

# Keystone

The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand

Vol. II No. 3

May/June 1996

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

## Radical Rev-Up

Beware: it forms humanistic habits.....pg. 25

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One family's solution.....pg. 21

## Dad's Role (Part II)

(The following is the second part of the speech delivered by Rev Graham Capill, leader of the Christian Heritage Party, at the Christian Home Schoolers of NZ National Conference in Palmerston North on Saturday 3 February 1996.)

So if we are to define this role, we will have to say that: Dad's role is to exercise loving leadership in every aspect of life in the home!

So in the time that remains, I want to examine precisely what ways Dad is to exercise this leadership as head of the home. I haven't put these in any order of priority, although I firmly believe that the first one should be the first priority because it largely shapes all of the other points I wish to make.

### 1.) Faith

The essence of headship and leadership that that entails is to be found in Dad's spirituality! His relationship with his God! I find it increasingly sad that wives and mothers are all too often left to take over in this vital area. It is they who initiate the Bible readings in the home, it is they who initiate going to church, it is mum who prays with the children, and so on. And yet, the Bible makes it clear that it is the father who is responsible for spirituality in the home!

And how can Dad do that, unless he himself is living in a close and vital relationship with God? It is interesting to note that prior to the command in Deuteronomy 6 to train our children it says: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart..." Then it says, "and you shall teach them

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## Keystone

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**Keystone** is intended to inform, challenge, encourage and inspire. The trustees of CHomeS believe that the Christian faith is being undervalued. Christianity is fully able to present a world view that is intelligent, coherent, consistent and complete. Committed to scholarship, the free exchange of ideas and the need to stimulate reasonable debate, **Keystone** may publish articles that will not necessarily reflect the views or beliefs of the Trustees. Original articles and letters are welcomed as is good quality material from other publications providing full acknowledgement is given and copyright respected. Letters sent to the Editor will be considered for publication unless the sender specifically requests that they not be.

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# Editorial

In the last Keystone we reported the MOE's new requirement that we write an annual report for each of our children being home educated starting from this November. Since then many home schoolers have expressed concerns regarding this move. There are many issues involved, some of them expressed in Sharyn Wylie's letter to the editor on page 9 and my response and also in the Tough Questions column on page 20. But there are more issues, and it seemed to be the right kind of thing to be debated nationally among as many home schoolers as possible. To help in this regard, CHomeS sent out a notice to every support group it could locate plus a number of individuals proposing a schedule for discussions, an outline of SOME of the issues, and finally proposing a national hui of home schoolers to be held in Wellington on Tues-Wed, 27-28 August 1996. As the idea has developed since it was first formulated, it can be seen in three levels:

- 1) How should individual home schooling families respond to this new requirement? Is it really anything to worry about or not?
- 2) If most home schoolers do feel it is something we should proactively address, perhaps we can come up with one or a number of proposals as to how the MOE could fulfill its statutory obligation to check up on us in a way that we would be thoroughly happy about and comfortable with.
- 3) Perhaps thinking further down the track, if we could amend the Education Act itself, the compulsory attendance clause and/or the "satisfied....regularly & well" clause, life would become a lot easier for us straight away.

**URGENT!!** The United Party intends to put an amendment to the Teacher Registration Bill now before Parliament that would require even teachers in totally private schools to be state registered. This amendment is coming after the bill has been through the public debating process, so that it might slip through unnoticed. It is an attempt to rope non-state-funded private and Christian schools into the state camp by force of statutory obligation. It would severely compromise parental choice in education, the integrity and independence of private schools, and is a way to dictate conformity through central control. If they are successful, I would not be surprised if they come for us home educators next, as we would then be the only teachers in New Zealand NOT REGISTERED by the state. Write today: see Action Station, pg 32.



# Letters



## I'll Scream!

Thanks for your letter and information, especially its promptness. The most frustrating thing I'm finding about setting up is the amount of time it takes to obtain information needed to decide on a curriculum, let alone filling out the exemption form! If anyone tells me that the Ministry closes during school holidays, I think I'll scream!! Thanks again for your prompt and encouraging reply. Our love to you in Christ.

Neil and Raewyn Wisniewski  
Kawerau

## Exemption Express

Thanks for sending us the magazine. You and I talked for a while in January on how to obtain an exemption for our daughter (15 years). Thanks again for your ideas. The day after our talk I called the Dept. of Education and was able to see an officer that morning. After a short talk of putting our case to him he practically promised us the exemption. A few days later it was in the mail and our daughter never had to go back to school. Thanks for all your work you are putting into the home schoolers and the Christian body and/or society on the whole. God bless and keep you and your family.

Sabina Sapiatzer  
Auckland

## Christians "Good Guys"

This is a note to personally encourage you in your work. We were visited yesterday by Chris Wright from the Holmes Show, to be interviewed about West Coast leases and how these have affected our farming business. As soon as we told him that we are home schooling, he asked if we were "strict Christians"(!) He then went on to mention the interview he'd done with your family and how impressed he had been with you as a family. He commented on the quality characteristics he'd noted in your children. He mentioned more than once a wee boy you'd fostered who was related to Paul Holmes. It was really wonderful to hear someone from the media speak so highly of you and to hear him state that he could see you were "good guys" (his words). The impression you made has obviously lasted. Thank you for your work with Christian Home Schoolers and isn't it great to see how the seeds

you've sown have made an impact. Be encouraged in God's work and thank you for the challenging material published in the Keystone.

Jenny Eggink  
Hawera

### Authority Debate: Centralisation

I read with interest Kathy Pyle's letter which you printed in Keystone for March/April 1996, and your comments on it. In those comments, you expressed an interest in hearing from others on the subject of authority and the Christian. For the Christian, there can be no question of the source of authority: "Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'" (Matthew 28:18, all Bible quotes from NASB.) Nonetheless, every person must face the question of how His authority is exercised in the world. In addition to natural authority, such as that of the family, (i.e., from God's creation of the world), there are at least three approaches to this question.

"Might makes right." This is said to have been Hitler's justification for his own actions. Peculiarly, this is not always unBiblical. God told His people, through Jeremiah, that they must submit to the Babylonians. Nonetheless, certainly power is not the best sort of authority, and was only valid for them because of their deep rebellion against God's own authority.

In the contractual model of authority, the idea is that authority emerges from the mutual agreement of two parties. A covenant is formed, and in this covenant, the superior party agrees to certain conditions, the inferior to obey the superior, given that the superior continues to meet these conditions. I have no doubt that this sort of authority is real enough, and honoured by God. The Proverbs and Psalms contain approving comments on men who keep their promises.

I believe that modern, western (perhaps only English-speaking) Christians assume a contractual form of authority. I think that many believe this was the basis for the Reformers' belief that they might accept the fact of separation from the Catholic Church, despite their wish to remain one with their Catholic brethren, if they could see their way clear to do so. Both the Reformers and the Church authorities were, in effect, in a covenant to be ruled, and to rule, respectively, within the covenant of God's Word. The Reformers

believed that Rome had failed to keep its side of the bargain, so they were free--obligated, even--to break their side. (I think the Reformers had a rather more charismatic view of their own authority, as a direct gift from God.)

I believe that Jesus's further words in Matthew 28, and other places, mean that we must view the authority of God as exercised in the world in rather a more direct fashion than the above. Jesus goes on in vv. 19-20 of the 28th chapter of Matthew to commission His disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." We are inclined to see this as a command to each of us as individuals to evangelise. I think it includes this. But its direct import is clear. Jesus is sending His disciples as teachers -- as, I think, teachers whose teaching ought to be obeyed -- and as ministers, to baptise.

In John 13:20, Jesus summarises the situation: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me." This is plain. The apostles are the sent ones. Our reception of them is our reception of Jesus. This is why we accept the Bible as His Word. It is their words. The question is: to whom has the authority of the apostles descended today? That it has descended to someone is unavoidable. To say "Sola Scriptura--the Bible Alone" is not enough. It is unquestionable that "Bible Alone" is the slogan of many who disagree with one another. Each person must then make his own decision in applying the Bible to his life's problems. He has become his own authority.

The early Church did not behave as if the authority of "sent ones" expired with the death of the last apostle. To take only a single example, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, in approximately AD 110, on his way to pour out his own life an offering to God in faithfulness to the Word of Christ, wrote letters to seven of the churches of Asia and Europe. For instance, in his letter to the Ephesians, he said, "For Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the will of the Father, just as the bishops, who have been appointed throughout the world, are the will of Jesus Christ. It is fitting, therefore, that you should live in harmony with the will of the bishop -- as indeed you do." His letters are filled with admonitions to be in submission to the authority of the bishops, as to Christ, and his views may be reproduced from any number of early Christian writers.

