

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

Featured Family

Ross & Hilary Waugh

Bethany (10), James (6) and Matthew (8)

Feature Family
Colour Photo of a Home Schooling Family
Cover is Navy Blue background with
Silver Gray lettering

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

Editorial



If we were not convinced that the Lord God was sovereign over the entire universe, that He had ordained this terrorist strike before the foundation of the world, while not being the author of evil, so as to fulfil His purposes for the good of His people and for His own glory; if not for this conviction, we would be fearful of leaving our home, and in fact, fearful of just staying at home. We will say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed by the name of the Lord" (1:21).

So what are we to make of this; how are we to respond? Is it simply a spectacular act of terrorism by a group who is not interested in taking the credit, a group with such short-term goals that they are now extinct? Is it part of one of the conspiracies said to be afoot, from George W. allowing it so as to have a good excuse for some pyrotechnics, to the evergreen Illuminati? Well, whatever, God is God, not man. That is, He is in control, not any group of conspirators. If the first advent of the Son of God ended with Him being nailed to a cross, even when He Himself prayed for deliverance, and it was totally according to God's eternal plan even though all His enemies thought for sure they'd scored a mighty victory; well, this present event is so far less significant, there is no doubt that our God has had the whole thing in His back pocket so to speak right from the start.

The significance for us is to continue to pray for justice to be done as well as human institutions can perform it, that the injured be healed, that they and other survivors and bereaved and many witnesses will be driven into Jesus' arms for comfort, solace and salvation. And we become more convinced than ever that a home based education, one conducted according to the direction of our undoubted faith, is what will best prepare our children to take up their callings and responsibilities with all wisdom and vigour in a world that is becoming more challenging every year.

Romans 13 says that civil government authorities, such as our MPs, are ministers of God to approve those who do good (v. 3) and to execute His wrath on the wrongdoer (v. 4). We, however, are currently cursed with a group of MPs calling for the legalisation of prostitution and who want to give essentially the same legal status and protection to homosexual and lesbian liaisons as marriage. These MPs are also considering legislation which would make criminals out of people such as preachers who would publicly declare homosexuals to be perverts; legislation which would make criminals out of parents who wish not to demonstrate hate toward their children, who have not set their hearts on their children's destruction by sparing the rod of correction (Proverbs 13:24, 19:18). They have it completely back to front. Are we preparing our children to live, to function and to actively influence such a place?

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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.

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The Faith of Us Fathers

The Christian Man and His Children, Part 1

by Craig Smith

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with *all your mind*; and your neighbour as yourself.” -- Luke 10:27

We are to engage our minds, our intellect, our understanding in order to love, serve and worship God properly. That is, we are to think. Think about this: from whence did your children come, men? Yes, from the Lord; yes, from your wife. But those children were not even conceived until you first consciously, purposefully and with much energy and anticipation, perform an act which was obviously designed to conceive that child. (Please forgive me if this sounds crude: it is not meant to be vulgar but instead to emphasise that your wife did not “fall” pregnant, nor did it happen by accident.) Maybe you didn’t have any child in mind at the time, but the child wouldn’t be around if not for your active and wilful participation in his or her conception. You are responsible, mate. And just as the Lord has forever held Adam (and through him all mankind) responsible when Eve ate the forbidden fruit, so He holds us fathers responsible when our wives bear our children. The Lord holds us responsible for our children, for providing for their physical, spiritual, character and academic development and security. “A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children” -- Proverb 13:22a. “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” -- Ephesians 6:4. “...for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” -- Hebrews 12:7b-8.

Being *responsible* for Jimmy or Sue is not the same as saying the child *belongs* to you. Our children, just like everything else in the universe, both visible and invisible, are owned totally by the Creator of the universe. It is the Lord, this Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of the heavens, the earth, the seas and all that is in them, even thrones, dominions, principalities and authorities (see Colossians 1:15-20), Who is not only the owner of our children but is also He Who has appointed you and me as stewards over His property. That is to say, one Day He will call you and call me to account for how we have stewarded, cared for, safeguarded, improved upon, nurtured, fed, clothed, housed and educated His property of whom He will be coming

to take possession. I suspect He will inquire most keenly into how well we have taught our sons to fear His Holy Name so as to always respond with awe and respect at every thought of Him, to hate sin so as to flee from even the appearance of it and to so hunger and thirst for righteousness as to actively seek out ways to more consistently conform his entire life to the pattern of Christ in His Word. Will He not also examine the attitudes we built into our daughters, or allowed to grow there unhindered, if they do not positively demonstrate a most godly reverence, respect, modesty, humility and all those Proverbs 31 and Titus 2 virtues?

I may detect a voice asking, “What virtues are in Titus 2? And where is this Titus anyway?” A dead give-away that we are in trouble men, and have some serious studying to do just to get ourselves in the running for the task ahead: making disciples for the Lord of lords and King of kings. And just in case we may be tempted to think we are fairly up with Christian things and are doing a reasonable job, remember the counsel of Paul in I Corinthians 3:12-15. Near enough is *not* good enough....not for King Jesus. We need to work at changing our “She’ll be right” attitude to a “She *must* be right” attitude, for He is worthy....and what’s more, that’s what He requires. “You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

We, then, are to be making disciples for Christ, fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20 right here in our family, a microcosm of those “nations” mentioned in the verse, as a first step toward reaching “all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). (We should be far more competent, able and willing to tackle the nations once our children are firmly converted and disciplined. And besides, our by-then-grey hair will automatically impart a lot more *mana* and respect to us in other parts of the world than if we went over as missionaries while still waiting for our beards to fill in properly.)

The methodology of fathers being responsible for diligently instructing their children in the context of everyday life as the Lord so graciously reveals it to us in Deuteronomy 6:5-7 has been described often. But verses 8 & 9 have perhaps not so often been described. We do not wrap or write verses on our hands or foreheads, although we do sometimes have a Scripture hanging on a wall or two in our homes. It would seem that these verses 8 & 9 of Deuteronomy 6 are surely references to something more substantial.

Verse 8 could refer to such things as ownership, leaving a seal or mark, a type of identification. After all, we have heard a lot about the mark of the beast from references in Revelation, a book full of figurative language. I am suggesting that this Deuteronomy 6:8 could also be figurative, but because it lies within a Book intimately concerned with heart and soul rather than outward appearances, these figures stand for something quite definite. One may have a mark of God or of the beast on his hand and on his forehead. That is, one’s mind and thought patterns are Biblical, set on the Spirit (Romans 8:5-6), thinking God’s thoughts after

Him and taking every thought captive to obey Christ (II Corinthians 10:5), or they are set on the flesh, hostile to God and used to invent evil (Romans 1:30, 8:5-7). Likewise one's hands, symbolising one's entire catalogue of works; one's works can be identified as Christian works of ministry or identified as works characteristic of the fallen angel who is the father of all lies and master of deceit.

So our very beings, what we think, say and do, even when we aren't thinking about it (see Matthew 12:36-37), are preaching sermons to our children. They can tell the difference between a faith that is consistent inside out from one that only extends to outward appearances....and they will soon learn the different set of rules applying to each. Do not be surprised, then, oh hypocrite, when your own son can appear so angelic by organising a weekly Bible study for the church youth group while seducing the girl at a meeting of the two-member planning committee. (Yes, it does too happen. Not only can I name names, but I can say that the youths involved hardly see much wrong with it.)

Deuteronomy 6:9 talks about writing God's commandments on your doorposts and on your gates. Again, we are talking about a lot more than those cute little silver Jewish verse holders one can fasten to the door and touch reverently each time you pass through. (That is about as efficacious as touching the car roof and lifting your feet while crossing railway tracks in order to have your wish granted.) The idea is that the Word of God reigns supreme in your home (the doorposts being the entrance or most obvious place to control the *in*fluences to your home). So what are your "gates" as mentioned in the verse? Perhaps just another word for doorposts. Perhaps as in the term "city gates" it means any place where you make decisions: your wider property, your fields, your rental flats, the business you run, the employees who work for you, the classroom in which you teach or lecture, the office team you manage, the work gang you supervise, the truck or machines you operate and whatever contracts you may consider entering into.....all these things are to have the Word of God stamped over them. They are to be run by the commands, precepts, statutes and ordinances of the Lord God Almighty. And when you think about it, since He is omniscient, doing things His way simply *has* to be the best recipe for success....and sure enough the Bible's been saying just that for thousands of years already: Psalm 1:1-3, Proverbs 3:1-2.

Right, men. Once we have sorted out our own lives so that they reflect the love and standards of our gracious God, we are ready to be proper stewards of our children, who are, as we said earlier, God's children over whom He has set us as His stewards. Galatians 4:1-2 specifically addresses this issue of holding a child back until the proper time: "I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father." So our children are in a holding pattern until they come of age at a date set by our Father God.

