones. Assuming the average animal to be about the size of a sheep and using a railroad car for comparison, we note that the average double-deck stock car can accommodate 240 sheep. Thus, three trains hauling 69 cars each would have

ample space to carry the 50,000 animals, filling only 37% of the ark. This would leave an additional 361 cars or enough to make 5 trains of 72 cars each to carry all of the food and baggage plus Noah's family of eight people. The Ark had plenty of space.

The bigger problem would have been the construction of the Ark. But the Bible indicates that Noah did this under Divine guidance and there is no reason to believe he did not hire additional workmen.

### **How Were the Animals Gathered?**

Another enormous problem some have posed is the problem of gathering specimens of each kind of air-breathing land animal and bringing them aboard the Ark. However, the Genesis account indicates that God gathered the animals and brought them to Noah inside the ark two by two. Some have suggested this may have involved the origin of animal migratory instincts or, at least, an intensification of it. We also know that most animals possess the ability to sense danger and to move to a place of safety.

### **How Could Noah's Family Take Care of All Those Animals?**

Once aboard, many have suggested that Noah's problems really began, with only 8 people to feed and water, to provide fresh air and sanitation for the huge menagerie of animals for a total of 371 days. However, a number of scientists have suggested that the animals may have gone into a type of dormancy. It has been said that in nearly all groups of animals there is at least an indication of a latent ability to hibernate or aestivate. Perhaps these abilities were supernaturally intensified during this period. With their bodily functions reduced to a minimum, the burden of their care would have been greatly lightened.

### **Conclusion**

It is evident, when all the facts are examined that there is no scientific evidence that the Biblical account of Noah's ark is a myth or fable. The facts support the view that Noah's ark was large enough to carry the number of animals required to repopulate the earth after the flood and that Noah and his family were capable of caring for the animals during their time on the Ark.

(Adapted from the motion picture *The World That Perished*, produced and distributed by Eden Communications. Used with permission from ChristianAnswers.Net, as downloaded 16 March 2001 from <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-eden/edn-c013.html>.)

# Keystroke



## When Is a Student Computer Literate?

by Michael B. Eisenberg &  
Doug Johnson

There seems to be clear and widespread agreement among the public and educators that students need to be proficient computer users -- students need to be "computer literate". However, while districts are spending a great deal of money on technology, there seems to be only a vague notion of what computer literacy really means.

- ★ Can the student who operates a computer well enough to play "Doom" be considered computer literate?
- ★ Will a student who has used computers in school only for running tutorials or an integrated learning system have the skills necessary to survive in our society?
- ★ Will the ability to do basic word processing be sufficient for students entering the workplace or post-secondary education?

Clearly not. In too many schools, most teachers and students still use computers only as the equivalent of expensive flash cards or electronic worksheets. The productivity side of computer use in the general content area curriculum is neglected or grossly underdeveloped (Moursund, 1995).

There are, however, some encouraging signs concerning computers and technology in education. For example, it is becoming increasingly popular for educational technologists to advocate integrating computers into the content areas. Teachers and administrators are recognizing that computer skills should not be taught in isolation, and that separate "computer classes" do not really help students learn to apply computer skills in meaningful ways.

A meaningful, unified computer literacy curriculum must be more than "laundry lists" of isolated skills, such as:

- ★ knowing the parts of the computer
- ★ writing drafts and final products with a word processor
- ★ searching for information using a CD-ROM database.

While these specific skills are certainly important for students to learn, the "laundry list" approach does not provide an adequate model for students to transfer and apply skills from situation to situation. These curricula address the "how" of computer use, but rarely the "when" or "why". Students may learn isolated skills and tools, but they will still lack an understanding of

how those various skills fit together to solve problems and complete tasks. Students need to be able to use computers flexibly, creatively and purposefully. All learners should be able to recognize what they need to accomplish, determine whether a computer will help them to do so, and then be able to use the computer as part of the process of accomplishing their task. Individual computer skills take on a new meaning when they are integrated within this type of information problem-solving process, and students develop true "computer literacy" because they have genuinely applied various computer skills as part of the learning process.

### Note:

Moursund, D. (1995, December). *Effective practices (part 2): Productivity tools*. "Learning and Leading With Technology", 23(4), 5-6.

(This ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) Digest was prepared by Michael B. Eisenberg, Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology and Professor of Information Studies, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, and Doug Johnson, District Media Supervisor for Mankato Public Schools, Mankato MN. Used with permission. ERIC: <http://ericir.sunsite.syr.edu>)

### NZ Home Education Websites

#### General:

[www.home.school.nz](http://www.home.school.nz)

[www.homeschooler.co.nz](http://www.homeschooler.co.nz)

#### **Trade & Exchange:**

[www.voyager.co.nz/~asmith/homeedu.htm](http://www.voyager.co.nz/~asmith/homeedu.htm)

#### **Support Groups:**

##### **Whangarei**

[www.bearlogic.co.nz/whesg](http://www.bearlogic.co.nz/whesg)

##### **Hamilton**

[www.geocities.com/heartland/vista/2702/](http://www.geocities.com/heartland/vista/2702/)

##### **Canterbury**

[www.mysite.xtra.co.nz/~homeeducation/](http://www.mysite.xtra.co.nz/~homeeducation/)

### NZ Email Discussion Groups

#### **Christian Classical home EDUCATION NETWORK**

[www.egroups.com/group/ccednet](http://www.egroups.com/group/ccednet)

#### **Christian Home Educators NETWORK**

[www.egroups.com/group/chednetnz](http://www.egroups.com/group/chednetnz)

#### **Christian Unschoolers of NZ**

[www.egroups.com/group/taughtofthelord](http://www.egroups.com/group/taughtofthelord)