What ought one to do when bishops disagree? Here, Ignatius anticipates what the Church clearly believes by the late 2nd century (Irenaeus, for instance), when he addresses his letter to the bishop of Rome in effulgent terms: "to the Church beloved and enlightened after the love of Jesus Christ, our God, by the will of Him that has willed everything which is; to the Church also which holds the presidency in the place of the country of the Romans, worthy of God, worthy of honour, worthy of blessing, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy of sanctification...to her I salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father." There is much more like this.

Ignatius is not speaking on the basis of the political centrality of Rome. He is speaking to Rome as a leader, because Jesus Christ had said (Matthew 16:17-19): "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock [Greek: *petra*] I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Though I have quoted here from the NASB, which makes no differentiation between *ye* "you-plural" and *thou* "you-singular", the Greek makes clear that Jesus is making this promise to Peter personally.

In late 1993, after 23 years a Protestant, 18 of them Reformed, I was struck by these words of Jesus, and by the treatment of them in the Church during the ensuing centuries. I had come to believe in submission to the authority of the elders of the Church, as to Christ. There followed two years of intense study and struggle on my part and that of my family, which culminated in our belief that in order to submit to Jesus Christ, we had to be in Communion with the Bishop of Rome. At Christmas Eve, 1995, we made our submission to Christ and were received into the Catholic Church. In the bonds of Christ,

John Jensen  
Pukekohe

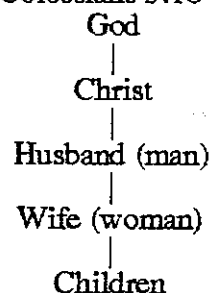
### Authority Debate: Devolution

Before we begin our letter, we want to take this opportunity to commend both Craig & Barbara for the fine job that they are doing in producing

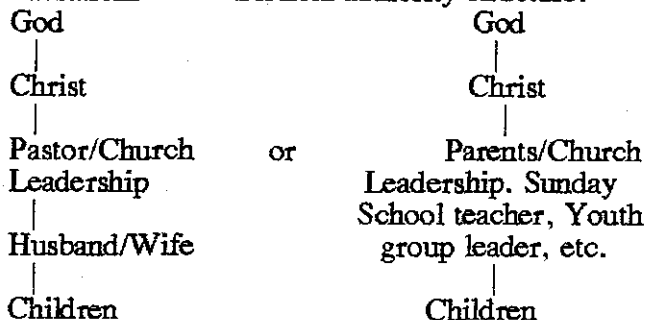
such a great publication for home educators. We both look forward to each issue of Keystone and read it with great interest.

In response to some rather controversial statements made in a letter that was published in the last edition of Keystone, we decided to take you up on your offer to share our convictions on this rather delicate issue. The debate that we are addressing relates to some rather strong opinions expressed about those who do not attend established church institutions. The letter inferred that such people were in rebellion and a "law unto their own selves", etc. Sadly debates such as this have caused a fair amount of division amongst believers over the years and it is certainly not our intention to further this conflict. However, there is a need to carefully re-examine Scripture without condemning the beliefs of others. We have been instructed in Scripture to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good. (I Thessalonians 5:21). Each believer has the right to study God's Word and search the Scriptures. (Acts 17:11).

This then is our conclusion on the matter at hand: Firstly, we are sure that all readers, whether inside or outside of religious institutions, would agree that the ultimate source of authority belongs to God and God alone. The key element of Biblical authority can be expressed in this diagram based on I Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-23, 6:1-2; Colossians 3:18-20:



Tragically this Scripturally based divine order has, in many cases, deviated from how it was intended. These illustrations show some alterations to the Biblical authority structure:



The established, Scriptural order of family authority overrides ALL other forms of man's authority, whether it be church or state.

Please do not get us wrong, we firmly believe that God has established overseers (I Peter 5:2-3, Acts 20:28), whose requirements are clearly stated in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Anyone who bears a "label" but doesn't fit these requirements is trespassing and has no right to hold any such position. It is interesting to note that those qualifications tie in directly to the above illustration of Biblical authority, i.e., it is important that the "overseer's" home is in order!

It is very hard to find a Scripture to justify the assumption that each believer must be "under" the "authority" or "covering" of a local church leader. Similarly, it is hard to find a Scripture that gives the church leaders the right to execute authority over believers. In fact I find quite the opposite. Jesus Himself said, "the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them and those that are great exercise authority over them, but it shall not be so among you!" (Matthew 20:25-28).

Throughout the Body of Christ there will always be those who choose to fellowship in various ways. Some are happy to attend a local church gathering, others meet in homes, yet others meet on a less formal basis. If these people are sincere, devout believers, we do not have the right to view them as being severed from Christ's Body. The Body of Christ is made up of individuals and there is no condition that states that each member must attend structured denominational church.

In many cases these Religious institutions have placed the church's authority over that of the Fathers. An obvious example of this is how families are divided when attending meetings, i.e., Sunday school, creche, youth group, etc. Some of these leaders speak with great authority things that differ to what a father has taught his children. Often the "pastor's" exalted position has usurped the authority of the Dad thus stripping him of his God-given role. As home educators, we have realised that it is the parents' responsibility to train up a child in the way it should go (Proverbs 22:6). We no longer let the state trespass on what belongs to the parents, so why should we let the "church" do the same?

Brent & Delwyn McAlister  
Tokoroa

## The Bible's Genuine Historicity

Sounds like you had a wonderful conference. Praise the Lord. Thanks also for the invite to the Precious Joules launch. I wasn't able to go but did appreciate the opportunity. A friend who went instead really enjoyed it. We've just had a Genesis-Malachi day here and are now set to relax for the holidays. In preparation for it I did a Walk Through the OT seminar and would really recommend that. We approached it differently with more walking and referred to extra-Biblical sources of information as well as the Bible. There's some fascinating stuff out there, and it goes to show that people who don't "believe" the Bible are ignorant of its genuine historicity.

Ross & Jenny Barkley  
Amberley

## Centralisation & Self Evaluation

Greetings from the Mid Far North. This is not where we were planning to be at the end of last year, but in the providence of God we are where we are, one door opens after another door closes. Thank you for the excellent production in Keystone, more meat than a support group and without the action file, where would we be as far as developments in the political field?

Speaking of developments, it is with interest that we received a letter from the MOE relating changes in MOE procedures that will affect home schooling. No doubt everyone of your readers also received it. Centralisation and self-evaluation being the changes being instituted by the MOE. There are two issues raised by this. The first is "will centralisation mean a consistent approach and also a means to make it harder to get exemptions?" A consistent approach will be appreciated but at an officious level, it won't.

Secondly, what is the intent of self-evaluation of home schoolers each year and who is going to be reading these reports? A short statement is not just one and a half to two pages long, and this report is surely subjective. What school has to report to the MOE in this way? Is this not the MOE getting us to do the job they should be asking the ERO to do, the job they did before it was decided it was uneconomic to assess our home schooling? There needs to be a debate about this and discussions about a proper response rather than a pliant acceptance. Should some method of Standardised Testing be used to show we meet the conditions of the Education

Act? Finally one cannot but be suspicious of the motives of those in the MOE, with all that has gone on in Education in NZ over the last 12 years and moves in Parliament to proscribe home schooling as the objectives of these moves.

David & Sharon Wetson  
Kaikohe

out that if each of us seven families introduced two other families to the course, in eight years over 45 million families would be doing the course. Amazing to think! Imagine if Christianity was like that, it blows the mind to think. Thanks for all your diligent work.

Pamela Shepherd  
Wellsford

### Growing Kids God's Way

Sounds like conference went really well. It was disappointing that I couldn't get there. I am teaching at Living Way Learning Centre with Todd Roughton in Wellsford. School started the week the conference was, so the dates clashed. It's always great to hear that you and others are actively working on parliamentarians & lawmakers to get a better deal for those wanting to get Biblical. Good on you! Thanks for putting my material in the magazine, it's quite encouraging to see it in print. It's been interesting working in a school environment and also having my bent for home education. This term we had one family leave to fully home educate and another pursuing the option. Basically what we do is give the parents some hands-on help with the day-to-day teaching. They have them Thurs-Sun, and we have them Mon-Wed. There is quite (at times intense) open and constant communication with parents. Many have become very close to us personally. We are doing a Growing Kids God's Way course at present. It is so fantastic! I would absolutely recommend it to any and every parent and teacher of Christian and even pre-Christian children. It is so practical and firstly Biblical. It always challenges presuppositionally all the time and makes you think things through. I worked

### The Great Physician

We thoroughly enjoyed meeting your whole family at Bethany Park (Nelson). We are looking forward to being able to purchase the tape of your first session as Robin thought it was excellent and I was unable to make it. After an energetic day at camp on the Sunday I spent most of the next week in bed. The doctor was amazed at what I had made it through over the weekend—he underestimated the work of "The Great Physician"! I have continued to gain strength each week and have now schooled the children for two weeks, coping well so long as I get an afternoon nap. On our overseas adoption front—our two children have both passed their health checks and we should receive photos this week. The Sierra Leone government is apparently very positive about the adoptions but have decided to get any living relatives to sign a statement saying they understand no money is involved and that they are legal adoptions (compared with buying children!!) As soon as the signatures are obtained the court case will go ahead....we continue to learn to wait on the Lord's timing for our family and these two little lives. May the Lord continue to provide for all your needs from His wealth and may you be encouraged as you seek to minister to many

### Keystone Subscription Form

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home schooling families.

