

# Keystone

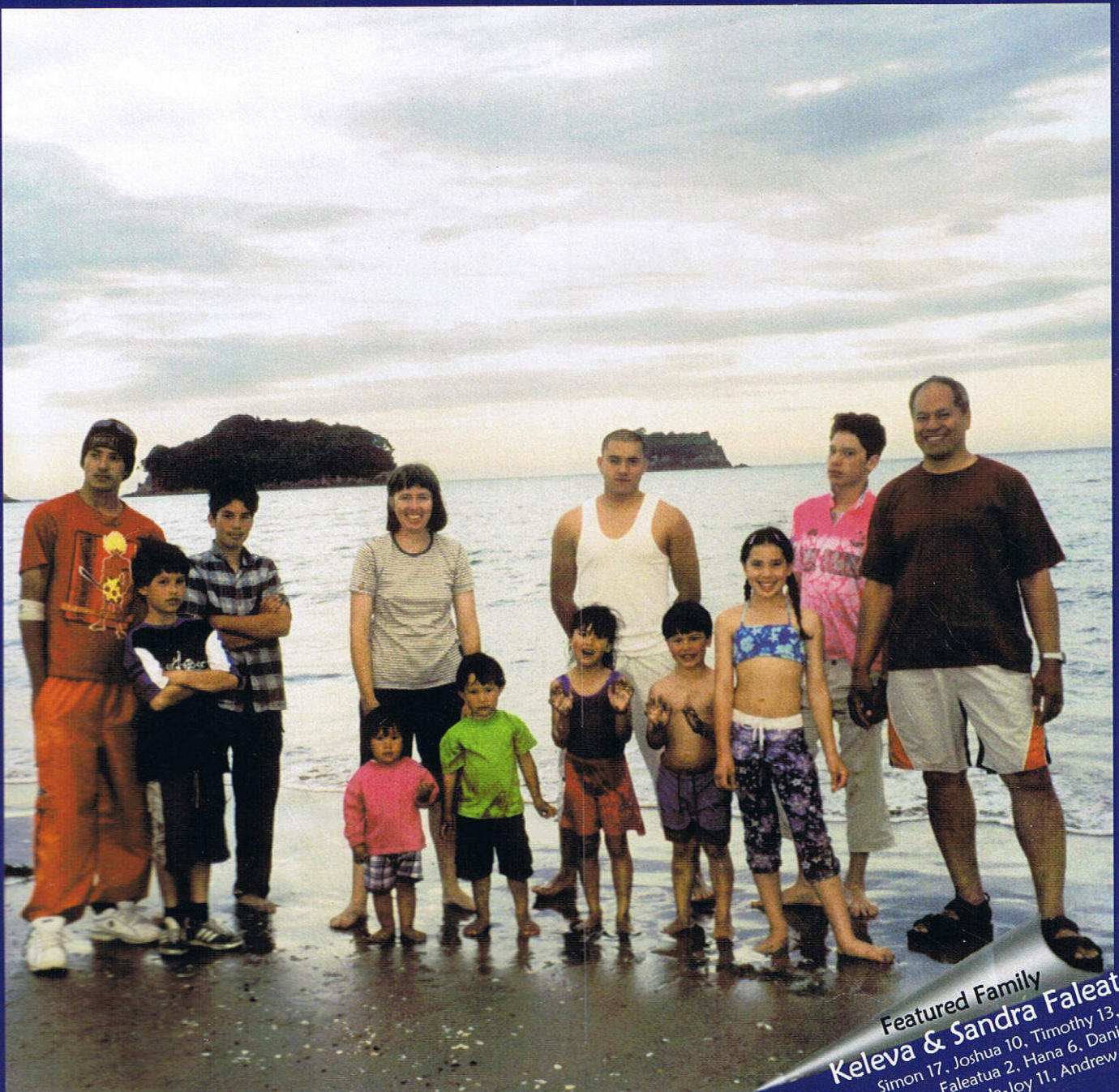
The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers

of New Zealand

Vol. IX No. 1

January 2003

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



**Featured Family**  
**Keleva & Sandra Faleatua**  
Simon 17, Joshua 10, Timothy 13,  
Sara 19mo., Faleatua 2, Hana 6, Daniel 18,  
John 4, Rasela-Joy 11, Andrew 15.