#### **Curriculum Swaps**

[www.egroups.com/group/harvest-curric-swap-nz](http://www.egroups.com/group/harvest-curric-swap-nz)

#### **Diana Waring History Alive**

[www.egroups.com/group/dwha](http://www.egroups.com/group/dwha)

#### **Home Education Foundation NETWORK**

[www.egroups.com/group/hefnetnz](http://www.egroups.com/group/hefnetnz)

#### **LDS Home Educators**

[www.egroups.com/group/ldshomeedinnz](http://www.egroups.com/group/ldshomeedinnz)

#### **NZ Home Education**

[www.egroups.com/group/nzhe](http://www.egroups.com/group/nzhe)

#### **NZ Unschoolers**

[www.egroups.com/group/nzunschoolers](http://www.egroups.com/group/nzunschoolers)

#### **Radical Unschoolers of Aotearoa**

[www.egroups.com/group/R\\_U\\_A](http://www.egroups.com/group/R_U_A)



# Theologically Speaking

## Smorgasbord Theology

by Craig Smith



When we started home education, we wanted to teach the various subjects from Biblical presuppositions and perspectives rather than from the state humanistic party line used in the public schools (the “Secular Clause”, Section 77). For example, Maths became a study of God’s orderly and rational character: the mathematical systems are not human *inventions*, but are human *discoveries* of a part of God’s revelation. He is proven to be the sovereign of all when it is found that maths can be used perfectly to describe every aspect of the creation, from the micro world to the macro world of interstellar space. That is why we describe the cosmos as a “universe” rather than a “multiverse”....there is a demonstrable unity throughout all the known cosmos, a unity that is *predictable* down to centimetres and seconds, as in a satellite rendezvous with distant planets and moon landings. Now if maths is only a human invention, used to impose order on the chaos around us, there is no logical reason for this invention to so perfectly apply and predict events on other planets.

(Dr Remo J. Ruffini, physicist at Princeton University, reacted to the successful landing of men on the moon thusly: “How a mathematical structure can correspond to nature is a mystery. One way out is just to say that the language in which nature speaks is the language of mathematics. This begs the question. Often we are both shocked and surprised by the correspondence between mathematics and nature, especially when the experiment confirms that our mathematical model describes nature perfectly.” Dr Ruffini openly admitted that the mystery could be solved by positing the Biblical God. But to him this explanation was unacceptable.)

Anyway, to know what Biblical presuppositions even are, we have to know the Bible fairly well. But then we found that different Bible study helps would approach the Bible differently....that is, they had different presuppositions about the Bible!! Aaarrggghhh! We had already been frustrated by that kind of thing: I grew up in a Methodist church and went back to one for a few years after being converted. We attended several Baptist and Presbyterian churches. We were among the Open Brethren for 14 years. We are now with the Reformed Church of NZ. These various churches approach the Scriptures in very different ways, I can assure you.

One day I heard someone say that most Christians had a “smorgasbord” theology, a bit of this, a bit of that, but nothing *comprehensive, complete and cohesive*. It immediately struck me how that perfectly described my own theology at the time, and certainly that of most

Christians I knew. I began a search for whatever was the counterpart to “smorgasbord” theology and discovered “systematic” theology. In this view one does not toss out all the old teachings and doctrines of the past simply because they are old. Instead, one takes the view that surely the Church of God here on earth, the Body of Christ, has learned *something* over these last two thousand years. Surely there are some basic things that we Christians don’t have to re-invent with each new generation of believers.

This view led various Reformers in history to write out statements or “confessions” of what constitutes a proper doctrine or Biblical understanding of God, of man, of the Fall, of Sin, of the Trinity, of Christ, His humanity, His divinity, salvation, justification, sanctification, church government, church discipline, proper worship, etc, etc. That is, they produced “creeds” and “statements of faith” which are fairly *comprehensive*, fairly *complete* and fairly *cohesive*. One church we were with for a while refused to have written creeds, saying they were merely the words of men (which is true: creeds are not inspired as are the Scriptures). These good people would say things like, “No creed but Christ”, and yet the congregation would be torn apart when some members would display gifts of the spirit or wander off into immorality or simply ask for an explanation as to why we baptise this way and not that way....the leaders just didn’t know the answers nor apparently where to start looking!

Actually, it seems to me many churches these days shy away from that kind of thing a bit, that is, accepting a written creed or statement of faith: something containing a logically presented, categorised and systematic breakdown of what the Scripture teaches on any particular subject. The fear includes the idea that such statements might cause divisions, or one aspect or another might be offensive to someone who might then leave. I have to laugh at this! It is the same as saying, “Doctrine divides, but love unites.” That in itself is a statement of doctrine! Doctrine is inescapable: we all believe something and should be able to “confess” what it is, that is, write it down in a clear, concise fashion.

As parents we must avoid presenting to our children a muddled, unclear or confusing picture of Who God is or what He requires of us as we take our children through the Bible. We need to study hard so that we will not be ashamed of our Bible knowledge and understanding before our children, and so that we may not be ashamed before God but instead *rightly* handle the Word of truth (II Timothy 2:15).

There is a lot of good material out there to help you come to grips with a consistent overview of what the Bible teaches. There are several Statements or Confessions of Faith by the Baptists, and buying one that has a commentary with it is very helpful. I think that the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Reformed all subscribe to one degree or another to documents such as the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. These lay out in very orderly and logical

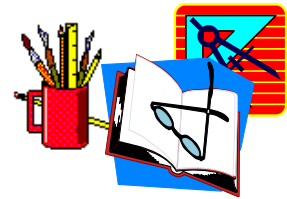


fashion the basic teachings of Scripture on the various items listed above. Again, getting a copy that has a good commentary with it is a great way to come to grips with these doctrines. There are also books on systematic theology from various theological perspectives. One I found exceptional for its clarity and brevity is "A Summary of Christian Doctrine" by Louis Berkhof (Banner of Truth, ISBN 085151 0558).