Robin & Lauren Swafford  
Collingwood

(Let's pray for these wonderful people!--Ed.)

### Keystone Keeps Abreast

Please send us a subscription to Keystone. My husband visited NZ in August. We're seriously considering moving to NZ. We want to keep abreast of the home schooling movement there. Thankyou for your help.

Katherine Lange  
Ord, Nebraska, USA

### Developing Own Curriculum

I am home schooling my nearly nine-year-old daughter Sasha. I have never used a set curriculum, and the only "formal" text we have got is a maths book. Developing our own curriculum has worked well, as I found I could develop her own interests in subjects such as Social Studies and Science. However, I am now wanting to purchase some resources or workbooks for Social Studies and Science. This is because I think Sasha would enjoy some "structured" work in these areas, and it would also make things a bit easier for me rather than having to chase around for resources myself (my second daughter has just turned five, and I have got a new baby as well, so time is at a premium).

Joanne Rengasamy  
Blenheim

(Can readers help with ideas here?--Ed.)

### Arohanui

Thanks for the time & effort put into Keystone. It has been a real blessing, and very informative. We were unable to attend the conference, being quite some distance from the far north, but would love to see one closer to home, say Auckland or Whangarei? Here's hoping! Bless you as you continue to serve whole-heartedly. Arohanui in Christ.

Brian & Trish Vesey  
Opononi

### Trust Established

Thanks to the information gleaned at the Friday session of the Home Schoolers Conference, we are now a Charitable Trust known as North Taranaki Home Educators Inc. By using the Manawatu Trust Deed document with the necessary name changes, etc., we were able to become a trust without the need to use a solicitor (a real saving!) We found the information put out by the LINK Centre to be an invaluable

guide. (There should be a LINK Centre in every major town...see your local council.--Ed.) Thank you for your efforts to put people in the know, both through the Keystone journal and the CHomeS Conference. Keep it up!

Margaret Ussher  
New Plymouth

### HENA To Hui

Thank you for sending me the information about your planned hui in August. I have showed it to a number of people already and I've been photocopying it for people to peruse at their leisure. HENA (Home Educators' Network of Aotearoa, PO Box 41-172, St Lukes, Auckland) will be trying hard to send at least one representative from the management committee down to the hui, and meanwhile we are discussing the issues you have raised. You've set it up in a very well-organised way -- I'm impressed with your obvious commitment to consensus policy-making. Thank you too for the information on the Precious Joules launch. I found it excellent, despite it taking place at a rather mother-hostile time (5 pm on a weeknight!!) and the resource kit is being borrowed by people all the time.

Kate Jaunay  
HENA Editor and Spokesperson  
Auckland

### Puzzle



Hey! What's the story?? Not one single entry for last issue's contest. Too easy, was it? OK, this time you need to answer two riddles:

#### Whose name is spelled by this rhyme?:

Five hundred the first, five hundred the last,  
And five in the middle is seen;  
The first of all letters, the first of all numbers,  
Are evenly placed in between.

(This one above is easy if you think Italian.)

#### Who is right?

John claimed that the wheels of his bicycle, when moving forward, rotated in a clockwise direction. His friend, Peter, said they rotated in an anti-clockwise direction. Which was right? (All those under 16 who send in the correct answers will go into a draw to be held on 29 June. The one drawn will receive a brand new, very colourful and informative book on Amphibians. Send name, address, age & answers to CHomeS, 4 Tawa St., Palmerston North.)



## Cancel Hui

Thank you for the information you sent on the proposed "hui". Our local support group has not yet had the opportunity to discuss the issues raised, so what I am writing is my own personal viewpoint. I believe that the "hui" should be cancelled! I believe that it is a waste of time, energy and money. I firmly believe that the "fears" being raised are in fact a ploy to distract us from getting on with the task of educating our children in the way of the Lord, and to spend our precious time on political issues based on, "What if?" In my experience, the question in my spirit of, "What if?" has ALWAYS come from the enemy. God has not given us a spirit of fear. II Timothy 1:7. He is in charge!

We are accountable not only to God, but to those who have been placed in authority over us. We cannot be granted a license to drive a car in New Zealand on the basis of our Christian character. We must submit to passing a driver's test. As long as we live in a secular society, this is the way it will be. I am more than happy to write a short report on the progress of our children. I do not consider it too much to ask. I would prefer a visit from the Review Officer as the children enjoy showing others the work they have done. If we strongly object to writing a short report, the outcome is likely to be compulsory examinations.

To date we have NOT been asked to do anything which will compromise our Christian beliefs. As Christians we should not spend our precious time in needless debate. The Bible has the answer to this and every issue which may confront us. The following passage is taken from the Good News Bible which puts the matter very plainly. It may be argued that this is referring only to payment of taxes, but I see this as merely an example. "Everyone must obey the state authorities, because no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God. Whoever opposes the existing authority opposes what God has ordered; and anyone who does so will bring judgement on himself. For the rulers are not to be feared by those who do good, but by those who do evil." Romans 13:1-3

Sharyn Wylie  
Wangamui

[I basically agree with most of what Sharyn says!! Oh, that we could just get on with the real task of educating our children without worrying about the MOE, because we already have more

than enough to distract us. I agree that in itself the report being asked for is next to nothing, a snap of the fingers to compose.....Roy and Catherine Sandbrook of Feilding have produced a masterful form-report that would take 60 seconds to fill in. (See pages 21-22). I agree that the MOE is not and has not asked us to do anything that would compromise our Christian convictions, and what they do ask of us is minimal compared even to Australia. There may be however a need to regard future developments. We could take the time and effort now to head 'em off at the pass (if indeed we even think there is a need to do so), or we could wait and fight the fight clearly worth fighting for when it comes. Of course it may be a lot more difficult to fight later than now. That is why CHomeS is suggesting the debates and discussion exercises long before the hui....to try to decide among ourselves if now is the time to act, and if so how, or if we should conserve our energies and resources for a different type of action later on. I share Sharyn's concern about raising non-existent fears....I thoroughly distrust anyone who does such things and pray that this idea does not appear to be doing that. We do need to be subject to the civil authority over us, and praise God that He has allowed us to be in a country where we can have a say in how that authority is formulated and enforced! Let us not leave those tasks to the heathen, but do all we can to see that Biblical principles of parental responsibility before God to our children is recognised by those same civil authorities....Editor.]

## First Year Home Schooling

Thank you for the lovely letter you sent. We too had a wonderful time at the Nelson Home Schoolers Camp. It was a real blessing and a time of refreshing. It was good to put names to faces and finally meet you both and all your family. This is our first year home schooling and we are all enjoying it and can already see the fruit starting to emerge. Thank our God for these opportunities! We have just started subscribing to Keystone after reading a friend's last year editions. We want to thank you very much for the encouragement and information you give and the time and energy you put into Keystone. It is a real blessing to us and I'm sure for many others as well.

Ivan & Sue Rock & Family  
Brightwater

## Authority Debate: Balance of Power

Having read the letters of my brothers John Jensen and Brent McAlister, I really do feel compelled to write myself on the issue of authority.

We were in an independent fellowship for 14 years, all our married life, where all our children grew up, where all our best friends were, our only spiritual home. When the Lord developed within us through His Word the convictions of Christian education and home schooling, we were stunned that others did not share our enthusiasm for this way of raising a generation of disciples for Christ. We thought their disinclination for bringing the Word of God to bear on the political scene regarding public morality was a cultural hangover from the good old days when Christians never had to be involved in such things. But when immorality, humanistic heresies and even the trampling of their own traditions were not spoken against when they happened in the congregation, we knew something was wrong.

One day I was handed a copy of a letter by the elders, *written to someone else* which said they did not believe in either the PRINCIPLE or the PRACTICE of home schooling and would never want to see their pulpit used to promote such a thing. We had been home schooling for five years. WHY HADN'T THESE ELDERS TOLD ME!! WHY HAD THEY LET ME GO DOWN A PATH AND TAKE MY FAMILY DOWN A PATH THEY CONSIDERED HARMFUL? WHAT KIND OF SHEPHERDING, PASTORING, ELDERSHIP IS THAT??!!

We knew we had to go. Why? Because these shepherds not only refused to shepherd, but also let each person go his own way. We either had to find a church that WOULD shepherd us properly or do the job ourselves.

Working through the issues involved in that little choice took us SEVEN years. We found the issue of authority to be a crucial one, right next to fidelity to Christ and His Word. We found some surprising things.

