

# Keystone

The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers of Australasia

Vol. II No. 5

September/October 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**

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## In Praise of Age

Rev. Brian M. Abshire

In I Kings 12, Rehoboam, king of Israel, had a wonderful opportunity. The reign of his father, Solomon, had been the golden age of Israel. After Solomon's death, Rehoboam was handed a religiously and politically united nation, with a sound economy, well-armed military, and no external enemies. But Rehoboam refused to listen to his aged counselors. Instead he collected around him a bunch of young punks. He dismissed the counsel of the aged and listened to the advice of his foolish, irresponsible friends. Instead of building on the foundation of his father, he bulldozed it. The nation split and was never reunited.

In our age-conscious society we have also developed a prejudice against the past and the wisdom of the old. New information, new technology, new powers over the universe (and a blip in the statistical curve caused by the "Baby Boomers") have caused Americans to focus on youth and youth-oriented activities. We ridicule those whose wisdom and education come from an earlier age. In the sixties the cry was, "Don't trust anyone over thirty." In the nineties it might be, "Don't trust anyone who can't configure their own autoexec.bat!" In the past 100 years, scientists, social planners, and technologists promised a brave new world where human problems would be solved, justice and freedom reign and everyone given the good life.

In the final years before the third millennium after the Incarnation, that hope is no longer real. The love children of the sixties have now grown up, and it is evident that we didn't know what we were talking about. We have learned, painfully,  
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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

I am aware that to some readers this issue will be over-the-top regarding political content. Well, perhaps it does seem a bit thick on some pages. But NZ has its Parliamentary elections on 12 October, its first ever under the MMP system where everyone has two votes, and the Christian Coalition seems certain of gaining the needed 5% of the party votes which will mean at least 6 Christian MPs in Parliament who will be expected to bring the Scriptures to bear on the issues. We are told in Romans 13 to obey the rulers. In that time, under the Roman Empire, obedience simply meant doing what you were told. Today in our representative democracies, obedience means participation in the political process. As Christian Home Schoolers we MUST become and remain politically literate and aware and active if we want to retain the legal ability to execute our responsibilities toward our children by teaching them ourselves, using the curriculum we believe is right, the type of discipline we believe is right, according to our own religious, cultural, moral and philosophical convictions. Read the Special Article at the centre fold.

This issue has the last installment of Ray Ballman's "How and Why of Homeschooling". Next issue we are starting "Christian Courtship vs. The Dating Game" by Pastor Jim West, published by Christian Worldview Ministries of Palo Cedro, California. You will LOVE it, you will HATE it, you will read every line again and again, it is so dynamic! Last issue I promised Part 3 of a Resource Review on material by Lisa McInnes-Smith. That will also be in the next issue. Many have asked about the Wall Charts of World History Timelines. These are still out of print, although the publisher has them listed in the current catalogue. Don't worry, I'll keep reminding him and will let you know when they are in.

NZ children currently being educated are part of one big experiment. The NZ Qualifications Trust is changing absolutely everything, and currently it resembles a dog's breakfast. Secular lifetime professional educators within the system have told me this. School Cert, UE, Bursary are all becoming meaningless or non-existent. Christian Educators are providing an alternative. Read about the Christian Qualifications Trust on page 18, and respond as necessary by 15 November 1996.

# Letters



## Transition

There will always be a transition time after a child has been taken out of school to begin homeschooling.

It is very important to explain to them why you and your husband believe that home schooling is the best for your family, that the decision has been made and that the decision is not negotiable—a bit like when you sell a house and buy another—the possibilities of going back are zero.

Because attitudes can greatly affect everything that you do it is also important to explain to your child that some words are inappropriate e.g. "I want to go back to school". As you have already explained that there is no returning to "Egypt" (check out your Bible) you must not allow these words. To speak them your child is displaying acts of disobedience and disrespect. Remember too that other siblings will be affected if you allow these or similar words to be spoken.

I liken this to eating dinner together. The toddler loads up his spoon and is about to eat when he hears "Yuk!" At this point he will look at whoever is speaking and will usually reject what he was about to eat.

The Bible says that we are to love, and train up our children; not to entertain them because they say they are bored or always make things fun for them. Sometimes they just have to learn to be content.

You may also notice that it can take a bit of time for a child to play, create or explore on their own initiative. Have a list of things that your child can do whenever they have finished their work and do not need to ask first. Then make another list for those activities that need your permission. Remember work before play.

Linda Procter  
Palmerston North, NZ

## To Anonymous,

Our now 10-year-old son has been at home for just over two years. He had been at school for 3 1/2 years. We had discussed doing home

schooling for one year before doing it. The day came and home he came (along with his 5 1/2-year-old sister). I think it was the lonliest day for me as all he wanted to do was go to school. We had tears and real sadness at having to stay home. It was made worse because as parents we were not doing the "normal" thing.

To overcome we literally carried on. I did not have support except from other home school parents and one especially with whom I was in constant telephone contact! My husband was supportive and we just had to go through that time. Today he does not want to go back to school, and he is a totally different person today through that perseverance. We knew that home schooling was for us—many a day I did not think it was! We start each day with prayer, and when the Lord is in the midst of all we do, He is our Rock to lean on. So I want to encourage you that it does get better. I found it took a while to get used to the new lifestyle. It is a whole new dimension to family life, but a really exciting time. I home school three children now, a 10, 8 and 6-year-old. Each day has its challenges, but each day is also a huge blessing, the rewards of which will not be seen until many years have passed. It is the line upon line, precept upon precept, that we undertake on a daily basis.

Liz Benson  
Napier, NZ

### Earnestly Contend

While there is a common bond amongst those of us who educate our children at home, we must be ever mindful that true unity cannot be achieved by the acceptance of other doctrines

and beliefs that are contrary to Scripture. True unity was evident in the early church when the believers were of "one accord" in one place. These are the people who "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Although this is indeed something to aim for, we must avoid being "unequally yoked together." The ecumenical movement promoted unity at all costs and turns a blind eye to the beliefs of those who are involved in cults. It is my belief that we must warn people because we are fast approaching the day when people "will not endure sound doctrine" and "if it were possible the very elect will be deceived." We must "earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints" and expose the "hidden things of darkness". We encourage everyone everywhere to "hold fast the form of sound words" and live in obedience to God's precious Word.

Delwyn McAlister  
Tokoroa, NZ

### Use Gambling Money?

Greetings in the Lord. This is just to thank you for all your time, money and effort in trying to organize the hui, sending newsletters, etc., and to voice a couple of concerns.

We suddenly realised, after getting your second lot of mail (re the hui, etc.) that you organizers had hoped to use gambling (lottery trust) money to help sponsor the hui. Surely, as Christians, we don't have to go begging to the world for financial help, especially when it is from the proceeds of sin? Our God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and I know we often all fall short

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on faith, but won't He supply all our needs from His own resources, as He has promised? "But my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:19)

Again, in the last lot of stuff you sent, and in another home school newsletter we received, the Caltex Dollars for Scholars scheme was mentioned as a thing that we should all be chasing up. But again, this is just gambling in fancy dress. It says that the "lucky" customer's name will go into a "draw" for the \$50,000 prize. This is just another game of chance, another "get rich quick" scheme, another instance where someone is loosing out. There is no such thing as "free" money. It has to be taken from somewhere else, more correctly, from someone else, to be available for the "lucky" person/school. Surely this is the very kind of life style that as Christians we are trying to avoid.

God says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread..." (Gen 3:19) and "Six days shalt thou labour..." (Ex 20:9). If we use games of chance and gambling money to support our schooling endeavours, aren't we teaching our children by example that the world's methods of "fund raising" and "getting rich quick" are pleasing to God? Aren't we undermining all we are trying to teach? And what message are we telling watching unbelievers and those who loose out on the prize? Aren't we the same as the Roman soldiers sitting under the cross, throwing dice as to who was going to get a "free" garment, while a living Saviour suffered and bled above them? Let us lift up our eyes and "look unto Him" hanging on that cross. Why was He there? Oh, how quickly we forget and drift into the world's ways.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" (See 2 Cor 6:14-18)

Well, this is not meant as criticism, we just felt we must share these concerns with you. The basic idea of the hui was good and certainly down here in Otago, it was good to get together with others and talk over these issues as a Christian group. We pray the Lord will give us all wisdom to do the right thing in regard to writing reports and dealing with the Ministry.

Thank you again, Craig, for your efforts.  
By His grace alone,

Bruce & Maureen Duthie  
Waihola, NZ

## Doing the Job Properly

Homeschooling is not as restricted as you make it sound in your article. In fact there is a positive response from a lot of Australian authorities. In Queensland the Government is quite happy for people to homeschool -- "even outside the Act", we just wish they would bring us under the Act. In their words, why chase people who are doing the job properly "outside the Act" when lots who send their kids to school do a terrible job for all sorts of reasons.

Frank Haegler  
Rosedale South, Qld.

## Puzzle



Congratulations to Fale'ola Tongilava of Howick in Auckland for winning the draw among those who sent in the correct answers for last issue's puzzles. Fale'ola receives a book on painting. The answers were:

1. The letters above the line are composed of straight lines, those below have curves.
2. All 12 months have 28 days.
3. Plurals: alibi-alibis, genus-genera, mosquito-mosquitoes, reindeer-reindeer, index-indexes or indices, criterion-criteria, man-of-war - men-of-war, datum-data, Mary-Marys, axis-axes, ox-oxen, talisman-talismans.

