

Keystone

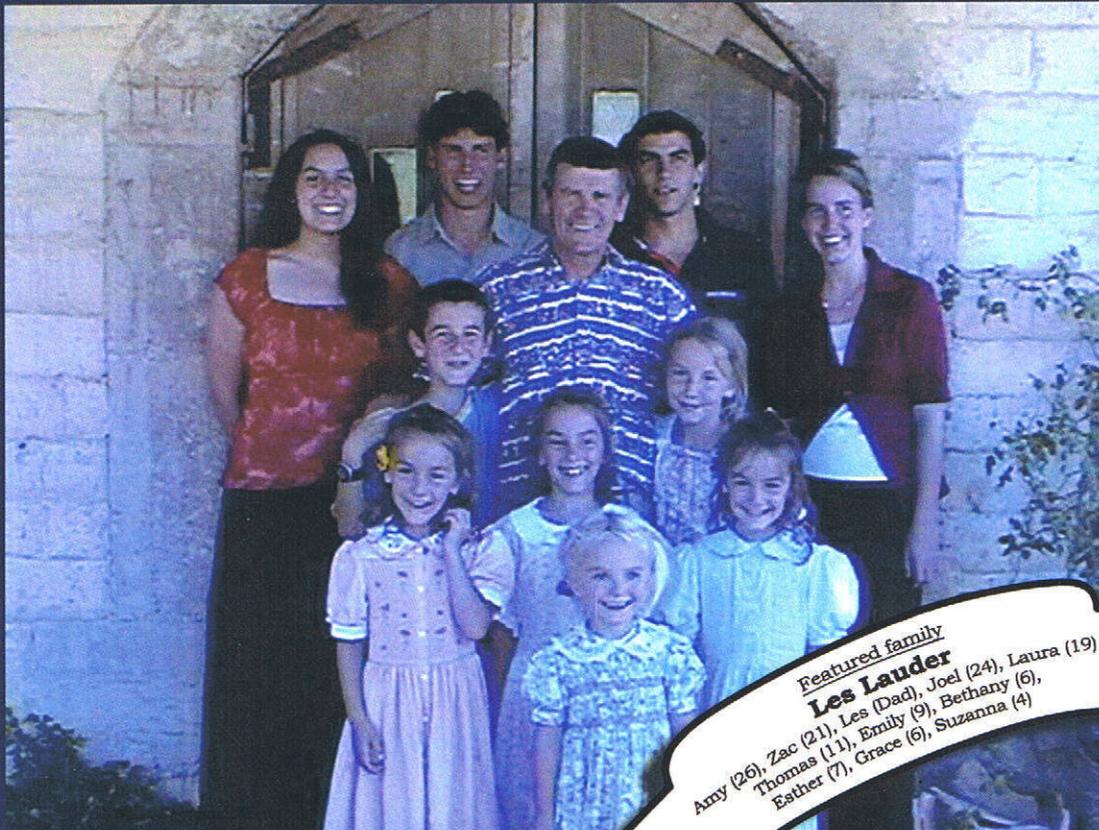
A Bi-Monthly Journal for Christian

Home Educators

Vol. XI No. 4

July 2005

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
Les Lauder
Amy (26), Zac (21), Les (Dad), Joel (24), Laura (19),
Thomas (11), Emily (9), Bethany (6),
Esther (7), Grace (6), Suzanna (4)

The Weaver Poem

My life is but a weaving between my Lord and me,
I cannot choose the colours, He works so steadily,
Oft times He weaves in sorrow, and I in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper, and I the underside,
Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the tapestry and explain the reason why,
The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.

~Author Unknown

Editorial



It is going to be another interesting election. The Prime Minister and her mates have been tireless in working to destroy the rightly honoured positions in our society of marriage, the nuclear family, stay-at-home mums, motherhood itself and dads who seek to be the providers for their families. I really don't know what more we need pushed into our faces by the homosexual/lesbian/feminist alliance who clearly have a most-favoured status with this Government.

But I guess the next thing is that they'll come to get us. That will be the scenario if these same lobbyists ever manage to get Section 59 of the Crimes Act repealed. This is the section justifying parents in using reasonable force with their children by way of correction. If this Section 59 goes, it will mean all parents are guilty of assault every time they use *any* force with their children, be it making them brush their teeth or go to bed. This has been the experience in Sweden, we hear now, since it banned smacking by parents in 1979: the Social Welfare crowd there has taken many children from parents for the flimsiest of reasons. (Check out the research page of the Family Integrity website, www.FamilyIntegrity.org.nz.) We need to pay attention to this because the repeal lobby here constantly say there is no evidence that police or welfare agencies remove children for "wee smacks on the hand" in those countries, like Sweden, which have made smacking illegal. The claim is rather odd: why make it illegal if the police are not expected to arrest and charge people accordingly?

Ian Wishart's *Investigate Magazine*, May 2005, had a scary article about the radically Marxist (that means Socialist) agenda the feminists of 30 years ago planned and have since achieved. He identifies Kay Goodger as the agenda setter and people such as Prime Minister Helen Clark, Speaker of the House Margaret Wilson, Governor General Sylvia Cartwright and others as the actors. Wishart says the "Sisterhood" began to demand the following from the mid-1970s: free abortion on demand; sex education and birth control "integrated into the education system at all levels" and readily available through government-financed clinics; an end to coercive family laws; equality with marriage of de facto set-ups; "the rearing, social welfare and education of children should become the responsibility of society rather than parents"; discrimination against homosexuals and lesbians to be abolished; laws against prostitution to be removed; paid maternity leave with no loss of job seniority; free child-care from early infancy, 24 hours a day. They've pretty well got it all.

Wishart claimed the recent Care of Children legislation downgraded parents and put children into the care of the wider community. But as I read the legislation, it is not the case. However, vast portions of it are written specifically for homosexuals and lesbians, and it does give female children *of any age* the right to unilaterally consent to abortions with no reference to parents (Care of Children Bill, Section 37). Vote prayerfully.

Contents

Feature Family Les Lauder and family.....	3
The Faith of Us Fathers A Husband's Unconditional Love by Chris Klicka.....	7
Home Education Research Parents Describe How They Raise Their Children by George Barna.....	8
Parenting Tips Once Upon a Crush? by Raquelle Sheen.....	9
Over a Cuppa The Value of Mothers at Home by Denise Walmsley.....	11
Graduates Speak Opposing Zeals by Genevieve Smith..... Life Lessons from the Game of Chess by David Botkin.....	12 17
Bits of Books Warning! Public Schools Aren't for Christians. Part 3 by Richard "Little Bear" Wheeler.....	18
When the Going Gets Tough A Husband's Perspective on His Wife's Depression. Part 1 by Steve Maxwell..... A Journey Through Depression. Part 1. by Teri Maxwell.....	20 21
Tough Questions People Ask Would You Define Homeschooling as a Calling? by Craig Smith.....	23
Exploring God's Creation Why Is It Important to Believe in a Literal Interpretation of the Genesis Creation Account? Part 1 by Anna Bentley.....	24
Worldviews in Focus Why Students Walk Away From Christ... and What Can Be Done About It! from Summit Ministries.....	26
Letters.....	28

**"History has never been dominated by majorities, but only by dedicated minorities who stand unconditionally on their faith."
~ R J Rushdoony**

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 and beyond. 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 books the Foundation sells 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 who gives a percentage (5%) 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 "Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand", reference 10898651, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Telecom's "School Connection" Programme. Please ring today!

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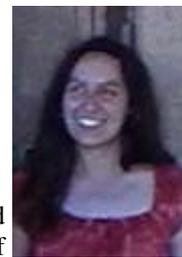
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Les Lauder and family

from Whangarei

As written by his daughter, Amy.



Amy

Hello! My name is Amy Lauder. I am 26 years old and the eldest daughter of Les and Dawn Lauder.

Some of you may know Dawn Lauder. She went home to be with the Lord on the 8th of April 2002 after a brief and sudden illness of cancer. If Mum were still alive, she would do a much better job at writing about our homeschooling experience, but I'll try to describe it as best I can.

Mum and Dad began homeschooling in 1989. By that time Joel was 8 years, and I was 10 years old. We had previously attended a lovely small country school in Towai. The teachers and Board of Trustees were all very good: they even allowed the "strap" and a "sin bin" as consequences for bad behavior. However, my parents took their God-given responsibility to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6) seriously and consequently decided to home-educate us themselves. They have told us of the many hours they would spend teaching us to be kind and loving to our brothers and sisters, include them in our play, speak nicely, etc, etc. But then they'd send us off to school the next day only to have us return squabbling, arguing and generally being unkind to each other and our younger siblings. By taking us out of school, they could train us more consistently in the way we were to behave.



Joel

Dad's job involved a lot of traveling at that time, so we qualified for the Correspondence School curriculum and used that for the first few years. I had a lovely Christian teacher whom I wrote to each time I sent in my lessons to be marked. It was a good transition time. One of the reasons we stopped using the Correspondence School curriculum was because of a subject I was asked to study: Buddhism. Mum wrote to the teacher and explained that my essay would not be simply about Buddhism but, from a Christian's perspective, why it is a false religion. I completed my assignment without further problem, but I think my parents began questioning the use of a secular curriculum after that. Shortly afterwards we stopped Correspondence School and used a variety of Christian based programs just as Laura and Zachari (children nos 3 and 4) were beginning formal "school work". Some of the Christian textbooks we used were Alpha Omega, ABeka, Horizon and Rodd and Staff. Mum taught all four of us older children using these textbooks.



Zac

We had a large house and our own "school room". I still remember the desks Dad built for us. We decorated them ourselves, mine: was a pale green colour and Joel's a sky blue. We were allowed to decorate them with pictures, so mine had horse

pictures and stickers glued onto it, and then we polyurethened over top of them. I remember being quite proud of it. There is something to be said for having your own desk/space while homeschooling.

In 1992 Mum and Dad attended a Basic Life Principles seminar and met the New Zealand directors of the ATINZ (Advanced Training Institute of New Zealand) curriculum. They were attracted by the amount of focus on the Word of God in the curriculum and how much it reinforced the Biblically based principles and standards they had already set for us. In 1992 we enrolled in the ATINZ program, and I for one am very grateful they did. At the first seminar I was able to attend, I rededicated my life to the Lord. I had been a "Christian" since eight years old but had not listened to my parents teaching or training as there were deeper roots of bitterness and secret sins in my life. It was at the seminar I noticed other young people a lot more Christ-like than myself, and though I convinced myself they were just as mean to their siblings as I was when at home, they had something different about them. I heard the testimony of one of the young ladies about confessing our sins, being free from bondage, bitterness, etc, and the Lord touched and healed me in such an amazing way.



Laura

ATI is not only designed to equip children with academic skill but to strengthen them and their families in godly character and God honouring relationships. The main books we use are called Wisdom Booklets. Each WB lasts approximately 1-2 months. They each begin with a verse from Matthew 5. Everything in that Wisdom Booklet is based on that verse; e.g., for Matthew 5:1, "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain..." you would study mountains for Geography or eyes for Science and Medicine. Not only do you study eyes physically – their diseases and functions – but there are always analogies between the physical and the spiritual. For example, Myopia physically is "nearsightedness." Spiritually Myopia could be seeing only my needs and not looking out for others. They are very well thought out, and there are many projects to choose from for the different age levels in the 'Parent Guide Planner.' We have always used our Abeka and other curriculum books to supplement ATI. This is not necessary but just what Mum personally chose to do and what we have continued to do.