Now, there is a two-tier system operating here: our

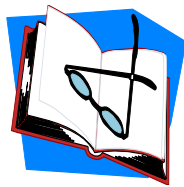
offspring will inherit that which we have laid up for them on this earth, and they will inherit that which the Lord has laid up for them not only on this earth but also later in heaven. What kinds of things do they inherit from us? They are both physical and metaphysical: houses, chattels, land, money, eye colour, a name/reputation, family heritage, culture, most of their character qualities, etc. Now do realise that while we like to say our children inherit such things from us, ultimately they get all of these things from the Lord, although filtered -- and corrupted somewhat -- through us parents.

What kinds of things do they get exclusively from the Lord? Those items often referred to as Providential: their talents, abilities, disabilities, giftings, ministries, callings, responsibilities, spouses, children, lifespan, etc., plus those things of which we know so little that will be enjoyed in heaven: crowns, mansions, life and ministry at the foot of the throne.

Men, listen carefully: it is our job to equip and ready and enable our children to themselves faithfully steward all these things they will be inheriting. We must be horrified at the idea of letting all these things fall into their laps when they are simply unprepared and incompetent.....due to lack of instruction and guidance on our part.....to handle them. Why should we be horrified at the thought? Because we know our children will be called to account for how they stewarded them, just as we are to be called to account. How callous to allow our children to appear before God and watch them have to fumble for an explanation. Our task as stewards of God's children is not only to be striving to successfully manage these inherited blessings, roles and responsibilities ourselves but also to prepare these children so that they themselves, by God's grace, may successfully manage them as well.

We want our children to grow up to be men and women of vision. Well, we'd better want that, for this is what God's children are meant to be, those children the Lord has entrusted to us to steward on His behalf. They are to be ambassadors for Christ, ministers and messengers of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:18-20) in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom they shine as lights in the world, offering them the Word of life (Philippians 2:15-16). *Our* vision is not just to rear children who will be able to cope with a degenerate world, but to rear soldiers of the Cross who expertly wield weapons of divine power to destroy strongholds, arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ (II Corinthians 10:4-5). Men, we are first of all to be — and second we are to raise up — conquerors for Christ.

Book Reviews



Homeschooling & Preschoolers: Do They Mix?

Reviewed by Mary Bicknell

I have just read *Homeschooling & Preschoolers: Do They Mix?* by Sharon Drinnan. It describes itself as “A practical guide to homeschooling with preschoolers”, and aims to be both informative and encouraging so that “when you have finished reading it, you will think, ‘I can do it!’”. I certainly found it to be that way, with plenty of advice that she had obviously found helpful in her own time. One that particularly stood out was “It’s not, ‘do all, some of the time’, but ‘do some, all of the time’.”

It is a small book, concise and to the point, which you really need when you already have too many things to do in a day, and I found it took me about an hour to read through. She is realistic and makes no pretence at perfection. In fact, she is ready to share some of the things that she has got wrong in a delightfully humorous way in the chapter entitled, “Just hand me the chocolate and no one will get hurt!” Each page spread has one side for notes opposite the main text so that you can pick out what suits you and leave the rest.

I would strongly recommend it for anyone contemplating, or already, homeschooling children while they have preschoolers. As they have published themselves, it is not available in the mainstream stores. You can contact them either at drinnan.family@actrix.co.nz or 171 Ara-Kotinga Road, Brookby, RD 1, Manurewa.

Bannatyne Reading, Writing, Spelling and Language Program

Reviewed by Kay Christensen

The Bannatyne System describes itself as a “Reading, Writing, Spelling and Language Program” and was developed by New Zealander Dr Alexander Bannatyne PhD, based on his extensive research and experience with dyslexia, exceptional children and learning disabilities.

More than a phonics programme, its objective is to provide students with a deep understanding of the nature of the English language and to gain a joy for reading. It has a highly researched, systematized and linguistic approach, and its language consequently is

rather technical. Although daunting at first to be confronted with such term as “phonemes”, “graphemes”, “auditory-vocal sequencing” and “visual spatial identification”, it is just this precision that enables the humble parent of a struggling child to grapple with a complex subject and feel that there is light at the end of the tunnel after all.

Despite the weight of academia bearing down on this Programme, it is surprisingly simple to use and works well in the home. You use just one workbook at a time, neatly carved into daily lessons of about 20-30 minutes. Bannatyne provides the parent with a rationale for every task so you’re not left wondering what the point is, yet the teacher’s manual is concise and practical, assisting you through the lesson from go to whoa without hype or fluff.

Bannatyne is truly multi-sensory. The ear, eye and hand are incorporated in every lesson, beginning with the simplest of sounds and building systematically to more complex ones. A number of very specific techniques are taught and practised over and over until they become second nature, and one of the strengths of the Programme is that by teaching these skills underlying reading, a parent can pinpoint the trouble spots with greater clarity, give it a name and work to overcome it.

Without exception, no sound or letter is used in any

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bed at the crack of dawn in order to dive into the books. Their brains just don't perk up until the middle of the day. For them, a school day that starts around ten in the morning (or after lunch) makes more sense. With older children who have a job or talented youngsters who need the daylight hours to practice music or sports, academics can easily be postponed until late in the day. And for those who really want to be free from the restrictions imposed by schedules, there's nothing to say that homeschooling has to be done at home. One California mother takes her three students to the beach twice a week. She says their best discussions take place during the commute.

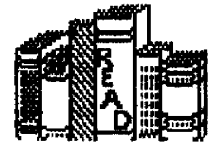
Since homeschooling is done in a quiet environment where there are few distractions, youngsters with an attention deficit disorder find it easier to concentrate. Children with a learning disability have all their assignments tailored to fit their abilities and needs. Under the watchful eye of a truly dedicated teacher, students with a low tolerance for frustration can avoid the aggravations that lead to tears and outbursts of temper. Thus, by making it possible for children to work at full capacity and at top speed, most homeschooled LD/ADD students get all their work done in three to four hours a day.

Freed from the restrictions imposed on those who work with large groups, homeschooling parents can turn almost any corner into a good study space. Gathering around the kitchen or dining room table is popular. Some families give up the den or the living room in order to make it into a classroom. Kitchen counters are great places for working on projects, and front porch swings are ideal spots for reading. Parents who work with ADD students often do a lot of teaching outside. They'll chant arithmetic facts with a youngster who is rhythmically bouncing on a trampoline, or call out spelling words while the child shoots baskets. When a quiet environment is necessary, public libraries are available.

Some homeschoolers believe in teaching through real life experiences. In using the instructional methods they refer to as "unschooling", they rid themselves of the stifling effects of structure, eliminating anything that even vaguely resembles schools, schoolrooms and schoolbooks. To those who see all activities as part of learning, the whole world becomes a classroom.

(From: *The LD Child and the ADHD Child: Ways Parents & Professionals Can Help*, by Suzanne H. Stevens, 1996 (John F. Blair, Publisher), Chapter 10, (pps. 216-231). ISBN 0-89587-142-4.)

Bits of Books



The Duties of Parents (Part 4)

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

XI. Train them. to a habit of obedience.

This is an object which it is worth any labour to attain. No habit, I suspect, has such an influence over our lives as this. Parents, determine to make your children obey you, though it may cost you much trouble and cost them many tears. Let there be no questioning, and reasoning, and disputing, and delaying and answering again. When you give them a command, let them see plainly that you will have it done.

Obedience is the only reality. It is faith visible, faith acting and faith incarnate. It is the test of real discipleship among the Lord's people. "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). It ought to be the mark of well-trained children, that they do whatsoever their parents command them. Where, in deed, is the honour which the fifth commandment enjoins if fathers and mothers are not obeyed cheerfully, willingly and at once?

Early obedience has all Scripture on its side. It is in Abraham's praise, not merely he will train his family, but "he will command his children, and his household after him" (Genesis 18:19). It is said of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that when "He was young He was subject to Mary and Joseph" (Luke 2:51). Observe how implicitly Joseph obeyed the order of his father Jacob (Genesis 37:13). See how Isaiah speaks of it as an evil thing, when "the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient" (Isaiah 3:5). Mark how the Apostle Paul names disobedience to parents as one of the bad signs of the latter days (II Timothy 3:2). Mark how he singles out this grace of requiring obedience as one that should adorn a Christian minister: "a bishop must be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity". And again, "Let the deacons rule their children and their own houses well" (I Timothy 3:4, 12). And again, an elder must be one "having faithful children, children not accused of riot, or unruly" (Titus 1:6).