This next puzzle is more like a general knowledge quiz. Work on these together as a family.

1. In addition to venison, what major product from deer is exported?
2. What is the name of the method of killing livestock for Moslim markets?
3. What breed of cow is also a type of sweater?
4. Who was the missionary, a resident of Australia, who introduced the horse into New Zealand?
5. Who made the first successful flight across the Tasman Sea in 1928?

[All those under 16 who send in the correct answers to all five questions will go into a draw to be held on November 2. The one drawn will receive a Backyard Scientist Super Crystals Science Experiment Kit (for ages 4-12, non-toxic and environmentally safe). Send name, address, age and answers to CHomeS, 4 Tawa St., Palmerston North, NZ.]

a certain subject, like chemistry for instance. At that point, she hopes she will be able to enroll them in a public school chemistry class. Daniel stopped attending public school after first grade. "I kind of miss seeing all my friends at school everyday, but besides that I like homeschooling a lot better," he says.

As the trend to homeschool accelerates, however, educators and others are raising concerns about it. "It's not that we as educators are saying that homeschooling cannot deliver the intellectual content," says Deborah Appelman, associate professor of educational studies at Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. "The job of a young person is to go from person to person, from classroom to classroom, and make sense of the divergences they seek, and when you keep someone at home they're not really able to do that. Another thing is the importance of peer relations," she adds. (Only a state-trained educator could make statements of such an irrelevant, inconsequential and incomprehensible nature.--Ed.) "As you move from late childhood to early adolescence the single most important developmental factor in a young person's life is their peers...I think the school day is the core, the centre of a young person's life -- it's the physical act of being in school...I don't think that extra-curricular activities take the place or can offset the daily isolation," Ms Appelman says.

But Maeve Visser Knoth, a children's librarian at the Cambridge Public Library in Cambridge, Mass., who works with homeschooling children, sees it differently. "I haven't seen any problems with them in terms of socialization. I see very outspoken kids who are sometimes very far ahead of their peers."

"Homeschooling encourages people to speak their mind," says John Keller, a senior at Carleton College who was taught by both parents at home between the 8th and 12th grades. Mr Keller's sister, who is 13, is the only one of his family's six children to be homeschooled from scratch and now tests in the upper percentiles in all subjects, he says.

Keller explains that he had to be creative in applying to college because he was never graded. His father wrote up a transcript on what he'd completed in each subject. His biggest concern about entering college as a freshman was wondering if he'd have a hard time taking notes, but after the initial settling-in phase, he says he's adapted.

# Home Schoolers Did It



## The Vaatstra Family

by Lisa Vaatstra  
Silverstream, NZ

We started home schooling our children six years ago. What began as a response to a growing disenchantment with the direction of the Christian schools in Australia has become a means of joy and blessing for our family. God has blessed and upheld us and we have experienced the promise that if we are called to a task, God will equip us to do it to His glory.

Having four robust sons, one of whom was just starting secondary school, we had to be absolutely convicted and prepared to take up the primary responsibility for educating our children.

Study of the Scriptures, prayer and encouragement from other families were essential as preparation. There are a few very supportive and helpful home schooling "ministries" in Australia. These provide advice, fellowship with like-minded families, resources and curricula.

Sadly, we endured opposition from family and our brethren in the church but rather than discouraging us, it served to make us determined and taught us perseverance. It also challenged us to ensure that we had Biblical reasons for everything we held to and practiced. We are very thankful to those folk because they helped to refine us.

By the time we left our home congregation to come to New Zealand in January this year, most of those who had opposed us were reconciled to us and some even became supporters, having been won over by the obvious benefits and the good "fruit" which became evident in our family. Our pastor prayed regularly for the task our family had undertaken, thus dispelling the notion that home schooling was outside mainstream Christian activity.

Rather than using a prepared curriculum, we have chosen materials and texts from a variety of publishers to suit the strengths and weaknesses of each child and the circumstances of our family. We also use some Australian materials and have written our own history curriculum. When we took our sons out of school we discovered that

they had been taught very little in certain areas but that their own interest had carried them far in other areas. We were able to correct this and also encourage them to pursue areas of interest since they had more time at their disposal than when they were at school.

This was the first great discovery of home study: good work habits brought the reward of more time for other interests. The boys are avid musicians, so could study to a standard which resulted in the winning of prizes and scholarships. They also compose their own works some of which have won prizes and have been performed in public. Before long they were commissioned to write a piece for a dance troupe. While they were at school they could barely read a note!

Currently our second eldest son, Bernard (16), plays viola in the Wellington Youth Orchestra and the two younger boys, Alexander (12) and William (10), play violin in the Gallery Orchestra. They have all had choir training and Bernard and Justin (18), our eldest, toured New Zealand with the Geelong Children's Choir (before we moved here). Justin and Bernard also teach piano to help pay for their own lessons.

Art, likewise, had never previously been a particular ability but good instruction from an artist who is a family friend and the time to pursue techniques have enabled our sons to develop this area and become quite talented.

Our sons love to read and a great deal of time is profitably employed in "self education". Great classics, reference works, history, biographies, even theological works are voraciously devoured by reading appetites that have been directed and trained -- a telling contrast to school library selections which often don't rise above Roald Dahl and Asterix.

Sporting prowess is also much coveted by our boys. They have played tennis, table tennis, basketball and athletics. They were invited to continue playing in the Christian school teams after they left the school, which they appreciated very much.

Their father, Hans, has always been a very significant figure in the boys' lives -- as a strong role model and companion, and a positive influence in molding their character. He oversees the older boys' work, directs their studies and organises their external exams.

Justin, who plans to start a law degree next year,

has been studying this year for the SAT exams. These tests are taken by students in the US for admission to university, but are being increasingly accepted by universities around the world. Melbourne University, for example, prefers students to have taken the SATs. They are available in NZ and are taken in two parts -- the Scholastic Aptitude Test which measures a student's ability to study at the tertiary level, and the Standard Achievement Tests which can be taken in various subjects nominated by the student.

A returning theme of criticism was that our sons were being treated like "hothouse plants" and were overprotected -- implying that this would cause them to turn out "unbalanced". This we took as a challenge to prove the critics wrong.

Last year we purchased a "renovator's nightmare" -- a house so bad that it was shunned by the local building fraternity. We set about restoring it. Nearly all the work was carried out by our sons. With help from friends and neighbours they learned how to plan, design, recycle materials, strip and prepare surfaces, paint, build, glaze windows, hang doors, plaster walls, do plumbing and tiling. They learned a sound work ethic and satisfaction in genuine endeavour. No school situation could ever duplicate those "lessons". An added benefit was that Hans, who previously had few building skills, learned alongside the boys.

Their work so impressed observers that the boys were offered a job to build a deck. They did all the planning, purchasing of materials and all work and duly completed the job without assistance from any professional. Their client gave them a substantial bonus on top of the agreed price!

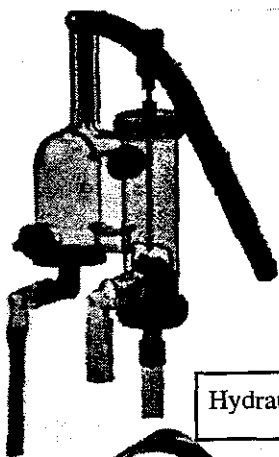
Another great benefit that has come our family's way is that of part-time work for the older boys. Since they were not hampered by school hours or homework they had an advantage which was most attractive to employers. They have therefore been able to acquire experience -- that most elusive of prerequisites for employment.

For all our family home schooling is a wonderfully enriching, blessed way of life. It has strengthened our commitment as parents and caused us to rely on God and His Word for instruction in that most important task: raising holy children equipped for service in the kingdom of God.

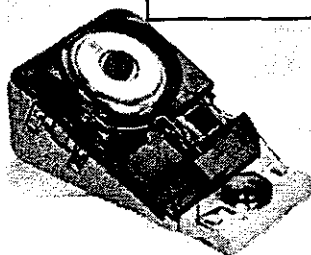
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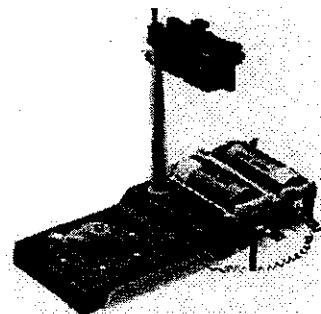


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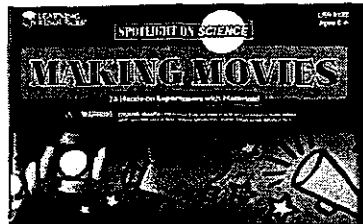
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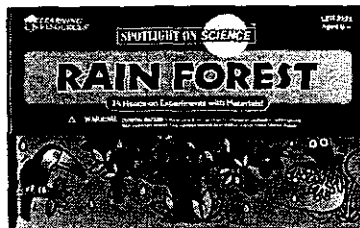
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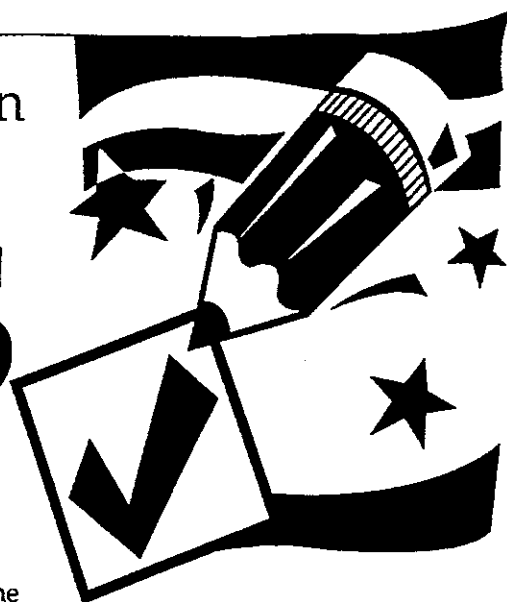
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# Why Christians should be involved in Politics



## Introduction

**W**e are on the verge of an enormous change in the political arena in Aotearoa, New Zealand. The advent of MMP offers great opportunities, challenges and risks for our nation. The full implications of this far-reaching political event and the effect that it has on our nation cannot yet be fully seen. The opportunity raises basic questions for serious Christians. Why vote? How do I vote? What about the party vote? What about Christian candidates within current political parties? Is there a place for a Christian political party?