ATI has an excellent CCC (Christ Centered Curriculum) for teaching littlies to read, write and begin mathematics. Mum began teaching Tom (their first reversal baby) with this and was amazed at the speed he learnt. It is a very thorough program. She always began teaching them at about age



Tom

KEYSTONE

is the Journal of
Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand.
It is read by subscribers in New Zealand,
Australia, Japan, the USA, Ireland
and the UK.

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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 worldview 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. Amen!

four, so he was reading very well at seven years. I remember being astonished at finding him at age seven on his bed with a stack of Children’s Encyclopedias (Physics, Astronomy, Science, etc, printed all over the covers), and he was happily poring over them! He is still an avid “bookworm”, and if you can’t find him, you know he’ll be somewhere curled up with a book! Only just the other day he was telling me that he has read most of the books we have now and is going through them again. I am forever hunting for good authors and have been blessed at garage sales with some real old treasures. I keep a little address/phone book in my bag at all times, and in it are listed all the authors and books we have, so I can look up an author and also know how many copies of a book we have. We like to have a couple of copies, but without my little book I think we’d have a lot more. I just noticed we have four copies of *The cross and the Switchblade* by David Wilkerson, so that must have been before my little book!

Tom also enjoys making model railways, and Dad has made him a large table-size board that lowers down from the ceiling and can be winched up out of the way when he’s not working on it. He loves to join in with anything that his older brothers are doing: camping, hunting, fishing, etc.

At this time in our lives a close solo mother, a friend of ours, died leaving three children. Mum and Dad decided to foster them. During this time we were living in a house-truck and traveling the North Island. The house-truck was an ex-dairy heavy truck and trailer. We enjoyed seeing the reactions of people when we stopped and seven children and two adults hopped out of the front cab. Towards the end of our travels the three extra children went to live with another family. The tour of the North Island ended with the birth of Thomas in 1994. However, we continued to travel the South Island when he was still a baby.

Emily was born when we returned from the South Island to live on a property in Whangarei. Dad helped rebuild the old Windsor Hotel. We lived in our house-truck on their property for a few years. Emily was a home-birth in the truck. Emily is now nine years old and has a real little mother’s heart. She loves babies and all sorts of crafts like cross-stitching, knitting and hand sewing. I think Laura has passed on the love of these, as I am much more keen on sewing machines and outdoor landscaping, etc. I don’t tend to finish my knitting or tapestry projects. Perhaps when I’m a mother I’ll do that sort of thing while breast-feeding. Mum read a lot and began a really lovely hand stitched quilt using the time she spent breast-feeding babies. Emily also loves books and has been reading the *Little House on the Prairie* series by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Emily’s name means ‘Industrious,’ and she lives up to her name. She often gets up early to complete some of her schoolwork before the day begins.



Emily

In 1998 we purchased the 43 acres we are now living on and went share milking in order to be freehold. Esther, Bethany and Grace were all born during this

time. Esther is now seven years old and a real out-doors girl. She has an independent streak – being in between Thomas & Emily and Bethany & Grace. When we first began teaching her, she would always be impatient to start. As you explain a new concept, she would interject with, ‘I know, I know how to do it!’. She is more teachable now but still loves to race through her bookwork as fast as she can. Esther is very diligent and determined to do something once she puts her mind to it. Even tidying the house for her is no problem – she’ll often tidy everyone else’s area as well because she sees she can get it done faster than they can.



Esther



Bethany

Grace

Bethany and Grace are identical twins — so identical we even get them muddled up. I’m sure it would be great fun to be a twin. They’re at the same level schoolwork, but it’s interesting to note their different strengths and weaknesses. This can also vary from week to week. One week one of them will read beautifully and write quite messy while the other struggles with reading and write beautifully and then the next week they’ve swapped around. I’m sure they motivate each other to do better and try hard. We so enjoy having twins and right from when they were little, we said, “They’re double the trouble but twice as nice!”

When we finished our share-milking contract, we spent eighteen months in several shacks/rooms joined together to make a house on our land. It wasn’t very pleasant in the wintertime, but we have very fond memories of snuggling on the couch next to the potbelly in our very small lounge while Mum read a story to us. She loved to read chapter books to us older ones, and we remember many great classics from listening to her. I now do the same with the children, and they love it as much as I do, reliving the memories of favorite books and of Mum’s devotion. She always left her own projects and hobbies she wanted to do: they were the very last on her “priority list.” Her children’s training and character development was always her first priority. By example we learnt to look out for and love each other more. She is the best model of “mother-hood” I know.

In 2001 we moved into our new two-storey earth brick home we were building. The boys had plenty of building experience, and we all helped make earth bricks from our own quarry. Laura and I began helping teach the younger ones, and the boys began work experience. Joel became an apprentice builder alongside Dad, and Zachari began part-time work farming and apiary work.

Suzanna was born in the year 2001 on the 8th of April. In October 2001 Mum was diagnosed with breast cancer that had already advanced to bone cancer. The doctors said she could have had it for five years

already. She went rapidly down hill. Though we had much prayer and various treatments, she left for glory on April 8th, 2002, the very day Suzanna our youngest turned one. The whole seven months was a very traumatic time and it has taken us a long time to adjust and accept God's will in our lives.

As I stated before, Laura and I had been helping with school more and more anyway, and as Mum grew weaker, we gradually got used to doing more. We love teaching the children and have really good relationships with all our siblings. Looking after and homeschooling our brothers and sisters is not such an unusual or shocking thing as some people may assume. We had already been planning to stay at home rather than joining the work force, and this is merely a bonus for training in the area of mother-hood and marriage. In fact we have it easier than most homeschooling mothers as there are two of us. We work very well together. I'm very much like Mum and love to have schedules and am project focussed, where as Laura (like Dad) is very flexible and is often able to get more done without a schedule than I do with a schedule.

We have not veered too much from the basic structure Mum had set for schooling while teaching us. We have changed our daily routine many times, as did Mum. But whereas Mum had time scheduled down to the last ten minutes, I cannot do that. At the moment we begin the day when I wake everyone — usually around 6:45am. Before this us four older ones are up and have a chat altogether with Dad and Joel before he (Joel) leaves for work. Everyone tidies his room, makes his bed and comes down stairs for a Bible reading and breakfast time with Dad and Zachari before they leave for the day's work. All the children except Suzy take turns reading aloud from the Bible. After breakfast we go outside and have physical education for 45 minutes. This involves milking the cow (for me), weeding/watering gardens, collecting manure and other odd outside chores. This gets our blood circulating and oxygen levels up ready for our book work studies. In rainy weather we do aerobics inside. Laura and I alternate one week doing school work and one week meals and "free time". Usually "schoolwork" is done by lunch time, and only Tom and Emily have a few subjects they finish off on their own. We generally mark all their work in the evening. Tuesdays are a bit different. We have a craft or culture day on alternating weeks. We still do some basics (MMM – Maths, Memory work and Music) and then arts and crafts like painting, mosaics, sewing, crossstitch, papermache, handmade gifts and sometimes baking or preserving, etc. On culture days we do MMMs then study a culture. We have been choosing a country alphabetically and then studying that particular culture. For example we are up to N, so (mainly because we hadn't been into the library to get books on anything else we chose New Zealand culture. We usually just pore over all the books we have, reading out interesting facts and writing down things we could do. We then make and plan everything for the "culture dinner" that Friday evening. This time we collected native tree branches and hung them around the dining area, made flax skirts and a woven flax table runner, made a moari cloak, drew pictures for the wall of the New Zealand

flag and some of the native birds and animals we have and invited some friends for tea on Friday. Instead of a hangi we had a "boil up" of watercress, porkbones and kumara! Complete with Lemon and Paeroa to drink and hokey pokey icecream with New Zealand fruit for dessert! All the children dress up, and we have a great time. Even us older children have dressed up and gotten involved sometimes. For Mediavil night Joel and Zac dressed up as horses, Esther and Tom as knights in cardboard armour and Beth and Grace as pages. They did jousting, complete with lady Suzanna dropping her hankerchief (a serviette) for them to begin! It was great fun and a lot of laughs.

As I have commented on all the other siblings, I'll comment now on Suzanna. She is still our youngest baby. She'll be four this April, which will be exactly three years since Mum has gone. We have begun a fun and flexible schooling with her using the Chrst Centred Curriculum, and she enjoys doing her little bit of book work with the others. The other children also enjoy teaching her and taking her through the alphabet flash cards, etc.



Suzanna

This is part of being taught and then being able to teach what you have learnt – a vital skill to anyone's development. Laura and I find we have learnt and continue to learn so much along with the children. Mum's ideal was that there would be no baby of the family but that the older children would be having their little ones by the time she (the mother) had stopped having hers. But unless Dad remarries (or one of us), Susanna will be the baby for the time being. We all so enjoy her sweet little mannerisms and conversations (complete with a baby lisp) as her vocabulary increases. Laura was the "baby" for eight years before Tom was born, and it didn't seem to harm her at all.

Anyway, I'm not too sure how to end this, so I guess I'll just leave you with a poem that many of you will be familiar with. Homeschooling is a huge part of training up your children to be mighty in spirit and in truth as it causes your children to be right there in the centre of your Christian walk as a family. It will help them see real life with it's dark threads and its gold all together forming the glorious plan the Lord has for each of them. It reminds them to not only learn but to learn to teach. "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thy house and when thou walkest by the way and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." Deuteronomy 6:7

The Weaver Poem

*My life is but a weaving between my Lord and me,
I cannot choose the colours, He works so steadily,
Oft times He weaves in sorrow, and I in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper, and I the underside,
Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the tapestry and explain the reason why,
The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has
planned.*

~Author Unknown

The Faith of Us Fathers



A Husband's Unconditional Love

by Chris Klicka

I was shocked by the news that three homeschool fathers (all professing Christians), whom I thought I knew well, had abruptly left their wives and families. One of these men had shed tears after I spoke about homeschool fathers loving their wives and children. Now he was divorcing his wife and emotionally torturing his children. The second outwardly walked the Christian life, but inwardly he was gradually losing his love for his wife. He left his five children, his wife, his church family and God for an adulterous relationship. The third left his wonderful wife and three little children when his several affairs over the years were discovered.

Even Christian homeschool husbands are not immune to the temptations that are destroying marriages at a rapid rate. Sadly the divorce rate among Christians is almost the same as the divorce rate in the world.

I am convinced that husbands bear the greatest responsibility for this tragedy. They do not love their wives unconditionally as commanded by God the Creator. Without such love marriages will fail.

The Command: Husbands Love Your Wives

In Ephesians 5:25, the command is crystal clear: "Husbands love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her" (all quotes NASB). This straightforward command is repeated in Colossians 3:19: "Husbands love your wives and do not be embittered against them." In 1 Peter 3:7, the Bible says, "You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered."

Each husband must make a conscious decision to love his wife even though he does not always feel like loving her. She is a sinner, and she will disappoint her husband, disagree with him and even hurt him by things she says and does. She, like her husband, will not live up to idealistic expectations. Will Christian husbands respond selfishly by withdrawing their love or simply leaving the relationship, even though God holds marriage sacred as a representation of the permanent union between Christ and us, His church?

A few years ago, while flying to a homeschool

convention, I sat next to a lady who was clearly a feminist. She seemed hopelessly bitter, and I tried to share the gospel. As I explained how easy it is to die, she agreed and related a recent near-death experience of her employer. As I mentioned the Word of God, however, she immediately recoiled, stating that the Bible simply tells husbands to treat their wives as doormats. All she knew was that wives had to submit to their husbands and that husbands nearly always abuse their authority. I calmly responded by reading Ephesians 5:25 to her and explained what Christ did for the church how He gave His own life for her, how He died for us even though we were His enemies and that husbands are to love their wives like that. Tears welled up in her eyes when she heard this truth for the first time. Her demeanor completely changed, and for the next hour she willingly listened. I left her with a New Testament and a huge smile on her face. Her heart was now open to the gospel.