Brother Andrew (God's Smuggler) of Open Doors was quoted in the *Challenge Weekly* of 3 April 2001, "Our big need as Christians, and evangelicals in particular, is that we don't even know how to verbalise our faith in God when the Muslims challenge us with questions about who our God is. This is appalling. This is such an extreme poverty. Praise God for the Heidelberg Catechism! How many people know about this Confession of Faith today? In my view it is the most eloquent expression of the faith that we have had throughout the centuries." These confessions and statements of faith help us to see how the whole of the Bible hangs together, they help us to see the wider implications of the Scripture to the whole of life, to every area of our lives. These are not to replace the Bible, but only to help us more accurately understand the incredible breadth and depth of the Scripture's application to every area of our private, social and national lives. They are excellent spiritual reference books.

Smorgasbord Theology: it just seems that the Scripture should not be viewed in that way, especially when the Lord Jesus Himself says, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by *every* word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4 see also Psalm 119:160). Anyway, I found that to have more than a smorgasbord theology meant doing a lot of work in reading and researching and comparing the various theological views around. Which one is the most accurate? Which seems most faithful to the whole of Scripture? These are difficult questions, but we must realise that we all, that is, each one of us, does have a theological point of view. It is inescapable. It can simply be one we picked up from tapes and sermons and our own Bible reading (a smorgasbord theology), or it can be one we have diligently sought out from all those on offer out there, conscientiously studied and now held as a personal view, one we can articulate to others, one we are ready to defend: and one we are explaining to our children, so that they will not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but will know precisely *what* they believe and *why* they believe it. Such is our duty to our children: to train them up "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4, RSV); to teach them God's commandments diligently all day every day (Deuteronomy 6:6-7); to impart to them a systematic rather than a smorgasbord theology. For the Lord and His Word are not composed of many unrelated bits chosen by us, but are like His tunic gambled for at the Cross: a precious whole, without seam, woven from top to bottom. (John 19:23-24).

# Home Education Research



## Homeschooling and the Redefinition of Citizenship (Part 2)

by A. Bruce Arai  
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### Elitism

Homeschoolers have also been accused of being elitist. The argument takes one of two forms. The first one is that the current public system is in disarray, but parents have a duty to try to improve that system to make it better for all children. Taking a child out of school may be fine for that one student, but it does nothing to improve the situation for all of the other children who are left in school. Homeschooling then, is an ungenerous act because those parents who choose it are shirking their duty to the other families who stay in the system (Menendez, 1996). In addition, if middle and upper class parents leave the school, this removes active and concerned parents who might otherwise fight for improvements. Occasionally, this criticism takes on a class or ethnic dimension as well. That is, homeschooling may be a viable solution to poor schools for middle and upper class families with a stay-at-home parent, but it is not an option for the lower classes where both parents must work in order to survive. Since ethnic minorities are over-represented in the lower classes, homeschooling is a way for ethnic elites to protect the education of their own children while abandoning children from other ethnic backgrounds.

A second version of the elitism criticism of homeschooling is that homeschooling can only be done by parents with high levels of education. The argument is that homeschooling may work for the well-educated elites because they have the ability to teach their kids at home. But for people who don't have high levels of education, they must rely on the public school system (Menendez, 1996). Again, this is a way for elites to maintain privilege. The interesting thing about both versions of the elitist argument is that its implications for the public school system contrast sharply with the socialization arguments above (see *Keystone* Vol 7, No 2, March 2001). In the socialization arguments, school was seen as superior to homeschooling while in the elitist argument school is viewed as inferior to the home, at least for elites.

### Higher Education

Another worry of critics of homeschooling is that homeschooled kids will be disadvantaged in their abilities to apply for post-secondary education opportunities. This criticism is different from all of the other criticisms because it is a concern that is shared by homeschoolers. The argument from the critics is that

homeschoolers will not have the credentials (namely a high school or equivalent diploma) to apply for college, trade school or university. Therefore, homeschooled children will be forced either to go to school anyway to earn these credentials, or to demonstrate their abilities through some other means. This can prove difficult because most post-secondary institutions have little or no experience or interest in evaluating the qualifications of homeschooled applicants. Again, the criticism is that children will be punished for unwise parental decisions.

### Citizenship and Choice in Education

All of the above criticisms of homeschooling are really concerns about parental choice in education, and the conflict between parental rights and state rights in education. Worries about coping in the real world, getting along with others, working for the common good rather than individual privilege and being able to contribute to society through higher education are all based on a vision of what good citizens do. Because of this, they are also concerns about citizenship and whether or not homeschoolers will fit into the larger society in the proper ways.

One of the most sophisticated arguments against parental choice in education, including the choice to homeschool, is Eammon Callan's (1997) *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (see also Callan, 1995). Callan's argument stems from the ongoing debates in political philosophy concerning the nature of rights, democracy, rationality, fairness and justice, and how we can construct schools which promote these principles. He argues that a true common school, in which all students receive a common curriculum, with some reasonable departures, provides the best way of ensuring a vibrant sense of citizenship among present and future generations. This sense of citizenship is built around the virtues of a critical tolerance of diversity, the power of rational thought and argument, and commitment to a defensible moral code. Citizens who develop these graces will have an understanding of the world which will give them the freedom to choose how they live their life, which is the ultimate aim of the liberal democratic state. Moreover, it is through common schooling that these attributes are best developed. As Callan wrote,

Schooling is likely the most promising institutional vehicle for that understanding since the other, extra-familial social influences that impinge heavily on childrens' and adolescents' lives -- peer groups, the mass media of communication and entertainment -- do not readily lend themselves to that end (Callan, 1997, p. 133).