This paper has been facilitated by VISION New Zealand<sup>1</sup> and Evangelical Fellowship of New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> It does not purport to give all the answers. Neither is it an attempt to endorse any political party or parties. We are indebted to a core group of people<sup>3</sup> who did all the initial work and to the signatories below for being prepared to endorse this document.

We offer it with the prayer that it will cause Christians throughout our nation to be more aware of the issues involved and therefore able to participate in this process with a clearer understanding of what is at stake.

## Why Christians should be involved in Politics



### 1. Because God is involved there

God the Father instituted and oversees the political realm as much as every other part of the creation.

We can be involved in the political issues of our day because we share in the life of the one who is a God of right order and who seeks justice

among humans.<sup>4</sup>

God the Son, during his life on earth, did not hesitate to challenge the national leaders of his day. His running battle with the oppressive views of the Pharisees and Sadducees are well known.

God the Spirit is at work convicting the world of sin and righteousness and judgement.<sup>5</sup> God delegates to human government the authority to approve what is good, and to judge what is wrong. When God's Spirit leads us we will do what God is doing in the world – caring about right, wrong and justice in society. That involves the political area and sensitively co-operating in the Spirit's ongoing task.

As Christians we know that all power belongs ultimately to God. Our understanding of God determines our understanding of government. Our God is the God of power and the God of order. These two facts undergird the Christian understanding of government, and are at the base of our obligation to be politically involved.



### 2. Because Jesus commanded it

Jesus was often surrounded by active members of the political parties of his day.

An example of this is found in Mark 12:13-17. The Pharisees who disliked the Romans, on this occasion joined forces with some Herodians – collaborators who depended on the Roman presence to keep Herod in power. The Scribes and Chief Priests who controlled the political power under their Roman rulers were also behind this interrogation of Jesus. So

Jesus faced a strange coalition of normally antagonistic political groups. They expected to catch him out with their crafty question "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to the emperor or not?" Whichever way he answered they could either accuse Jesus to the Roman powers as a rebel, or condemn him before the people as a traitor to the Jewish nation. Jesus recognised their trap and showed up their hypocrisy. Jesus' answer was unanswerable – *Give back to the Emperor what rightly belongs to him AND give to God what rightly belongs to Him.* This reply sets out the basic principle which covers all such questions about our duty to the government.

Jesus showed that the Christian has a duty *both* to government *and* to God. We are to pay taxes to the government. At the same time we are to honour God as our true King. Political responsibility and our duty to God are not two distinct areas of duty to keep separate from each other. Rather, for Jesus, obeying God and fulfilling political responsibilities are two inter-related duties which we

This document has been created by Dr John Hitchen, National Principal, Bible College of N Z; Bruce Logan, Director, N Z Education Development Foundation; Rev Brian Smith, Principal, Carey Baptist College; Rev Dr Bob Robinson, Dean of Studies, Christchurch Branch, B C N Z; Pastor Rex Meehan, Thorndon Apostolic Church, Wellington; Rev Gordon Miller, Church Relations Manager, World Vision N Z and, Brian Hathaway, Te Atatu Bible Chapel.

must always hold together. It is not either/or but both/and. We are to fulfil our obligations to the government and at the same time we are to continue to obey God. Jesus requires us to judge clearly in each situation what is our duty towards the State and our duty towards God. We must give to each what rightly belongs to each.

This teaching of Jesus shows us that we should –

- discern clearly what is our duty to God and what is our duty to the government in each practical situation we face.
- make responsible decisions about where the government's rights begin and end, and about what obeying God means in each particular setting.
- give back to each what is their proper claim. To God what belongs to God and to the government what is its due.
- remind the government of the limits of its power and refuse to go beyond those limits. Like the prophets of old, we are to remind the government its powers are not totalitarian.

Translating these principles into today's political situation not only means we should pay our taxes but that we should vote responsibly at elections. Not to exercise this duty will, for Christians, be as irresponsible as refusing to pay taxes.

In New Zealand today, the whole political process depends on citizens accepting their democratic responsibilities. Each citizen shares the duty to ensure good government. Christ's command requires us to fulfil that duty. This means being active in the whole political process. Creating and supporting political parties are fundamental duties of the citizens in our system of politics. This also brings an obligation on Christians who want to obey Christ's command to fulfil our governmental responsi-

bility. We have a Christian duty to ensure the right kind of parties and potential members of parliament are contesting the elections. MMP brings both a new opportunity and a new responsibility. In a fresh way each citizen has the duty to determine the mix and composition of parliament. We need to grasp this significant new political duty with both hands.



### 3. Because we share a common humanity

Christians should be involved in politics primarily because we share common human responsibilities along with all our fellow citizens. Christians should not be in politics because we want to have power over others, but because we want to serve others as responsible citizens. Our Christian faith should heighten and confirm these duties, but they do not make our duties radically different. Joseph was such a political leader, empowered by God and made responsible for the welfare of nations.

Good government, and valid political and societal concerns, all ultimately come from God. But God gives gifts without partiality. Christians do not have a monopoly on political common-sense. Other people also have sound moral judgement. Many well-meaning people are involved politically because they have valid insights into the needs of our community. Many accept that the ten commandments (or at least the latter seven commandments) and the social teachings of Christ include common-sense values that are of fundamental importance for the well-being of society. Christians in politics will be quick to recognise and acknowledge the validity and insights of others, and to work with them for the common good. The effect of generations of Christian instruction in the West has not lost its influence amongst serious-minded people, regardless of their religious commitments today.

One function of Christians in politics will be to bridge the differences between different sections of the community. While there are issues against which we must take a stand, being merely combative will ensure Christians are marginalised in the political arena. We need to become known for what we are for rather than for what we are against. Several key New Testament passages dealing with societal and political involvement stress *peacemaking* rather than an aggressive approach for followers of the Prince of Peace. The *salt and light* passage immediately follows blessings upon the meek, the merciful and those who make peace.<sup>6</sup> The commands to submit to government authorities are preceded by strong pleas to, *Do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge...*<sup>7</sup> or in Peter's teachings, *...by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people ... live as servants of God. Show proper respect for everyone ...*<sup>8</sup>



### 4. Because basic Christian virtues are appropriate for all society

It is not just that we know God has declared these fundamental principles to be good for people as a whole. We also see a widespread recognition that these values are fitting for our society. Thoughtful people across a wide spectrum of our community, regardless of their religious affiliations or the lack of them, will accept the importance of these basic moral guidelines for society as a whole.

This widespread agreement about basic morals comes from three sources –

- an inborn awareness of right and wrong. Paul observes that even people who have not been given God's law in a direct way, still have a moral awareness, because *what the law requires is written on their hearts*.<sup>9</sup> This basic knowledge of good and evil, or conscience, is integral to human nature.
- the reasonableness of God's moral principles for people. A wide spec-

trum of thinking women and men endorse the Biblical values because they make common sense. Practical human insight, observation of the way societies operate and certainly the lessons of history show that healthy moral standards are good for any society.

- an acceptance of the worth of the ethical teaching of Jesus Christ. Despite the general rejection of the theological and spiritual roots from which Christ's ethics grow, there is still an interest in retaining the fruits of his teaching. *Love your neighbour as yourself; Do unto others as you would have them do to you; Turn the other cheek;* and other popular statements win acclaim in our community.



### 5. Because we seek to uphold the personal rights and responsibilities of all people

We agree with J.N.D. Anderson's dictum that

Christians "must accord to others that liberty of conscience which they claim for themselves."<sup>10</sup>

In calling for the proper community respect for moral standards we will keep people at the centre of our concern. Where minorities are discriminated against, we will, like Christ, take our stand with them against their oppressors.

Our distinctly Christian ethic has taught us that all the parties in social relationships have both rights and responsibilities.<sup>11</sup> In taking our stand on public issues then, we will see our duty both to stand up for the underprivileged and the underdog – and at the same time to call on them to "acknowledge the duty which accompanies every right."<sup>12</sup>



### 6. Because Christians are called to be a prophetic people

The call to be salt and light in our communities implies that we have a prophetic responsibility. The role of Old Testament prophets was, among other things, to influence kings and government. We know that the message we share with our friends and neighbours has the dynamic to transform

both individuals and, through them, communities. Our responsibility then is to be salt and light in all areas of society. Hence our concern is to ensure that humble, discerning and widely respected Christians are elected to parliament so that their presence and words may continue to inform, to challenge and to guide opinion by contributing positively to public moral awareness and good political sense. Daniel and his companions made a deep impact on a foreign government by their godly values. The same can also be seen in the life of Esther.