**New!**

First there was Pastor Jim West. Then there was Joshua Harris, Douglas Wilson and Eric and Leslie Ludy. Now read:

*Emotional Purity:  
An Affair of the Heart*

by Heather Arnel Paulson

*I charge you,  
O daughters of Jerusalem,  
By the gazelles  
or by the does of the field,  
Do not stir up nor awaken love  
Until it pleases.  
"The Shulamite"  
Song of Solomon 3v5*

Women have been told for a long time to dress modestly to help men out. And this is good, but no one has told men what they can do to help women out...not until *Emotional Purity*.

Physical purity: people talk about this all the time. We are even encouraged fairly regularly to maintain physical boundaries in pre-marriage relationships. But what about emotions? Should we be trying to keep these pure for a future husband or wife? We never seem to hear instruction on keeping pure emotionally...but now there is *Emotional Purity*.

*Emotional Purity's* 175 pages will answer all kinds of questions for you from a Biblical Christian point of view such as why emotional purity? What is emotional purity? How can one achieve emotional purity? And who should be trying to achieve it anyway?

Written for both men and women the book is directed towards singles. We recommend it for parents to read too - even parents of younger children to help them to prepare their children for keeping their emotions pure and to help them teach their children how to interact with members of the opposite sex as they grow older.

Normally \$26.00, *Emotional Purity* is being offered at a special introductory price of \$22.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

(Order form overleaf on inside cover, page 27.)

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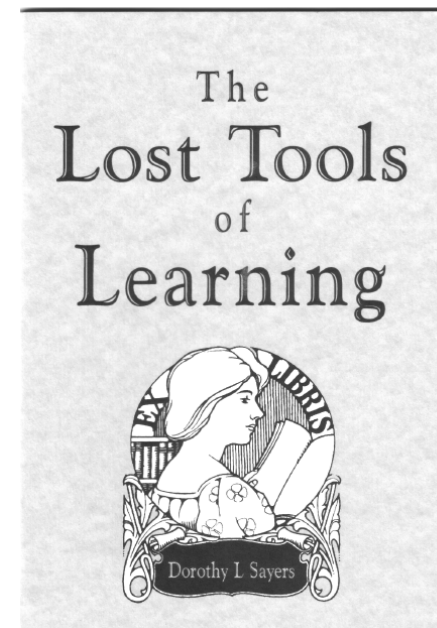
Matthew (15), David (13),  
Sharon (8), Lydia (3), Jessica (5)  
Ruth (2mo.), Lydia (3), Jessica (5)

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

www.HomeEducationFoundation.org.nz

*The fear of the LORD is the  
beginning of wisdom,  
a good understanding have all those  
who do His commandments.  
— Psalm 111:10*

Oh, Lord, please give us the wisdom and vision to home educate our children for Your Glory. May they not only live and work honourably as Christ-like role models in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation but also fearlessly, tirelessly, lovingly offer them Your Words of eternal life. Amen!



Dorothy Sayers' delightful prose outlines the Classical Trivium approach to excellence in education used by most great Scholars, past and present. Train your children to think critically and learn for themselves. 18pages, A5.

by  
Harvey Bluedorn

Prepared by Barbara Smith  
(70+ A4 pages)

[www.HomeEducationFoundation.org.nz](http://www.HomeEducationFoundation.org.nz)

(Continued from page 6: **Faleatua**)

seeking the Lord on whether we are to continue to homeschool. It IS a lot of commitment and responsibility and that much harder with a large family. I especially like to have God’s peace and reassurance that we are on the right track, as there are plenty of people around (including Christians) who think we are on the wrong track! I seek the Lord on how to tackle the year and I am always amazed at the (seemingly) little ideas He gives me to make the schooling run smoothly.

After praying and spending time listening to the Lord, I write a yearly plan that I review each June. This gives me a feeling of being in control (sort of!) through the year. I can see where we are going! I base topics around textbooks and look for gaps, trying to get extra books in advance if need be. For a few years I kept a daily journal. But with the increased workload I found this too difficult to keep up with. Nowadays I write a report each term on each child’s progress. This helps me keep tabs on them all. We work with the school term, mainly out of habit, and to avoid the dilemma of friends wanting to play during school holidays.

Our daily routine goes something like this. Children finish breakfast and tidy rooms, etc., (life skills!!) by 9:30am. We try to get as much housework as possible done by this time. It never seems to ever get done, so I have had to discipline myself to stop with housework and on to schooling. The older ones mainly work on their own, coming to me for help if they can’t work it out themselves. I work with Hana and Nathan then “float” between whoever needs me the most. Sometimes the older ones take turns teaching the younger ones (great for reinforcing basic concepts!). Other days, the older ones take short turns playing with the toddlers if I need to spend more time concentrating with someone’s reading or marking some work. Afternoons are less structured, with finishing work or art and crafts or our group discussions for health/science while the two youngest are asleep.