Callan has in mind a very particular form of schooling here which he refers to as "schooling as the great sphere" (Callan, 1997, p. 134). This is a form of schooling in which children are helped to explore the world and in the process they acquire the abilities to decide for themselves how and where they wish to live in that world. Callan further argues that schooling as

the great sphere should be mandatory for all children, except in some clearly defined circumstances. The reason is that the preservation of a liberal democratic state depends on it. As he wrote,

The need to perpetuate fidelity to liberal democratic institutions and values from one generation to another suggests that there are some inescapably shared educational aims, even if the pursuit of these conflicts with the convictions of some citizens. (Callan, 1997, p. 9)

This is reminiscent of the early mandate of public education systems to provide the people of the country with the skills to allow them to become proper citizens. The key question concerning homeschooling, then, is when is it permissible to not send a child to a common school. Callan has argued that parents have a right to keep their children out of school in only two circumstances. The first is when a parent's right to freedom of association with their children would be jeopardized by sending them to school. If the teachings of the common school would so alienate a parent from a child that they could no longer sustain an adequate parent-child relationship, then the state must allow these parents to keep their children out of a common school. The second situation is when a community creates a separate educational system which helps preserve the integrity of that community. For example, if a distinct community was able to construct a set of educational institutions, and these institutions were necessary to preserve the integrity of that community, then the state should grant children in that community an exemption from the common school. The example he uses is an Amish community that cannot preserve its integrity if its children attend a common school.

However, Callan is clear that these are very unusual circumstances, and exemptions are only to be granted after careful scrutiny of each case. One cannot keep their child out of school simply because they think it is in the best interests of the child to do so. He explicitly argues *that parents do not have the right to reject great sphere schooling for their children* (Emphasis added — Ed.). The reason is that this would interfere with the child's future "zone of personal sovereignty" (Callan, 1997:155) by keeping the child "ethically servile" (Callan, 1997:155) to her or his parents. Children who are ethically servile to their parents are those who have been raised in "ignorant antipathy" toward all points of view other than that of their parents. In other words, parents do not have the right to keep their children out of a common, great sphere school because they could be brainwashed into believing in only their parents very limited view of the world. This is not only harmful for the child so brainwashed, but also for the larger society. As Callan wrote,

Large moral losses are incurred by permitting parents to rear their children in disregard of the minima of political education and their

children's right to an education that protects their prospective interest in sovereignty (Callan, 1997, p. 176).

Further, he argues that, "Those who would argue for the right of parents to veto the great sphere are effectively demanding a right to keep their children ethically servile" (Callan, 1997, p. 155). In Callan's argument, the personal rights of the child are connected with state rights to the preservation of liberal democracy to cancel out parental rights to make choices about their children's education. There appears to be little room in his proposal for homeschooling. Homeschooling would only seem possible under extreme circumstances when parents would be at risk of losing their relationship with their children, or if they happened to belong to a community in which homeschooling was the chosen method of preserving a distinctive way of life. But since the reason for requiring attendance at school is to help create good citizens, the issue becomes what sort of citizenship education children receive in school.

(No matter how you slice it, this fellow Callan is saying the state should have prior right over parents to determine how the parents' children are to be educated. And the author of this article said Callan's argument was sophisticated! Fancy words, maybe, but at the core it is simply a crude power grab by the state. -- Ed.)

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Bruce Arai teaches courses in research methods, statistics, and the sociology of work at Wilfrid Laurier University. His research interests include homeschooling, educational assessment, and economic sociology, particularly self-employment.

# Teaching Tips



## More Than Music by Wendy Hill

When I was a young music student studying for exams, I had an old dictionary which defined music as a succession of sounds so arranged that they are pleasing to the ear. God has shown me a far bigger picture which has inspired the Elements of Music program.

Education is "the unfolding of God - His character and His creation" (Peter Frogley). Nowadays I see music as like a beautiful rose -- growing and blossoming and as each petal opens, we see deeper into the seed and new life. I am amazed at this exquisite design and how it reflects so much of its Creator. In music you can go much deeper than the surface level exams, performance, theory, practising, enjoyment and the satisfaction of singing or playing an instrument.

A closer study of the basic building blocks (the elements of music) reveals much about the Great Composer. God designed each music element. In every element, we see evidence of His character and signature. The very first music element is the humble soundwave. A soundwave is made of God's basic building blocks, molecules bumping into each other in a wave pattern and carrying music to our ears. Soundwaves teach us that God is a Giver and Provider. Colossians 1:16 tells He created all things visible and invisible including soundwaves.

Since the Renaissance which saw the rebirth of ancient Greek and Roman cultural ideas and philosophies, much of music-learning has focused on essentially three aspects:

- 1) the human aspect of glorifying man,
- 2) the musical aspect of glorifying music itself and
- 3) the music industry where money is the motivation.

This course differs fundamentally from worldly methods. It attempts to shift the focus away from the gods of humanism, knowledge and money. It views music as a gift from God to man and acknowledges fourteen elements of music as originally God's creations.

The Bible also tells us that we can use God's creation — music — to learn more about Him. "For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities — His eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." Romans 1:20. So many music students today are trained to focus on music-making, money-making or personal development. They become blinded to the wider, overall picture. Man, music and money are poor substitutes to knowing more about our Maker.

In the three year *Elements of Music* program the fourteen elements of music are unfolded including simple definitions, explanations, God messages and supporting scriptures. The program is written for eight to twelve year old children, although it is usable by other ages.