Parents, do you wish to see your children happy? Take care, then, that you train them to obey when they are spoken to — to do as they are bid. Believe me, we are not made for entire independence — we are not fit for it. Even Christ's freemen have a yoke to wear, they "serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:24). Children cannot learn too soon that this is a world in which we

are not all intended to rule, and that we are never in our right place until we know how to obey our betters. Teach them to obey while young, or else they will be fretting against God all their lives long and wear themselves out with the vain idea of being independent of His control.

Reader, this hint is only too much needed. You will see many in this day who allow their children to choose and think for themselves long before they are able and even make excuses for their disobedience, as if it were a thing not to be blamed. To my eyes, a parent always yielding and a child always having its own way are a most painful sight: painful, because I see God's appointed order of things inverted and turned upside down; painful, because I feel sure the consequence to that child's character in the end will be self-will, pride, and self-conceit. You must not wonder that men refuse to obey their Father which is in heaven if you allow them, when children, to disobey their father who is upon earth.

Parents, if you love your children, let obedience be a motto and a watchword continually before their eyes.

XII. Train them to a habit of always redeeming the time.

Idleness is the devil's best friend. It is the surest way to give him an opportunity of doing us harm. An idle mind is like an open door, and if Satan does not enter in himself by it, it is certain he will throw in something to raise bad thoughts in our souls.

No created being was ever meant to be idle. Service and work is the appointed portion of every creature of God. The angels in heaven work — they are the Lord's ministering servants, ever doing His will. Adam in Paradise had work — he was appointed to dress the garden of Eden and to keep it. The redeemed saints in glory will have work: "They rest not day and night singing praise and glory to Him who bought them." And man — weak, sinful man — must have something to do, or else his soul will soon get into an unhealthy state. We must have our hands filled and our minds occupied with something, or else our imaginations will soon ferment and breed mischief.

And what is true of us, is true of our children too. Alas, indeed, for the man that has nothing to do! The Jews thought idleness a positive sin: it was a law of theirs that every man should bring up his son to some useful trade — and they were right. They knew the heart of man better than some of us appear to do.

Idleness made Sodom what she was. "This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread and abundance of idleness was in her" (Ezekiel 16:49). Idleness had much to do with David's awful sin with the wife of Uriah. I see in II Samuel 11 that Joab went out to war against Ammon, "but David tarried still at

Jerusalem." Was not that idle? And then it was that he saw Bathsheba; and the next step we read of is his tremendous and miserable fall.

Verily, I believe that idleness has led to more sin than almost any other habit that could be named. I suspect it is the mother of many a work of the flesh — the mother of adultery, fornication, drunkenness and many other deeds of darkness that I have not time to name. Let your own conscience say whether I do not speak the truth. You were idle, and at once the devil knocked at the door

and came in.

And indeed I do not wonder; everything in the world around us seems to teach the same lesson. It is the still water which becomes stagnant and impure: the running, moving streams are always clear. If you have steam machinery, you must work it, or it soon gets out of order. If you have a horse, you must exercise him; he is never so well as when he has regular work. If you would have good bodily health yourself, you must take exercise. If you always sit still, your body is sure at length to complain. And just so is it with the soul. The active moving mind is a hard mark for the devil to shoot at. Try to be always full of useful employment, and thus your enemy will find it difficult to get room to sow tares.

Reader, I ask you to set these things before the minds of your children. Teach them the value of time, and try to make them learn the habit of using it well. It pains me to see children idling over what they have in hand, whatever it may be. I love to see them active and industrious and giving their whole heart to all they do; giving their whole heart to lessons, when they have to learn; giving their whole heart even to their amusements, when they go to play.

But if you love them well, let idleness be counted a sin in your family.

XIII. Train them with a constant fear of over-indulgence.

This is the one point of all on which you have most need to be on your guard. It is natural to be tender and affectionate towards your own flesh and blood, and it is the excess of this very tenderness and affection which you have to fear. Take heed that it does not make you blind to your children's faults, and deaf to all advice about them. Take heed lest it make you overlook bad conduct, rather than have the pain of inflicting punishment and correction.

I know well that punishment and correction are disagreeable things. Nothing is more unpleasant than giving pain to those we love and calling forth their tears. But so long as hearts are what hearts are, it is vain to suppose, as a general rule, that children can ever be brought up without correction.

But if you do not take trouble with your children when they are young, they will give you trouble when they are old. Choose which you prefer.

Spoiling is a very expressive word and sadly full of meaning. Now it is the shortest way to spoil children to let them have their own way: to allow them to do wrong and not to punish them for it. Believe me, you must not do it, whatever pain it may cost you, unless you wish to ruin your children's souls.

You cannot say that Scripture does not speak expressly on this subject:

"He that spareth his rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24).

"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" (Proverbs 19:18).

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it from him" (Proverbs 22:15).

"Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell" (Proverbs 23:13, 14).

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest, yea, he shall give delight to thy soul" (Proverbs 29:15, 17).

How strong and forcible are these texts! How melancholy is the fact, that in many Christian families they seem almost unknown! Their children need reproof, but it is hardly ever given; they need correction, but it is hardly ever employed. And yet this book of Proverbs is not obsolete and unfit for Christians. It is given by inspiration of God and profitable. It is given for our learning, even as the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians. Surely the believer who brings up his children without attention to its counsel is making himself wise above that which is written and greatly errs.

Fathers and mothers, I tell you plainly: if you never punish your children when they are in fault, you are doing them a grievous wrong. I warn you, this is the rock on which the saints of God, in every age, have only too frequently made shipwreck. I would fain persuade you to be wise in time and keep clear of it. See it in Eli's case. His sons Hophni and Phinehas "made themselves vile, and he restrained them not". He gave them no more than a tame and lukewarm reproof when he ought to have rebuked them sharply. In one word, he honoured his sons above God. And what was the end of these things? He lived to hear of the death of both his sons in battle, and his own grey hairs were brought down with sorrow to the grave (I Samuel 2:22-29, 3:13).

See, too, the case of David. Who can read without pain the history of his children, and their sins? Amnon's incest; Absalom's murder and proud rebellion; Adonijah's scheming ambition: truly these were grievous wounds for the man after God's own heart to receive from his own house. But was there no fault on his side? I fear there can be no doubt there was. I find a clue to it all in the account of Adonijah in I Kings 1:6: "His father had not displeased him at any time in

saying, Why hast thou done so?" There was the foundation of all the mischief. David was an over-indulgent father — a father who let his children have their own way — and he reaped according as he had sown.

Parents, I beseech you, for your children's sake, beware of over-indulgence. I call on you to remember, it is your first duty to consult their real interests, and not their fancies and likings; to train them, not to humour them; to profit, not merely to please.

You must not give way to every wish and caprice of your child's mind, however much you may love him. You must not let him suppose his will is to be everything, and that he has only to desire a thing and it will be done. Do not, I pray you, make your children idols, lest God should take them away and break your idol, just to convince you of your folly.

Learn to say "No" to your children. Show them that you are able to refuse whatever you think is not fit for them. Show them that you are ready to punish disobedience, and that when you speak of punishment, you are not only ready to threaten but also to perform. Do not threaten too much. Threatened folks and threatened faults live long. Punish seldom, but really and in good earnest: frequent and slight punishment is a wretched system indeed.

Some parents and nurses have a way of saying, "Naughty child", to a boy or girl on every slight occasion and often without good cause. It is a very foolish habit. Words of blame should never be used without real reason.

As to the best way of punishing a child, no general rule can be laid down. The characters of children are so exceedingly different that what would be a severe punishment to one child, would be no punishment at all to another. I only beg to enter my decided protest against the modern notion that no child ought ever to be whipped. Doubtless some parents use bodily correction far too much and far too violently; but many others, I fear, use it far too little.

Beware of letting small faults pass unnoticed under the idea "it is a little one". There are no little things in training children; all are important. Little weeds need plucking up as much as any. Leave them alone and they will soon be great.

Reader, if there be any point which deserves your attention, believe me, it is this one. It is one that will give you trouble, I know. But if you do not take trouble with your children when they are young, they will give you trouble when they are old. Choose which you prefer.

Home Education Research



Homeschooling and the Redefinition of Citizenship (Part 4)

by A. Bruce Arai
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Homeschooling

Homeschoolers have responded to the above charges of not being good citizens and have begun to create a different understanding of citizenship through their actions. The counter arguments to the charges of lack of socialization, elitism, post-secondary qualifications and parental rights to choice in education reveal that homeschoolers do not accept the assumption that schools are a primary agent in the construction of all good citizens. Further, the majority of them do not want to isolate themselves from the larger society, as is commonly presumed. Rather, they seek meaningful integration into the society, and in doing so, have come to produce a different but equally valid understanding of citizenship.