Such a prophetic role will be seen in the consistent Christian witness by individuals within a business, a school or a political party. It may also be seen in collective activities such as the part a Christian business or Christian school can play within a community or for that matter a Christian party may play among other political parties.

## Towards a Christian political platform

Scripture gives us a view of God, the world and our human significance which we know is true for all women and men. We want to share these views for the common good of our society. Christians should not be in politics just to oppose what they see as the wrong views of others, nor merely to fight for the religious rights of Christians.

We believe the Maker's instructions for human welfare apply universally. God has declared what is best for the creation. We seek to uphold these insights in our political involvement, and can summarise their importance in statements such as these:

- The God we serve is Lord of the whole creation. First and foremost this is God's world. God has not abdicated sovereign rule. We do not

believe the usurper, the Evil One, is the true ruler of the world.

- Women and men are all created in the image of God with the spiritual capacity to know God and the moral capacity to know right from wrong. Though damaged by the fall, this "image of God" has not been obliterated and still constitutes our common nature as humans.

- God has entrusted this planet to humans to be enjoyed and managed for

the good of our fellow creatures, of both this and future generations, and for the glory of God.

- God has structured and ordered our world so that moral principles may be recognised by human conscience even apart from the special revelation of scripture.

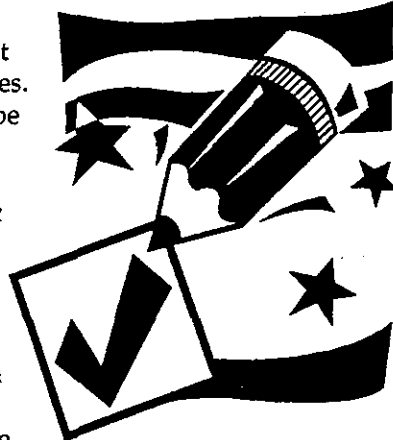
- God sends gifts and mercies upon all humans, whether they acknowledge the Giver

or not. Moreover, God gives and respects their personal right to choose whether or not to respond to him.

- God controls and rules history. God appoints times and seasons politically as well as in nature. Thus we need to come to grips with present realities like the modern pluralistic society. Simply to fight against pluralistic society may be to fight against the ongoing purposes of God. Perhaps God is offering this political and intellectual environment as an opportunity for a new kind of societal experience where he can be discovered and honoured.

- All truth is God's truth, wherever it is found. All valid insights into human life and behaviour are part of the God-given resources we are to utilise for the glory of God and the good of all our fellow human beings.

- All humans carry in their persons the biases, stains and effects of their inherent sinfulness. We are not gullible, nor naive about the lust for power, the self-serving motives and the potential for deceit, corruption and dishonesty in the corridors of power. Thus we recognise the importance of a prophetic upholding of the public virtues and standards of



righteousness in a nation, ever mindful of the need for personal integrity and transparent moral purity on the part of would-be politicians.

• We believe that the following embrace a core of scriptural guidelines for the common life of society:

*Respect for worship and for the public use of God's name*

*Respect for human life*

*Respect for parents and family life*

*Respect for marriage and for sex as an expression of love within marriage*

*Respect for work and for the worthwhile products of human creativity*

*Providing for healthy recreation, leisure and adequate weekly rest*

*Respect for truth in speech and communication*

*Guarding against the social cancers of theft, greed and selfish ambition.*

We do not expect all our fellow citizens to recognise these basic moral responsibilities as part of their Mak-

er's revelation for their welfare. But we believe, nevertheless, the values enshrined in these ordinances are fundamental to wholesome community life. This puts us under obligation to work for the widest possible recognition of these basic values.

## Summary

We, the undersigned, acknowledge that sometimes we have said too little, and that too late, so that we have only ourselves to blame if we are regarded as reactionary traditionalists rather than astute moral leaders.

We believe that the coming MMP environment offers a uniquely different opportunity for the Christian principles that have made this nation what it is today, to be heard once again in the corridors of power.

Today New Zealand is in deep moral crisis. This shows itself in a variety of family and other social dysfunctions to which public policy is

unable to respond effectively. We believe that MMP offers opportunity for Christians to contribute coherent and penetrating solutions towards a more effective public policy.

We will pray for our government, and especially support and encourage those who as committed Christians – sense the call of God on their lives to seek parliamentary office, or find themselves elected to parliament.

1. VISION New Zealand (see below).
2. E F N Z (see below).
3. See box on page one.
4. Psalm 146: 7-9.
5. John 16:7-8
6. Matthew 5:1-16
7. Romans 12:14-13:7
8. 1 Peter 2:13-23
9. Rom 2: 14-15
10. J.N.D. Anderson, *Into the World: The Need and Limits of Christian Involvement*, London: Falcon Books, 1968, p48
11. Colossians.3:18-4:1
12. YMCA Y's Men's Clubs motto.

## Signatories

Lindsay Armishaw, Shirley Becroft, Jonathon Boston, Ian Brown, Terry Calkin, Brian Caughley, Sam Chapman, Hamish & Diane Divett, Trevor Donnell, John Evans, Wyn Fountain, John Fulford, Marjory Gibson, Brian Hathaway, John Hitchen, Gideon Hoekendijk, Ian Hooker, David Jenkins, John Komene, Bob Lawson, Peter Lineham, Bruce Logan, John Massam, Tavale Matai-Ēa, Garth McKenzie, Rex Meehan, Anne Morrow, Ray Muller, Graeme Murray, Sue Norton, Bruce Patrick, Rasik Ranchord, Murray Robertson, Bob Robinson, Hudson Salisbury, Andrew Saunders, Brian Smith, Lionel Stewart, Bill Subritzky, Neville Taylor, Stephen Tollestrup, Phil Underwood, John Walton, Ray Windsor, Marilyn Withers, Rob Yule. Several other men and women were invited to become signatories but were unable to being overseas at the time.

## Strategic Leadership Network

Promoting principle-based leadership in our nation

SLN is an independent forum, facilitating research, education and informed action on social, legal and political issues facing our families and communities.

SLN is committed to influencing public policy – by encouraging Christians to be informed and involved, by acting as a resource centre, and by communicating to the leadership of our nation that the Christian perspective needs to be taken seriously.

Director: Lindsay Armishaw  
P O Box 93, Wellington 6015  
Tel: 04 472 0400, Fax: 04 473 6020

Additional copies of this statement are available from Strategic Leadership Network. Call today for bulk orders.

## Evangelical Fellowship of New Zealand

EFNZ seeks to promote united thought and action among churches who share the conviction of the authority of the Bible, and to be a voice and example in the community of the Biblical approach to issues.

National Secretary: Rev John Fulford  
P O Box 27 548, Auckland 1030  
Tel: 09 625 0030, Fax: 09 625 7412

## VISION New Zealand

*Calling the Whole Church to take the Whole Gospel to the Whole Nation and the Whole World.*

The second VISION N Z Congress is planned for January 1997.

Chairman: Rev Bruce Patrick  
429 Queen St, Auckland 1001  
Tel: 09 377 4063, Fax: 09 307 2628

## Christians in Politics: 1996

With contributions by Anderton, Austin, Barth, Bolger, Borrie, Boston, Coles, Irwin, Jennings, Lineham, Moore, Moran, Novak, Stephens, St Imulus, Wright and others.

*Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought & Practice* has just published **Christians in Politics: 1996**. It is a thoughtful, provocative and sometimes humorous consideration of the new political environment in New Zealand. It includes comment from politicians, political commentators and others.

**Christians in Politics: 1996**  
Available @ \$10.00 each from:

Publisher: Douglas MacIachlan  
*Stimulus Journal*  
P O Box 306, Masterton  
Tel: 06 378 9699, Fax: 06 378 9698

we are beyond our ability. We should do the same with our own children.

God's word also tells us in Proverbs 22:6 to "train up a child in the way he should go". As parents of handicapped children, we apply this verse in the physical realm as well as the spiritual realm. Often the abilities our children will have depend on our instructions and demonstration that they can accomplish much more than they think. How do Olympic champions obtain perfection in their sport? Someone has told them that they could reach the highest goal with their own determination. As Christians we need to allow God to work in our children to give them the strength they need.

In conclusion, as parents who are deeply concerned about our handicapped children, their education, and their future, we are challenged to give our children the greatest opportunities to succeed without limiting their goals unnecessarily. We must overcome our trepidation about our child's abilities and encourage them to strive beyond false limits to achieve their goals. We should look toward each other, medical professionals, our children, and our God to provide us with guidance in establishing or releasing limitations on our handicapped children. Most of all, we must not confuse our love of our children with our fear for their safety. Then we will produce competent, confident, and accomplished children.

(Reprinted from NATHHAN NEWS, NATIONAL CHALLENGED Homeschoolers Associated Network, Vol 4, Issue 3, Spring 1996, which is a Christian non-profit organisation dedicated to providing resources and encouragement to families homeschooling special needs children. NATHHAN NEWS, 5383 Alpine Rd. SE, Olalla, WA 98359, USA, has an annual subscription rate of US\$15. Published quarterly.)