Music is much more than food for the soul. *The Elements of Music* aims to feed the whole man — body, soul and spirit. For the body — reading, writing, listening and basic keyboard skills. For the soul — the intellectual and understanding part -- musical analysis, memorising definitions with actions, puzzles, games, flashcards, charts, colouring, review exercises and musical examples to enjoy. For the spirit, the part designed in God's image -- creativity in composing simple music, scripture memorisation and training to discern what is acceptable to God.

God designed us to appreciate art and music. We have the physical ability to sing and play an instrument. We have the emotional and intellectual ability to feel, express, analyse and understand music. We also have the spiritual perspective and gift of creativity to combine the music elements in a variety of ways.

Twenty-five years of music teaching including eight years of homeschooling have taught me:

- 1) There is an imbalance in the way music is taught with an over-emphasis on knowledge, performance, humanistic philosophies and commercialism. These focus on body/soul and neglect the spirit. Without a solid spiritual foundation, music becomes just another tool in the inventory of humanism.
- 2) There is a lack of music programs with a solid Biblical perspective.
- 3) Parents believe music is important enough to be taught as part of the core curriculum along with mathematics, language and science etc.
- 4) Parents are often discouraged from private music lessons by the expense, discipline required for practice and the emphasis on performance.
- 5) It is assumed that one must play an instrument. Playing an instrument well is impressive but not essential for a basic music education and learning about God.
- 6) Many parents sense that there must be more to

music than what the world offers.

This article is entitled More than Music because *The Elements of Music* teaches much more than playing an instrument. The three year course provides a broad overview of music from a Biblical perspective linking the whole of God's creation with other subjects. The course links music to:

Languages -- through music reading, writing, verbalising, poetry and meter.

Science -- through soundwaves of different instruments.

History -- of music history from Creation to Twentyfirst Century, timelines with hymnwriters alongside the classical composers, secular and Church history.

Musical Styles -- Different types of music and when they were written.

Geography -- Maps showing the spread of western music.

Maths -- Rhythm maths, relationships between notes in scales.

Physical Co-ordination -- Basic keyboard skills.

Aural training -- CDs with hundreds of aural questions identifying music elements and developing listening skills, how to build your own music collection.

Creativity -- Composing melodies and rhythms, putting scripture to music.

See enclosed *Elements of Music* brochure or contact LEM (address below).



# Learning to Read & Reading to Learn

by Barbara Smith

You help a child Learn to Read so that thereafter the child may Read to Learn. What does this involve? It is much more than just teaching a child to read. We have used five different ways to teach our five reading children how to read over 17 or 18 years. Different children will learn how to read in different ways. Some children will not learn how to read until they are 9, 10 or 11; others will learn while watching you teach an older child or sometimes even before the older child and sometimes without any help from you.

We as parents must not stress out about this. It takes longer for some children's cognitive development of their brain to reach the stage where they can read, yet for others this happens early. Before this aspect of brain development is complete, the child can learn lots of facts but will have trouble stringing the facts together. So this "late developing" child can learn the sounds of the alphabet and blending but have trouble sounding out the word. By the time this child is at the end of a sentence s/he has forgotten the beginning of the sentence. But once the brain's cognitive development has reached the stage which makes the decoding process of reading easy, the child will begin to read a lot, and, are you ready for it, will be reading at his/her own age/interest level, rather than at the beginning levels.

So take heart you parents of late developers. Once it connects for them, they will very soon catch up and possibly exceed their peers. We don't talk about fast and slow learners now, but early and late developers. They all have their unique learning styles; some learn to read at 3 or 4 and forever after have their head in a book. Others in the meantime are learning all sorts of other interesting life skills which are broadening their minds in readiness for when they begin reading. So relax, just work on teaching reading a little each day, 5-15 minutes a day, until they take off in their reading. But remember to read to these children for at least two hours a day until they are reading on their own, and continue reading to them after that for the vocabulary development, family closeness and other benefits I'll mention later.

But this is just the beginning of teaching reading.

Once a child has "learned to read" it is ready to "read to learn". It is also time to teach writing and researching skills. Most children will need to learn how to write reports, essays, letters, assignments and research projects. Teaching a child to read, write and research is the most intensive time in educating our children. Once this has been achieved, children are able to work more and more on their own until they are educating themselves. This also happens at different times for different children. Some children are always motivated, others become motivated once they know what they want to do. Others need creative and patient parents who can come up with different triggers to get them

going. For some it is getting out into the work force for a couple of hours a day or for one day a week and finding that they need to get more educated, or they will be working at that type of job the rest of their lives. Others are motivated by the reading they are doing.

This was the case for our son Zach, now 19. When he was 14/15 he worked for an engineer, who is a jack of all trades, all day every Tuesday. He learned that he did not want to be an engineer, mechanic, plumber, electrician or painter. He seemed to be no good with the pen, so we wondered where to from here. We kept getting him to do reports, etc., but it was a struggle. During this time when he was 15, Craig asked him to write a report on his holiday. It was full of "and thens", and incredibly boring to read. Later in that same week he came out in the morning and informed us that he was going to write a book. We despaired thinking of all the "and thens" that would fill the book. Well, he surprised us completely. The first chapter had no "and thens" at all. His first few chapters were the spitting image of Alistair McLean, the author he really loved to read. He ended up going to the library and getting books out on Amazon basin flora and fauna, various South American countries' military and ammunition capabilities, topographical maps, etc., as this was his book's setting. He learned heaps doing this and came up with some really interesting plots.