A wife longs for her husband to love her like that! Our love to our wives must not be dependent on their submission to us or on how well they organize their day or homeschool the children or any other external thing.

Certainly Christ's love for us is not dependent on our submission or obedience. Romans 5:10 says that we were God's enemies, but He reconciled us to Himself through Christ anyway. Is it right for us to base our love for our wife on works? Are we making our wives earn our love?

How Can a Husband Love His Wife Unconditionally?

You might be thinking that your wife is not easy to live with. In the power of your flesh, it is impossible to love your wife unconditionally. But there is enough grace from God in Christ for us to have all the joy and hope and encouragement that we need, no matter how difficult our circumstances. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We can love our wives even when we feel we are not loved in return. We cannot wait for our wives to change before we love them unconditionally. That is disobedience!

God will hold husbands responsible one day before the Judgment Seat for our faithfulness in dying to ourselves and loving our wives. But we often are not building our spiritual lives, and we assume that we are immune to dangers.

Stark evidence for this appears in a survey conducted by Dr. Howard Hendricks of 246 men involved in full-time ministry who were all unfaithful to their wives. All the men had started with strong marriages and a strong commitment to full-time ministry. Nonetheless they fell to sexual temptation one by one.

Dr. Hendricks found two common traits among these men that indicate why they fell into sin. First, none of them had a personal, daily time with the Lord in prayer and Bible reading. They had ceased personally nurturing their own souls.

(Continued on page 27: *Klicka*)

Home Education Research



Parents Describe How They Raise Their Children

By (George) Barna Research Group

Parenting is a controversial and complicated issue. Bookstores are filled with volumes written about the most effective methods of raising children, and millions of adults attend parenting courses and conferences each year. A new nationwide survey of parents, conducted by The Barna Group, offers some surprising insights into the outcomes parents are most eager to achieve in their children, the qualities they believe are most important for parents to have in order to be effective and some of the critical choices and tradeoffs they make in their child-rearing efforts.

What Makes A Parent Successful?

Each of two qualities was listed by one-third of all parents as contributing significantly to effectively raising children. Thirty-six percent said having patience is necessary to be effective, while 32% indicated that demonstrating love was indispensable.

The next most frequently cited attributes of effective parenting were enforcing discipline and being understanding. Each of these qualities was named by 22% of parents.

Having a significant faith commitment and an identifiable set of religious beliefs was mentioned by just one out of every five parents as an ingredient required for parental success.

Several other qualities were named by at least one out of every ten parents. Those included having good communication skills (17%), being compassionate (14%), knowing how to listen (12%) and being intelligent (11%).

Characteristics that were stated by at least 5% of all parents were being an encouraging person (9%), having substantial emotional strength (8%), making consistent choices (8%), having a clear philosophy of parenting (7%) and knowing how to plan and set goals (6%).

Smaller numbers of parents listed elements such as being a praying person (4%) or having integrity or good character (1%) as significant characteristics.

Most Desirable Outcomes for Kids

Parents described what they feel are the most important outcomes they are devoted to helping their children experience. By far the top-rated outcome was getting a good education. Four out of every ten parents (39%) listed that as a critical outcome they were committed to

facilitating.

Helping the child to feel loved was the second most frequently mentioned outcome (24%), followed by enabling them to have a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ (22%).

The only other outcomes cited by at least one out of ten parents were fostering a sense of security (16%), helping them to feel affirmed and encouraged (14%), providing a firm spiritual foundation (13%) and delivering basic necessities such as shelter (12%) and food (10%). Ten percent also said it was crucial to help their children feel happy.

Among the less common building blocks parents mentioned were having a sense of belonging or connection (9%), being and feeling safe (8%) and helping to establish appropriate moral values (4%).

Trade-Offs Parents Make

One of the most eye-opening portions of the research related to the choices that parents make in various situations. Four specific conditions were evaluated.

In the first, parents were asked if they were more likely to battle their children over every issue that emerged in order to establish control and appropriate choices or to instead limit those battles to particular issues the parent deemed to be significant. Three out of every four parents (77%) took the "pick your fights" approach, while one out of eight (13%) felt it was important to interact on every issue.

A second situation was whether the parent tells the child that the Bible teaches moral absolutes that must always be obeyed, no matter what the situation is, or instead teaches that there are no moral absolutes, so the child must be prepared to make good choices in every situation without any absolute guidelines. Parents were evenly divided on this matter: 43% said they teach there are some moral absolutes, and 45% said they teach that there are no such absolutes.

Another trade-off posed was related to the child's media exposure. A majority of parents (56%) said they gave their youngsters general guidelines about the amount and quality of media they were allowed to access and then let the children regulate their media intake by themselves. One-third of all parents (36%) strictly limited the amount and quality of TV, music and other media the children were allowed to access.

How do parents determine whether they have been successful in raising their children? By more than a two-to-one margin (62% to 28%) they define success as having done the best they could, regardless of the outcomes. Less than three out of ten parents say the fruit of their efforts is the defining factor.

Surprising Insights Into Parenting

In studying the findings, George Barna, who directed the research, noted that the faith commitment of parents made surprisingly little difference in how children were raised.

“You might expect that parents who are born again Christians would take a different approach to raising their children than did parents who have not committed their life to Christ – but that was rarely the case,” Barna explained. “For instance, we found that the qualities born again parents say an effective parent must possess, the outcomes they hope to facilitate in the lives of their children and the media monitoring process in the household was indistinguishable from the approach taken by parents who are not born again.”

The California-based researcher pointed out that there was one substantial distinction. “Born again parents were twice as likely as others to teach their children that there are certain moral absolutes they should obey. However, even on that matter, less than six out of ten born again parents took such a position.”

One of the most startling observations, according to Barna, was how few born again parents indicated that one of the most important outcomes parents needed to help their children grasp was salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. “Only three out of ten born again parents included the salvation of their child in the list of critical parental emphases,” he noted. “Parents cannot force or ensure that their kids become followers of Christ. But for that emphasis to not be on the radar screen of most Christian parents is a significant reason why most Americans never embrace Jesus Christ as their savior. We know that parents still have a huge influence on the choices their children make, and we also know that most people either accept Christ when they are young or not at all. The fact that most Christian parents overlook this critical responsibility is one of the biggest challenges to the Christian Church.”

The author of the best-selling book, *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*, Barna offered his thoughts on the significance of the research. “For years we have reported research findings showing that born again adults think and behave very much like everyone else. It often seems that their faith makes very little difference in their life. This new study helps explain why that is: believers do not train their children to think or act any differently. When our kids are exposed to the same influences without much supervision and are generally not guided to interpret their circumstances and opportunities in light of Biblical principles, it’s no wonder that they grow up to be just as involved in gambling, adultery, divorce, cohabitation, excessive drinking and other unBiblical behaviors as everyone else. What we build into children’s lives prior to the age of 13 represents the moral and spiritual foundation that defines them as individuals and directs their choices for the remainder of their lives. Garbage in, garbage out; there’s no magic that suddenly changes the young person from what they were trained to be in their formative years into a model Christian once they get older.”

Research Source and Methodology

The data reported in this summary are based upon telephone interviews with a nationwide random sample

(Continued on page 27: Research)

Parenting Tips

Once Upon a Crush?

by Raquelle Sheen



When my sister Heather was 11 years old, she unwittingly attracted the adoration of an 11-year-old boy, the out-of-state cousin of a friend of ours. When he and his sister came to visit our friend, he met Heather and was smitten. Apparently too bashful to make his feelings known at the time, however, he waited almost a year. Then, when his sister wrote a letter to our friend, he enclosed a short love letter for her to give to Heather. It was forthright and concise. It read simply: Dear Heather, Are you still as cute as you were last year? I am. Love, Bob.

The “romance” never flourished, however, perhaps because of our friend’s little brother. The next time Bob and his sister visited our friend and came to church with them, the little brother shrieked excitedly in front of the entire Sunday School class, “Heather, your boyfriend’s here!!!” Verily, that is enough to quench more arduous love than his! We never heard from Bob again. Alas!

All right, when you stop giggling, I have a question. Let’s be wet blankets and consider the painfully practical side of childish crushes. Are they wise? Unfortunately...no.

A crush, you’ll admit, distracts a young person from reality. I have seen starry-eyed 13-year-olds who can only talk about their boyfriend. I ask you, what business does a 13-year-old have with a boyfriend? She can’t marry him for at least four or five years, and it’s extremely doubtful that her affection will last that long anyway. She would be much wiser to be focusing on reality—her walk with God, her family and her responsibilities.

“Crumbs,” you say. “You really are wet blanket! C’mon! Crushes are cute!” Well yes, sometimes. But is the defining standard for a child’s behavior whether something is “cute” or not? Ha! The defining standard of a child’s behavior is Scripture. Did you know Scripture has something to say about premature romances? In Song of Songs, that great Biblical love story, we read this: “Daughters of Jerusalem I charge you: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.” (Song of Songs 8:4) Premature romance is not something to be played around with. A young person’s love is to be carefully preserved for his future mate, not frittered away on a new “friend” every six months.

Another problem with crushes is that they often result in hurt feelings when the other young person doesn’t return the affection or perhaps “drops” them for someone else. Hurt feelings would be needless if the

crush had simply been avoided. I know that children need to learn to deal with hurt feelings sooner or later, but let's face it—as long as human beings act like human beings there will always be opportunities to practice dealing with hurt feelings. Why knowingly allow—or encourage—situations where this can happen?

A third problem is that crushes tend to mar true friendships. I knew a girl and boy once who had a mutual crush on each other when they were both about 12. Nothing ever came of it except that he gave her a pencil with red hearts on it when she had to move away. Aw, how sweet, right? But a year later the girl moved back, and then what? The crush hadn't lasted, of course, and the girl would have enjoyed resuming a normal, comradely friendship. However, she felt terribly awkward. How does one politely say, "Hey, I hope you don't 'like' me anymore because I don't 'like' you. Let's just be friends, huh?" So she simply avoided him, and they never got beyond stilted small talk. They both lost a friend because of a crush.

A fourth problem with crushes is that if they are catered to in childhood, a habit is formed for the teen years. "Innocent crushes" become more serious. Passions and emotions that have lain partially dormant suddenly emerge with frightening strength without the corresponding maturity to handle them. Crushes indulged at this age increase the severity of the problems I've just described. Varying degrees of impure behavior can even result.

"All right," you say, "You might have a point. But how do I prevent my child from getting a crush? I can't control my child's emotions!" No, but you can proactively influence his thinking. And you can control his behavior.

Explain to your children early on that God will provide their life partner when they're ready for marriage, and it's silly to think about "romance" until then. If your child gets a crush, remind him again that it's unwise and encourage him to pray about it and put those thoughts from his mind.

Additionally, remove harmful influences. Homeschooled children are protected children, but they can still be exposed to damaging influences. Certain activity groups (sports, ballet class, etc.)—and even church youth groups—are often rampant with crushes. Homeschooled kids are not immune to the "who likes who" game, so keep an eye on co-op and support group activities as well. However, proactive training is its own safeguard—the child who is taught that crushes are foolish will probably be bored and disgusted with conversations that are perpetually crush-centered.