Financially, with Alpha Omega, it is great to be able to purchase however many lifepacs whenever I need to. This was especially helpful when we were on a student allowance in Dunedin. KEPL (Kingsley Educational Pty Ltd) in Australia are excellent, friendly suppliers. With email my order is in the post from them within a day and (usually) arrives within a week.

Some days are great. The washing is hung out before we start and Faleatua and Sara seem settled. Everyone manages to find a pen or pencil! Other days, Keleva gets home at lunch time – takes one look at me and says, “Simon and Andrew, you’re in charge while I take your Mum out for lunch!”

Keleva prays for us as we begin each day and makes sure the overall schooling idea is still working. Being a parish minister here in Rosehill, Papakura, has enough demands on his time. Our “family time” in the evenings is similar to the Samoan culture of evening vespers. As the head of the home, Keleva directs and teaches us from Scripture. We also have family discussions and prayer at this time. Some evenings, jokes are flying and we have a good laugh together! These times,

especially our praying, is very much the glue that keeps us all together – and happy as well! To see our four teenage boys get on so well counteracts the worry sometimes when we know they are not getting “normal” education. Also the fun we have together as a family far outweighs the different opinions of those around us who are opposed to homeschooling.

It’s been good for me to write this article. Makes me give thanks to God for where He has patiently led our family. And now it’s off for three weeks of camping, fishing, swimming etc, in the beautiful Pureora forest. A compulsory yearly subject for our family curriculum that we all love!

(Continued from page 13: **Downs Family**)

My husband works at home, so they get to spend a lot of time together. In fact, all of my children have benefitted from having their dad at home, and Josh gets the credit for that. By the time Josh was almost 2, I was having a hard time keeping up with the kids and the house and the homeschooling. Josh was still on an apnea monitor, and the alarms during the night (mostly false alarms) left us exhausted. My husband started his own business so he could be at home and help me out. That decision has benefitted our family in countless ways since then, and it was all because of Josh.

So I guess in a way we *are* the Down Syndrome Family. Josh’s disabilities impact us daily. We keep locks at the tops of all exterior doors so he doesn’t break out. We have to keep one eye on him at all times, so that he doesn’t pick up a phone and dial China, or microwave his brother’s watch (don’t worry, we caught him in time). Everything we want to do requires that somebody stays home with Josh, or brings him with us and keeps an eye on him. When he was small, he was so hard to share a room with that my husband had to add a bedroom to our house, specially equipped with grounded outlets and a built-in bed with a gate, to keep him from roaming the house or falling down the stairs when everyone else is asleep at night.

But we aren’t the Down Syndrome Family I envisioned that night on the way home from the hospital. We have not devoted our lives to carting Josh between experts. We have tried to keep our efforts to help Josh to a manageable level, and have balanced them with the other kids’ activities. His big brother and sisters have been scouts and camp counselors and sports participants. They have been active in homeschool group activities and church activities. We marvel at their accomplishments as much as Josh’s. (Although we may appear more effusive when Josh does something: to this day, when Josh goes to the bathroom, he announces it loudly, and then applause is heard from all over the house.)

We believe God chose our children specifically to bless our family. He knew Josh would have Down Syndrome, and he knew it would affect us, individually and as a family. But each of our children brought certain strengths and weaknesses to our family, and God used both to teach us so many lessons.

In Psalm 127:3, Solomon states, “Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him.” Note that he doesn’t say only healthy children or genius children are a reward. *All* children are a reward from God, and we thank Him constantly for all four of ours.

(Used with permission from NATHHAN, NATional cHal-lenged Homeschoolers Associated Network, a Christian non-profit organisation dedicated to providing encouragement to families homeschooling special needs children in ways that glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. [www.nathhan.com](http://www.nathhan.com).)

# Editorial



Welcome to 2003! I am personally quite excited about the prospects for this year. Home education is coming of age; there are plenty of young folks who have been educated all through the “compulsory schooling” years and are now doing very well in tertiary and the workforce. We can all have quite an influence in helping our Christian friends to rescue their precious children from the pits they call public schools and disciple them for Christ.