Once your children become more independent in their reading and researching, you will not be able to personally review or become familiar with the content of all they read. Therefore during this "reading to learn" stage (which actually lasts all the rest of their lives) it is important to help your children come to understand and recognise the worldview of the authors of the books they are reading and how this colours their writings. This is why you continue to read to them after they can read for themselves: it gives your family endless opportunities to discuss the ideas, concepts and worldviews expressed by the authors you are reading. You want your children to be discerning readers, who will know when to put a book down and not continue with it, who will know when they are being fed a line of unChristian propaganda, who will be able to resist a high-powered sales pitch, who will be able to tell if even a Christian writer's theology is either wonky or orthodox.

For example, in an earlier article, I mentioned that we are looking at buying New Zealand author Elsie Locke's books because she had been highly recommended to us. Well, she has two or three good books, but the rest are not as good. In the 9 April 2001 *Manawatu Evening Standard*, this article appeared:

## Special Tribute to Campaigner

She was a tiny woman physically, but her qualities and stature were enormous. Family and friends yesterday paid tribute to Elsie Loche, a peace campaigner, environmentalist, novelist, historian, community worker, and "national treasure", who died at her Christchurch home at the weekend. She was 88.

Mrs Loche's huge list of community efforts include helping to found the group that became the Family Planning Association, starting the nuclear disarmament campaign in the 1960s, writing more than 20 books for children and adults, advocating for environmental protection, and forming and running the Avon Loop Planning Association, which limited development around Christchurch's Oxford Terrace. She was the recipient of numerous awards, including an honorary doctorate from Canterbury University.

This tribute tells you a lot about Elsie Loche's world view which may or may not agree with your own.

To help understand world views, there are several books on the market now. *Understanding the Times* by David A. Noebel of Summit Ministries in Colorado Springs is excellent. Our daughter Genevieve has studied the unabridged book and also been to Summit Ministries in the States for two weeks. She highly recommends this book and Summit Ministries. Diana Waring recommends the abridged edition of this book. The abridged edition is available from Answers in Genesis for \$49.95. They say in their catalogue "Church leader Dr D James Kennedy believes that this massive book could be more valuable to young people than their university education. Looks at the inconsistencies of humanism, in the New Age movement, Marxism/Leninism and other world views, and shows the truthfulness of the biblical Christian world view. Helps students recognize bias in teachers, the media, and friends and helps adult Christians counteract false thinking in others. 402 pages."

Another great book is *Let us Highly Resolve* by David Quine. Diana Waring said of this book, "[It] deals with one of the most important issues facing us as Christian parents today — raising our children in a Biblical world view. That is the core, the very foundation, of who we are and why we do what we do, especially as it concerns our parenting. David and Shirley have issued a clarion call to us all, the call to carefully, thoughtfully, and Biblically prepare our children to be leaders in the 21st century. I encourage you to read this book prayerfully. It may be the most important book you ever read!" *Let Us Highly Resolve* is available from Christian Education Services, 55 Richards Ave, Forrest Hill, North Shore City, New Zealand, Ph/fax (09) 410-3933, email: cesbooks@intouch.co.nz. Carol (of CES) hopes to get other books on Worldviews, so ask her about them next time you are in touch with her.

We are also planning a conference 7-12 April 2002 in Auckland on Worldviews with interesting speakers and study group leaders. This will be aimed at youth and their parents, so stay tuned for more information on this in coming months.

## Over a Cuppa

Someone recently wrote:

*I suppose that if dogs were like people they would eventually give up on us... but they never do. A dog's love is almost impossible to destroy, because it's not a love you earn -- it's simply a love you are given. In other words, dogs love unconditionally. Unconditional love, unending patience, faithfulness to the very end. Do you suppose, just perhaps, that God made dogs to show us a little something about Himself? Do you think maybe "man's best friend" is really pointing us to the One who is truly our very Best Friend? You could learn a lot about God from a dog.*



At first reading this is quite cute, something we might even read to our children as a modern parable. But as home educators, I think we need to be a lot more discerning as to what we tell our children about our Heavenly Father.

Dogs communicate rather poorly to us humans compared to how God communicates to us. Dogs give barks, licks, looks and movements that we interpret as affection....but we really have no idea what is going on in that animal's head, if anything. God has communicated directly through His prophets in the Scriptures, the Bible, so we have it in words of a human language, in black & white. And latterly God communicated with us through His Son Jesus Christ. There is no guess work involved in what God thinks of us or what He requires of us: it's all recorded very clearly in the Bible.

But more than that, God saw that we humans still have trouble understanding Him because our spiritual acuity is so poor, and we do so many things we know are wrong and fail to do so much of what we know is right, that our consciences are pretty muddled up, also preventing us from understanding what He has communicated. (In theological terms, we are spiritually dead because of our sins.) So His Son Jesus Christ died in our place, bearing the death penalty our wrong-doing deserves, and also raising up from the dead and ascending into heaven to give us the promise of victory over the grave and an everlasting life in heaven after the grave.