What is your child reading or watching on TV? A lot of children's books and movies—even "Christian" ones—center heavily around

"special friendships" between boys and girls who are barely in their teens. This sets a very poor role model for your kids. Get rid of those kinds of harmful influences. Or, like my mother did, write "editorial remarks" next to the foolish parts in a book that is otherwise wholesome. Clean romance itself is fine, but not when it's presented as an option for a young person to indulge in.

What about controlling the child's behavior? You don't have to accommodate crushes. We've all seen parents smile dotingly at their child and purposely seat them next to their "sweetie," arrange for them to spend afternoons together, etc. If you take a crush this seriously, your child will too. But if you refuse to accommodate it and instead remind your child that they're being unwise, the child will probably soon get over it.

Hint: Giggling at a foolish letter like Bob's can go a long way toward dispelling romantic notions. Of course, getting a ridiculous letter like that is enough to dispel them too! Who could be serious about a "boyfriend" like that?

Raquelle Sheen was homeschooled all her life and is currently pursuing her college degree at home also. She and her family live in the United States in sunny South Carolina. The Sheen family has been active in the homeschooling community for many years, having

(Continued on page 11: Parenting Tips)

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Over a Cuppa

The Value of Mothers at Home

by Denise Walmsley



Just recently a very powerful woman, a self professed feminist, childless by choice, let the country know that she would be doing what she could to persuade mothers to leave their children for others to bring up and return to the paid workforce in order to raise the country's GDP.

The social agenda that she doesn't speak about but has worked on quietly over the years has come so gradually that I hardly was aware at first. But the implication of what she said recently is horrifying to me as a mother committed to my family and to family values, believing that strong families are the backbone of a strong, healthy society.

In using mothers to raise the GDP of our country, we are accepting that motherhood is of low value, that mothering isn't really a valid, useful, long-term option for women. We are accepting that children can be brought up equally well by any adult, whether the adult loves the children or not, just as long as she/he doesn't physically hurt them.

My views on mothers, children, home-life and family differ drastically from the Prime Minister's. I see a mother who is creating a loving home as doing an infinitely valuable job. And it doesn't end when the children reach school age or are no longer so utterly dependent on her.

My desire is to provide a home life for my family that enriches their lives and supports them as they grow. These riches don't come from an increased GDP but from a lifestyle that allows time for family and for enjoying time spent with those we care for.

In our home the "baby" of the family is nearly ten. So we have left behind the "baby years". Conversation around the dinner table is different from when we had just little ones, and evening events can go at a more leisurely pace because there is no need to rush off and get baths for little ones or read to all the children in rotation.

If our children went to school, and I went out of the home to work each day, then I know our evenings would be very different. At the moment my work is to prepare for the out-of-home workers coming home each evening by having dinner almost ready and the house tidy and welcoming for them. We usually sit around the table in the evening, relaxing, enjoying each other and being refreshed. We laugh and joke as we

unwind together. We share stories of our day and put the world to rights.

If we were to all rush in from out-of-home work at the end of the day, tired, stressed and needing to then start all the home things, how different things would be. For us life is more than GDP, and the relationships we have in our family are much more important than any economic benefit of having me going out to work each day.

I know that I am very blessed to be able to be at home for my family. It's an honour and it's a rich, fulfilling life. And yet I often hear comments that imply that it's a pathetic little life that home makers live. Even something to be slightly ashamed of. My friend recently sent me this quote from a guy who has been able to put into words something that I've wondered about many times. G. K. Chesterton, in his book *What's Wrong with the World?*, said:

How can it be a large career to tell other people's children about the Rule of Three and a small career to tell one's own children about the universe? How can it be broad to be the same thing to everyone and narrow to be everything to someone?

There may come a time when I go out to work full time again, maybe out of necessity or maybe out of choice. But I know that for now, even though my "baby" is no longer breastfeeding and my children are school-aged, my family still needs me in different ways to support, refresh and encourage them. And so I do the best I can in mothering and home-making.

Denise Walmsley is married to Philip, and they have five children—all of whom were taught at home. She is the founder of Ezra Homeschool Support Group and the founding editor of Ezra News. Articles she has written have appeared in New Zealand's own Little Treasures magazine and for the American magazine, Homeschooling Today. Her vision is to share her experience and encourage and empower parents to teach their own children well and with confidence. Denise runs courses for home educators and is available to lead sessions or give talks at Home Educating events. For more details please visit her website: www.thebroadroom.co.nz or write to her at The Broad Room, PO Box 34 444, Birkenhead, Auckland 1330.

(Continued from page 10: Parenting Tips)

served with state homeschool organizations in several states. Raquelle also works for her father's business, teaches piano lessons, performs and records CDs of harp duets with her sister (see their website at www.joyfulharps.com) and writes for a local weekly newspaper. You may contact her at: joyfulharps@earthlink.net.

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Graduates Speak

Opposing Zeals

by Genevieve Smith



Just last May I attended the Well Child Expo in Palmerston North. Organizations such as Public Health, SKIP, the Commission for Children and Plunket had colourful booths at the Expo encouraging parents to feed their children healthy food, not to hit their children and to brush their children's teeth regularly. The Expo was attended by mums and dads with their young children. The littlies could have their faces painted and were given apples and stickers and balloons by the people running the different booths.

Attending the Expo confirmed something in my mind which has become more and more obvious to me: there are people out there with zeal for my children.

They want my children to be healthy and happy and to have a little sparkle in their eyes!

Last year I attended another function which had all the same organizations at it. This was a conference called, "Stop It! It Hurts Me" and was put on for midwives, childcarers, teachers, and CYFS workers to attend. It was a conference designed to rev attendees up against those who would spank their children. It was a conference designed to network people together towards repealing s59 of the Crimes Act which states that parents are justified in using reasonable force to correct a child. The people at this conference had a zeal for my children too, but it was a zeal with a very different tone: they are convinced that they know better than the parents do what is best for everyone else's children. .

Their zeal was not so much motivated by the idea of having healthy, happy little children but was motivated by hatred against God, against the Christian family, against the Church, against Christianity and against men (strong patriarchal men in particular).

On the surface the people at the Stop It Conference just wanted to stop children from being abused (while using double talk confusing spanking with abuse) but underneath their agenda is to destroy the traditional family's place as the unchallengeable foundational unit of society.

They have zeal for my children and for yours too. Their desire is to ensure that our children break away from our parental influence. Their desire is to train the children to be willing workers for the Government. Their zeal is encapsulated in their motto, "Get the children away from their parents." As parents you and I won't hear that motto. They phrase it differently to us. What we hear is "free childcare," "free schooling" and "free healthcare for your infants." What they want is to take our children away from us at earlier and

earlier ages or to gain access into our homes in order to monitor what is happening.

Yes, there are people out there with zeal for my children. But I have zeal for my children too. My zeal is motivated by love. It is motivated by a love for God, a love for the family (mine in particular), a love for the Church, for Christ and for patriarchy.

The zeal I have for my children causes me to want to have my children around me all the time. It causes me to want to teach them the things that I know. It causes me to want to explore the world with them. It causes me to want to teach them right from wrong. It causes me to protect them from the influences of the world and to prepare them for doing battle in the world. My zeal motivates me to teach my children to love God too. It causes me to teach them to love the family, to love the Church, to love bearing the name of Christ and to love patriarchy.

So I will care for my children myself. I won't send them to a kindergarten that will train my children that they can do without me.

And I will teach my children myself. I will teach them the things I believe. I won't let them be taught by those haters of God in the state schools who will teach them to be unthinking dependants of the State.

And I will prepare my children to do the same for their children. I will prepare them so that they can stand strong with great zeal when they encounter people with zeal contrary to their own.

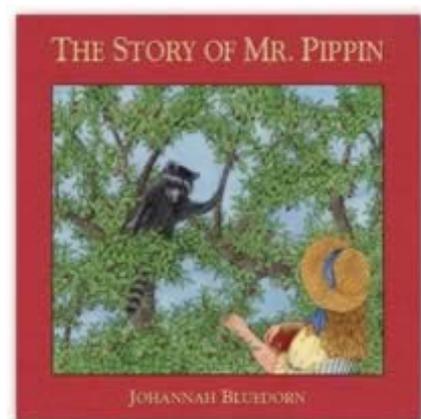
Do you have zeal for your children? I hope you do, because other people do too.

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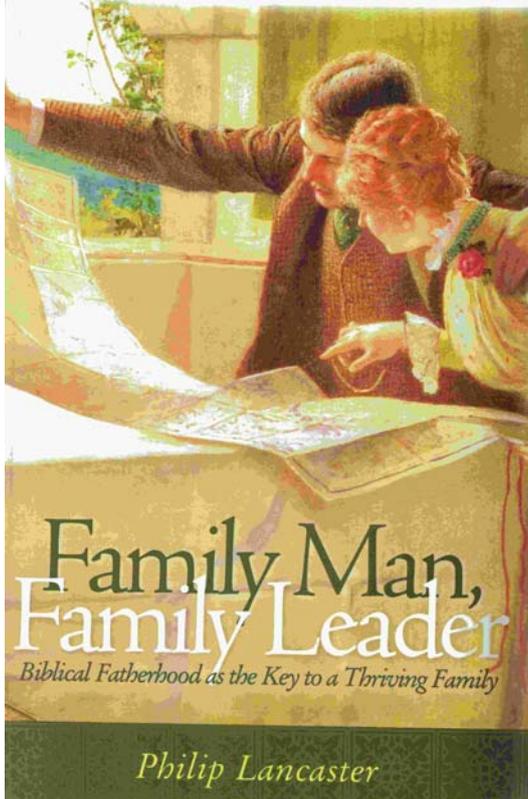
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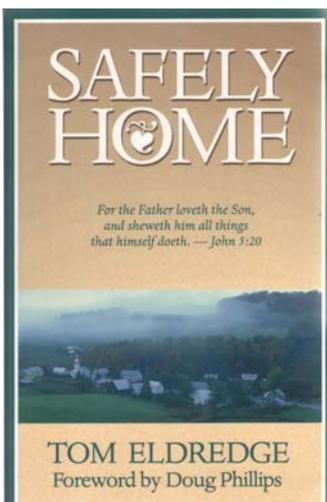


What this country needs is a few good men — husbands and fathers who are willing to love and lead their households with manly resolve and godly vision. Frankly, the Church needs these men every bit as much as the rest of the country. We are experiencing a national crisis of manhood of epidemic proportions. Absent a revival of fatherhood, we can expect to see an ever-increasing rise in the number of effeminate boys and masculine women, as well as the breakdown of the Christian family as it is defined in Holy Scripture. What we desperately need today are men who will be family men and family leaders. But how? Now, in simple, easy-to-understand concepts, the Biblical foundation necessary for men to turn their hearts to home and change the world are presented in a book entitled *Family Man, Family Leader*. This remarkable work first presents the vision of Biblical household leadership and then addresses the many practical issues necessary for achieving victory as a man, from learning and acting upon God's priorities, to decision-making as a father, to growing in oneness with your wife, to personal accountability before the Lord and victory over secret sins. Whether you are a veteran visionary father or a dad just beginning the journey of patriarchy, we hope you find *Family Man, Family Leader* to be a source of inspiration and practical help. By Philip Lancaster. Paperback. Approx. 320 pgs