I’m also quite excited about our church...it just seems poised for launching out somehow, for there are a lot of young families and virtually all of them are home educated. I know a number of readers no longer attend church, having been hurt by someone’s intolerance or oppressed by someone else’s over-the-top zealotry. This really is sad, for our effectiveness is multiplied when we can team up and work together; *multiplied*, not just added together! It’s like marriage: husband and wife make two individuals, but as *one*, a married couple, our effectiveness is much more than the mere sum of our respective efforts. It is also sad when we home educators meet with opposition to our home education in the church.....a lack of maturity, I reckon. If we remain faithful and loving toward them, the Lord will bring them around.

Here are a couple of pen-friend letters I just received from folks way up north near Kaitiaki:

I would love to have a pen friend. I am just 10 years old I am home educated all my life. I love Jesus my Lord. I like reading, writing, sewing, piano, ponies (I would really like one), sailing, exploring and *being outdoors* and milking our house cow. Please write soon! From:

**Felicity Faith Deverell**  
**Private Bag**  
**Totara North 0471**  
**New Zealand.**

P.S. — My brother Peter, age 12, would also like a pen friend to write to. He likes everything I like except sewing of course.

My name is Keziah and I am 12 years old. I would really like to have a pen-friend, a girl my age to write to either overseas or in New Zealand. We are a Christian home educating family and live in the country near the sea and I love being outdoors in God’s creation. I like reading, writing, piano, bike riding, sailing, swimming, stickers and being in my family. I look forward to hearing from you.

**Keziah Grace Deverell**  
**Private Bag**  
**Totara North 0471**  
**New Zealand.**

Our two eldest, Genevieve 22 and Zach 21, just got back before Christmas after nearly two years travelling and working all over the USA and Canada. As soon as they arrived back, we took off for the South Island. Within 10 days they reckoned they’d done more unique

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stuff (such as touch a live kiwi, shoot a possum, dredge scallops and have keas perch on their arms) and seen scenery unmatched in all their travels (standing on the front porch of Tim & Raewyn Shand’s overlooking Port Ligar in Pelorus Sound is mighty hard to beat!) And are you ready for this? These two globe-trotters also declared in all sincerity that Palmerston North, where they were born and where they’ve lived all their days, is the best city anywhere!! They loved being back at their home church because it is so conservative and reverent and traditional!! They loved the lack of tourists and the tacky, glitzy shops and entertainment spots tourists seem to generate. And they loved sinking their teeth into real meat pies and fresh veggies!



**TEACH Bulletin** (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home) is a monthly newsletter of the Home Education Foundation. Articles deal with political developments which may affect New Zealand home educators, statist and professional trends, correspondence with politicians and educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Published since January 1997, **TEACH Bulletin** has been used to sound legislative alerts, rallying home educators to write submissions to their MPs and Parliamentary Select Committees when legislation unfavourable to home educators was introduced into Parliament. The six-page newsletter comes out 11 times a year (none in December) for an annual subscription of NZ\$16 or two years for NZ\$30.

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

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

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# Teaching Tips



## Maths

by Craig Smith

Many of us, when starting out home educating for the first time, feel we haven't got a clue how to tackle maths. We weren't so good at it ourselves at school, and our youngest siblings started doing a type of maths at school we never saw before, and how will my children ever learn trigonometry and calculus from me?

OK, calm down. As in any other area, because you are the child's parent, an adult, and have been around the block now a couple of times, *you know* from personal experience what kind of maths they *need* to learn. Unless it is clear they are going into engineering as a career, you can probably forget about the trigonometry, geometry and calculus. Just don't worry about it for now. What maths do you use on a daily basis?

counting	addition	subtraction
multiplication	division	measuring
fractions	decimals	money
estimation	proportions	percentages
budget	balance cheque	book

That is what your children will *need*. And if they master those things, — and I'm talking about really mastering these things well — they will be streets ahead of their peers, not to mention set up for the rest of their lives.

Take things in a logical progression: there are the concepts and then there is the method of manipulating those concepts with pencil and paper. Until they are starting to read, the pencil and paper work is off the menu. But until then there are the concepts to learn!

Learn to count using anything and everything: pebbles in the drive, chairs around the table, cars parked in the street. Go over it and over it until they have it memorised backwards and forwards. Virtually everyone has already done this as it seems to come naturally. Both parent and

child appear to love it. Use this same methodology for all concepts until age 10 or so. Parents and other adults (such as school teachers) get tired of the repetition *years* before the children do, so they look for shortcut methods, and the schools have demonstrated that these only short change the students' grasp of the facts.