Socialization

Homeschoolers have been charged with failing to provide their children with the tools necessary to cope in the wider world. The contention of this criticism is that school provides this wisdom. However, homeschoolers recognize that school is not the only means by which children learn coping skills, nor is it necessarily the best. Homeschooled children, far from being isolated in their homes, are often heavily involved in sports, music, church and wilderness groups (i.e., scouts and guides) outside the home (Mayberry et al., 1995; Ray, 1994; Thomas, 1998; Knowles, 1998). To play on sports teams, in a band or be a member of a Guide troop requires that children learn how to interact with others, which means they need to learn the values of tolerance, mutual respect and cooperation. Homeschooling parents contend that their children learn the supposed coping skills in these activities, so learning them at school is unnecessary.

Some homeschooling parents react to this criticism more harshly, arguing that the supposed coping skills learned in school are simply unintended consequences of the communal organization of schools. Moreover, parents also provide instruction in these skills and values, so it is erroneous for schools to claim all of the credit for these abilities (Gatto, 1997). It is not the case that just because a child is homeschooled that he or she will not learn what is necessary for proper interpersonal interaction.

The charge of bias and narrow curricular content has also been addressed by homeschoolers. The criticism depends, they argue, on the assumption that all teachers are unbiased or that their biases offset one another. This is unlikely according to homeschooling parents, so there is no necessary reason to think that children in school will receive an unbiased education. In addition, many parents use standardized curriculums and/or also make extensive use of public and college/university libraries in their home education, which reduces potential bias and idiosyncrasy (Ray, 1994; 1997).

The criticism of narrow mindedness is most serious when parents set out to indoctrinate their children in a particular world view. For example, if some homeschooling parents wanted to ensure that their kids believed that the world was flat, set out to teach them this, and made sure that no other views contaminated this truth, most people would rightly have a problem with this approach. However, homeschoolers view this as a parenting problem, not a homeschooling problem (Sheffer, 1997). They argue that children can be indoctrinated into malicious or erroneous world views even if they attend school, and that it is up to their critics to show that indoctrination is more likely in homeschooling than in public education. For example, homeschoolers contend that most racists have attended school. Raising bigoted, intolerant or violent children then can be done as easily if they attend school as if they stay home.

Homeschooling parents have responded to the charge that their children do not receive sufficient exposure to others in two main ways. First, they claim that their children do get exposure to others through their other activities such as sports and music, as noted above. Second, many of them also claim that the exposure to diversity that kids actually receive in school is probably over emphasized because schools demand a high level of conformity in the first place. The organization and structure of schools requires that diversity fit into specific patterns such as the daily schedule of classes and extra-curricular activities. Also, in school children have little opportunity to interact with people who are not almost exactly the same age, thereby robbing them of the ability to learn from those older and younger than themselves. Therefore, real exposure to other ways of life probably does not happen in school, according to many homeschoolers (Thomas, 1998).

Elitism

Some homeschoolers are understandably upset at the suggestion that they are being elitist by keeping their kids at home. This is especially true of the selfish version where homeschoolers are perceived to be abandoning the public education system and the kids who remain in it. Although homeschooling is usually a response to problems or perceived problems at school (Knowles, 1991), they recognize that home education is not for everyone. They wish only to be accorded the same respect for their decision as is given to parents who decide to send their kids to school.

As for being part of the elite, homeschooling families, from the many surveys that have been done, are not part of the financial elite, although the large majority of them are white (Mayberry et al., 1995; Ray, 1994; 1997). And while there are problems with all of these surveys (see Welner and Welner, 1999, for a summary of problems which apply to these as well as other surveys of homeschoolers), they all show homeschooling families to have an average or slightly below average level of family income, and slightly higher levels of education in comparison with the general population. However, homeschoolers are quick to point out that home education can and is being done by parents with very low levels of education as well. Indeed, many home educating parents would find it ironic if they had to attend school just so their kids could stay home.

Higher Education

Homeschooling parents as noted above are as worried about their children's chances of entering post-secondary institutions as are some critics of homeschooling. Their response has usually been one of planning, and trying to find out what institutions would require while there is still time for their kids to acquire the necessary credentials or documentation (Ray, 1994; 1997). For example, if getting into university requires a high school diploma, many homeschooled kids will end up spending a year or more in school, or taking correspondence courses, to get the diploma. Homeschoolers point out that this has the unintentional benefit of forcing these teenagers to think about what they want to do and then work toward that goal instead of just finishing school and then choosing among the options that happen to be available.

Other homeschoolers are unwilling to attend school or take correspondence courses and try to change the entry requirements of post-secondary institutions. Some homeschoolers approach college and university registrars and try to convince them that they are qualified for admission without the regular high school diploma. The success of this approach of course depends very heavily on the persuasive abilities of the student and probably more importantly the regulatory context within which the institution must work. In some jurisdictions (for example, in most provinces in Canada) colleges and universities receive government funding only for students who meet specific entrance criteria which usually includes a high school diploma or recognized equivalent. Universities do not receive funding for students who do not meet these criteria, so there is no incentive to accept these students.

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(Continued from page 9)

word or story until it has been thoroughly and systematically taught. Hence, there are no surprises for the unsuspecting student, and indeed every step is designed for success rather than the possibility of failure. Other important aspects of teaching are incorporated within the Programme including the deliberate use of praise, positive reinforcement, humour, physical and workbook activities and games, the building of small incremental stages that win confidence and overlearning of concepts to encourage memorization and fluency.

Altogether there are 13 workbooks (but you wouldn't necessarily start at the beginning if already reading) and six teacher's manuals. Perhaps the best part is that you don't have to fork out a lot of money up front just to get started as you only need one workbook and one teacher's manual at a time. One workbook would last about 16 weeks at the rate of one lesson per day.

But a word of advice: The Bannatyne System is much, much more than a sum of its workbooks. To use it to best effect, parents are encouraged to understand the hows and whys of what they are teaching. Some of this can be found in a useful Handbook produced by the Bannatyne Programme or by attending occasional workshops (usually, but not always, in Auckland). Parents are also encouraged to combine the workbooks with a range of resources that can either be made simply and cheaply at home or can be purchased for convenience. All materials can be obtained by mailorder, and Gay Hoare who distributes them is a remedial reading teacher herself and has been very helpful with advice.

Schools, home educators and teachers of remedial reading all use Bannatyne. It can be used to teach reading from the beginning or to reinforce reading skills, comprehension or spelling. But it really comes into its own for "remedial" reading situations for children and adults or in the teaching of children who otherwise have learning, motor or speech difficulties.

Bannatyne is not something I would have bothered with if my son hadn't had problems. One of the accusations is that it is S..L..O..W... and yes, it can be said of the beginning books. But the rate of progress is deceptive because of the depth that Bannatyne works at. Besides, it all depends on your point of view. When you have a child who is in a real tangle, when they cannot seem to remember what they learned five seconds ago let alone yesterday, and when the whole point of reading has been lost in the agony of learning, then slow is hardly a problem because finally, finally! you're making progress.

If you want to check it out, contact: Gay Hoare, Learning Systems NZ, PO Box 86-014, Mangere East, Auckland, ph. (09) 276-4684.

Exploring God's Creation

A Whole New World

by Catherine Sandbrook

Like Alice ducking down a rabbit hole and finding herself in a whole new (crazy, illogical) world, we ducked into our first unit for the year and were lost in a fascinating (wonderful, logical) world, which, unlike Alice, we didn't really want to get out of. It's become an investigation that will continue to intrigue and thrill us all our lives and, I suspect, into eternity. We started studying "Creation".

I wanted all of us to grow in our appreciation of our Maker's creative power and of how God's natural world honours Him by being what it was meant to be (despite the presence of sin), and also in realising how we ourselves can honour Him in a similar way. Tall objectives, but great discoveries.

This meant exploring and experiencing some of those delights of our Creator's world, some that I think He made with children in mind (like water). Or pioneering our way up bush tracks; the endless delights of sea and sand; our hunt for a favoured swimming hole in the Hutt River; our climb up the hill above Wainuiomata to view the greatness of God's creation looking over the Hutt Valley and Wellington, where the kids were far more interested in the ragwort caterpillars -- but I think their Creator understood, and it was a good lesson for me that appreciation is just as valid in the micro as in the vast.

How well the Psalms and Job and Jesus credit God with the wonder, the excitement and the glory of the creation and its Maker. I hoped to lift our children's eyes from the created world around them to their Maker, and it wasn't a hard transition. There were plenty of adventurous paths to send young minds down.

Genesis was a good beginning. It was so enjoyable watching the children verbalise those questions and answers that leave you in awe: God said, "Let there be light," on Day One of creation, but He didn't create the sun until Day Four. If it wasn't sunlight what was it? Did this "light" include all the spectra of rays that God knew would be necessary or useful to man? Did God create colour on Day One?