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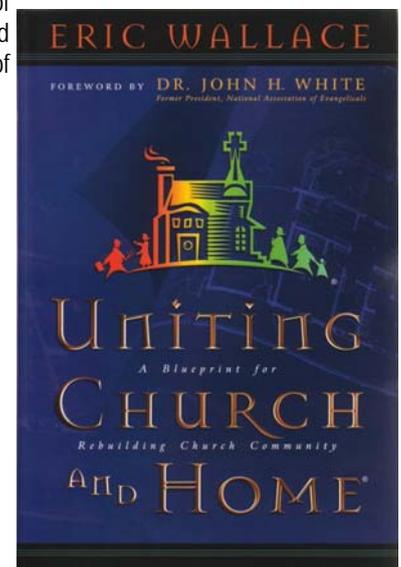
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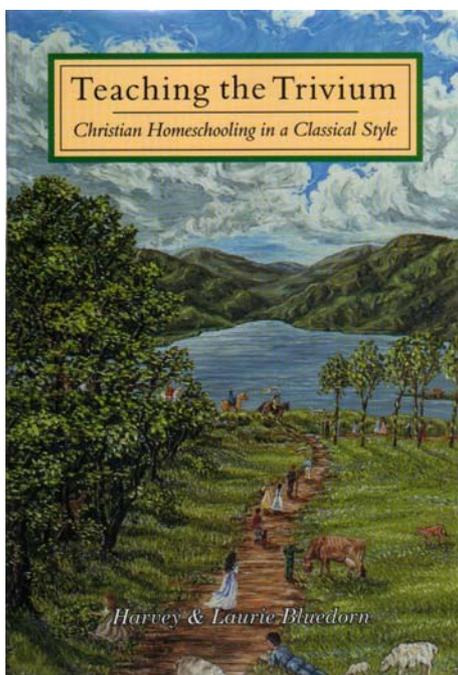
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Books by the Bluedorns

Books by the Bluedorns



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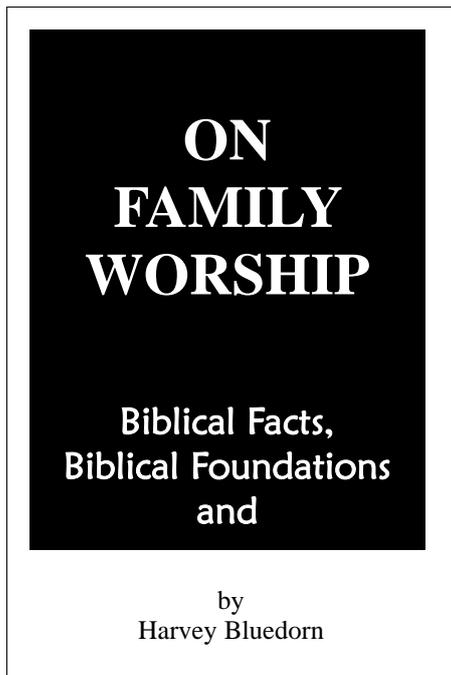
How can you give your children the tools they need to teach themselves? Long ago students were first taught how to learn. Today, students are taught an encyclopaedia of subjects – trivia – but they are not taught the basic skills of learning: to discover, to reason and to apply. They are not taught the **Trivium**.

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Learning Logic at Home

- Reasons to Study Logic
- Self-Teaching Logic Books
- Suggested Course of Study
- Suggestions for Children & Adults
- Frequently Asked Questions

Learning Logic at Home

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Nathaniel Bluedorn writes to convince readers that they need to learn logic. He gives an overview of logic and reviews many of the books available on logic and reasoning. One chapter is dedicated to outlining a suggested course of study for students interested in learning logic.

35 pages, A5.

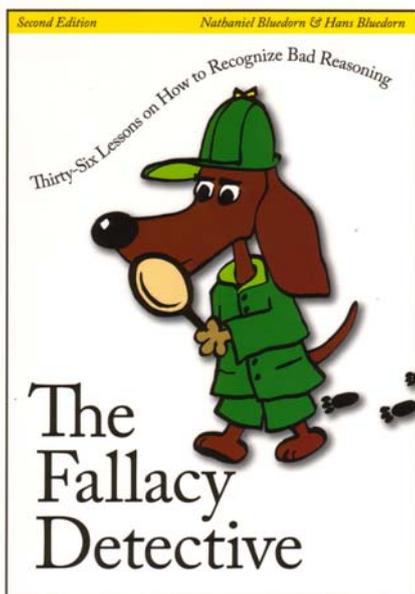
The Fallacy Detective

After reading an article I wrote, someone suggested I read *The Fallacy Detective*. "You committed several logical fallacies in your article. I think you could learn a lot from *The Fallacy Detective*." [ouch!] So I borrowed my parents' copy and sat down and started reading. Firstly, it gave an introduction to bad reasoning and fallacies – errors in logic. Just as the book launches into the lessons it issues a challenge: "Remember, most people never study good thinking skills. So people who take on this quest of learning logic are breaking out of the mold, and this takes courage. It also takes humility. But most of all, it takes self-discipline." I sure was glad of that challenge as I read through the book and completed the exercises. I learned about ways people (including myself) will avoid the question using red herrings, ad hominens and straw men, etc., and how we make assumptions, commit statistical fallacies and use manipulative propaganda. What an eye-opener the book was! I am more aware now when someone is not being logical; however, the real eye-opener was in myself. All the ways I thought I was being logical because of the connections I could make between concepts or whatever, I was in fact committing logical fallacies! Whew! I was glad they warned me about the need for humility at the beginning of the book!

Now that I have finished, I am very glad for the opportunity to have read it. You know, reading it is like reading a comedy. I was laughing all the way through. The Bluedorn brothers, Nathaniel and Hans, the authors of *The Fallacy Detective* are really very funny. What was it that Mary Poppins used to sing? "A little bit of humour helps the humility to go down."

Logically set out (we would hope so!), the book works on the principles of moving from the known to the unknown and from the simple to the complex. It is easy to progress through it, and there are plenty of reviews and interesting exercises to help us retain the concepts. Geared for ages 13 plus, it is designed so that groups can go through it together, and Mums and Dads can sit on the couch with Johnny and Jane as they read the chapters and complete the questions. Comes complete with a comprehensive answer key and the promise of a fun "fallacy detective game" which can be played once the concepts have been learned.

I highly recommend it. Softcover, 227 pages. Now with comics!



A New Zealand Home Educator's Guidebook

Preparing for an ERO Review

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Preparing for an ERO Review

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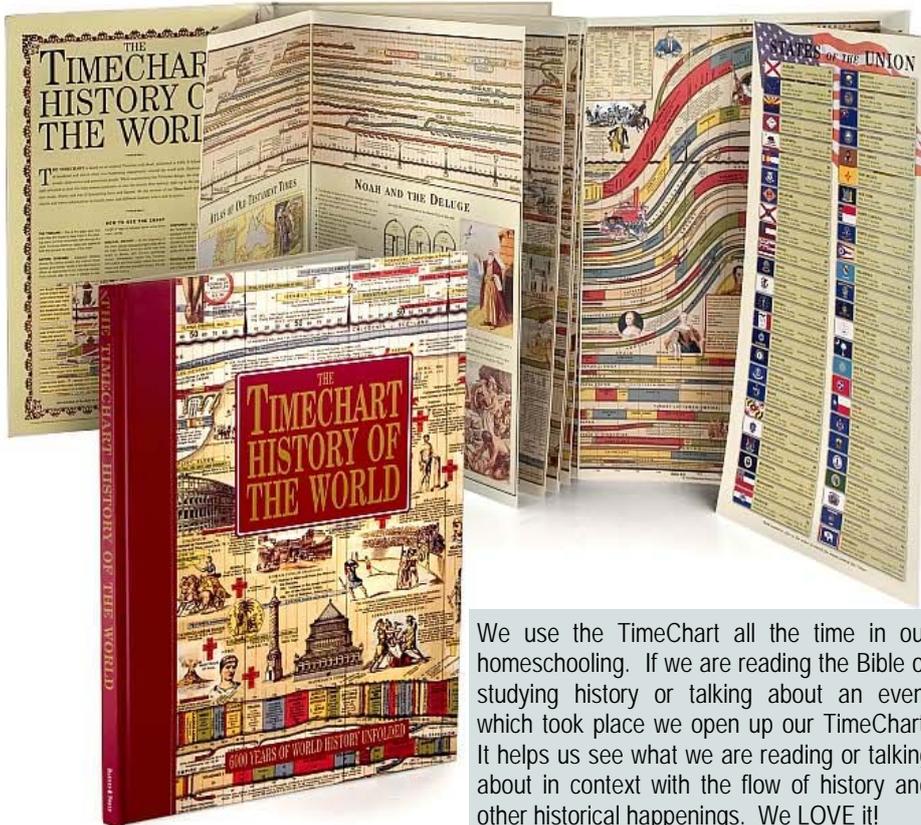
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Reading Aloud.....	Page 1
The Art of Buying Used Books.....	Page 3
Learning to Read & Reading to Learn.....	Page 6
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Graduates Speak

Life Lessons From the Game of Chess

by David Botkin



It's funny how something as seemingly simple as the game of chess can offer insights into life. I'm a long-time chess player, and in my years of playing I have seen many, many playing styles, and many different strategies and many mistakes.

But there are three mistakes that are made more often than the others, and these are not just results of poor tactics or not knowing the basics of the game; these are mistakes that result from a lack of planning and observation. These are connected to character.

All beginner players make these same mistakes, and most players require instruction in order to overcome these shortcomings. Some players recognize these mistakes over time on their own, but with training and instruction they will develop much more quickly into proficient chess players.

The sad thing is that it's almost the same with young people in life; most of them will make the exact same three mistakes unless they have been taught not to. And currently most young people make these mistakes. Look at these three patterns of failure.

Failure to keep the objective in mind

In chess, the game has a goal. Capture your opponent's king before your opponent captures yours. You're not playing just to have fun moving pieces around. Having the right objective focuses the player's attention and gives the player a basis on which to judge and value his options. A player who remains focused on the objective is unlikely to be sidetracked or distracted, and is more likely to win.

In the real world there is usually a lot of confusion when it comes to the objective of life. If we are merely advanced life forms, and there is no God, and life is chaos, then where is the meaning of life?

But we as Christians know from the Scriptures that we are *not* mere organisms (Genesis 1-2), and that there *is* a personal God (Exodus 3:6), and that the created world is not chaotic (Matthew 10:29-30).

We also discover from the Scriptures that God has a plan, and that He is our King. We discover that He is involved in a war, and we are his subjects. Also there are duties that are required of us, just like any subjects.

The parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) shows that growing and expanding God's Kingdom is a good work, and is rewarded, while maintaining the status

quo is punished.

If we want to be faithful servants, we would be responsible to make long term plans for advancing God's Kingdom.

Spiritual inaction and surrender are not acceptable uses for a Christian's life.

Failure to make any form of plan: short term or long term

Possibly what most defines a novice chess player is a lack of planning. He never looks beyond the current move. Because he has no plan, his actions and movements are haphazard and almost random. He has very little control over the game or his fate.

This same lack of planning is very often seen among young people. They are perfectly willing to live life by the moment. They simply don't plan ahead. Of course, this is understandable since they don't know about their duty to serve God faithfully and further His kingdom according to specific Biblical plans.

In World War II the plan for Operation Overlord, commonly known as "D-Day", was over 1000 pages long. Without this planning the war in Europe easily could have gone on into the mid-1950s if Overlord had failed. The best chess players plan way far ahead into the game, often looking ahead 20 moves or more.

Of course, plans also need to be flexible. Large pieces of the plan for Overlord were thrown out once the operation was underway, and the best chess players are always having to rethink their strategies mid-game. But without plans, both long-term and short-term, victory is almost impossible to achieve anywhere. Why cripple the expansion of God's Kingdom by not planning?