Do addition and subtraction with pebbles, beans, matches, whatever. When they can read numerals ("5" is a symbol, a *numeral*, which stands for a *number* of things, five to be exact. Get your terminology right for it will eliminate massive confusion later. "376" is a three-*digit* numeral which stands for quite a large number of things.) Anyway, when they are reading numerals, write all the maths facts (addition & subtraction first; multiplication later) on flash cards and drill them until they know them randomly without hesitation. We made it a game to see how many they could get right in 60 seconds — each child raced only the clock, not another child. (Once they are individually good at it, then they can challenge each other, but it is too discouraging while they're still just learning them.) We drilled them against the clock maybe 3 or 4 times each day, not even 15 minutes each. Before they had them mastered, they were reading, and so we moved to pencil and paper computation.

This is a lot trickier. Adding 12563 and 35412 is great fun as is subtracting 3124 from 5376 for there is no borrowing or carrying over. Ours all loved doing these over and over. When you get into carrying over as in 59 plus 78 or borrowing as in 120 minus 75, the concept of place values and the concept of "0" become absolutely critical and must be thoroughly mastered before they can progress. Take your time over this. An abacus can help. Schools often don't tackle this until age 9 or 10, but children can learn this a lot earlier. Every child is different, remember, but if we can motivate them by doing it with them and making it pleasurable rather than a pain, they will progress rapidly.

## Check up on your child's progress

Diagnose weaknesses

Keep an acceptable record

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on the other. There is only obedience and disobedience.

So far is modern man from thinking Christianly that he has the acutest difficulty in trying to combine together in his mind the concept of love and the concept of power-laden authority, [the two being perfectly united in God]. There was a time when these two key concepts were blended together in the embracing idea of Fatherhood, which has provided the richest summing-up of God’s significance for us. The father was the loving provider and defender whose hand was open in liberality and raised in protection: he was also, at the very same time, the awesome ruler to whom implicit obedience was due. But in the modern world notions of supreme authority are not involved in the connotation of fatherhood. There is now something faintly ridiculous about the idea of a father trying to assert binding authority in the home. Yet God remains, in religious utterance, pre-eminently our Father, even though a father, as currently imaged, is no longer either authoritative or even dignified. For the comic strips in the cheap Press have reduced the father to the stature of a genial and clumsy butt. He is a friendly but rather awkward bear about the house. He fills up the armchair, he has to be kept in a good humour; but he must not be taken too seriously. He is a little obtuse, in a half-winning, half-wearing way. In reposeful moments he can be the best of company; at awkward moments he fumbles and exasperates. He is the poor fish who pays for unauthorized purchases by wilful and frivolous womenfolk. He loses his pipe, forgets his umbrella, drops parcels in the street and bursts the buttons from his braces. His highest delights are provided by the sporting pages of the daily Press; his familiar misfortune is the lawn-mower; his bitterest agonies are associated with income tax. [That was written in 1963. TV today unfailingly portrays fathers as absent, unfaithful or unwed, but generally passes over them altogether in favour of the unattached male who is totally absorbed with himself and his sex appeal to both females and other males.] In current thinking the lovable has become the very antithesis of the powerful, the loving the antithesis of the authoritative. [Another vintage 1963 observation. Today fathers are popularly perceived in the media as having none of these attributes: lovable, loving, powerful or authoritative. Yet godly Christian fathers are called to possess them all.]

Revelation not Construction

The following represents a state of mind far removed from the Christian: “A God is posited because the brain likes it like that: it wants to dwell upon a cause as well as upon an effect, upon a purpose as well as upon an activity. The individual intellect summons up a God in order to satisfy its thirst for system and order. Man’s intellect wants a complete picture of the shape and meaning of things, and it proves artistically desirable to insert a God in the top right-hand corner of the composition.”

It is important not to denigrate the demands of the

human intellect. Nevertheless, it is equally important not to miss the sharp distinction between an intellectual demand for a God to fill up a humanly composed picture, and the Christian’s awakening to the fact of a divine revelation in time by which a Faith, a Person, a Book, a Church are presented to him charged with the weight of an absolute and transcendent authority: God Himself. A mere intellectual demand for a God to fill up the picture is essentially secularist in spirit and in motive, in that it claims a God only to enrich and complete a finite situation. Such an intellectual demand is also rooted in the human urge to mastery. The metaphysical free play of the human mind by which God is docketed along with absolute values, moral imperatives, and the like, is itself as secularist in spirit and purpose as the manufacture of rockets with a view to reaching the moon.