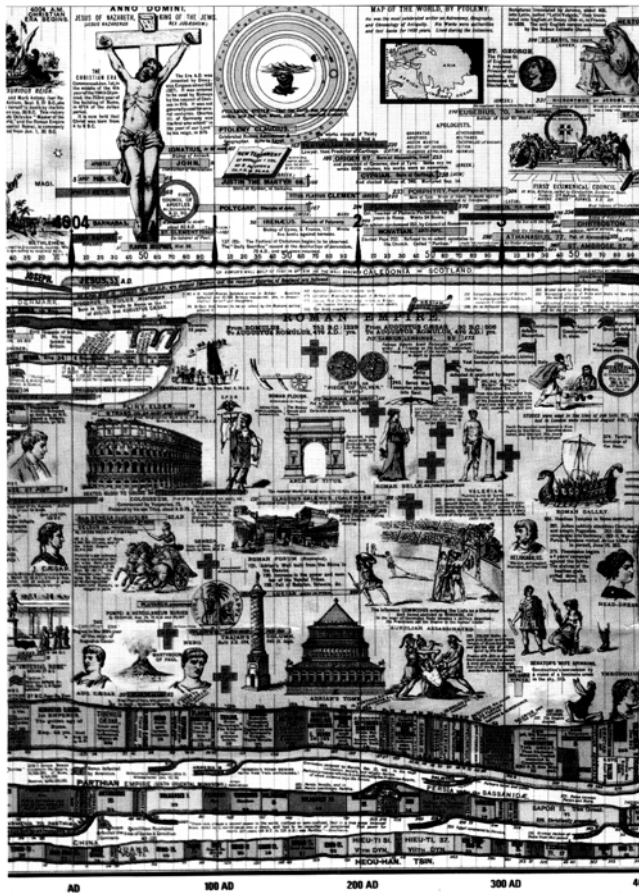
But not only that, He also sends His own Holy Spirit to dwell within those who believe He has done these things for them and who trust in Him for the guidance they need in all areas of this life and that to come, rather than who trust in "chance", "fate" or their own cleverness. This Holy Spirit makes us spiritually alive and able to understand spiritual realities, something we are unable to do otherwise.

But not only that, His Holy Spirit also changes our way of thinking and of perceiving the world. He also changes our wants, desires, priorities. In fact, we begin to desire to follow all He has commanded in the Scripture (not to mention the fact that we can now properly understand it as well).

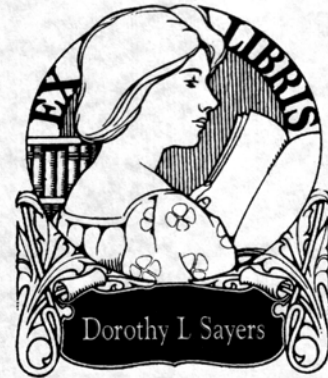
But wait, there's more! His totally undeserved love toward us is so overwhelming, not like the dog's seemingly accept-us-as-we-are love. His love shows His commitment to us: by ensuring we have His love letters (the Bible) written in words we can easily read; by His Son Jesus condescending to come live among us and then dying for us; by His Holy Spirit coming to dwell within us; by Him changing us from the inside out; and by giving us the assurance that we can approach the throne of the Almighty God of the Universe in prayer, not to receive a lightening bolt of anger and revenge, such as we deserve, but to receive mercy and grace and help in time of need.

In addition to all that, God has appointed us Christians to love one another as brothers and sisters, submitting to one another.

*(Continued on page 26: God not Dog)*



# The Lost Tools of Learning



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*(Continued from page 6: Brown)*

attend the University of Canterbury as a first year law student. He is now in the last year of his law degree but has trouble with the idea of leaving university for a job.

He has learnt much of his knowledge simply from reading books, magazines and newspapers. These days you can add the news and information sources of the internet to that list. While in his teens Douglas did very little writing. The less the better, as far as he was concerned. While this was a worry to us, it was turned around when he went overseas and started sending back large letters describing his experiences. He has continued on that way at university and generally gets excellent marks for his essays.

Steven is our doer. He has turned his hand to most things and succeeded. Much of his training has been hands on, which we have found to be the most effective. Whenever a tradesman was been at our house, Steven was out with him helping. As a result there is little of which he doesn't have some sort of working knowledge. We have found this to be a most effective form of teaching through the years. Not only do we have on the job practical education, but we don't have to do it. In our experience few tradesmen are unhappy about having a helper or two around. Today he is able to service his trucks because he watched and helped the diesel mechanics that worked on the farm.

He is self employed as a beekeeper. He had caught a swarm of bees when he was 12 years old, and this led to a keen interest in keeping bees. A family friend was an expert beekeeper and took Steven under his wing. When Steven turned 16, he went and stayed with him for 3 months while he learnt the art. After this Steven went up to stay in Whangerei for another 3 months for more experience. When he returned home, he bought a beekeeping business of 200 hives. This has grown today to where he has 750 hives and exports Queen bees all over the world.

At the same time he has kept up his interest in virtually everything, most often via radio and the newspapers. He is an avid reader, and finds theology, economics and politics especially interesting. Generally, however, he has an opinion on everything and anything....and is passionate about his opinions.

Leanne has had difficulties with her education because of her learning disabilities. Despite this she is now able to read at an advanced level. The Special Education Service have told us that had she been at school, they would not have tried to teach her to read. We are now working on her mathematics. She is interested in horses, having three of her own, and often helps out our neighbours with their racehorses. She helps around the house, but takes every opportunity to go and see her horses or lose herself in a book.

With the ELS programme we talked about earlier, she is making great progress with her learning. She eagerly awaits the newspaper's arrival each day and is gaining a good general knowledge. She is also far

better on the computer than her mother! Her aim this month is to get her learner's licence.

Our children have diverse learning styles, abilities, disabilities and interests. We are convinced that for them to have been at school, among 30 other children being taught in the same style, would have sold them short. This is especially true for children with learning disabilities or ADHD. Take them out, don't worry about them, and let them learn. It worked for us!

Looking back over 15 years, it seems to have been a long time to be home educating, but it has been a wonderful experience. We loved having our children home with us and enjoyed every year of it. For us the older they got, the easier it became. In fact we have found that the whole family has been educated, not just the children. At the same time we have become friends and accomplices with them. Home educating has not always been the easiest, especially in the early years when there was so much to find out. It has been worth it, though, even if it didn't seem so some of the time.