Failure to observe the obvious results of an action

Of course, even if you know what the objective is, and you have a plan, you can still make a dumb mistake unless you are constantly on your guard. Weak chess players jump hastily at what looks like a good opportunity or appears to be a standard "move".

In both chess and life there are certain "moves" that are often considered to be the standard choice. A good chess player never blindly follows the preset pattern or the commonly held view. In life we should never choose a certain option just because it appears to be the standard choice. A good example is university. Today most people consider a university education to be the only road to personal success and affluence. Huge numbers of young people blindly go to Uni, not recognizing the moral dangers or the new realities of the real world. Many businesses are realizing that most Uni credentials are not worth the paper they are written on because Universities are no longer honest learning environments.

In some industries, like the media industry, a Uni credential is often a *liability* to the job-seeker. The

(Continued on page 27: *Graduates Speak*)

When the Going Gets Tough

A Husband's Perspective on His Wife's Depression Part 1

by Steve Maxell



We have had so many email us and ask about how we dealt with the depression Teri suffered from years ago, we decided to write this month's Corners on it [Steve and his wife Teri write monthly e-newsletters called Dad's Corner and Mom's Corner. See the notes at the end of this article for instructions on how to subscribe—Ed]. It is important to remember that we are not doctors giving advice but believers sharing our experience.

What I am writing in this Dad's Corner is a result of what the Lord taught me through the years Teri struggled with times of depression. Depression was a part of her life off and on for about fifteen years. It was the worst when I worked long hours and traveled a great deal. Only in the last eight years has the Lord brought Teri out of those dark times. Not only was the depression something Teri had to cope with, but it obviously had an impact on the children and me as well.

When a wife is suffering with depression it can be very difficult for the family. Depending on the age of the children, they may be aware of it and asking questions as to why mommy is crying or sad. There don't seem to be any easy answers. However, everyone is in agreement that they want mommy happy again.

Working through issues in my mind was critical to developing a godly perspective on Teri's depression. It was very easy to think about myself and not the pain Teri was suffering. I think that was absolutely the first and most important step: that I would get my mind off of myself and focus on my wife's and children's needs. Isn't that what we are really called to do as husbands and fathers? Isn't that a perfect picture of the shepherd who is tenderly caring for an injured sheep?

I had to realize that God was not surprised by the situation. He had a plan for it. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:28-29). God desired to use my wife's depression to conform me into the image of His Son Jesus Christ. It is

interesting to note that the word "conform" is from the Greek word "morphe" from which we get the word morph. His desire is to morph us into the image of Christ. Are we willing?

It may mean that there are "things" in my life that are hindering God's conforming me into the image of Christ. I believe that God uses problems in a wife's (and children's) life to bring serious pressure to bear on a dad. As long as things are smooth sailing, we might not be willing to deal with areas that may be displeasing to the Lord. However, as the pain grows in my family, I become increasingly more willing to surrender what I might not have previously let go. I have now learned to use every serious difficulty that our family faces as motivation to cry out to God to examine my life and for Him to point out sin that He wants to eliminate. Pain in the family can become a wonderful stimulus to seek God's will for change in my life.

I also saw my wife's struggles as opportunities to show her my love. It is easy to love someone when she is pleasant and meeting my needs, but what about when her eyes are swollen from crying and she isn't much fun to be around? Maybe it isn't too difficult for one or two days, but what about when it is longer than that? Truly, I could demonstrate that I meant my wedding vows by choosing to love Teri through better or worse. Whether my wife is discouraged all the time or just a few days a month, I must be understanding and love her as Christ loved the church. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). Those are not just nice sounding words used to fill up an empty page, but God commanded us dads to live them out. I must choose to give of myself in whatever way God tells me to.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). So what does it mean "according to knowledge?" Vines amplifies it to mean "to come to understand." I needed to understand the struggles that my wife was having. I needed to shoulder the load that she was stumbling under.

When Teri was depressed, I had to learn how to listen. As I prayerfully listened I heard about things that I had not adequately dealt with, things that produce bitterness and hurt. Unresolved offenses are fertile ground for Satan to sow seeds of doubt and discouragement in a wife's heart.

As I listened, I heard about areas of intense struggle with the children that she did not have answers for and that led to frustration. Again, they had to be dealt with as well.

A dad may hear that his wife is discouraged because she is too busy while accomplishing too little. Dads often can be the cause of encouraging lots of activities for the children. This can be terribly draining of both mom's energy and time, not to mention introducing

(Continued on page 23: Wife's Depression)

When the Going Gets Tough



A Journey Through Depression Part 1

by Teri Maxwell

In Steve's July Dad's Corner, he mentioned that my bouts with depression were part of the reason we decided, at one point, to limit our family size. We were amazed at how many e-mailed after that one sentence in his article and wondered how we had dealt with the problem of depression. It seemed fitting to us to put together our thoughts on a subject we would be just as happy to shove in the closet and forget was ever a part of our lives. However, there is the possibility that our experience and the changes the Lord has brought in this area might be helpful to others (see Note 1).

It has only been the past eight years that the Lord has given me freedom from the at-times-devastating depression that I had struggled with. It was usually the worst during the year I nursed a baby. My pain through those difficult years was very real and is not that old. I can fully understand the concerned feelings of a mom who is struggling with times of depression and her husband's worry because that was our experience too.

There is no one thing that I can point to as a miracle cure or a twelve-step program to overcome these struggles. This is probably so that I can take no pride in what I did but always know it was the Lord's work. I will try to share what we see in retrospect about things that helped move me away from depression, and perhaps there will be something here that the Lord can use in another's life.

One of my first lessons to learn was that the Lord works in His time. I wanted to be over the emotional downs right away. I didn't want it to be "in process," and sometimes I was even angry with God because He wasn't helping me to be better right away. If He was the One to work in my life and I was still depressed, angry and struggling, then it was His fault. That thinking was totally wrong, but that was how far off my ability to think truth had moved. I had to learn to accept my own failings and sinfulness and wait on the Lord for what He would do in my life. It was not my timetable. Phil. 2:13, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Steve truly believes that the changes that have taken place are because, through it all, my heart's desire was to be pleasing to the Lord and do what He wanted me

to do – even if it seemed totally impossible. My depression was humbling because I knew I wasn't what I should be or what He wanted me to be. I even confessed to my church what was going on in my life. That was a start to the healing process for me. The depression was no longer something I had hidden away in my "private life." Rather, now the Lord could use the prayers of my church family to help me.

I stayed faithful to daily Bible reading and prayed through those dark times even though I often felt distant and forgotten by the Lord. I will also say that though there were very, very black days in the midst of that time, I was often closer to the Lord than I have ever been because I was totally helpless and needy, not knowing where to turn or what to do.

We discovered that there were very real hormonal imbalances that affected my emotions. I would do everything I could to deny this, but it was very obvious to everyone except me. What I could normally handle one day would send me into tears another day. I used the natural progesterone cream (can be found in most health food stores or see Note 2 at the end of this Corner) for a time along with vitamins suggested by our naturopathic doctor friend (you would need to research the vitamins on your own, because I no longer have that list.). I eliminated caffeine as well.

Daily exercise was critical at this time. I know daily exercise sounds impossible to an already depressed, overwhelmed, terribly tired mom. Exercise – my walks – were about the only time I was away from home. Just getting out of the environment that I was struggling with for a short period each day, plus the effect of the exercise itself, was very helpful. When I would begin to feel myself spiraling down, getting out would sometimes be the only thing that would change the course of my emotions.

Being tired was a sure way to put me off balance. I am a light sleeper, often being wakened in the night by a noise or perhaps the need to nurse a baby. After that, I wouldn't be able to go back to sleep. For eight years now I have worn earplugs (the soft, spongy type; see Note 3 at the end of this Corner) when I sleep. It has transformed my ability to sleep. I thought not being able to sleep was just a part of my physical makeup. Not so! Since I began wearing earplugs, I hardly ever have a sleepless night. Steve became the "ears" for our family, and I know he will wake me up if the children need me. (Earplugs may not be an option for a mom whose husband can't do this.)

If you want to see what being tired does to even the most "spiritual" of people, look at Scripture. The story of Elijah running from Jezebel after the Mt. Carmel experience is a great example. Elijah was tired, and this is what happened from 1 Kings 19:3-5, "And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay

and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.” Sisters, guard sufficient sleep in your life very carefully. Don’t trade it for quiet late nights when the children are asleep, and you can have some peace. It isn’t worth it!

I discovered I made it best through a time of depression when I didn’t try to analyze what was causing it. It was better to accept my feelings – as Steve would encourage me to do – like a physical ailment to be patiently waited out. The more I ferreted for the causes the more discouraged and upset I would become.

However, the times I accepted the feelings and said, “Lord, I don’t like this, but I’m going to focus on You and not on me. I am not going to make any major decisions. I’m not going to root for the cause. I will just wait. If I wait, it will pass with no damage except for feeling down. If I think about it and talk to Steve about it, it will pull me further down, resulting in wrong thoughts and words.”

When Steve had run out of ideas for how to help me on his own, he found a pastor’s wife who agreed to counsel with me. Janice and I only met in person one time for an afternoon. She started by making sure that I knew I was saved (see Note 4 at the end of the Corner). With that assurance she then gave me a couple of tangible projects to put my focus on the Lord rather than on myself. I called her a few times on the phone – at Steve’s insistence – but the path she set me on was exactly what I needed even though we didn’t have multiple “counseling” sessions.

Here are two of her projects. Perhaps they will be helpful to you as well. The first project involved learning to take captive my wrong thoughts — thoughts of being depressed or overwhelmed, thoughts that I was going to ruin my children, thoughts that I would never feel normal, thoughts of anger, bitterness or defeat, thoughts of being overwhelmed. Those thoughts were all lies. II Cor. 10:5 is now one of my favorite verses. It says, “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” I was to take my thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ! For example, the truth in regard to the feeling of being overwhelmed is that the Lord hasn’t given me one more thing than there is time to do. If there isn’t time to do it, then He doesn’t expect it of me. My family was better off with next to nothing being done and me being happy than for me to try to do everything my expectations said needed to be done while I was depressed and my mind running in circles, able to concentrate on nothing.

The pastor’s wife encouraged me to begin a notebook. She showed me hers. It was a simple 8 ½ by 11 inch three ring binder with “ABC” tabs in it. Behind the tabs she had notebook paper, each with a topic on it such as, “Anger,” “Discouragement,” “Discipline,” etc. When she had her Bible reading time, she would take verses that applied to her and copy them down in her notebook under an appropriate heading. Then when she

needed to think “truth,” she could open her notebook and read it.

I would suggest that moms who are prone to depression do some of this evaluating of what you are thinking and replace the lies with God’s truth. Begin a notebook such as I have described. If you can’t think of God’s truth – I know there were many times when I couldn’t – get your Bible or notebook out and find that truth. Read God’s truth. Speak it out loud if necessary! Sometimes I would have to say the words of truth out loud because my thinking was so muddled and twisted that I could not concentrate on or accept the truth when it remained in my mind. However, when I spoke the words, my heart would grab hold of them!

For the second project, I was to have another section of the notebook titled, “Sin List.” Every time I sinned, I was to write it in the notebook. I was then to confess the sin to the Lord, repent and ask His forgiveness. In my notebook I would write “FORGIVEN” over that sin.