## Trading Post Wanted to buy:

(BJUP) Bob Jones Maths text for grade 4 or 5  
Contact: Teresa Dever, 414A Lascelles St.,  
Hastings, NZ, ph. (06) 876-4038

## For Sale:

Bob Jones University Press:  
Reading Worktext Grade 5, \$12.00 (new)  
Reading Textbook Grade 4, \$20.00 (as new)  
Science Textbook Grade 4, \$15.50 (as new)  
Science Textbook Grade 3, \$15.50 (as new)  
(Selling on behalf of NZ missionaries recently returned from Belize, Central America. Write to C & B Smith, 4 Tawa St., Palmerston North, NZ, ph/fax (06) 357-4399.)

# Teaching Tips



## Maths Can Be Fun by Denise Walmsley, Auckland

Wouldn't it be great to have more people say "I really enjoy maths."? Yet, of all the basic subjects, maths is probably the one that worries parents most. Many feel incompetent: things look so complicated and different these days.

So, after choosing a text book or a series of text books you plough through the book, occasionally missing out any pages that look superfluous or more trouble than they are worth; these are usually the practical pages. You hope the child will learn all he needs to know from the text books. And you breathe a little sigh of relief each day when the maths has been "done".

I think the reasons many parents think that maths is hard is because they weren't taught very well themselves; or maybe they have forgotten so much that the textbook they have for their child looks frighteningly complicated.

But there is an alternative. Maths can be fun and interesting. You don't need to be a maths whiz or have all the answers to enjoy maths. If you weren't good at maths or have forgotten much of the school maths that you did learn, don't worry. You can work alongside your children, investigating, co-operating, discussing and arriving at solutions together.

## Allow Time For Lots of Practice

Mathematics development at it's best would follow a similar pattern to language: first there is the practical experience; then you talk about it; then you write about it.

For example, with younger children teaching them to sort and count, you will have had many casual opportunities to classify and count the toy cars; or to match one to one, the place settings to the number of people in the family.

You will be talking to your child about what's going on. You might be commenting on the colours of the cars or talking about how to count the number of people for dinner and then get the same number of place settings.

Then, following the practical experience and the talking with you, the children will be ready to draw and number objects.

This happens in a natural, almost un-noticed way with young children. But the theory follows through as children get older. It is important to keep offering the opportunity to handle maths equipment and discuss with your child what he is discovering before he actually writes about it.

For example, in studying square numbers, a child who has had lots of opportunity to play with pegs in a little peg board will notice that the number of pegs needed to fill in a square nine pegs on each side is 81, for a square of only 5 pegs a side it's 25, and so on. These are the square numbers. Sounds so simple doesn't it? Practical equipment and manipulatives used to teach and practice maths concepts do help to create a strong, firm foundation of understanding. I have found this in my own case as a homeschooling mother and as a teacher in school. Even intermediate and high school aged students will benefit using practical equipment.

As your child experiences maths he will be ready to discuss his findings with you, then recording his results will follow on from there. This might sound time consuming and you'll wonder if you'll ever get through all your maths work but you'll actually be spending a lot less time on book work and your child's understanding of maths will be very clear. So it will be investment time.

### **Choosing a Maths Scheme**

When choosing a maths scheme choose one with a comprehensive teacher's manual. When you understand the background to what the pages are trying to teach it makes so much more sense, and the job of teaching becomes much easier. Often the teacher's manual is bulky and expensive, which is off-putting. But it is money well spent if it gives you the aims and objectives of what is being taught and includes tips for teaching the pages.

Look at the student's work books or text books carefully. A bright, cheerful format with a pleasant layout will attract both you and your child. A good series which takes you right through from Primers to High School offers continuity and helps you to build up on knowledge in an orderly way, and which you like will be an investment.

### **When Things Get Tough**

There might be times when the going gets rough and you'll wonder if you have chosen the wrong

scheme or are incapable of teaching maths. In actual fact it may just be time to put away the maths text for a few weeks or even a term or more. Move onto a new maths topic and come back to that maths topic another time. This happened to me recently with my ten-year-old daughter who was beginning to get very unhappy about her maths text book. We put it away and I said we would leave maths for a while. Meantime I arranged with a grandmother friend from church to come each week to play maths games with my daughter. Then I picked out games which covered the areas my daughter needed practice in. Both my daughter and my older friend are thrilled to have this special time together each Thursday morning. I then searched for other ways to enrich her maths experience.

### **Other Maths Activities**

Any scheme has limitations and to restrict all maths learning merely to a scheme would be to miss out on much worthwhile and enjoyable maths work. So look for ways of supplementing your scheme with other maths activities.

Cooking and shopping are great ways of practising maths skills, as well as opportunities to have fun with your child.

Other activities could include things like computer maths games; maths board games; home made maths games. Times Table cassette tapes help with rote learning; Snap and Dominoes are helpful for younger children; but maybe you and your children can invent variations that will challenge the brightest of children.

Any trip to the supermarket includes dozens of maths activities; older children could do precise mental calculations of how much you have spent as you walk round or calculate which of two brands of a product works out cheaper. And estimating is one of the most common and useful daily maths applications you can develop in your child.

### **Don't Forget To Enjoy Maths**

If you are still feeling unsure about enjoying maths find another homeschooling family who is enjoying maths, ask them for tips and suggestions. They might be able to recommend good books or games or show you some of their own games for you to get ideas from. Pray and ask the Lord to guide you to the right books and friends. Ask Him for a genuine enthusiasm and a

positive attitude to maths. He is gracious and promises to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. (1 Chronicle s 16:9.)

## Making Home Schooling Enjoyable

by Delwyn McAlister, Tokoroa, NZ

Come with me and take a peek into a typical home schooling family's living room at 10:45am on a Tuesday morning. The children have already been sitting up at the table doing their lessons for well over an hour, and they are beginning to get scratchy. Mum's mind is preoccupied in wondering what to prepare for lunch. She is also thinking about the load of washing sitting in the basket that needs hanging out and the aroma in the room indicates that the baby needs changing....again. Master two is clutching her skirt asking for a drink of water while the six-year-old is asking how to spell a word that he should know by now. Who ever said that home schooling was fun?

With having the unique opportunity of interacting with home schooling families throughout New Zealand, and having gleaned information from some of the more senior members of this profession, I feel that I might be in a position to offer a bit of advice that might make home schooling much more enjoyable. Having had a few years of educating my children under my belt, I'll share some examples from our household.

If you have chosen to withdraw your child/children from school or if you have decided to start formal lessons when your little one turns 5 (or 6), the first thing to do is to establish the correct chain of authority in the family.

With Dad as the head of the home and the Mum in submission to him, the couple are then in the correct Biblical order to then train their children to "Obey their parents in all things". If parents haven't trained their children in obedience, home schooling will be very difficult. If a child is used to responding to a teacher or headmaster, he/she needs to be taught that the parents are now in control. Some home schoolers recommend a period of de-schooling instead of taking a child out of school and beginning lessons at home straight away. During this "bonding" time, the parents are able to take their rightful place once again and the child learns to get into a new

routine. It is then advisable to introduce the new way of education slowly so the child can adapt to these changes.

Over and over again I have observed families who withdraw their children out of school, only to set up a mini-school under the roof of their own home. The Mum takes on the role of teacher and they generally try to mimic school. Maureen Tully of *Welcome Home Australia* says that they don't home school -- they home train! Some mothers feel that they are duty bound to tutor their children from 9am - 3pm because they feel obliged to teach their children "as regularly and as well" as a registered school. It would be interesting if someone did a study into a typical day in a classroom in a typical school to evaluate exactly how many hours a day children were actually being taught! One teacher claims that it's only 25% of the school day. There is a lot of "down" time where the children aren't learning anything at all; and when they are learning, what good is it doing them? I remember going into classrooms several times in the last ten years and being repulsed at what the children are being taught. Just glance through some of the books on a shelf in a class room, and that is reason enough to keep our children at home.

There is another theory floating around that says that Christians should excel academically as a witness to the world. I suggest that if a child is naturally graced with above average intelligence, that is fine, but to push a child into achieving things beyond his/her grasp is not right. I am a firm believer that children should learn at their own pace under the supervision of the parents. Children need to be given time to explore and discover during the learning process without striving to aim for higher grades.

A vital ingredient to making home schooling enjoyable is to put God first. We try to have what we call a "Bible time" before we begin the formal lessons each day. Sometimes this is a short prayer and one verse and other times it's taken the whole morning!

It is then important to make the lessons interesting for each child. If your child is bored or unhappy then you might have to look at changing the curriculum/resources that you are using. Some families have put aside the using of a curriculum and make their own unit studies. These are particularly good for unmotivated children because the parent can weave the 3 Rs



around a topic that is of interest to the child. I will give you an example of this later. When a child is learning something that is interesting, then they actually begin to enjoy their lessons and so much more can be achieved.

There are times when it is best to put the books away and do something else. Here are some things that can be done that still can be a form of learning: Go outside and have a game of football together. (The children are doing their P.E., aren't they?) Go for a walk. (Just think of all the home schooling that goes on during a walk: oral language, observation skills, nature study and P.E.) My children enjoy doing art and craft of their own choosing. Over the last two weeks they have had a wonderful time making their own set of cut-out dolls, designing and creating a paper doll's house, cooking playdough and playing with it, cardboard weaving and much more. Numerous skills have been used during these activities and the children have been happy. What more could a mother want?

Yes, we do have a weekly timetable of what we hope to achieve, but if we don't stick rigidly to it, who cares? Sometimes we make our plans but the One Whose ways are "higher than ours" sometimes has other plans, and His are always better.