And what about the "what if's"? Try this one. If Adam hadn't followed Eve into sin, what would have happened -- to Adam, to Eve, to the world? We explored some interesting paths alright.

More importantly, above the excitement of discovery and learning, perhaps above the appreciative honour being given to their Creator (i.e., worship), our children were building convictions. Genesis is the essence, the

foundation of much that is so vital in thinking and in life. Theology in a word -- the study of God. Here in creation, in Genesis, we form our picture of our Creator God. Here we meet the fall and necessary redemption of man, we meet the first and the second Adam. Here we see the beginning of the history of God's dealings with man. And sadly, at Genesis, there's a breach in the wall of truth that Christ's church defends. I realised that my children (and I too) had to be prepared to stand in that gap; that if we'd fight for the truth there, we would defend it anywhere. Our kids need to be confident about the real age of the Earth, certain of a literal 7-day creation, with a true picture of the first people God made. Our children and we ourselves need to be equipped to battle the fantasy of the missing, missing, missing, missing links, those ridiculous stone-throwing ape-men creatures worthy of nothing more than a Disney film; the myth of man's "progression" from hunter-gatherer to farmer, and Jurassic mania. There is enough mythology to rival the Greeks! Genesis is the only true picture of early man from the only Eyewitness. Moreover, there are no archaeological digs of pre-flood cities, kings or kingdoms because God chose to wipe out all evidence of their existence, probably because of their wickedness.

"You have destroyed cities, even their memory has perished." -- Psalm 9:6

We can only catch glimpses through the floodwaters of ante-diluvian man: the social structures, technology, history, morality (or rather, immorality), etc., but it is a fascinating study. The picture jars some of my school education concepts. Adam was a farmer, tilling the soil (Genesis 1:17-19, 2:2), not a hunter-gatherer. Tubal-Cain, seven generations after Adam, was a craftsman in bronze and iron (or the lower metals). Where are the Bronze Age and Iron Age? Job, of the patriarchal times after Babel, speaks of mine shafts and smelting, which required fairly advanced technology. Then ponder the astuteness of Jesus' comment: "As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage..." -- Matthew 24:37-38. Man, in essence, in pre-occupation, in heart has not changed.

It was a revelation to me to realise my children would have a far more accurate and tantalising picture of the first people of history than I'd ever had. They could lay good foundations in theology and anthropology. They could wrestle with the origin and effects of man's sinfulness -- moral issues. They could also have a more comprehensive grasp of science through Genesis and creation from the very first verse.

"In the beginning (TIME) God (FORCE) created (ACTION) the heavens (SPACE) and the earth (MATTER)." -- Genesis 1:1

Genesis One *is* a science textbook. Our investigations led us into looking at the basic chemical elements God had used to form our world. In studying the Periodic Table, our older children got so excited (rather to my astonishment) in peering through the complexity to see patterns and connections that only an extremely

brilliant and orderly mind could think of. Glimpsing God through the Periodic Table was an unexpected surprise for us all. (Shouldn't have been.) As were some of our chemical experiments, but we made good carbon, and we can make mothballs not only smell but also cover every piece of furniture in the living room with volcanic-like ash. As we looked at the nature of metals, given by God to man, we were intrigued at their properties and possibilities. We watched a goldsmith melting down gold and making a ring which drew comments on the things of true value (Job 28, 22:25, 23:8-10, Matthew 6:19-34, I Peter 1:6-7.)

"When He has tested me I shall come forth as gold." -- Job 23:10

The gold ring also brought to attention the awesome things that God has given into man's hand and how carefully the world has been prepared for man. Man's creative endeavours using "the dust of the earth", i.e. the units, the building blocks, whether in metallurgy, in architecture, in weaving, in plastics, in cooking or whatever, have all been made possible by the One Who made the dust of the earth out of Nothing, the One Who provided the materials and the possibilities and the inspiration. It was one thing to appreciate the wonder of God's creative endeavours; it was another to appreciate this potential in man.

Creativity is so important. Haven't you loved your children's pictures and cards to Mum and Dad, to Grandma and Grandad -- the cute, the colourful, the crazy. I find them stashed in drawers, in boxes, in filing cabinets. We can't bear to throw them away. Then there's the craft treasures they've made: the cardboard plane, the "I love you, Dad" wood carving, the first attempt at a suit for Teddy or a pin cushion.

In their creative endeavours our children show one of the wonderful attributes of their Creator, a characteristic not found in any animal. So in our unit we allowed space for creative activities -- some formal, some independent. Creation of course is a fabulous topic for this. We dabbled in modelling clay, edible clay, plaster of Paris and soap carvings. We had fun making a life-size dinosaur (small species) out of junk, doing drawings of Behemoth and various dinosaurs. Steven had to draw his dinosaur being loaded into the Ark with a crane. Bruce drew a technically accurate triceratops. Clare's Behemoth was in peaceful pastels, while Wayne's dinosaur had a man hanging out of his mouth dripping blood. And Maree and Gary drew cute dinosaur pets on leads. I allowed extra space for our own creative interests, mine included. Then we had delightful times with Diana Waring's suggestions in creative writing and games, puns and ideas like renaming the animals. Can you guess what a yingying is, a houseback or a hopdog a beddybyefly, a thunderwalk or a wise-guy? We also admired the creations of artists, craftsmen, sculptors and composers. We all chose our favourite parts from Haydn's Oratorio, "The Creation". We learnt new hymns and grew to love best of all "This Is My Father's World". We sang with great gusto to the country beat of Buddy Davis:

I didn't crawl out of a pond or swing down from a tree. Adam is my ancestor and not a chimpanzee. God created everything and in six days He was through. So the Big Bang Theory's just a dud and the million years are too.

Our 2-3 week unit study became 2-3 terms! I began to wonder how we would ever get out of this topic of Creation. Studying God's Creation is endless!

But we progressed on in Genesis to look at Noah and the Great Flood, realising the significance of who made Noah and who made the flood. In actual fact, our Creator's work has never ceased (you need only to look at your own offspring). Everything in our universe, in our history, in our knowledge is directly or indirectly the work of our Creator Who created and sustains all. It's tremendously exciting to think of the creative wonders that lie behind the door to the future. With a Creator God, creative in nature, what waits for us in eternity?

When we dived into our unit study on Creation, I had no idea of how much I'd learn myself and in such unexpected areas, nor of how exciting it would be. Most of all, we never realised that the rest of our lives will be seen through a "looking glass" -- this is our Creator's world.

Fantastic material for a unit study on Creation:

*Ancient Civilisations and the Bible, Vol 1: Creation to

Christ -- Diana Waring.

*Ancient Civilisations and the Bible: Elementary Activity Book (K-4) -- Diana Waring.

Available from: Christian Education Services, 55 Richards Rd., Forrest Hill, North Shore City.

*Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation -- D. Peterson

*The Great Dinosaur Mystery and the Bible -- Paul Taylor

*Dinosaurs by Design -- Duane T. Gish

*Dry Bones and Other Fossils -- G. & M. Parker

*The Answers Book -- Batten, et al.

*The Puzzle of Ancient Man -- Donald Chittick

*(CD): Creation Gospel by Buddy Davis.

*(Video): From a Frog to a Prince.

All the Answers in Genesis material is excellent!

Available from: Answers in Genesis, PO Box 39005, Howick, Auckland.

*Genesis: Finding our Roots -- Ruth Beechick.

*Understanding the Times -- David A. Noebel.

*It Couldn't Just Happen -- Lawrence Richards.

Most of the above can be borrowed from Dayspring, in Palmerston North, ph. (06) 355-2368, dca@xtra.co.nz.

Tough Questions People Throw Your Way

How do you motivate a nearly 6-year-old boy to want to learn to read?

by Craig Smith

Boys are often a year or a year and a half behind girls developmentally at that age. My first reaction to the question was, "Relax, don't worry about it". Resist the temptation to compare him to others, any others, for he is a unique individual with his own developmental timetable. It will almost certainly not match the one the schools use: it is based on some sort of mystical "average" the experts have dreamed up somewhere and is some kind of guide to a teacher with 25 kids in a classroom. But you are just one-to-one. This has tremendous educational and social advantages over a classroom. You can spend most of your time interacting with your son and he with you.....rather than he with a book or an assignment sheet of work to do, set by the teacher who is far too busy trying to maintain order and get through the subjects in the time available to spend more than a moment with any one child.