(...to be continued)

Written by Teri Maxwell, co-author of Managers of Their Homes, A Practical Guide to Daily Scheduling for Christian Homeschool Families, Keeping Our Children’s Hearts: Our Vital Priority, Just Around the Corner: Encouragement and Challenge for Homeschooling Dads and Moms and author of Homeschooling with a Meek and Quiet Spirit. Homeschooling since 1985, Teri Maxwell is the mother of eight children, from age eight to twenty-eight. She has been writing monthly encouragement articles for homeschoolers since 1990.

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Notes:

1. We are not doctors; we cannot make medical recommendations. We are only sharing our own personal experiences. We encourage each of you to pray and research as you look for your solutions to depression.
2. The progesterone cream I used is called ProGest and can be easily purchased on the Internet. A one ounce jar lasts from about one to three months depending on how much was used each day.
3. The ear plugs I use are called “Classic” by Cabot Safety Corporation, 317-692-6666.
4. Scripture verses outlining salvation: Romans 3:23 (KJV), For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Romans 6:23 (KJV), For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 5:8-10 (KJV), But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be

saved by His life. Romans 10:9, 10 (KJV), That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Ephesians 2:8, 9 (KJV), For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

(Continued from page 20: Wife's Depression)

many additional character problems with the children. We need to be prepared to encourage the elimination of unproductive use of time and be willing to help. It might mean doing the grocery shopping or cleaning house; whatever it takes, we should be prepared to do it as long as necessary. Although one caution is that I don't feel it would have been good for Teri if she had nothing to do. Idleness gives Satan much opportunity for working in a person's mind. A certain amount of work and rest is good, but having nothing to do is harmful.

One thing I learned was that doing the family budget was stressful for Teri. She had begun doing it to free up some of my time. However, it was adding to the pressure she was under and was actually hindering my being financially responsible. I have found, and now believe, that it is good for the husband to manage the finances so he feels the financial pressure. I am freer with money than Teri is, and when she tracked the spending, it caused her to worry. However, if I have to manage it and see the bills, I'm more likely to be careful. I now handle the finances, not as efficiently as she did, but adequately and without her having the pressure.

There could be other areas of responsibility that a wife has taken on that really should be dad's. When a mom is shouldering extra load that God did not intend for her to, it can clearly lead to depression. Unfortunately, most wives will quickly step in to take over an area when the husband is not doing the job.

(...to be continued)

Written by Steven Maxwell, co-author of Managers of Their Homes: A Practical Guide to Daily Scheduling for Christian Homeschool Families, Keeping Our Children's Hearts: Our Vital Priority, Just Around the Corner: Encouragement and Challenge for Homeschooling Dads and Moms, and author of Preparing Sons to Provide for a Single-Income Family. Homeschooling since 1985, Steve Maxwell is the father of eight children, from age eight to twenty-eight. In 1997, the Lord brought Steve home to run his own business, and he now enjoys the privilege of working with his two adult sons and one adult daughter. Steve has been writing monthly articles of encouragement for homeschooling dads since 1990.

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Tough Questions People Ask



Would You Define Home Schooling as a "Calling"?

by Craig Smith

Yes! Home education is a calling. I remember reading eagerly every bit of information that would make its way here to New Zealand from the USA in those early days of the early 1980s. One title for a talk at a conference I recall reading really bothered me at the time. The title was "Beware of becoming a home education sub-culture" or some such thing. I guess the idea was to warn against cultish tendencies, but I understood from the title and brief outline that we shouldn't be trying to be too different or alienate or marginalise ourselves. Yet as I saw it in the Scriptures at the time, that is precisely what we are to be doing: getting as far away as we can from the worldliness and secularism of the government schooling system as we pursue a thorough-going Christ-centered worldview across the entire curriculum.

The classic passage of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 first of all gives the teacher qualifications: to love God with heart, soul, mind and strength (and remember, our Lord said this was the first and great commandment). Once you love God like that, there isn't much left over. "We need to be totally sold out and given over to Him" is what I understand this passage to say. Then it says we have to have the Word of God upon our hearts. The Scriptures are to reign supreme in our affections. Man, have I got a long way to go! But that's the direction we are told to be taking. Philippians 3:12-16 (straining forward to what lies ahead) and II Corinthians 3:18 (being changed into His likeness) and Ephesians 4:22-24 (put off the old nature, put on the new) and other passages basically say the same.

Now all of this compromises the teacher qualifications we parents are to have. Have you ever seen higher qualifications anywhere? Let's face it, unless we are called to die to self and to constantly strive to be more and more like Him, we won't be moving in that direction. Now the disturbing thing is that surely all Christians are called to this, yet so few of our fellow Christians seem to be occupied with pursuing this calling. So few Christian teachers in Christian schools seem to be occupied with this either. Yet teachers especially need to be, for James 3:1-2 warns about being a teacher and Luke 6:40 says one object of teaching is so the student will be like his teacher.

I would suggest that parents already have home education and the pursuit of Christlikeness as their

calling...it is their calling as Christian parents. The two fit together. Such a calling is a huge commitment, something most parents already understand: you simply cannot pay anyone to do what parents routinely do for their own children. Deuteronomy 6 is a very high qualification to reach for...but it is part of our calling as Christians...it is not an optional extra for spiritual giants...the Deuteronomy 6 passage is addressing everyone.

Deuteronomy 6:7 specifically addresses parents telling them to teach God's words diligently to their children. And it gives the methodology and context: a running dialogue 24/7 in all the circumstances of everyday life in the home, the marketplace, the workplace and the community as you go about your daily business. A calling? Maybe more like a commandment.

The first several chapters of Proverbs repeat over and over, "My son, listen to my..." It starts to seem as though the Lord wants us to pick up on this as normative behaviour, that parents would be speaking to children in this way. Indeed, I Thessalonians 2:9-12 (RSV), especially v. 11, also seems to indicate this: "For you know how, like a father with his children, we *exhorted* each one of you and *encouraged* you and *charged* you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory." In a most off-handed way, Paul says this is what fathers just do with their children: yet it is so rarely seen today (except among home educators), that dads first *exhort*, which is what a greater does to a lesser, an experienced one does with a newbie, calling them to "Try harder, you can do it, get the lead out, go for it!" Then as the little one matures the dad and his child walk more in step, more side-by-side. So Paul now says *encourage*, which is what peers do to one another. Finally he says he *charged* them. This is what you do when you launch the young adult out on his own, leaving you behind: "Keep the faith, remember what we've taught you, remember who you are."

The acid, we've found, is not on our children as home educators: the acid is on us parents to be Christlike in all things and to be consistent. This home education has been the greatest self-improvement programme we've ever embarked on. It has also been the most fulfilling. It has meant total commitment...that is a calling. It is not a pastime, a diversion, a hobby. Whenever we put home education (or what is more likely: one of the children) on the back burner for a while, we all suffered for it. This home education is a passion. We live for this. Our career is modified if possible so that it can be a training ground for our children. Then they will be helping us become more effective and efficient. Then with maturity they will be ambassadors for Christ as well as ambassadors for our family, for home education, for our career or business as they will have developed their own vision for their place in the multi-generational scheme of things.

Right from early days with the children we help them to see that this home education is training for us as well as for them, that we are all working on this thing together as it is bigger than any of us. Such a vision

(Continued on page 28: *Tough Questions*)

Exploring God's Creation



Why Is It Important to Believe in a Literal Interpretation of the Genesis Creation Account? Part 1

by Anna Bentley

Since the beginning of time, man has sought to dethrone God by calling His authority into question. At ground level God is authoritative over man because He is his Creator and Sustainer. Evolutionary science destroys the foundation of God as creator and "frees" man to usurp authority and define himself, society, morality and the world apart from God. Evolution lies beneath the surface of a myriad of problems we confront today. Its philosophies have subtly (and not so subtly) infiltrated society and education to such an extent, that we are often unaware of its presence. Even within the Church there is a failure to identify evolutionary thinking as the devastating problem that it is. Indeed, a tragic number of Christians have willingly blended their belief in the Bible with evolutionary science, failing to realize the necessary negative consequences. In the following paper I seek to show why evolution in the Church is so problematic and to demonstrate how fundamentally opposed it is to Scripture and the God of the Bible.

All Scripture Stands or Falls Together

"All Scripture is inspired by God..." (2 Tim. 3:16). God does not lie (Titus 1:2, Rom. 3:4). Because God speaks only truth, and all of Scripture is God's Word (inspired by Him), all of Scripture must be true. This belief is the presupposition upon which a Christian reads the Bible. The Bible is authoritative because it is the Word of God and because God's Word is true. Jonathan Edwards defined truth as "the consistency and agreement of our ideas with the ideas of God...God is truth itself."¹ It is therefore a most serious matter to suspect the accuracy of the Genesis creation account. If God is not always truthful, it is impossible to be sure when the Bible is telling the truth and when it is not (or if it is ever accurate at all). If one part is false, then the rest is likewise called into question. Allowing for the possibility that some passage in Scripture could be inaccurate opens the door for an endless barrage of questions as to the legitimacy of every other passage. Finally, the reader will simply jettison any Scripture he finds inconvenient.

But the Christian who has espoused an alternate interpretation of Genesis, attractively mingling *ex*

nihilo (out of nothing) Creationism with an evolutionary interpretation of science, will object. He does believe that God created the world, and he does believe that Scripture is true. He feels that the creation account can be interpreted in a way which neither denies God as creator nor contradicts evolutionary science. Three of the most common reinterpretations are the Day-Age Theory, the Gap-Theory and the Framework Hypothesis. All are problematic for a number of reasons.

First, such readings run contrary to normative patterns of interpretation.

The Day-Age Theory hinges on the idea that the Hebrew word for “day” in Genesis 1 and following is interpreted elsewhere to mean something besides a normal twenty-four-hour day. This is also the case with English. Day can be used to describe an era (In Moses’ day the children of Israel wandered in the desert), daylight (I’ll be home during the day but am going out in the evening) or, of course, the twenty-four-hour period it takes for the earth to make one complete rotation. We rely on context to determine the specific meaning of the word. The context in Genesis (the use of numbers and “morning and evening”) makes it clear what the author was seeking to convey. James Barr, a leading Hebrew scholar and professor of Hebrew Bible at Vanderbilt University, says this:

Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience; . . . Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which suppose the “days” of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not to be chronological and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by any such professors, as far as I know.²

Barr is not a creationist, nor does he vouch for the historical accuracy of Genesis. Yet he asserts that Genesis 1 cannot honestly be interpreted in accord with the Progressive Creationist view.

The Gap Theory, or Ruin-and-Reconstruction Theory, says between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 there is a vast time gap, during which evolution took place, followed by a huge catastrophe which wiped out all life and left the fossil record. Genesis 1:2 then describes the state of the earth after this catastrophe. The following creation account is said to narrate God’s act of re-creation. However, there is no textual reason to assume such a time lapse.

If a story says, “Betsy arose early in the morning. The horizon glowed pink as the sun came up behind the distant hills.” No one would suggest that a many-year time gap is implied between the two sentences. An author who failed to narrate the progression of time more clearly than this would be a very poor writer indeed. Reading a massive expanse of time in between

the first two sentences of Genesis is simply unreasonable. If such a gap did occur, wouldn’t God have plainly told us?

The Framework Hypothesis suggests that the days of creation are unrelated to time. They are simply imagery.

When someone reads a news article about a car accident, he interprets it at face-value. He does not ponder whether the accident victim really spent three days in the hospital. The possibility that the three days symbolized something else or some other time period would not so much as enter his head. On the other hand, symbolism and analogy are heavily used in poetry and to be expected therein. A literal reading of such works usually makes no sense at all. When Psalm 18:2 says, “God is my rock,” it is clear that figurative imagery is being employed. Of course God is not a stone. Context and the type of writing are key to determining how a piece of literature is to be interpreted.