First, there are some things which are inescapable. Therefore these things affect everybody and cannot be ignored. One is the deceitfulness of sin. We found most Christians underestimate the degree to which they are susceptible to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the

eyes and the pride of life. That last one especially, the pride of life, is what causes us to deny that Jeremiah 10:23 applies to us: "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps." "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (I Corinthians 10:12). The deceitfulness of sin is inescapable. Therefore we must be constantly on guard AND open to the admonition of others.

Then there is doctrine. The fellowship we left would say that love unites, but doctrine divides. But that in itself is a statement of doctrine. That is what they believe, it is what they teach. One elder told us, "Well this is what we believe, and if you don't like it, you can leave." That was a statement of doctrine. When I told them, which was difficult through my uncontrollable sobbing and tears, that we felt we had to leave, only one of the eight elders tried to talk to us about it. That showed the commitment of their love to unity. Everybody has doctrine: the one they profess may be different than the one they live by, but doctrine is inescapable. So the question is, which doctrine is closest to Biblical doctrine.

A third inescapable item is the way in which God has ordained under His own authority other spheres of authority. The family, the church, and the state are the three main ones ordained by God, each with its own sphere of influence and each accountable and subservient to God's authority. You know this is inescapable by the amount of trouble inevitably caused when one authority tries to extend its sphere of influence into that of another or is actually invited by the other to do so, as when the state relieves the family of its social welfare, health care and educational responsibilities.

We must not complain about man-made structures because they too are inescapable. We WILL have one structure or another, always man-made, no matter what we do. Even if we stay home and not even meet with any other believers, that too is a man-made structure, made by ourselves. (Personally, because it is made by myself to suit myself rather than to help and encourage others I would therefore tend to trust it all the less as this kind of system is humanistic to the core, being self-centred rather than Christ-centred. Of course if there is no Christ-centred church within a reasonable distance, then you probably do need to stay at home, rather than come back from a service in

such a place complaining about it in front of the family and feeling unclean.) And so, the question is which man-made structure is closest to the Biblical pattern.

So, when the authority of the church begins to eclipse that of the family, you come up with strongly authoritarian church structures, from huge international organisations to local personality cults, where the doctrine is determined by an elite person or group, and more and more of the family's activities are determined for it by the church. On the other hand, when families believe they can fulfill for themselves the responsibilities of the church, you can get antinomian<sup>1</sup> structures where doctrine tends to be rather fuzzy at the edges to the point where each family determines its activities for itself with no reference to the church, the Body of Christ of which this family is meant to be a part.

Just because the church structures we have experienced seem restrictive to us does not mean church structures are wrong. That is like saying because my marriage seems restrictive, marriage is wrong. Why do we tend so quickly to blame the institution and not the sinners (ourselves) who are in the institution? Could it have something to do with this "do your own thing" generation in which we live, which rebels against whatever doesn't suit ME? Have we possibly been influenced more by the world and our own deceitful sinfulness than by the Lord's Word in these situations? Why do we focus more on, "What (probably new thing) does the Lord want ME to do?" rather than "How can I more effectively do what the Lord HAS ALREADY TOLD ME to do in the Scriptures?" I am not saying that we should stay put in a "church" which has compromised, apostasised or grossly overstepped its boundaries, but neither should we despise the churches as a whole simply because what we have experienced has been unsatisfactory.

The perfect church does not exist on earth, but then neither does the perfect Christian exist on earth. That means that being an imperfect member of an imperfect church will give us plenty of opportunities to obey some of the clear commandments the Lord has already given us: to bear with the failings of the weak (Romans 15:1), not neglect to meet together to stir one another up to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25), to bear one another's burdens

(Galatians 6:2), to do good to the brethren (Galatians 6:10), and to love one another so that the outsiders may see (John 13:34-35).

It seems to me that the Scriptures do clearly state that elders are to be appointed in every place (Titus 1:5), that they are to rule over us (I Tim 3:4-5, 5:17, Hebrews 13:7, 17), that we should submit to them (I Peter 5:5, Hebrews 13:17), that we should call them when ill (James 5:14), and that we pay them well (I Tim 5:17-18). Yes, the elders certainly have directives as to how they are to look after us (I Peter 5:1-3, Hebrews 13:17) and must be held accountable to that by way of exhortation (I Tim 5:1).

The Church on earth, the Body of Christ, is made up of ALL SORTS: the weak, the immature, the lazy, the stong, the keen. I am commanded to bear with them all and not to please myself, but to serve and to love all my brethren. Apart from the Bible verses above that indicate that I should be a member of a local congregation under elders, from a practical, logistical point of view, I can best fulfill the commandments to serve the brethren by being committed to a local congregation. Because I do not have a corner on the truth, I must concede that I can learn something, probably quite a bit, from every brother and sister in the congregation, if I would only take the time to listen and learn....to love and serve them as I have already been commanded by the Lord to do.

The organisational church is not meant to usurp the authority of us fathers within our families, but to strengthen and equip and support us in that role. The authority of the church is over corporate areas of worship, discipline, the sacraments, etc. If the pagan Roman Empire could be commended by the Lord in Romans 13 as a *minister of God* to whom we should submit, how much more can we joyfully submit, in those appropriate areas, to the appropriately constituted church of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory forever, Amen!

Craig Smith  
Editor

1. Antinomianism (against the law) stresses freedom from the condemnation of the law to such an extent that it can come to mean freedom from the law itself. It also tends to reflect a modern existentialism or "here and now" attitude as if it had nothing to learn from the church's 2000 years of history, struggle, practise and scholarship.

# Home School Research



(During 1995 Pamela Shepherd of Christian Teachers' College of Aotearoa New Zealand sent out 100 questionnaires to Christian Home Educators all around New Zealand. She had 49 responses, which is quite high for this kind of voluntary response questionnaire. She has compiled the findings in several forms, Part One of which appeared in the Mar/Apr '96 issue of Keystone. Below is Part Two. There will be more in subsequent Keystone Home School Research articles.)

## Discipline

You gave many good hints on what works in discipline and how to curb misbehaviour. The way you discipline your children is as varied as shades of colour on a leaf, but a leaf is still a leaf and discipline is still discipline. There are some generalisations we can make about discipline that should never be overlooked. I will list some:

- \* A good system to remember what to do: smack for Disobedience, Dishonesty, Disrespect and Destructiveness. The Biblical command to use the rod to discipline a child is to be a very carefully administered action that can easily do a lot of harm if not applied correctly. One of the key things is to never smack a child while you are angry at them.
- \* Never yell at them when you're angry; you often say very hurtful things which they replay over and over in their heads. This shows them that it is okay to act in anger towards other people and that will become a response for them to use too. There are times when a loud voice is needed, but to explode frequently is very damaging. The child will come to expect that whenever they do something wrong they'll get their "head ripped off". They may become hesitant to try new things or even anything because of the fear that grips them that they may fail and be yelled at. Children would rather have a short, sharp smack any day rather than a barrage of personal insults that causes pain where nobody can see. God isn't like that, He doesn't get angry at every little mistake that we make. He doesn't even yell at our big ones! He is patient, not wanting us to come to harm.
- \* When times call for a smack, the child needs to know why they are being smacked and the reason why that thing is wrong, then they will learn to discern their sins. It is helpful if they can repeat to you what it is that they did wrong. It also gives them a sense of accountability for what they've done.
- \* We need a warning of what is to come. Never warn a child more than once. Jonah learned that delayed obedience was costly; we should train our children in this also. If they have heard your warning that if they repeat their action they will be smacked, (or whatever disciplinary action you will use at that time) then follow through on your word. So many parents are never taken seriously because their children know that they are soft. It is not helping the child or the parent by letting them be told several times. It is said by one father "delayed obedience is disobedience".
- \* Give them a chance to ask forgiveness of the person upon whom the "crime" was committed, and a chance to ask God for forgiveness. This does not necessarily mean that they get out of being smacked; we still must live with the consequences of our sin.
- \* Allow them to make restitution if appropriate.
- \* Privacy is quite important when you are in the disciplinary process. God does not speak out loud to us during church about what sins we have committed during the week (just as well!) He speaks to us through our conscience and His Word to remind us of what His standards are compared with what we've been doing.
- \* The reason the folly in children's hearts is dealt with is because we are obedient to God's Word; the biggest mistake people can make is to assume that their child is naturally obedient and good. "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:10).
- \* When standards of behaviour are clearly outlined and consistent, your child will be happy and secure in knowing where the "fences" are that they are not allowed to climb over. Consistency is quite hard, but very important; the child will never know where they stand unless your standards are maintained.
- \* The child would be helped by knowing that you are one of the people in a line of authority.

Generally life got a lot busier!

### **Some Statistics About Who Supports You**

41%..other home educators 22%..grandparents,  
other family 15%..church people 8%..teachers  
8%..God directly 6%..on your own (friends  
were mentioned too.)