Read to him. Read books at his "level" of interest and understanding and at a level you would think is way above. Read stuff like *Treasure Island*, *Pilgrims Progress*, *Gullivers Travels* and other classical literature rich in vocabulary, character development and an honesty in grappling with human issues. Read at least two hours a day. Honest. This will improve his vocabulary amazingly. It will also provide you with countless opportunities to answer the questions he is sure to have about words, characters, the setting, the action, etc. This is all excellent instructional time, the best you could possibly hope for. Why? **Because he is asking the questions!!!** That means his mind is engaged with the material and his cognitive skills are being worked and his imagination is operational and his powers of enquiry and inquisitiveness are being fanned into flames. Each question constitutes what the experts call a "teachable moment", which in the classroom occurs only when there is a fortuitous coincidence of teacher availability, subject interest and enough curiosity by a child to overcome both inertia and the possibility of negative peer reaction for the child to actually ask a question. But with one-to-one tutoring, you can have dozens of such teachable moments throughout the day!

Reading to him also gives you the opportunity to ask

questions about things you want him to be clear on. And the reading material, if it is any of the rich literature and biographies around rather than the dry *Dick and Jane* calibre of stuff they often get in schools, will provide many launching pads for you to tell stories from your own background experience: your extended family, tales from when you were a child (always a favourite with children), life lessons you've learned, your perspective on significant moments in history you've lived through, etc. You will be forming his world view, his attitudes, values, standards, concepts of right & wrong, good & bad, wise & unwise. These are the things which are used to build up his frame of reference through which he eventually filters everything he hears, sees and experiences externally, and through which he will filter his own conscious thinking and evaluation processes. This is vitally important. And the sad thing is, most children have this frame of reference formed with large measures of the attitudes, values and standards they picked up from school and playmates and TV.

If you are enthusiastic about reading, if you get excited about the reading material yourself, your excitement will almost guarantee your son's excitement and anticipation of the reading sessions. It is great if you two are curled up together in an easy chair, but it is not necessary. Read to him while he is drawing or playing with Lego. Read while he is playing in the sandbox, or washing the dishes, or tidying up his room, or massaging your feet or folding the laundry.

At some point he will be begging you to teach him how to read, because you can't read as much to him as he would like, and he sees you buried from time to time in a book indulging your own passion to read. And of course, you will have told him plenty of times about the treasures of excitement and fun just waiting for him to discover between the covers of those books sitting on your shelves.

We've all heard it said, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink". Maybe so, but you can put salt in his feed!! The salt is your thoroughly positive attitude toward reading, your enthusiasm for it and your obvious passion for indulging in the activity yourself! Yes, your example is fundamental to your son's learning anything. We are here face to face with one of those profound gems of wisdom, marvellous in its simplicity: monkey see, monkey do. This is a bit too simplistic, actually, for we humans are a lot more complex than that.

To summarize, meditate on two very sobering passages of Scripture, the implications of which are easy to see, yet frightening in how they will be manifested down the track. Luke 6:40 says a student will be just like his teacher once fully taught. And Galatians 6:7 can be taken as a glorious promise or as a scary threat: God is not mocked: we will reap what we sow.

World Views in Focus

Worldviews — How We Learn Them

by Carol Munroe, North Shore City, NZ

We made the statement in our previous article that everybody has a religion or system of belief; a way they see the world or worldview.

Worldviews are usually not systematically taught or learned. They are imbibed, and most of us are not even aware that we have one or know what it is. If you were to walk up to someone on the street and ask what worldview system they adhered to, you would probably get a blank look: “Whaddayamean?” You are not likely to have the response, “I am a humanist of the Marxist persuasion and I adopted this worldview five years ago.” A worldview position is usually not consciously adopted unless systematic study is undertaken. Most of us can’t be bothered, but what we don’t realise is that we are constantly being bombarded with other beliefs, and we adopt new thinking whether we are aware of it or not. Remember *The Lion King* and its circle-of-life worldview? This is blatant cosmic humanism, and

Hollywood consistently promotes it. Life is not a circle. It is linear. History has a beginning, at creation, and it will have an end, at the judgement seat of Christ when all shall bow the knee and acknowledge Jesus is Lord. History, time and place as we know it, will have an end.

But we are constantly taught something else, and often very attractively! This is why it is crucial not only that we home educate our children from a thoroughly Christian world view, but also teach them the beliefs that are out there and how to recognise them in order to understand where people are coming from -- that is, to recognise what presuppositions they have and what they are really teaching. Some Christians are Marxists in their view of economics and are not aware of it. Some are behaviourists in their thinking. Some hold Christian teachings and non-Christian teachings at the same time and are unaware that they contradict each other. The Bible commands us to be wise and not become captive to worldly philosophy (Colossians 2:8).

The problem we face in our modern world is that the teaching in the schools and universities is thoroughly anti-Christian, but it is taught as the truth. Children are not taught to understand the ideas *behind* what is taught; they are merely expected to learn and regurgitate the lessons at the appropriate moment. It is expected that they believe what they are taught. Evolution, for example, is taught as fact, not a theory or faith. If you speak out against evolution in the high school, you are subtly regarded as inferior because you need (blind?) faith for your religion. They won’t teach

you that it takes a lot more faith to believe in evolution than a Creator. Morality is taught in the context of “deciding what is good for you”. In other words, the individual is the determiner of truth.

If we Christians are not taught clearly their own belief system from the scriptures, our fallen natures will easily take in humanistic thought. C S Lewis, in *The Abolition of Man*, attested that children “are bombarded with religious propaganda masquerading as general information or even technical detail in subjects such as grammar or psychology. The information environment makes certain ideas seem plausible and other ideas seem implausible without any arguments being made for or against them”. Lewis, who taught at Oxford and later at Cambridge University, was acutely aware of this because he saw all those young people coming to the universities like sheep prepared for slaughter, unable to cope with what was being thrown at them.

How we need to prepare our children for that world! This year our daughter has been studying at AUT. Last semester one of her papers was social science. This semester she is doing a paper on ethics. It is fascinating. We studied *Understanding The Times* last year, and a lot of the material she was hearing at AUT she recognised as coming straight out of secular humanist philosophy -- the idea, for example, that Man is basically good and that society is responsible for producing criminals, not the individual themselves.

In the ethics paper, so far, the basis of morality is “ethical relativism”. Everything should be done for “the greater good”. Excuse me? What does *that* mean? Hitler, I have no doubt, believed he was acting for the greater good of mankind when he sought to exterminate the Jews and establish the “Master Race”. So did Karl Marx, whose political belief system has been responsible for the mass murder of more human beings than any other belief system in history. All for the greater good of mankind, of course.

What “the greater good” really means is that every individual determines for himself what is right or wrong, and in the final analysis, it is power that counts. If you are more powerful, you impose your ideas on others. Very simple, but certainly not Biblical. As Christians, we seek to bring the Word of God to bear on all areas of morality, and this is in the political arena as well, since it is God who has declared what is right for mankind. And only God has the authority to do that.

If Christians do not understand the Scriptures and face this anti-Christian kind of teaching, they do one of three things. They adopt some of this anti-Christian thinking into their own belief system, and thus have a Christianity which is inconsistent with the Word of God. Or, they reject the faith, because it appears unreasonable, and no person of intelligence can accept it. Or, they retreat into a pietistic framework which, as we saw in our previous article, separates religion from reason and has nothing to say to the world. Christians need to understand their own faith, as well as the worldviews of other religions.

This was brought home to our daughter when she was discussing what they were learning with a fellow student, also a Christian, on the bus coming home one day. The discussion got so heated they both had to take “Time Out”!

“Wow!” I said, “What did the rest of the people on the bus think?” “I don’t know. They were very quiet. But we weren’t”. “Are you still speaking to each other?” “Oh, yes, that’s not a problem. When we saw each other the next day, he greeted me with, ‘And how’s our little right-wing fundamentalist today?’ But what I don’t understand, is how we are both Christians, and yet think so differently on these issues.”

But is it really surprising? Here is a young man sent to the state school where humanism is taught and understood to be the truth. Yes, he is a Christian, but as David Noebel says, Christians are in the middle of a battlefield over the minds and hearts of our children. Yet most Christians are unaware they are even in a war! In Genesis 3:15 God says He will put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. That has always been so and will be till the end of time. Really, the battle is between Christianity and humanism which comes out in various guises. Lael Arrington, in her excellent book *World Proofing your Kids* says the issue is not so simple, because some Christians are so woolly in their thinking they adopt and actively promote anti-Christian teaching. Then, however, the issue becomes how you view the Bible -- is it the authoritative statement about God and man, or not? Does it have the final word on morality, or not? The issue is still humanism -- am I the determiner of what is truth, or is God? (See Genesis 3 - Eve wanted to be like God -- to determine good and evil for herself. That caused the fall.)

My daughter’s friend has been sent to the state school; he is continually accosted by the media promoting anti-Christian worldviews; he listens to rock music that is thought to be cool: is it any wonder that his thinking is affected? Of those Christian parents who send their children to the state school, how many of them systematically teach the Scriptures at home to counteract what their children are learning? Some may, and they have my deepest respect. But assuming that they are not taught at home, is the church going to teach the Christian concepts in areas of economics, business etc? I don’t think so. The responsibility is ours as parents to teach our children the Biblical worldview.