The book of Genesis is quite clearly a historic book. Genesis chapter five is the genealogy of Adam, preceded in the chapter before by a historic account of Cain killing his brother Abel. There is no textual reason to think that somewhere between the second chapter of Genesis and the rest of the book it changes from poetic imagery to history.

None of these readings of Genesis work well. They all require the reader to put aside the normal rules of interpretation. It is like studying the Bible the way one would go through a buffet line: picking and choosing what to call figurative, what to call literal, where to interpose gaps, where to oddly interpret a word, all based solely on what presently seems appealing. Were the same methods applied to the rest of the Bible (or any other literary work), the result would be a meaningless muddled book.³

(...to be continued)

Notes

1. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) in “The Mind” (<http://www.jonathanedwards.com/text/The%20Mind.htm>)
2. James Barr, letter to David Watson, 1984.
3. Even such contrived interpretations of the Creation account do not really reconcile Creationism and Evolution. For example, Genesis says birds were created on day five and reptiles as land animals on day six; that is, *after* birds. The evolutionary view is that reptiles came *before* birds and actually evolved into them. This is but one of many discrepancies.

Anna Bentley was born into a homeschooling family and graduated this past spring having convinced her parents of her commitment to lifelong learning. She resides in Mobile, Alabama with her parents and six other siblings, enjoys watercolor painting, palentology, and a bit of desktop publishing. She helps maintain a busy household while preparing to manage her own one day.

(Continued on page 28: *Creation*)

Worldviews in Focus



gogue, 84 percent are in favor of abortion, 67 percent accept homosexuality and 65 percent want the government to ensure full employment! No wonder students are bolting from a commitment to Christian ideas; they simply believe what they are being taught.

Why Students Walk Away From Christ... and What Can Be Done About It!

Decline in student spirituality

When it comes to the spiritual life of college students, the statistics are not very encouraging. According to a recent study by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, after three years in college the number of students who frequently attend religious services drops by 23 percent.¹ The study also confirms that 36 percent rated their spirituality lower after three years in college.

Another study, the "College Student Survey," asked students to indicate their current religious commitment. Comparing the responses of freshmen who checked the "born again" category with the answers they gave four years later, we find that up to 59 percent no longer describe themselves as "born again."² That's a 60 percent fallout rate!

The numbers of students who no longer claim to be "born again" actually vary depending on the type of school they attend. For example, students at public universities drop out of the "born again" designation at the rate of 27 percent. Protestant colleges show 31 percent fewer "born agains" by their senior year! Those attending private (secular) universities indicate a 45 percent decline. And interestingly, Catholic colleges have the highest percentage, where 59 percent no longer call themselves "born again."

Even on colleges associated with the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, seven percent of "born again" freshmen renounce that description by their senior year! However you factor it, these are significant numbers!

Increase in liberal Professors

These statistics validate that many students fall prey to the anti-Christian rhetoric of their professors. That most professors disdain Christianity is affirmed in the March 2005, issue of the *Washington Post*. Quoting from a recent survey of college faculty, the article notes that 72 percent of professors and instructors in colleges across the U.S. are liberal.³ That's a marked increase from just 20 years ago when those who identified themselves as liberal was only 39 percent. This also is in sharp contrast to a Harris poll which found that only 19 percent of the general public describe themselves as liberal.⁴

The *Post* article goes on to report that 51 percent of college faculty rarely or never attend church or syna-

Reversing the trend

There is one bit of encouraging news coming out of the UCLA survey: after three years in college, 20 percent of students rated their spirituality higher. This indicates that at least some students are being helped through campus ministries, the remnant of Christian faculty and organizations like Summit Ministries.⁵

What can we do as parents, educators and church leaders to keep our young people from dropping out of church or converting to the "no longer born again" category?

First, we must understand that the battle is for the hearts and minds of students. For too long many churches have been content to focus on the emotions, shying away from a serious discipleship of the mind. Yet Jesus said that loving God involves both heart and head (Matthew 12:29-30). And Paul, in Romans 12:1-2, insisted that serving God involves renewing the mind.

Second, our teaching should revolve around the fact that Christianity is a robust faith, and when it comes to life's most pressing issues, we have answers that are superior to all other philosophies. As the Apostle Paul put it, "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God and we take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ."⁶

And third, we must teach students that Christianity is a comprehensive world and life view. This means explaining the reality of God's truth in every area: from philosophy and science, ethics and economics, to psychology, sociology, law and, yes, even politics. In this way, no matter what course a student takes, he or she will be able to discern when the professor is presenting an anti-biblical bias.

With biblically-based convictions firmly etched in their minds, Christian students will be prepared to stand firm against the deceptive worldviews of our day. With this kind of preparation the downward spiral of spirituality can be reversed, and when future surveys are taken, more students will respond on the positive side of the spiritual ledger.

When all is said and done, Tiger, we'll either hold fast to the truth, or we'll face the consequences.
– Dr. Noebel, President, Summit Ministries

Notes

1. Quoted in the report, Preliminary Findings on Spiritual Development and the College Experience: A Longitudinal Analysis (2000-2003). Online article: http://www.spirituality.ucla.edu/results/Longitudinal_00-03.pdf.

2. Taken from the "College Student Survey." Cooperative Institutional Research Program, U.C.L.A. Online article: http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/css_po.html.
3. "College Faculties A Most Liberal Lot, Study Finds," By Howard Kurtz, *Washington Post*, Tuesday, March 29, 2005; Page C01.
4. THE HARRIS POLL® #8, February 13, 2002, Party Identification: Democrats Still Lead, But Their Lead (5 Points) Is As Low As It Has Ever Been. Online article: http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=285
5. For information on Summit's Student Leadership Conferences, log onto www.summit.org and click on "conferences".
6. 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV).

(From: <http://www.summit.org/resource/tc/archive/0505/2005-13> (May))

(Continued from page 7: Klicka)

Second, all of these men said they thought it would never happen to them. Proverbs 16:18 tells us that "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before stumbling." Each day we should humbly beg for God's mercy and His strength to stand firm. Without God's hedge around us we will fall (Job 1:10).

Finish the Race

It is important how we start in our marriage and our homeschool, but it is equally important how we finish.

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Husbands, we need to run to win in our marriages, or we will be disqualified. When the temptations come from all around us, we need to instantly ask God for strength and say with Joseph when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife, "How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9b). God will give us deliverance!

Further protection is available when a husband maintains a godly physical relationship with his wife and when he makes a lifelong commitment to loving her unconditionally. No matter how many of our expectations are not met, we must be faithful to God who specifically ordained our marriage.

My three friends started their marriages and their homeschools strong. But they did not finish the race. They cheated and quit. They spiritually failed and may end up losing their own soul if they do not repent from their adultery. (See Proverbs 5:5, 20-23; 6:23-29; and

9:18.) By God's strength we must finish strong in the Lord.

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(Continued from page 9: Research)

of 1004 adults conducted in November 2004 by The Barna Group. From that sample, 707 adults were found who are parents. The maximum margin of sampling error associated with the sample of parents is ± 3.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The sample of parents included 366 born again Christians, giving that segment a maximum sampling error of ± 5.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All non-institutionalized adults in the 48 continental states were eligible to be interviewed, and the distribution of respondents coincided with the geographic dispersion of the U.S. adult population. Households selected for inclusion in the survey sample received multiple callbacks to increase the probability of obtaining a representative distribution of adults.

"Born again Christians" were defined in these surveys as people who said they have made "a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today" and who also indicated they believe that when they die they will go to Heaven because they had confessed their sins and had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior. Respondents were not asked to describe themselves as "born again." Being classified as "born again" is not dependent upon church or denominational affiliation or involvement.

Ventura, California, USA. February 2005

The Barna Group, Ltd., and its research division (The Barna Research Group) is a privately held, for-profit corporation that conducts primary research, produces visual media and books and facilitates the healthy development of leaders, children, families and Christian ministries. Located in Ventura, California, Barna has been conducting and analyzing primary research to understand cultural trends related to values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors since 1984. If you would like to receive free e-mail notification of the release of each new, bi-weekly update on the latest research findings from The Barna Group, you may subscribe to this free service at the Barna web site (www.barna.org).

(Continued from page 17: Graduates Speak)

credential only proves that the holder is capable of enduring boredom and of using old hardware and methods to produce a mediocre product.

Blindly accepting and following a preset route is folly. Always carefully examine any major choice, not just from the perspective of today's culture, but from the perspective also of history and God's word.

How can we apply the lessons of the chessboard?

Not long ago I was told about a young chess player whose father had taught him these three rules very well. When he was playing, this young man would focus entirely on the end of the game, often sacrificing greatly to gain a strong position. For about the first half of the game it usually looked like this homeschooled boy was a real loser. But as the end of the game drew near, it became very obvious that his prudent sacrifices and careful planning were going to win him the game.

In real life, laying a careful plan and making wise decisions can be hard. Especially when the wisest course of action usually is contrary to what society says is the picture of success. It took Noah around 100 years to build the ark. During that time he would have looked pretty stupid to most of the world. Of course, we see now that his planning and sacrifice paid off, and that whatever people said about him and the Ark he was building didn't matter. He had the objective firmly in view. The business of God's Kingdom must come first in our lives as we follow our King and Lord obediently and intelligently.

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(Continued from page 19: **Warning**)

from one place to the other. If the parents are out of bullets, they had better make sure that there are others keeping the children under cover while the parent reloads. In like manner, sending children into a godless government school is not only *not* covering them with God ordained proper authority, it is as foolish as sending their children into the farmhouse where the bad guys are. By the time the parents reload and their children return home after school, they have already been shot full of the "holes" of being taught lies and deception all day.

One of the major deceptions parents are under is the idea that the current government elementary school system is basically neutral and teaches the important skills of writing, reading and arithmetic. However, after the subtle erosion of twelve years of humanism, the damage is often not seen until it is too late. And it is most often not until the teenage years that the damage becomes apparent.

(Evangelist/Historian Richard "Little Bear" Wheeler, through the vehicle of Mantle Ministries (www.mantlemin.com), has integrated his theological and theatrical training to "re-

Letters



Marriage

Thanks for the articles on marriage. I have read them through quickly, but we will print them off and read them together.

Thank you for being so open and honest so that others can benefit from your experience and advice. This takes a lot of courage.

Your comments have given me the goal of a great marriage and determination to go about achieving it.

Yours, Claire Yallop, UK

Great Keystone

We received the *Keystone* yesterday and I was blown over again. What a great edition! I loved the article on having grandparents help with homeschooling.

Fiona Jongepier, Wainuiomata

educate" adults and children via dramatizations demonstrating the spiritual foundations of the USA using authentic costumes and props. Richard married Marilyn on July 29, 1972. They have three children: Noelle, Aimee and Joshua and live in Bulverde, Texas, just north of San Antonio.)

(Continued from page 24: **Tough Questions**)

draws us together as a family, since we are all aiming in the same direction, working toward the same set of goals. The success of one is the success of all.

(Continued from page 25: **Creation**)

This article originally appeared on the Creation Expeditions website: www.creationexpeditions.org. Used with Permission .



Often placed in the 'too hard basket' or seen as unnecessary, the teaching of fine art has seen considerable neglect in schools as well as in homeschooling circles. **Let's Teach Art** is a sound, biblically-based art curriculum which teaches the skills of art in a godly, creative manner. The accompanying introductory video and 'spiral' structure provide a simple way for the typical parent or teacher to creatively teach exciting art lessons.

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