### **What Do You Want Help With?**

The most common reply was 2 hours per day of

work in the kitchen, doing the washing, ironing and grounds. The other needs were for help with spring cleaning and other jobs like fridge and oven cleaning, windows, etc. I wished that I could set up a roster of willing participants and assign them all to your houses. I am praying that the church at large will see the needs that you have and will do something about them rather than ignoring them. So many people just don't understand the implications that the choice you have made has; they may never guess that you are in need of help.

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It is the best thing to train your children in household work, they will surprise you at how capable they are with practice. What do you do when they are really young though?

### **Initial Objections**

Here are the initial objections that people had to home education:

- 42%—No objections
- 21%—Parents' inability
- 16%—Other concerns
- 9%—Lack of support
- 7%—Tradition
- 5%—Socialisation

An inspirational quote to keep you going: You parents are the single biggest influence in your children's lives. This is compounded if you home educate. Your children will believe everything you say. It is not until they leave home and encounter people who were not brought up exactly the same way they were, that they will begin to understand how much they do things just because you do.

that God has ordained. You are acting under orders, as they are.

- \* Model what you want them to do. The best sermon is a good example. Never expect your child to do what you would not do yourself.
- \* Remember that outward discipline or control is a stage in the process of becoming self controlled. If the child knows the consequences then they will not be likely to repeat the misdemeanor. Once the Holy Spirit is at work in the child's life then the ability to control oneself and the conviction of sin will take place as they allow.
- \* Letting children get away with unacceptable behaviour is not helping them. God has limits and so does our legal system. We must learn to submit to authority or suffer the consequences.
- \* The overriding factor is to always show unconditional love. A disciplined child does not need to be banished to their bedroom; they should be allowed the opportunity to stay close to you. God's discipline is to draw us closer to Him, not so that we will shun Him. If they are repentant then they will not want their relationship with you to remain uncomfortable, so will attempt to make contact with you however they feel they need to.

### Changing Your Mind

I asked you if you had ever considered changing your mind about the whole thing. 32% of you never had. Those who did had various reasons but the outcome was almost always the same; you decided against it. A few have sent their secondary age children to school, and a couple of primary age children have gone back after being at home. The parents in most cases have found that to be an extremely hard decision to make after having the benefits of home education that we all enjoy. On the whole you have hung in there and your reasons have remained steadfast.

### Initial Changes

One of the first things that you notice is that your children are there all the time. While other people are sending their children out the door in the morning, you are getting yours ready for another day of learning at home. There is no respite; the children are with you all the time; they demand 24 hour attention.

Some families found that it was more relaxed being together all the time rather than all rushing off in different directions.

The second most noticed thing would have been the state of the house. Nearly every mother stated that she is not pleased with the way her house looks most of the time. There is a balance between having order so that you can operate, and letting people actually live in a place. It is very easy to give children the impression that keeping the house tidy is the most important thing. When tidiness comes before relationships then your priorities have become blurred. There is a personal balance to all this and after all God did create order. Taking responsibility for cleaning up after themselves is something everyone should learn, so is helping one another to do the things that need doing as part of a family. Don't become a stressed mess because you are scared of what people might think of your house, relax....there is learning going on!

Number three was the inability to be able to attend anything outside the home during the day. I was astounded at the amount of socialising and getting together that women do during the day while their children are at school. It is often with regret that they give up all those luxuries when the children come home. Another was prayer meetings and other church functions during the day.

A very common complaint is having so much less time alone with your spouse once the children stay at home. Some have thought of creative ways to overcome this.

Families have had to instantly deal with relationship problems within the family. A mother told me that they couldn't "sweep problems under the mat anymore" or "just get them out the door" in the morning. They had to be faced and fixed before anything else could happen.

Parents discovered the full responsibility of what it is like to have to cater for the learning needs of their children. They could no longer hold anyone else accountable for educating their progeny. There were many surprises.

The sibling relationships grew closer and much better. They found new friends in their brothers and sisters as they learned to live and play well together all day every day.

# Home Schoolers Did It

by Genevieve Smith, 16  
Palmerston North



After publishing the first issue of The Minority (a political action newsletter for teens, no longer in production) I thought I would take it along to my local youth group and give copies of it to those in my Bible Study Class.

They were impressed with the newsletter but were not so sure that they could write letters to the Editor after I spoke to them of the need to fight for our beliefs. Soon the subject of smacking came up and how it was soon going to be made illegal to smack children. One girl asked if there was a letter that they could all sign in support of smacking. I volunteered to write a letter that they could all sign and then send it to two local papers and Dianne Yates (MP who wanted to ban smacking).

Dianne Yates wrote back. Her letter moved one of my friends to write back because "Dianne Yates' thinking was off track."

Then within days of our letter appearing in the paper someone wrote to the paper in reply to ours. My friends at the Youth Group were appalled. They thought that our writing a letter had been a waste of time because we had had opposition.

It was actually quite the opposite. Our letter had stirred people up. It had made them act. Here we were, an apparently insignificant minority, moving a generation twice our age to thinking again about a very important matter. We had started a debate. So I wrote another letter and got my friends to sign it. This time I met with opposition. One girl said that she didn't like her friends seeing her name in the newspaper. Others said that they agreed with the letter but didn't want to make trouble. Even so I still got a lot of people to sign it.

After the publication of this letter, Natasha received a private letter from a lady in her church. The lady, I believe, was not too impressed with the way Natasha was pushing her

beliefs because after all we Christians are not supposed to get involved in the problems of the world. This is a very wrong way to view the world and its problems.

My father always used to say that there are three types of people in this world: Those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who say "What happened?" As Christians we should be in the first group; we should make things happen and not wait for the non-Christians to take over.

The world is the Lord's and He has given us laws to govern it by. In New Zealand at this period of time a lot of non-Christians are doing all they can politically or otherwise to change New Zealand into a completely secular (with no reference to God or the Bible) country. It is our job as Bible believing Christians, to stop this. How? Write. The pen is mightier than the sword, and when a whole body of people (even a minority) rise up in unison over a matter things start to happen! Wheels start to turn and resolutions are made.

So show that you won't be made to back down over a matter. Write to your local newspaper, MP, or organisation. A very important thing to remember is to always glorify God in everything you do.

## Trading Post



### For Sale:

"Sing, Spell, Read & Write" phonics programme, as new, \$100. Phone (06) 857-8811 or write to Sharyn Weeks, 2 Tikokino Rd., Waipawa.

### How would you complete the sentence: **I am saved because...**

- a) I obey His commands
- b) I believe in the Lord Jesus
- c) I have been born again through the Holy Spirit
- d) Jesus Christ's life, death, resurrection, His death for sin, His perfect righteousness has been applied to me by God's electing Grace.

The first three start with "I" and are man-centred, telling what he can do. The last is centred on God, and declares that, being the author and finisher of our faith, He does it all.



for her: Hippotherapy.

Another benefit is that she has brought many new people into our lives. Many have turned into friendships that will last a lifetime.

I now know these children with special needs were chosen by our Heavenly Father for a special mission. Sometimes we may not understand, but I believe as Romans 8:18 says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. "I want to take this time now to thank Jami for a wonderful new life she has given our family. THANK YOU JAMI!

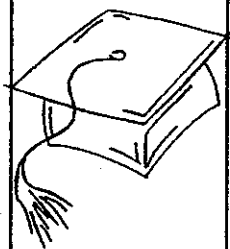
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## Tough Questions People Throw Your Way



**The MOE will be requiring us to write a 1 1/2 to 2 page report for each of our home educated children on the progress they have made in the previous year. How should we respond to this?**

Some have said we should dig in our toes and refuse. Others have said the MOE appears to be asking a minimum of information in the vaguest of terms, so why should anyone moan? One or two have already come up with form letters to make the job really easy. Roy and Catherine Sandbrook of Feilding have put together a masterful two-page form, all the wording of which is lifted straight from the National Curriculum (primary) documents, so must be acceptable to the authorities. The form is produced on the following pages. It really is a beaut!

However, there are a lot of other issues which can be raised in relation to this request by the Ministry. It appears that a piecemeal approach to the administration and supervision of home schoolers is taking place. This is unsatisfactory for them and for us. I have had encouragement from someone highly placed within the MOE that they would certainly look at any proposal by home schoolers as a group as to an overall, comprehensive approach the MOE could have toward us.

Consequently CHomeS is calling a hui of all home schooling support groups to hammer out one or a number of possible responses to the Ministry's new requirement. The idea is to enhance all home educators' understanding of the issues and implications and to see if some ideas can be tabled with a reasonably broad base of consensus. CHomeS is willing to act as a facilitator of wide discussions, and is happy to collate and reproduce the ideas & findings of support groups and send them around to other support groups so further discussions can take place with the possible added benefit of fresh ideas from other parts of the country. A timetable has been proposed and circulated to over 70 home schooling contacts nation wide. If you would like a copy, please write to CHomeS.