In seeking to understand what the Bible teaches about all areas of life and submitting ourselves to it rather than being our own determiner of truth, we become an answer to the problem rather than continuing to remain part of the problem. We cease to copy the world and provide an alternative. That, as home schooling parents, is one of our greatest challenges.

Teaching Tips



Choosing Teaching Materials

Choosing teaching materials can be an overwhelming decision because there are so many excellent products available, and each one claims to be superior to all others. Many veteran home schoolers suggest that you stick to a “pre-packaged” traditional curriculum for the first year or so. Others encourage new home schoolers to consider correspondence schools. We do not completely agree with these recommendations, because for many it seems to perpetuate a mentality of home schooling as being “school at home” instead of an exciting lifestyle of learning. We know that it takes some experience to determine which materials are best suited to your teaching style and your children’s needs, but we are also convinced that the Lord can lead concerned parents to the teaching materials and methods that work best for their family. Here are some suggestions concerning choosing curricula:

Rule #1: Consider your situation and budget. A farm family will have many opportunities for “hands on” learning in the areas of math, science, economics, etc. A city family has access to museums, libraries, cultural events and more support group activities. You can make the most of the real life learning opportunities God gives you, perhaps never needing textbooks and teaching materials in certain subject areas. As far as budget is concerned, as our friend Carole Seid says, “All you really need for home schooling are a Bible and a library card.”

Rule #2: Choose teaching materials that compliment both the teacher and the learner. Textbooks developed for classroom use tend to be “teacher directed” and chalkboard oriented, seldom taking into account different teaching approaches or the different ways children perceive and process information. Each student has a style in which he learns best. Different children have different learning strengths and weaknesses that the perceptive parent can take into account when choosing teaching materials. (See page 14 of The Elijah Company catalogue for information on learning styles.)

Rule #3: If you don’t like the material, you will resist using it no matter how good it is. All teaching materials have a bias, not just in the subject matter, but also in the way the subject matter is presented. Every teaching parent, whether he recognizes it or not, has an educational philosophy -- some set of values and beliefs about what and how children should be taught. Sometimes we will have an unexplained inner resistance to certain teaching materials. It could be that this inner resistance arises from a conflict between our educational philosophy and that of the teaching material. Trust the Holy Spirit and choose from your spirit as well as from your head.

Rule #4: Avoid programs that require a great deal of teacher preparation. Unless you are a researcher-type or high-energy person, you will be frustrated by programs with detailed teacher’s manuals to wade through, supplemental books or seminars that are necessary to fully utilize the program or lots of activities to prepare beforehand.

Rule #5: Don’t judge a book by its cover. Expensive and “glitzy” does not necessarily mean better. There are \$250 reading programs with “bells and whistles” and \$25 “bare bones” reading programs. Any dedicated teacher with a good phonics program can teach a child to read and spell well. Remember, this is home schooling. Some of our favourite programs look like they were put together on someone’s kitchen table. We’ve been so conditioned as consumers to want slick packages, that we will judge the quality of a product by how it is packaged.

Rule #6: Be aware that there are various schools of thought concerning the teaching of any subject. Some examples: In math there are programs that are

primarily problem solving with manipulatives and programs that are primarily problem solving on paper. In reading there are programs that focus on learning phonics before learning to read, programs that focus on learning the rules while learning to read and programs that focus on just learning to read and letting the rules come later. Each school of thought has produced excellent mathematicians, readers or spellers.

Rule #7: Realize that needs change. What worked one year may not necessarily work the next. Your family's needs and interests will change. Buy materials that meet present needs. Mould the curriculum to the child, not the child to the curriculum. Also be aware that not all books in a series are equally as good. For example, the fourth grade level of a particular program may be excellent, but this does not mean the other levels will work as well.

Rule #8: God gave you *your* specific children because there is something in *you* that He wants imparted to them. Teaching materials are only tools to help you impart yourself to (disciple) your children. You can trust the Lord to lead you to those materials that will help you best disciple each child.

Rule #9: Remember that teaching materials are often the least important elements of your home school. Books are easy to discard if they don't work for you, but attitudes and destructive family dynamics are not. The five major reasons families fail at home education are:

1. they lack the personal conviction to persevere through the difficult times;
2. the father is not involved;
3. the children are undisciplined and resist parental instruction;
4. the parents are undisciplined and cannot handle the added responsibilities; and
5. the family has unrealistic expectations.

[Reprinted (with permission) from The Elijah Company catalogue. See also <http://www.elijahco.com/choosing.htm>. For a free catalogue of home schooling materials contact The Elijah Company, 1053 Eldridge Loop, Crossville, TN, 38558 (931) 456-6284.]

Kick Calculators Out

by David Gelernter

(a professor of computer science at Yale University)

They should be banned from primary schools. The practical gain would be large, the symbolic value even greater. If you hand a child a calculator, you must take care that it is used judiciously, or the result could be catastrophic: an adult who cannot do basic arithmetic. Such a person is condemned to stumble through life's numeric moments in a haze.

The calculator subtly undermines the whole maths curriculum: walking to school isn't bad if you do it every day -- but if you sometimes go by car, walking can start to seem like a pain. And "once the calculator goes on," says Mike McKeown, a geneticist at the Salk

Institute in San Diego, "the brain goes off, no matter what we hope." McKeown is a cofounder of Mathematically Correct, an American group that lobbies for common sense in maths education.

My generation of school children mostly learned their times tables when they were in the second grade. (Japanese children still do.) You can't proceed to long multiplication and division, and fractions and decimals, without knowing the times tables. But at the school my kids attend...they burn lots of class hours learning something other than basic arithmetic. Have they mastered some marvellous new kind of mathematics? Not so you'd notice.

Teachers and principles who defend calculators make this argument: they're cheap, handy and accurate. To the extent we allow children to rely on them, teachers needn't waste time on basic arithmetic -- and can proceed faster and deeper into more advanced terrain.

As most parents realise, this is nonsense. If you haven't mastered basic arithmetic by hand, you can't do arithmetic at all -- with or without calculators. Calculators are reliable but people aren't; they hit wrong keys. You can't solve a problem unless you start with a general idea of the right answer. Otherwise you don't catch your errors -- and you and your calculator are a menace.

But suppose you're perfect; you never hit wrong keys. Even so, if you can't do arithmetic manually, you can't do it mentally; and you'll need to do rough mental arithmetic all the time. How long ago did that happen? When will I arrive? How much cash will that leave me?

You encounter such problems shopping, strolling, driving, paying the taxi. Yes, you could whip out your calculator on such occasions -- and you could skip learning how to drive and simply consult the owner's manual each time you have to make a right turn. Is that what we want for our children?

It comes down to this: Knowledge you can look up is knowledge you don't have. To be educated is to master a body of facts and skills and have them on call 24 hours a day, as you talk and walk and read and work and garden and scheme and think. You can't master everything, but after centuries of thought we have agreed on a time-tested agenda -- reading, writing, history and basic arithmetic.

The yawning chasm between school doctrine and common sense has already swallowed up -- to our shame -- a whole generation of kids. When you hand children automatic, know-it-all crib sheets, you undermine learning. So let's get rid of them.

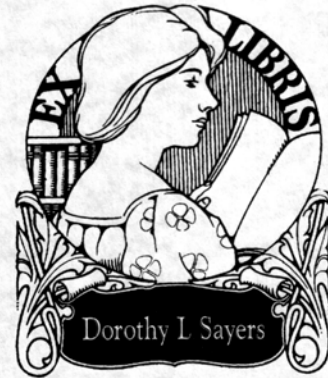
(Excerpted from *Readers Digest*, Dec 98, pp 73-4.)

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by Craig S. Smith

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Over a Cuppa



The World's Most Unselfish Act

by Karen De Coster



I was at a party recently and met a couple of young girls who let it slip that they were being homeschooled by their Mom. They were somewhat surprised by my exuberant reaction, because, according to both of them, it is more common that they would see signs of disdain upon an adult learning of this fact.

“What are the reasons?” I asked. Well, it’s the same old clichés. That is, people think that home-schooled kids cannot be “properly socialized”. Now this is quite amusing because it’s just so wantonly incorrect. Besides, it’s an answer that reveals lazy naiveté and mere repetition of a popular aphorism. After all, what else could someone so ignorant of the facts have to say about homeschooling?

These ignoramus just repeat the blather of the shameful media, and they recite the garble of the State: homeschooled kids don’t have friends, they can’t learn normal social skills, and they are just plain weird. It’s the typical cop-out response to justify an adult’s selfishness, passivity and/or general inclination toward irresponsibility. After all, if one is dumping their kids in the midst of the four walls of the State, and for free, they don’t want it to appear that the parents of those homeschooled children may have something over them.