I am writing this in the middle of the Atlanta Olympic games. Instead of formal lessons we are enjoying the games. During the second part of the opening ceremony, the children had a very enjoyable geography lesson. Prior to the games we studied ancient and modern Greece. We have even incorporated a Bible study with it. The girls are keeping a record of the medals won by New Zealanders. They have had the opportunity to learn more about sports than any text book could offer.

I do believe that home schooling (or home training) can be achieved without miserable children, burnt-out Mum and a bewildered Dad. I cannot offer you a set formula that will easily resolve conflict, but I can direct the readers to the One Who promises "life and life abundantly". The Holy Spirit has been given to us to "lead and guide us into all the truth". Seek the Lord for direction. Don't be persuaded by other home schoolers. We are all different and what suits one family doesn't necessarily suit another. I must admit I don't always have it "all together", and my husband and I still have so

much to learn.

From observation the most contented home schooling children that we've come across are those whose families focus more upon character training. These children flourish in the home school environment and are not lacking intellectually, yet they have received very little of what I call "formal teaching". Their parents have taught them the basics and have equipped them with the skills to acquire knowledge and information. But above these things, the parents of these children have eternal values in view and are ever mindful that we are only strangers and pilgrims passing through.

If each of our children one day hear the words, "Well done thou good and faithful servant", then we will have achieved all that is required of us as parents.

## The Christian Education Qualifications Trust of New Zealand

The CEQTNZ has been established to pioneer the promotion and recognition of standards within independent Christian education in NZ. The pioneering aspect is critical, for merely reactionary alternatives to state and other schemes fail to fully express the Christian faith. In the midst of the present upheavals in education, Christian educators are challenged by a rare opportunity to begin with Biblical principles, and to build a structure that will support schools, pupils and their parents in a distinctively Christian way. CEQTNZ personnel prayerfully hope that the work of the Trust will so demonstrate the vitality and relevance of the Christian faith that it will be a leader in shaping educational standards.

### Examination Based Qualifications for Home Schoolers

When the Trust announced its plans to establish examinations for 6th and 7th form pupils, there was widespread interest expressed from home schooling families. Would the examinations and qualifications be available to home schoolers? Yes! The CEQTNZ plans to make their examinations available to home schooled pupils.

(Continued on page 28)



# Over a Cuppa



## Remember Back THEN?

by Ingrid Turner

Co-ordinator of The Home Educators Network  
(THEN) Inc., Hamilton, NZ

I suspect that along with many other families you have all thought about either having a break from your children, maybe swapping them for other children, (who are always better behaved than your own, because they listen and are instantly obedient!!) but you WOULDN'T have thought of sending them to school.....would you????

Well, maybe for a moment the thought may have crossed your mind!? For those of you who have had children in school, may I remind you of some of the reasons why you took them out; and for those of you who have never had your children at school, may I suggest a few reasons why not to send them.

Sending your children to school means sticking to a rigid time schedule every morning of RUSH, RUSH, RUSH. Lunches to be made, home work books in their bags, P.E. gear/swimming togs in a plastic bag, extra money for this, that and the other thing, (which you need often!)

The clock ticks away relentlessly five mornings a week, toward the dreaded hour of 9am. The same questions are asked every morning....have you got your shoes on? Are they clean? Have you got your jacket on? etc, etc. Quick, it's time to go! When they are gone, you may have some peace, depending on whether or not you have pre-schoolers, but there is no time to rest because the housework and washing is still the same!!

Three pm and you are ready to receive your children home. Only now they are tired, hungry and often grumpy! Once again the routine of RUSH, RUSH, RUSH begins. Only this time there are after school activities; endless amounts of home work that must be done. As well, there is dinner to prepare, children to bath, etc, etc.... Somewhere in amongst all of this, the husband/father comes home and would appreciate some quiet time and a ready meal. (Joke, joke, eh Dad!!) When you have finally got

dishes done, children in bed, etc, there is probably a meeting to go to or thankfully bed to fall into!

I found that the teachers, (who do a great job), had the best part of my children for the best part of the day! I had them when they were sleepy and rushed in the morning and tired and grumpy in the evening! It was my experience for many years, to send "angles" to school in the morning only to be greeted by "rebels" in the afternoon. They became disrespectful and constantly challenged my authority. There was unkindness towards other family members and as school years progressed, peers became a constant source of strife in our home as our children became obsessed with what other children thought of them.

As children get older it no longer becomes "cool" to hold your mother's hand in public, and my older daughter on beginning secondary school, insisted on being dropped off and picked up a block away from the college. I, of course, in my normal conforming fashion, continued to pick her up outside the main school gate where everybody assembled to catch the bus, and suggested that if she wanted a ride home from school it would be a good idea to get in when I arrived!! Then I would toot the horn at her friends and wave to them, as I know many of them personally. You can imagine her reaction...which I naturally ignored!

Peer dependency has a major effect on all children and is a constant battle for the home. I am very thankful that I no longer have "peer dependent" children.

Socialisation (which only ever becomes an issue when you begin to home school!!) is significantly more inhibiting at school than it will ever be at home. At school, your child will be with 30-plus like-minded peers who have the same level of maturity and intelligence as your child. (Is this stimulating?) With home educating, your child has the opportunity to inter-relate with other families of many different ages and abilities, giving them a wide variety of experiences.

Home educating my children has meant being able to promote wholesome family values. It has given us the opportunity to meet each of our children right where they are, challenging them not only in their academic subjects but also in their growth as young people, equipping them for

the years ahead. Isn't it a joy to not only monitor and train but to see the fruits of your labour in your children? Don't you just love the spontaneous hugs and cuddles you get throughout the day? Isn't it nice that your children come to you for advice and answers rather than to someone else that they have developed a relationship and respect for? One of the nicest things I have begun to hear is when my children tell others, "Mum taught me that." That makes me feel valued and I realise what an impact I am making in my children's lives.

So please, don't give up! You have chosen the most rewarding and valued career that was ever invented...that of raising the next generation!

So to all you home school Mums, thank you for sacrificing the hours, days, weeks, months and years of your lives so that your children will have the opportunity to grow into mature, wise, intelligent and loving citizens. Thank you for demonstrating that things of value are not monetary things, but things that can't be bought like respect, obedience, truthfulness, leadership, wisdom, sincerity and other character qualities. Thank you for encouraging other mothers who are struggling, which all of us do from time to time.

Keep up the wonderful work you are doing, and if it gets too much either visit another family for the day or ring someone up for encouragement! Happy home educating!

### The Family Kitty Could Be a Killer

(With home schooling families so close and together so much, including the kitty-cat, we need to know of the very real dangers, especially to our unborn children. I have had this disease, toxoplasmosis, from a wee scratch on my hand from our beloved jet-black boneless cat. I felt tired and headachy for weeks and the lymph node under my arm swelled to the size of a golf ball and ached. And the scratch wouldn't heal up. The following article is provided by the NZ Veterinarian Association. -- Ed.)

Toxoplasmosis is one of a number of diseases we call zoonoses, or a disease that can be spread

from animals to people. Toxoplasmosis is a common disease in NZ...about 50 percent of us would show evidence of having been exposed to the disease if we were blood tested. The disease can be a problem for people who are stressed for some reason (take note, home schoolers -- Ed.), on chemotherapy or suffering from immune deficiency diseases such as Aids.

Signs in people may be nothing more than a mild fever or headache, through to enlarged lymph nodes (glands) throughout the body, meningitis, muscle pains, heart and eye problems. Because the symptoms are so mild, many cases of toxoplasmosis are probably passed off as a cold.

**One of the nicest things I have begun to hear is when my children tell others, "Mum taught me that."**

The most important fact to remember is that toxoplasmosis can infect and damage a baby in the womb. This is a problem if the

mother becomes infected early in pregnancy. Prevention of infection is especially important for pregnant women.

Toxoplasmosis is caused by a tiny parasite that lives in many animal and bird species but whose eggs are only excreted in cat feces when a cat becomes infected by eating raw meat or infected prey. So without going into all the details of this parasite, these precautions should be taken to avoid infection:

\*Heat all meat to at least 60deg throughout before eating. Avoid raw or semi-raw meat. Cooking destroys the parasite.

\*Wash hands after handling raw meat.

\*Feed your cat prepared and balanced canned foods, or cat biscuits, or, if necessary, cooked meat.

\*Collect cat droppings each day and burn them. This is especially important if your cat uses a litter tray. If you are pregnant, avoid changing the litter tray at all.

\*Cover children's sandpits when they are not in use.

\*It is safest not to introduce a new kitten into households where a woman is pregnant, because kittens are much more likely to shed infective eggs in their feces than adult cats.

# Home Schooling T-SHIRTS



White T-Shirt with Blue printing or Black T-Shirt with White printing.