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*(Continued from page 24: God not Dog)*

He has appointed husbands to love their wives as Christ loves His church and gave Himself for her. He has appointed wives to respect and submit to their husbands. While we are not always exemplary in these areas, we work toward these as an ideal.....and I'm here to tell you, that having lived 23 years as a self-centred hedonist who really enjoyed and sought the attention I could get from those who apparently expected (and certainly got) nothing in return, I would not trade the worst day I have had since then as a Christian (27 years now) for all the pleasure and good times in the whole of those previous Christless 23 years.

A dog's love is just the way we self-centred folk like it: all our way. But God shows His love for us in that while we are yet living lives that basically ignore Him, or that even are obviously in total rebellion toward Him....even so, His Son Jesus Christ died for us. But not so that we can remain as we are. No! That's a dog's love. God expects, He demands that we change, that we conform to the image of His Son. It is in Him, Jesus Christ, that we have redemption, the forgiveness we so desperately need for all our wrongs and shortcomings.

A dog's love is similar to what theologians call God's "common grace", the fact that God sends the needed rain on the evil and on the good and makes the sun shine on the just and on the unjust, and that He is long suffering toward evil-doers. But a dog's love offers us nothing remotely similar to what God's love guarantees to those who trust in His Son Jesus Christ. Do your children know the difference?

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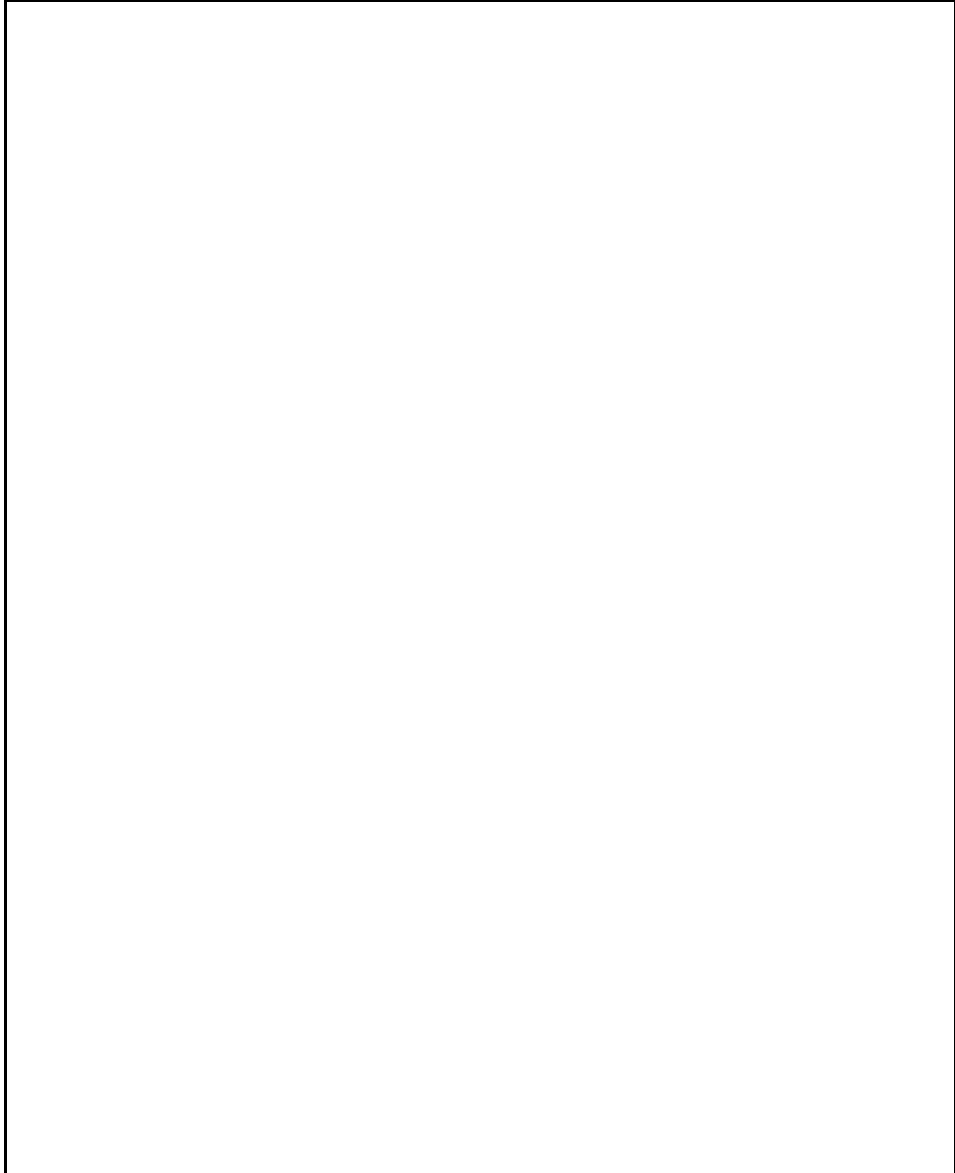
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(Extracted from *Home School Researcher*, Vol 11, No 3, 1995, p. 1-6, Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., Ed., National Home Education Research Institute, Western Baptist College, 5000 Deer Park Dr., S. E., Salem, Oregon 97301, U.S.A.)



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The results from this study make it possible to begin to formulate a model of factors which influence children's perceptions of their home-education experience and which could be tested through further research in this area. Of course any model must recognise the reciprocal relationship between the developing child and the environment. A child's development could be considered to be an endogenous variable affecting a child's perceptions of home-education and the other factors to be variables exogenous to the child. Exogenous variables feed into the child's development (endogenous variable) which in turn feeds back into the exogenous variables in a reciprocal relationship.

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