Well, these parents do have something over those other folks. Homeschooling parents are some of the most solid, principled people you may ever meet. In fact, home schooling is the most unselfish act that a parent can render unto his or her children. The sacrifices that one makes to take on the responsibility to teach, train and endow their children with requisite life skills at the expense of their own sweat and labour are revealing. It reveals a great tenacity to want to enable your children to grow up with a tailored scholastic experience outside of the realm of collective brainwashing at the hands of a despotic educational bureaucracy.

After all, it is the parents who must make all of the qualitative education decisions; no longer is picking five classes out of a 4-page catalogue and signing a permission form the only parental responsibility. No longer does the parent dump the kids into an unrestrained system that promises to provide for all their future needs – from tutelage to psychological therapy to self-esteem to condom handling. It is the parent that actually acts as the fountainhead of truth and scholarship in a homeschool setting.

The mother of the two homeschooled girls was literally shocked when she heard that someone reacted favourably to her homeschool situation. She affirmed

the overall contemptuous reaction to her decision to actually raise and teach her kids herself. It is shameful that the tendency toward having the Public Nipple in every aspect of our lives actually breeds contempt for those who choose to shove the nipple aside and take on the more difficult yet rewarding task of detachment from the Welfare State’s feedback.

On the subject of socializing, the typical home-school family does not live on 100 acres in Idaho, 30 miles from the nearest patch of civilized life, with the organic herb garden, home gun range and paramilitary parents in camouflage pants. Homeschooled kids live in neighbourhoods like most other kids do. They play with other children and their siblings just like your average public school drone. They join sports teams and they may take ballet classes. They are even more likely to participate in church-related groups. The difference is, they are not packed like lemmings into a classroom with thirty other incompatible and unequal ragamuffins, while trying to learn at a pace that is deemed “average” and sufficient for that individual child’s age group.

It was the malignant philosopher John Dewey who stated that only public education could aim for and accomplish greater social competence for children. Let me mention that John Dewey was a die-hard collectivist and despised the notion of the individual removed from the substantial influence of the self-elected, pedagogical elite. The ennobled Dewey, as a noisemaker for the State and its educators, helped to ingrain a sense of helplessness and forbearance in succeeding generations of parents with his philosophical rubbish.

Homeschooling folks have greater objectives for their children than do most parents; and that is, to shield their children from the harmful, unwanted effects provided by outcome-based education techniques; they wish for their children to develop a sense of spirituality and a values system that is desired in the home, and can only be taught at home, by family; they desire an individualized, more classical-oriented education for their children; they wish to control the daily influences that their child receives; and they wish to make all time spent learning quality time, which cannot be the case in the never-ending, disciplinary atmosphere of the public zoo.

Some folks homeschool their children because they exalt the individuality of their offspring and they take parental responsibility seriously. This is showing the greatest respect for God’s gift to them. If you don’t homeschool your kids, that’s your choice. However, keep your empty-headed slurs to yourself, shut your mouth and put these folks on a pedestal, because they deserve it.

(With Permission. Karen is a freelance writer and graduate student in economics and works as a business consultant in Michigan. She can be contacted at: OldRightWingGal@yahoo.com)

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Letters

Pass It On

I thoroughly enjoy reading your magazine and pass it on to others to read (non-homeschoolers)! It would be interesting to see an article where a variety of homeschoolers are interviewed on their different homeschooling methods, and what they thought of different programmes.

Suzanne Berry
Auckland

Always Look Forward

Hope you are all well and refreshed after your trip to the South Island. I read all about it in the *TEACH Bulletin* and it sounds like you had a great time. I always look forward to the *TEACH* and *Keystone* as there is always a lot to think about after reading them, and it is also a good source of encouragement, especially if you don't have much contact with other homeschoolers. I heard that the ERO is busy there in Palmerston North at the moment. My review is next week, but it doesn't worry me too much. Two years ago I would probably have freaked out.

Ilse Boessenkool
Wellington

Glory to God!

Enclosed is our *Keystone* and *TEACH Bulletin* renewal. It is to me vital that we retain such an important and informative life-line. Thank you for your ministry and you and Barbara's willingness to help "newbies" like me!! Great to know due to reading your publications that we're not obligated to teach the subjects the National Curriculum set out for schools. This encouraged me to "challenge" what I was told by MoE on the phone and advise them I'd confirm with you and get back to them. They soon backed down. Glory to God! And the exemption was granted! Glad to know I can access your expertise/support if necessary as I'll soon start our daughter's application for exemption. Keep up the great work, & may the Lord strengthen and bless you.

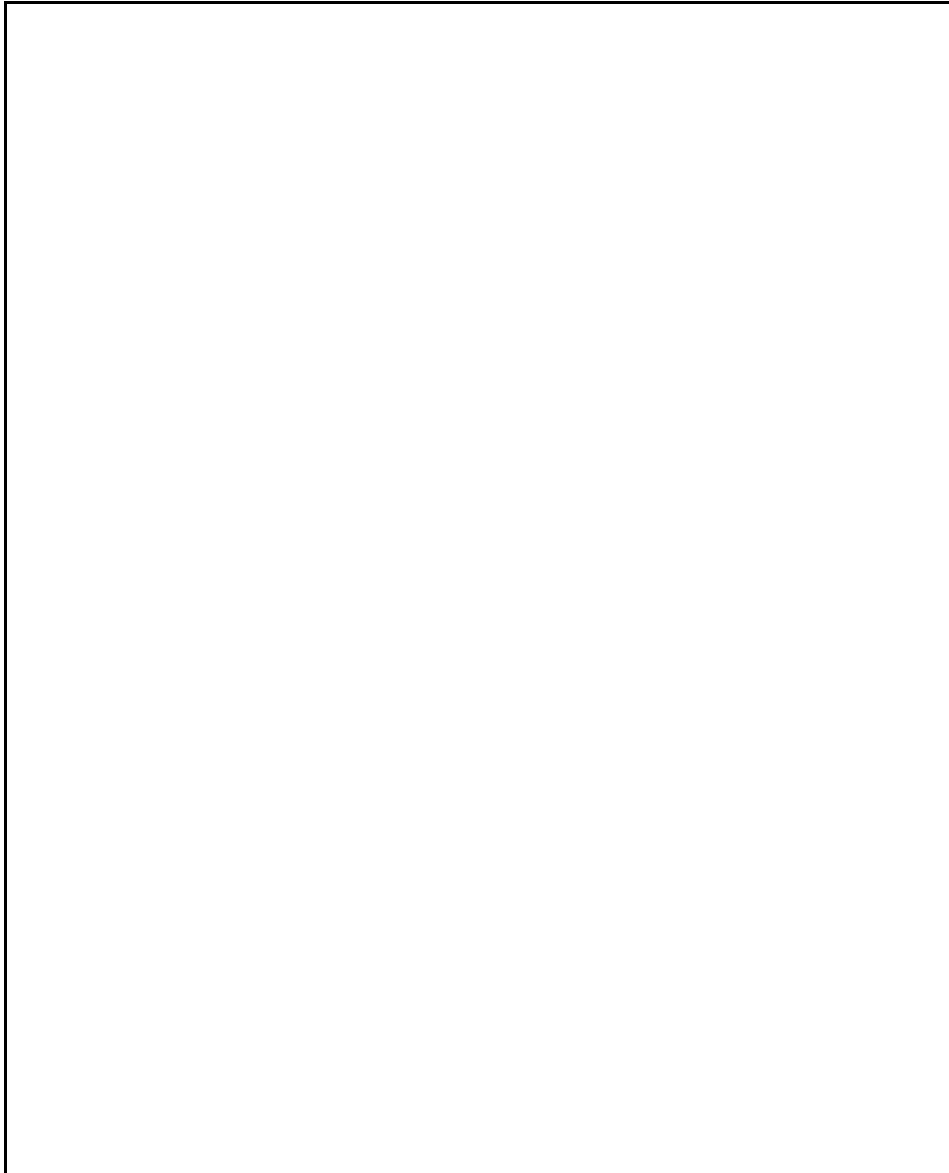
Elizabeth Hing
Masterton

Much Discussion Generated

Hope things are going well with you and your family. There is still much discussion generated by your visit in Marlborough amongst homeschoolers, and we all appreciate your efforts there thanks. We were hoping you could send us some of the *Keystone* pamphlets with your photo on the front and subscription prices etc. on the back if available. They are very handy for passing out to people starting out, and we have now run out. It is amazing the amount of people enquiring in our area about wanting to start homeschooling which is great and groups for art, craft, sport and field trips are all being well supported.

Robyn Thwaites
Blenheim

(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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