# Home Educator's Progress Report

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Curriculum	Progress				
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Slow	N/A
<b>Oral Language</b>  Developing listening skills Can converse, ask questions and talk about events and experiences in a group Able to interact in group discussion  <b>Written Language</b>  Able to express and record personal experiences Able to shape ideas and present them in various forms Able to recount events and facts Learning to identify and use common conventions of writing Can identify and express the meanings of texts  <b>Reading</b>  Wants to read for enjoyment and information Uses cues to gain meaning Responds to language and meaning in texts Is interested in different contemporary and historical texts  <b>Handwriting</b>  Basic script has improved in legibility, fluency and speed Cursive style has improved in legibility, fluency and speed  <b>Mathematics</b>  Can apply mathematical concepts in problem solving Shows growing confidence in the language of maths Developing an understanding of numbers and what they represent Developing an ability to estimate and make approximations Developing a knowledge and understanding of systems of measurement Developing spatial awareness and gaining a knowledge of geometrical relations Learning to recognise patterns and relationships Using symbols to represent mathematical concepts  <b>Social Studies</b>  Developing an understanding of people, their actions and activities Developing a responsible attitude in contributing to society					

Curriculum	Progress				
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Slow	N/A
<p><b>Science</b></p> <p>is exploring the relationships between science and technology            Is developing investigative skills and attitudes            Is gaining an understanding of living organisms            Is investigating local ecosystems and the interdependence of living things            Gaining an understanding of the nature of physical phenomenon and substances from practical investigation            Developing an understanding of and a responsible attitude to Earth and its resources</p> <p><b>Music</b></p> <p>Making imaginative responses to sound            Developing the urge to explore and experiment with music            Appreciates music through responsive listening            Developing the ability to understand music            Learning to enjoy and value music</p> <p><b>Art</b></p> <p>Learning to respond to experience in ways that enrich sensory emotional, spiritual and intellectual awareness            Learning to use this response to generate ideas which can be given visual form            Practising ways of working necessary for art work            Can evaluate their own and others achievements            Has explored art in their own and in different cultures            Learning to understand and evaluate art works</p> <p><b>PE</b></p> <p>Has experienced the joy of physical activity            Applies basic motor skills to everyday situations            Is developing physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle            Developing co-operation, toleration and sensitivity in interacting with others.            Uses movement as a satisfying form of expression</p> <p><b>Health</b></p> <p>Aquiring knowledge and developing attitudes that contribute to healthy living            Developing the skills needed to maintain health            Demonstrating increasing awareness of their own and others' health needs and health in the community</p>					
<b>Teacher's Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>				

# Resource Review



## Part 1

by Craig Smith

Following is a review of three books out of Australia by Lisa McInnes-Smith, entitled, "I'm a Walking Talking Miracle", "Radical Rev-Up for Kids", and "How to Motivate Manage & Market Yourself". They are attractive and user-friendly. They deal with areas about which people are concerned and in which they rarely get any clear guidance. Christian home schoolers would find these books are attractive, not only because they are definitely interested in these areas of self-improvement, influencing the world and those around them, and the philosophy of life in general, but also because these books have Christian references throughout.

Unfortunately these books are appealing to both Christians and non-Christians for another set of reasons which are not good. These reasons will be explained in this and future articles.

The material in question is part of a larger set of books and tapes (another title being "Why Wasn't I Told?"), all with the aim of improving your own personal life through self-evaluation, improvement of attitudes and self-image, goal setting and the like. Because this material is fairly well focused, it is obviously not "neutral" or unbiased. It is very definitely biased in a certain direction and its whole purpose is to get others onto its bandwagon and moving in that same direction. Further, because it has things to say about the nature of man, both spiritual and temporal, about our origins, about our purposes on earth, it is clearly a religious work. The difficulty is that the religion revealed and defined throughout is not Biblical Christianity. It is in fact the religion of secular humanism disguised in a veneer of Christian and Christian-sounding spiritual references.

## Definitions: Biblical Christianity

To point this out clearly, I must first define Biblical, orthodox, traditional Christianity and its philosophical opposite, and mortal enemy, secular humanism. Let's start by asking a rhetorical question, "Who's in charge here?" We would find that Christianity and secular humanism answer this question quite differently. Christianity says that God is in charge of every atom of the Universe and directs every event

in nature and history and the affairs of men according to His will and for His purposes. Secular humanism says that we ourselves are in charge of at least our selves and our own destiny, that we can choose our own path and work our way to our own goals. Christianity not only says that God directs all things past, present and future, but also that we will have to give account of our every word and deed on Judgement Day. Secular humanism dismisses such an idea. (Secular=worldly, without reference to supernatural; humanism=man centred.) If God is acknowledged at all, (as He is by what are called religious humanists) He is there to help, not hinder, us. It is the same as if He were not there, since in the end we choose our own goals and we achieve them by our own efforts, with no reference to His directives and no concern about a future calling to account.

Christianity acknowledges that although created in the image of God our Creator, we have fallen in Adam (see Genesis chapter 3), and have become corrupted in all our faculties (spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, etc.). As a result of this Fall or Original Sin, we all have two big problems. One is an in-built tendency to rebel against God's absolute authority in order to "do our own thing". Another is our total inability to rightly and accurately assess and evaluate ourselves, those around us, situations, events, ideas or concepts. In other words, in our "natural" state as humans in the world today (not the same as the beautiful and good state in which we were created) we reckon we are generally both able and willing to determine what is best for ourselves and others, when in fact we are unable and unwilling to even recognise the best when it is staring us in the face. (The best being of necessity whatever the Lord demands of us.)

It was for this reason that Jesus Christ came into the world: to save us from our deceitful selves and the fire of hell we have earned by our rebelliousness. The seriousness of our condition is revealed in the fact that the only perfect Son of God, Jesus Christ, had to die a bloody, shameful, humiliating death on a cross to pay the death penalty our sins incurred.

Christians, therefore, are humble before God, knowing they deserve His condemnation, but seeking His forgiveness and reconciliation and continual guidance through the Lord Jesus Christ and His revealed will, the Bible. Further, Christians seek to obey God's commands and to

conform their lives to Christ's directives not only because they realize they are incapable of directing their own lives (Jeremiah 10:23), but also because Christ alone is worthy of emulation. In addition, by the nature of Who He is, He must have sovereignty in and over our lives since He has purchased, redeemed, and saved us by His death on the cross. We have no real existence outside of Him, both now in the present and also in the future state after death. To live as if we did is an illusion. To do so in ignorance is one thing. To live apart from total submission to Him wilfully is inexcusable.

For this reason, mature Christians do not see the activities, purposes, goals of their lives as an opportunity to do their own thing, but as a calling from God to do His will for Him. Woe to us if we do not do His will....He will call us to give account.

### **Definitions: Secular Humanism**

In contrast, the secular humanist sees himself in a state of normalcy, that he is not a born sinner, but either neutral or basically good. He would say that he inherits any faults he may have from his environment. This includes his upbringing, resources or lack of them during his life, his parents' faulty ideas, peer pressure of siblings and schoolmates and workmates and society, etc., etc. If Christ's death is acknowledged at all (as it is by religious humanists) it is simply as a sign that God loves us no matter what we do....so, really, we are free to do whatever we like, just the same as if He didn't exist at all.

Life has no meaning except that which we choose to impart to it. In fact, we humans not only give whatever meaning there is going to be to life, we are ultimately in complete control of our destiny. Because we can know nothing for certain about what happens after death, the destiny with which we can concern ourselves only involves the affairs of this earthly temporal life. God does not control this part, we do. He may or may not have something to do with the afterlife, but we are in charge of this temporal existence. In fact, we are our own gods here on earth, determining for ourselves what constitutes right and wrong for ourselves, good and bad for ourselves, wise and unwise for ourselves. We may refer to other wise or successful people of the past or present, even to the life of Christ and the Bible, but they are only some of the many options available to us. To limit ourselves would be a silly mistake. And there are now and always have been plenty of wise, kind and successful people who have

had no time for Christianity and the Bible. (Of course, this is according to the humanist's definitions of wise, kind and successful.)

### **Consideration of These Books**

So how does Lisa's material stack up along side Christianity and humanism? It is thoroughly humanistic in its approach, definitions, objectives and methodologies. True, it has a good sprinkling of God-talk and some verses here and there, but this is only a surface coating of sugar and is not an integral, vital part of the driving philosophy. I don't know if this has been done purposefully to deceive Christians or whether it is the result of endeavouring to be as philosophically inclusive as possible in order to market to the widest possible audience with the least amount of offence. Unfortunately, no, make that fortunately, Christianity is a pure philosophy, since it originates from the pure and holy God. It cannot be combined or mixed with any other philosophy without immediately losing its identity. It is a one-way reaction. One drop of impurity in an ocean of pure water causes that pure water to become impure. Adding an ocean of pure water to one drop of impurity will never make that impurity pure. Diluted, but not pure. But the humanistic thrust of this material is not even diluted by the Christianity in it: the Christianity is used to try to justify the humanism!