## Order Form

Size	Colour	Qty.	X	Price	=	Total
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10	Black	___	X	\$19.00	=	
12	Black	___	X	\$21.00	=	
14	Black	___	X	\$21.00	=	
Sm	Black	___	X	\$23.00	=	
M	Black	___	X	\$23.00	=	
L	Black	___	X	\$23.00	=	
XL	Black	___	X	\$23.00	=	
8	White	___	X	\$19.00	=	
10	White	___	X	\$19.00	=	
12	White	___	X	\$21.00	=	
14	White	___	X	\$21.00	=	
Sm	White	___	X	\$23.00	=	
M	White	___	X	\$23.00	=	
L	White	___	X	\$23.00	=	
XL	White	___	X	\$23.00	=	

Total:

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of NZ

4 Tawa St., Palmerston  
North, NZ.

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Correspondence with Politicians and Educationalists



## Family Affairs Committee

Parliament has established a new Select Committee on Family Affairs. Its members are: Hon Graeme Lee (Chairman), David Carter, Joy McLauchlan, Hon Margaret Austin, Hon Mrs TWM Tirikatene-Sullivan and Hon Annette King. According to the *Graeme Lee Letter* of August, 1996, the Committee's first report to Parliament included the following:

1. That an Institute of Family Studies be established and be given Government funding.
2. That the existing Office of the Commissioner for Children be expanded into an Office of the Commissioner for the Family and Children.
3. That a Policy Unit be established to monitor all policy proposals submitted to Cabinet and provide the Cabinet with a Family Impact Report for each proposal.
4. That Local Government bodies and community service organisations develop a NZ Family Day.

Mr Lee also said he promoted the idea that the Policy Unit (point 3) be upgraded to a Ministry for Family Affairs. (My personal opinion is that our families need LESS government scrutiny, official pronouncements and state interference, not MORE, as these developments will surely produce.--Ed.)

## Spanking

In a letter dated 3 September 1996 responding to a question about the possibility of Parliament banning parents from spanking their own children, Peter Gresham, Minister of Social Welfare, replies:

*The Department of Social Welfare, in line with Government's intentions, has concentrated on developing positive strategies in promoting alternative measures to physical punishment for parents to adopt. For example, the 'Breaking the Cycle' campaign, under which parent education programmes such as 'Parenting without Hitting' are promoted among the wider community, emphasises the undesirability of excessive disciplining and measures to be taken where this occurs. ....the Department is not seeking to do*

*away with all forms of parental discipline.*

I think spanking gets a lot of bad press because it is first of all thought of as physical punishment. According to Proverbs 20:30, 22:15, 23:13-14, 29:15 & Hebrews 12:11 the rod is not for punishment, but for cleansing and correction and training and removing the foolishness from the heart. Punishment rightly carries with it the idea of wrath and anger and vengeance, all of which our God will pour out on the ungodly on Judgment Day. Praise His Holy Name, He has already poured out OUR share of punishment on His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not our job as parents to pour out punishment on our children: it is our job to correct, discipline and train. Leave the vengeance, wrath and punishment to God.

The Minister of Social Welfare has now joined with the Commissioner for Children and others in assuming that spanking is a form of violence, one that leads to a cycle of violence, that parents are hitting their children and therefore need to be taught alternative forms of discipline. It seems that the anti-spanking squad of social engineers is moving, be it slowly and cautiously, toward a legal ban on parents fulfilling their duty to apply the rod of correction to their own children. We will have to take the offensive on this and move in the other direction now before public opinion has been conditioned too much against us. It means sorting out and clarifying our own thinking on the whole topic and then taking every opportunity, and creating opportunities, to talk about it and inform and educate the public in our favour.

## Teacher Registration

Barbara Smith wrote to Jill While, Labour MP for Manawatu, asking about the Teacher Registration Bill which has now passed into Law. Jill answered in a letter dated 21 August 1996:

*The aim of this Bill is that children are to be taught by people who have at least reached certain minimum standards regarding their training, their suitability as people and their ability as teachers. Registration is then about qualification, character and performance.*

*For those teachers who fulfill all the requirements except that of the training requirement, there is a second level of registration, an annually renewable "limited authority to teach".*

*This means that teachers are not excluded on the grounds of their particular type of training if they are capable and safe educators. Qualifications can also be upgraded of course, by a variety of methods if teachers so wish.*

*With regard to the situation of private school teachers and the amendment to include them, I, along with my Labour colleagues and several other Members of Parliament, believe that all children should have teachers who have at least met the minimum standards indicated above.*

This MP went out of her way to emphasize the word "all" above. Now that all teachers in all schools have to be registered, we home schoolers are the only ones providing education, the only educators, the only teachers in NZ, not registered. But Jill said she believed ALL teachers should have met certain minimum standards. My own personal opinion, for whatever it is worth, is that this particular party's intention is to come after home schoolers if they are ever in the position to do so.

### **NZ Correspondence School**

The NZCS has been running since the '20s to provide children in the back blocks with regular school lessons. It would appear that their role and their roll have both changed quite a bit over the years. An October 1989 article in the *NZ Geographic* says that there are over 20,000 full- and part-time students on their roll. Over half of those are part-time. There are 1,200 prisoners. A letter from the Correspondence School dated 30 March 1993 states that there are only 2,025 fulltime primary and secondary students using the C.S. lessons under policy entitlements, that is, free of charge. There were also at that time 123 students with exemption certificates paying thousands of dollars for the C.S. lessons, because they did not qualify for these policy entitlements.

So exactly who is entitled to these C.S. lessons free of charge? (Not that all Christian home schoolers would want these lessons anyway.) Well, all adults are, including prisoners. I know of some parents who enrol for the lessons to get them for free and then give them to their children. Itinerant families are. Children with certain conditions, allergies, disabilities, or behavioural problems are. These behavioural problems include smoking dope. A letter from the Correspondence School dated 27 August 1996 confirmed that the students expelled from

Cambridge High School for puffing the weed pay no fees for the Correspondence School lessons they now take together in their own classroom. The letter read, in part: *This school accepts such enrolments on official referral from the Ministry of Education. The referral process gives those concerned the status of full-time entitled students while they are on our roll.*

But it is not just the wayward who benefit. An article in the *Manawatu Evening Standard* of 13 August 1990 reads: *Three West Auckland girls have been taken out of school by their parents to concentrate on their gymnastics careers. Corryn Lewis, 11, Angela Warren, 12, and Sarah Ferris, 13, are the sole pupils of a new Institute of Gymnastics, set up by former New Zealand coach John Cross and former national gymnast Robyn Donaldson. They attend the institute from 9am to 1pm every week day to train, then spend the afternoon doing schoolwork by correspondence under the guidance of their parents. Cross believes it is the first time in this country that children have been allowed to learn by correspondence for sporting reasons. "It was a bit of a battle to get the Government to agree with it," he said. "But the parents of these kids say they are going ahead in leaps and bounds educationally since they've started the correspondence. If they weren't, we'd put them back in school."*

Now it is no mystery to us that they are progressing academically by being tutored at home....although it is a surprise that they are tutored in the afternoon, after four hours of what may be assumed to be rigorous physical training, a shower and lunch which would all tend to make them pretty sleepy, I reckon. (But then we have always maintained that it doesn't take much to keep up with the "progress" in the state classrooms.) However, the real issue is that they have been entitled to these lessons free of charge, along with all adults and criminals and juvenile delinquents. But plain old common garden students whose only crime is that they are keen for an education, cannot access these lessons without paying the thousands of dollars the C.S. demands for their services. The Hon Wyatt Creech, Minister of Education, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, is the man to write to, brothers and sisters, instructing him in a better way. You do not need to put a stamp on the envelope.

# Statist & Professional Trends



Here are two condensed articles of interest, one an encouragingly insightful comment on state schools and the other on current trends in children's literature by two cut-the-garbage-and-go-for-the-jugular journalists.

## Heroes of Contemporary Thought

*True dinks, I didn't realise the awesome powers I was dicing with. I realise now that to paint-bomb throwers, a mouse is as important in the cosmic scale as a human being. I see it now: the paint-bomb throwers are a triumph of modern education, heroes of contemporary thought.*

*Why wouldn't mice be more important than dying humans if you'd been ceaselessly told about rights, but never heard of theology; if you had no morality other than your personal rights and impulses; if you believed feelings were more important than reason; if you had no notion of society itself, and your obligations to it, it being bothersomely bigger than you; if you'd read "Watership Down", not "War and Peace"? (Rosemary McLeod's response to animal rights protestors who paint-bombed the Cancer Society's headquarters because the CS does experiments on mice, from her regular column in The Dominion of 5 September 1996.)*

## Children's Literature

*Language once regarded as offensive is in common use. With many girls as foul-mouthed as boys, too many of our ill-spoken young sound more like the products of a semi-literate frontier society than one where the hard-won, civilising customs of the past are valued, and passed on.*

*Having for some years reviewed annually the offerings in differing age categories for National Children's Book Week, I recently returned to catch up with what is currently being produced for children, because of two happenings. The first was an abusive and obscene letter I received about a year ago from an Aim Children's Book Award winner, while writer-in-residence at a college of education, after I had expressed concern at the over-casual, politically correct tone of a children's writers' newsletter.*

*The second was the debate following publication of Maurice Gee's "The Fat Man", a disturbing, unpleasant read.*

*Defended by Tessa Duder, convenor of the 1995 Aim judging panel, as "a superb children's book" with the facile claim that it is "clearly written to children and is therefore for them"; "The Fat Man" is full of in-your-face descriptions. Maurice Gee is extremely good at describing the nasty, the depressing, the pathologically bizarre. The ending of his books, even where evil is defeated, is often still bleak, giving the child reader the sense of loss, or of unpleasantness still looming around the corner.*

*Children have few defences against what they read. While we are now inundated with trivial, unimportant or politicised children's books, the void in which many youngsters find themselves suggests they have not been intellectually or spiritually equipped to cope.*

*Literature is one of the means through which minds eventually reach maturity. The outstanding children's books are valuable because behind the book there is a person to whom life has said something worth passing on. Given our worrying youth statistics, are we overdue to appreciate the reality that competition in our society is also about what values are to prevail? (By Agnes-Mary Brooke, a freelance writer based in Nelson, specialising in socio-economic affairs, and excerpted from her regular column in The Dominion of 31 July 1996.)*