Anyway, let us move to some specifics.

### **The Spiritual Compartmentalized**

First, although the spiritual aspect is acknowledged, it is offered as one of several parts of our lives (page 15 of *Motivate, Manage & Market*). The implication is that it is no more important than any other part and may be optional. It is not presented as a necessity. It is not presented as it actually is: inescapable. Whether people acknowledge God or not, all will be called to give account to Him on Judgement Day. God is the Creator, Sustainer and absolute Sovereign and Judge over all things in this universe, both seen and unseen. The spiritual is not one part, it is the all-encompassing starting point and framework within which everything else exists.

In other words, this opening assumption sees God taken off His throne. He is still around, but no longer as the sole object of focus to one's life from which all else emanates. We can now focus separately on the physical, mental, emotional, etc., separate from and with no reference to God

and the spiritual. To quote from page 15, "each heading can be used as a smaller framework within the greater framework of purpose." The spiritual is a smaller framework within the greater one of "purpose". From whence comes this "purpose"? Question: Who defines this "purpose"? Answer: The individual person. That makes the person greater than God. That makes God subservient to the person's "purpose". This is not Christianity. This is humanism.

The MMM book further inculcates this idea of God being reduced to an option by the lists on pages 41, 44 and 45. The one on page 45 is particularly offensive as it lists "drinking alcohol" and "smoking" as an equal option to "praising God". The reader is invited to choose and to add whatever else might make him "feel important". An extortionist or kidnapper would have fun with this one. There is absolutely no guidance given...it is completely left up to the reader.

I must add here that this is exactly what took place between Eve and the serpent in the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 3.) The serpent got Eve to see God and His commands as one of several options before her, rather than as the unquestionable authority over her. She was encouraged to evaluate the options in terms of her own desires, treating God and His Word with the same deference as she afforded the devil's suggestions and her own original ideas. She removed God from His throne, from His rightful place of authority over her every thought and action. Then she simply did the best she could with the resources at hand and chose what appeared to be the best option at the time. The whole human race and all of creation as well have been suffering ever since.

### **God's Sovereignty is Usurped**

But more than just deposing God, Eve went on to make herself as God. (Genesis 3:5-6, 22). She saw the empty throne and decided *she* might as well sit on it as anyone else. This material actually catechizes the same concept. The book Walking, Talking Miracle is particularly bad in this area. Here are some of the examples of anti-Christian teaching I found in it.

- \* *If I believe I can be "ace" at basketball I will be.*
- \* *You can make your dreams come true.*
- \* *If I read my goals and believe my goals, I will achieve my goals.*

\* *If you can see it and believe it you can achieve it.*

\* *What we think about comes about.*

All of these assume an omnipotence that only God possesses. The statements are absolute, with no conditions or qualifiers ....not so much as an "if the Lord wills". In addition they encourage the reader to make for themselves an idol on which they are to concentrate their thoughts and intentions. This is against the 2nd of the 10 commandments.

\* *I choose to say good things about other people.*

God commands us to say good things about even our enemies. (Matthew 5:44). To say that we choose is to usurp God's authority and declare that this rule originated with us or that we will follow it because *we* choose to, not because we are **commanded** to and **must** do so whether we like it or not. No, we will stay in charge here, not God.

\* *I believe in me.*

The Bible constantly tells us to believe in God, not in ourselves. God has been replaced with "me" in this book. The Bible goes on to say, "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool." (Proverbs 28:26).

\* *Nothing is impossible for God. With God's help, nothing is impossible for you.*

Here is another absolute statement, no qualifiers, no conditions. The implication is that all you need to do is acknowledge God's existence and He is bound to help you. Who is in charge here? We are, and God becomes our servant.

The snappiest sounding but most objectionable of the lot is:

\* *If it is to be, it is up to me.*

This is breath-taking in its arrogance and implied denial of God's ability to intervene in human affairs. The speaker assumes omnipotence and omniscience for himself in order to speak this trash. It is a total denial of God. It is secular humanism at its best. It is anti-Christian to the core.

(To be continued next issue)

# The Christian Coalition

It was Friday 29 March 1996, just a week or so after the last issue of Keystone was off the press, that Barbara & I met at the Beehive with the leaders and executive members and other guests of the Christian Heritage Party and the Christian Democrats for the formal launch of the Christian Coalition. May God be praised! Our prayers were answered as these two parties worked very hard to hammer out a coalition agreement that would safeguard each other's commitments to their memberships and yet allow them to contest this next election as a united body.

The two parties do not differ in any substantial way regarding their vision for New Zealand and the kind of society, the standards of public morality, justice, health, education, employment, etc, they would each like to see. But they do have differences in political strategies and priorities. This translates into quite a diversity of talent among the two executives and top political aspirants within each party. It seems they each definitely have a fair amount to contribute to this

new coalition party, and are quite confident of reaching that 5% threshold in the party vote which would give them 6 seats in Parliament.

So how do these parties regard home schooling? The CDs have said they endorse the principle of home schooling and believe not only that parents should have the right but also receive adequate support. The CHP specifically mentions home schooling in its 1996 policy manifesto as one of the options parents may use in the pursuit of their responsibility to educate their own children. Both seem to favour a voucher system to enhance parents' choice in education.

MMP certainly is going to be different. You get two votes. With one you are encouraged to vote for the *person* you reckon will do the best at representing you and your electorate's concerns before Parliament. With your other vote you are encouraged to vote for the *party* whose policies you favour most. All Christians should seriously consider voting for the Christian Coalition Party with this vote, for if they get 5% or more of the total, there will be at least 6 Christian MPs, voted in because they are Christians, who can unapologetically proclaim God's Word into the Parliamentary process.

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# Strengthening Support Groups



## Incorporation at No Cost!

by Margaret Ussher  
New Plymouth

We, the North Taranaki Home Educators, Inc., were able to become a trust without legal assistance thanks to the willingness of the Manawatu home Educators, Inc., to allow us to use their trust deed document as a basis for ours. Apart from a bit of time and effort, the exercise cost us nothing.

A most useful series of papers in setting up a charitable trust can be obtained from your local LINK Centre. (If your town doesn't have one, ask the local Community Development Officer or write to the Dept. of Internal Affairs for their free brochures describing how to become an incorporated society or charitable trust.--Ed.) The documents we got were titled:

1. Descriptions of Legal Structures
2. Comparing an Incorporated Society and an Incorporated Charitable Trust
3. Charitable Status

This third paper outlines the THIRTEEN steps involved in setting up a trust and also includes sample letters which we found invaluable.

Now that we as a group are registered as a charitable trust, we intend applying for various grants, the

money from which will be used to finance our home school resource library, a worthwhile enterprise.

(The Manawatu Home Educators advise that if any other group would like a copy of their trust deed document, just send a self-addressed stamped envelope plus two 40cent stamps to:

Manawatu Home Educators  
c/- Barbara Smith  
4 Tawa St.  
Palmerston North

**FAMILY MATH**

John Kerr, Kenneth Virginia Thompson and Ruth Carter  
Illustrated by Martin Hill

The **FAMILY MATH** book is about: parents and children working together, learning to like mathematics, doing activities that make maths fun for children from 5 to 18 years old.

It has important mathematics topics: word problems, logical reasoning, measurement, geometry, spatial thinking, probability, statistics, calculators, estimation, arithmetic and others.

The **FAMILY MATH** book advocates a completely hands-on approach to maths education. It has games and activities galore to help make meaningful fun of mathematics. The activities are designed to help children learn how to think about a problem using such strategies as: looking for patterns, drawing a picture, working backwards, working with a partner, eliminating possibilities. Having a supply of strategies allows a choice of ways to start looking at a problem.