*Here is just a handful of recent happenings that show the inevitable harm that comes when the state, motivated by politics and power yet dressed up as we-have-to-do-something compassion, gets involved in caring for the children of real families.*

## Sexual Health

*Young people need accurate information on sexuality so they can make informed choices, says Associate Health Minister Katherine O'Regan....The Government's strategy on sexual and reproductive health aimed to promote responsible sexual behaviour....To change from risky to healthy behaviour, people needed accurate information relevant to their lifestyle. "If we are to get support from people who lead different lives than us, we must allow messages to be given in forms that we may personally find*

# Backyard



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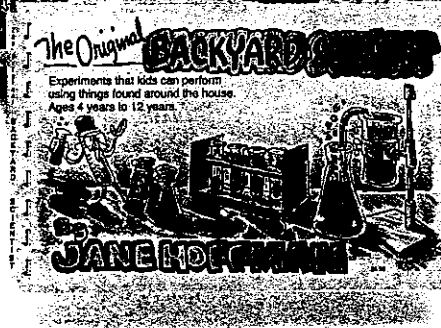
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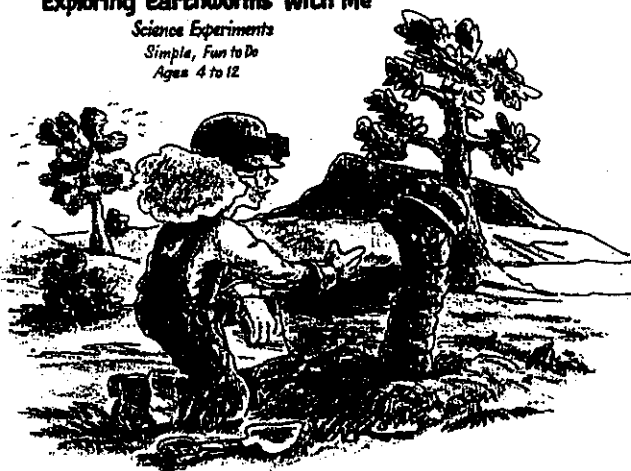
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All these books normally retail for between \$17 and \$20 each, but CHomeS is pleased to be able to offer them to Keystone readers at virtually half price. The \$10 includes both postage and GST!

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curious or even repugnant." (Excerpted from *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 5 September 1996.)

Why should we give repugnant advice? I would rather give advice which is good and sound. If the one receiving the good, sound advice finds it repugnant, too bad. How are we doing them a favour by giving them advice they may want to hear but which we know is flawed?

Why don't we simply tell school children that sexual relations are wrong outside of marriage, and that the only responsible sexual choice is pre-marital chastity and post-marital fidelity? Because the current state religion of political correctness has a doctrine even worse than relativism or situation ethics. This doctrine states that any set of values or standards or none at all are just as valid as any other....meaning the one with the most or highest standards must always inevitably give way, in the name of tolerance, to the one who has the least or lowest standards. Why must those with standards tolerate the intolerable while those without scruples are free to be unscrupulous?

The latest move by the Family Planning Association is planting peer sexuality advisors in schools: students attending the highschools who are there to answer any question about any aspect of sex, same-sex, safe-sex and to hand out condoms. As if this wasn't bad enough, two local high schools recently debated the topic, "That women reap the consequences of men sowing their wild oats". Try to imagine for a minute the kind of thoughts, arguments and rationalisations the young people taking the negative stance to this debate must have had? Praise God He has led us to remove our precious children from these institutionalised halls of child abuse and train them up at home.

Write to the Minister of Health, the Hon Jenny Shipley; the Minister of Education, the Hon Wyatt Creech; your own MP, all c/- Parliament Buildings, Wellington, and not requiring a postage stamp, stating simply in one or two lines that you are not happy with the philosophy or methodology of the sexuality education being pushed in schools since it begins by assuming children will be sexually active so we better make sure they do it "responsibly". Tell them that instructing the teenage boys in your neighbourhood in "safe" sex techniques and offering them condoms does not put your mind at

ease regarding your daughter's safety or virtue. (Even though this stuff is happening in the schools from which we have, thankfully, already rescued our own children, we still need to be VERY concerned with what is going on, because it does affect us.) If you'd like to give the Family Planning Association a piece of your mind their contact details are: PO Box 11-515, Wellington, ph. (04) 384-4349, fax (04) 382-8356.

### **Be Pro-active**

An article in *The Dominion* of 30 August 1996 opens with these words: *Police say girls are regularly raped in Social Welfare Department custody, and that they will not be surprised if deaths result from placing hardened child criminals in welfare homes.*

Brothers and sisters, if the Ministry of Education or Social Welfare officers ever take seriously a complaint from a crank neighbour that our kids are not in school, running wild and unsupervised, and that we subject them to religious indoctrination to the point of psychological abuse and that they have heard our children scream from physical abuse, our children may end up in these Social Welfare homes while they sort out our case. We must not let it get that far. We can do so by being pro-active in upholding our responsibilities to our friends, neighbours and relations; by getting our church leadership to support us in our home schooling; by voting Christians into our Parliament in these upcoming elections; by promoting our convictions on secular and Christian talk-back radio; by writing letters to the editors of papers, politicians, and other leaders.

### **Truancy**

*The Dominion* of 2 September 1996 says "the Education Ministry is allocating \$1.6 million to community groups to ferret out truant students". The ministry awards contracts for "district truancy services". How do they decide if a service is efficient and worth the money given to them? "National operations senior manager Kathy Phillips said the purpose of truancy funding was to bring those at risk of missing out on education back to the attention of schools and other agencies." Let's hope they don't start declaring day-time curfews and stopping any school-aged children in the streets during school hours as they were doing in Masterton, NZ, a while back.



# Action Station



- 1.) Get out and vote in the Parliamentary Elections on Saturday 12 October.
- 2.) Enter the puzzle contest on Page 5.
- 3.) Write to the Minister of Education, Hon Wyatt Creech, if you reckon Correspondence School lessons should be available free of charge to home schoolers as of right. See Page 27.
- 4.) Write to the people listed on Page 30 expressing your feelings about the FPA. It need only take two minutes and read like this: "Dear \_\_\_, I am thoroughly dissatisfied with the sexuality education being offered in the schools by the Family Planning Association. As a taxpayer and a voter and a parent I am asking you to please do all you can to cut their government funding to the bone. Yours, etc."
- 5.) Read about the Christian Qualifications Trust on Page 18 and respond accordingly by 15/11/96.

to be respected. If a rebuke is needed, it should be done gently, respectfully, graciously and sparingly. After all, what we rebuke, may really be our own ignorance. This does not mean that older people are to be indulged in their sin and not corrected, or challenged to grow. Old dogs can learn new tricks, if they want to. And if they did not learn the tricks they were supposed to when they were young, they need to do so before they stand before the Great White Throne. In fact, one of the keys to keeping all our faculties as we grow older is a willingness to be flexible, to learn new things and discover new challenges. Older people who continue to read, think and interact with the world put off senility. They are able to build on their experience.

Therefore, younger people must learn how to be respectful to their elders. Younger people should rise when an older person enters the room. A liberal use of the terms "sir" and "ma'am" is not out of order. It is bad taste to call older people by their first names. How we talk about a person affects how we think about him. Calling a person by his first name is a mark of equality (aren't you offended when sales clerks routinely call you by your first name?). But young people are not equal to their elders. We are in a subordinate position. No matter how much an older person might protest, or be embarrassed,

inside he is secretly pleased when we honour him. In South Africa I found a most refreshing custom. Younger people are taught to call an older person "Uncle" or "Auntie" (or the Afrikaans equivalent). In my own family, our children are forbidden to address adults by their first names. They are required to call people by their last name, with the appropriate honourific. If the person is well known to us, they may use the first name with Mr, Miss or Mrs. If the older person is intimate with our family, then our children may use "Uncle" or "Auntie". While an uncommon practice today, it is our attempt to be faithful to what the Bible teaches regarding respect for elders. God demands it, older people have earned it, and we are required to give it.

Respect and courtesy are the lubricants that make the family and the church run smoothly. A healthy Biblical church is one where the strength, vision and enthusiasm of the young is tempered by the wisdom and maturity of the aged. We owe older people respect. It helps younger people appreciate the wonderful people God has given us. It shows our submission to God's Law. It cannot help but bring His blessing.

(*Chalcedon Report*, No. 356, March 1995, PO Box 158, Vallejo, Calif. 95251, USA.)

## Christian Education Qualifications Trust (From Page 18)

But the CEQTNZ needs your help! They need to have some indication of how many pupils might want to sit the examinations. It is necessary that these examinations are sat in properly supervised exam conditions, so they also need to know how easily home schoolers can set up organised examination centres.

This year their 6th form examinations are being trialed, and they plan to release a syllabus by December this year for publicly available 6th form examinations in 1997. Seventh form examinations will be trialed in 1997 and will be publicly available in 1998.

If you are interested, please write to them telling what your interest is, how many pupils in your family or group might take these examinations, and how you could establish an examination centre. All responses should be sent to the Trust no later than 15 November 1996.

The Secretary  
The Christian Qualifications Trust of NZ  
c/- Tyndale Park Christian School  
Murphy's Rd., R.D. 2  
Papatoetoe, Auckland

956 10.6.4  
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