The **FAMILY MATH** book is an internationally popular home school resource. "If I could have only one maths resource it would be the **Family Math** book." *Claire Aumonier-Founder New Zealand Homeschooling Association*

**Price: \$53.80 includes p/p**



To order the Family Math Book or for information about:

- \*Parent maths courses,
- \*our activity newsletters,
- \*Family Maths
- \*a catalogue of resources,

contact the:

**Family Maths Charitable Trust**  
P O Box 33 1591  
Takapuna  
NORTH SHORE CITY  
Phone: 09 445 8312  
Fax: 09 445 8312

## Correspondence with Politicians & Educationalists



Delwyn McAlister of Tokoroa wrote to the new Minister of Education to ask him what he thought of home schoolers. His reply, dated 1 April '96:

*Thank you for your recent letter asking for my views on home schooling. I do not foresee any major changes to the current Government policy on home schooling. Government remains committed to providing parents with as much choice as possible for the education of their children. This involves the opportunity to home school their children provided that the Ministry is satisfied that the children will be taught "at least as regularly and well as in a registered school".*

*The details of the actual home schooling programme are a matter for the parents to decide. While it is not compulsory, the national curriculum (as embodied in the New Zealand Curriculum Framework and its associated national curriculum statements) is sound and balanced and has, I believe, relevance for all New Zealanders. I would unhesitatingly recommend it to home schoolers, who may find it useful in developing their own programmes. Thank you for writing to me on this matter.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Wyatt Creech  
Minister of Education*

Nothing new here. Ian Brown of the Canterbury Home Educators wrote to the NZ Qualifications Authority, the people who define what constitutes everything from a Sixth Form Certificate to a degree in medicine to a trade certificate in plumbing, to ask how home schoolers could work their programmes so as to gain credit with the Authority. Their reply certainly gives us something to think about. Bear in mind that universities and polytechs have already said they are agreeable to accepting home schoolers with no qualifications whatsoever as long as they can show some representative work that would show them the student could handle the course. This reply is dated 27 March 1996.

*The Qualifications Framework has three facets which need to be understood in relation to your enquiry.*

*The first of these is national standards. For each school "subject" there will, by 1998, be registered a set of standards for assessment. Learners will need to achieve these standards in order to be given credit towards national qualifications. Assessment against the standards will be by the teacher (or a professional colleague), and not by external tests or examinations. The Authority is currently conducting a training programme for secondary school teachers in standards-based assessment.*

*The second aspect is accreditation. To ensure that providers of education and training have the capacity to deliver teaching programmes that enable learners to achieve the standards, they must be accredited by the Qualifications Authority or one of its agents. Private providers must, in addition, be registered with the Authority prior to accreditation.*

*The third aspect is moderation. All assessments are subject to external scrutiny by a moderator acceptable to the standards-setting body. Moderation may be local (through teacher groups), or national. In some subjects, an external moderator who is a subject and assessment expert may be required.*

*Potential problems for home educators occur in all three areas. Teachers in the home will need to be familiar with school-level Framework standards and qualifications, and will need to train in standards-based assessment methods. Home schools will need to be registered and accredited. Assessments in the home will be subject to moderation, either locally or nationally. All of these processes incur a cost which is reasonable in the case of a large institution but may be seen as onerous in the context of home education. This has to be balanced against the need for national comparability and consistency in the award of qualifications.*

*There is an obvious need for further consultation on this matter, and I should like to schedule a meeting between representatives of the home education movement and appropriate officials from the Authority. If this could be arranged with your assistance, I should be most grateful.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Alan Barker, Coordinator  
Policy, Research and Ministerial Support  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority*

(From Page 1)

diligently to your sons..." Dad, your relationship with God is the key to spiritual headship in your home. It is essential if you are to do what Paul says in Ephesians 5:27 is your responsibility to your wife: "Present her without spot or wrinkle; holy and blameless".

And so I want to ask you: how is your walk with the Lord? Is it lively? Is it vital? Or has it become dry and rather arid? How's your prayer life? Do you love to read and meditate upon God's Word day and night, knowing that from it flows the river of life? Or are you living on past spiritual fuel? My dear friend, you will not be able to be an effective head of your home if you yourself are not living in a close and vital relationship with God!

But then, having developed that vital walk with God, you are then in a position to pass it on to your children. Perhaps one of the most critical aspects of training our children is being a godly example to them. There will be many times when they will forget your words...they may even forget what you have done for them...but one thing they will never forget is your example!

When they see a father whose heart is on fire for the Lord, a dad who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and all his mind, and with all his strength, that will be indelibly written on that child's mind forever!

That is why, is it not, that Deuteronomy 6 goes on to discuss the type of training in the faith we ought to give our children. Moses says: "You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up..." In other words, the type of spiritual training we give them is not to be merely dry academic lessons, pat answers to theological questions. It is to be spiritual training in the context of life itself! As we see the beauty of creation, then is the time to teach about the God it speaks of; as you read this book or that, then is the time to teach them to evaluate it by the standards God has given us; as you listen to that piece of music or look at a piece of art or watch a film...then will be the time to apply one's faith! That is what it means, is it not, to teach the commands of God as you walk and talk, sit and lie down?

That's what excites me so much about home

schooling: it allows one to interact with your children "as you walk in the way", instead of spiritual instruction being something done in a classroom at a set hour in a dry academic way. Every moment of every day ought to be a communication of your spiritual walk with God. But, oh, what a responsibility that brings to us to ensure that we are indeed "walking humbly with our God", doesn't it? And so Paul says in Ephesians 6:4, "Fathers...bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord". Friends, are you doing that? Fathers, are you setting a godly example to your children? Are you integrating your spiritual instruction with every part of life or have you fallen prey to mechanical teaching of the faith? Dad's role must, first and foremost, focus on giving leadership in FAITH!

## 2.) Academic Development

Spiritual growth and development goes hand in hand with growing academically, the more that one gets to know God, the more interested one will become in the things He has made and the knowledge He has of all things. King Solomon says in Proverbs 1:7, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge", and then he goes on, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching". In other words, there is a duty given to both parents, but first and foremost to Dads, to instruct one's children. (And there is a duty for one's children to heed that instruction.) And the Proverbs continue verse after verse: 15:14--"The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on folly." 18:15--"The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge." 22:12--"The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge." 22:17--"Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your mind to my knowledge." 24:5--"A wise man is strong, and a man of knowledge increases power."

And so on! The point is that the Bible places a great deal of emphasis on acquiring knowledge and understanding. And it is Dad, once again, who is to take the initiative in this area. Curriculum considerations are not simply something that mum (in the home school environment) or the teacher (in the classroom environment) should be concerned with. Curriculum ought to be of key importance to dads!

As fathers we ought to be concerned that our children are growing and developing, not just

# Action Station



- 1) Read about proposed hui and discussions regarding the MOE's new requirement for annual reports under Tough Questions, page 20. Write to CHomeS if you need to.
- 2) Do the puzzle on page 8 and send in your answers. These are easy!
- 3) If your support group would like to think about incorporating, read page 29 and write to Manawatu Home Educators if you need to.
- 4) Write IMMEDIATELY to the PM (Jim Bolger), the Minister of Education (Wyatt Creech) and your local MP (each c/o Parliament Buildings, Wellington, no stamp required) asking them to vote down the proposed amendment to require even teachers in private schools to be registered. (See Editorial).

spiritually, but also academically. As fathers we ought to be stimulating the family: to read widely, to watch or listen to the news, to take an interest in current events. We should be encouraging our children to get a substantial grasp on history, after all, there is nothing new under the sun, is there? You see, it is the duty of every single Dad to ensure that their children are growing and developing in every single area of academic pursuit.

And I have to say I am frequently distressed at how shallow many Christians are. We settle for second best too quickly, we don't apply our brains, we don't push our children to learn all that they could, we waste our time on trivia. All this instead of taking the view that this is God's world and it is our responsibility to try and give our children a good grasp of everything we possibly can.

And so I want to test you tonight. Dads, do you know what subjects each of your children are being instructed in? Can you name some of the books each of your children have read in the last two months? What action have you taken to help correct weak areas in your child's development? Have you given sufficient thought to each of your children's academic growth? I want to put

it to you that these basic questions are part of the dad's role in the home and home school, giving leadership in academic development!

## 3.) Material Provision

Maybe I will be accused of being old-fashioned to see one of the responsibilities of fatherhood as being the provider. But I believe the Scriptures speak of this! I'm not suggesting that it is wrong for a mother to be involved in work that brings money or food into the home, surely the picture in Proverbs 31 dispels that notion. But it is very interesting that when you read the pastoral epistles, Paul gives Timothy and Titus the qualifications of those who may be appointed as overseers in the church. I'm not going to read those all out...you can do it at home, if you wish to, but a re-occurring thought is that the overseer must be able to "manage" his own household well, otherwise how will he be able to manage the household of God. And the idea behind that word "manage" is that of being a steward. And what does a steward do? Well, he must ensure that there are provisions for the whole family; he must make sure that there is ample food, shelter, and clothing; he must distribute his attention to all in the household, and not neglect the needs of anyone. In fact, he must be sensitive to their needs.

And Paul is arguing in Timothy and Titus, if he can't do that with his own household, where there are only a few people who are constantly living with him, how in the world will he be able to do it in God's household where he must feed the people of God on God's Word?! And so I Timothy 5:8 concludes, "If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

You know it is very easy for us men to become selfish, isn't it? You know, isn't it easier for us to find money to spend on our hobbies and pleasures, than for a pair of shoes for one of the children? Isn't it easy for us to ask our wives to cut back on the housekeeping, while we find money to spend on our computers or other interests? Of course, we always have good reasons for it, don't we?! And yet, isn't that precisely what Paul is addressing? As fathers we are to take an interest in the welfare of all aspects of our households, yes, even material provisions.