Jesus Christ – and not Man – Is Lord

The key to the distinction may be said to lie in the word *authority*. For it is the binding authority and authoritativeness of the Christian Faith which, holding the Christian mind in its grip, puts that mind in the reverse situation from that of the secular mind trying to hold the Christian Faith in its grip. The one state of mind leads to that sense of personal inadequacy, human dependence, utter lowliness and loss, which brings the Christian to his knees and throws him into the hands of our Lord. The other state of mind leads to a case-hardened self-satisfaction of the pharisaical kind with which our Lord Himself never came to terms.

It is important never to confuse the notion in the head that a God probably exists with the motion of the will that flings a man on His mercy. There are men and women who feel positively virtuous in having mentally allowed for a God in the scheme of things. One may well ask how the Church can stir them to that sense of dependence, creatureliness, gratitude and unworthiness, without which, Christianly considered, their pretence to reckon with God is a mockery – a living rebellion. The intellectual who arrives at the position of declaring that “Jesus Christ comes nearest to representing what divinity must be like” is a long, long way from Christian self-commitment. His declaration represents an authoritative judgement upon our Lord – while the Christian’s position is that of accepting our Lord’s authoritative judgement upon himself. The blasphemy implicit in this reversal of rôles makes one pause. A declaration in which the human brain sums up our Lord as from a superior position is surely wholly secularist in its rejection of divine authority.

(Condensed and edited by Craig Smith from *The Christian Mind* by Harry Blamires, SPCK: London, 1963, pages 107, 111-2, 132, 137-8, 141, 144-7. Passages enclosed in brackets [ ] were written by Craig Smith.)

Keleva & Sandra Faleatua of Auckland

served, and tearful (well beyond that first week!). I was beginning to doubt our parenting ability, especially when we had a large family of four.... then five... and six....!

A good friend, Anne, was home schooling at the time. I always admired her but remember thinking I’d never have the patience! Or the time! And I don’t know how to teach! Anne’s happy countenance and lovely children gave me encouragement to at least be open to the idea.

During these years of pre-school to school, I was doing some Playcentre training on Childhood development. Also, because of the difficulties Simon was facing, I did some extra research into different learning abilities, etc. What an eye-opener! I realized that there was more to education than just sending my child to school with a back-pack of lunch and a sharpened pencil. We had our next three children to also consider. Did we want to go through the schooling issues with them as well? Keleva and I discussed maybe trying home education. After ten years of working in the National Bank, Keleva was responding to the Lord’s calling of entering ordained ministry and all that that entailed. As a couple we were responding to God’s calling into leadership. With the studying Keleva would have to do, we both knew that the actual teaching would be my responsibility. We prayed, and I waded through curriculum options (this nearly put me off!!). Thus our homeschooling journey began when we decided to teach Timothy when he turned five. Despite having a toddler and a baby at that time, I thoroughly enjoyed the one-on-one, which to me was just a continuation of life with my son!

After being accepted for the ministry, we moved to Dunedin in 1995. Keleva attended Knox College and University. We decided to home educate Andrew along with Timothy rather than try to settle him into a new school. I wasn’t yet confident enough to teach all the boys along with two toddlers. So, Daniel and Simon attended a lovely Christian school at Liberton. It was a wonderful experience for the boys. The school displayed a caring, Christian environment. Despite this, Simon’s difficulties with reading, writing and maths seemed to remain. So with much prayer, after the first year, rather than Simon move onto the senior class.... we decided to home educate him alongside Andrew and Timothy.

Homeschooling in a city like Dunedin, that prides itself on education, meant that many people did not approve of what we were doing. So I really appreciated the sup-

Top: Rasela-Joy 11, Sara 19mo., Hana 6, Faleatua 2, Joshua 10.  
Bottom: Timothy 13, Daniel 18, Nathan 4, Simon 17, Andrew 15.

I have just completed the application for an exemption certificate for Hana who turned six in December. Oops! It should have been done earlier. With the experience I have acquired over the past years, I have written it with confidence. Not so, seven years ago when I nervously applied for an exemption from school for Timothy!

But before I get into details of our homeschool journey....a little introduction to Keleva and I. Keleva was born in Western Samoa. He was the youngest son of a Methodist minister. I (Sandra) was brought up “Presbyterian”. Our family moved to Western Samoa in 1980 as a missionary family. Keleva and I met and married in Samoa and moved back to New Zealand in 1982. We lived in Pleasant Point, South Canterbury, for twelve years. God has been so faithful to us as a couple. We have had to learn to trust Him as He has taught us to respect our different cultures in the light of His word. Our personal walk with the Lord is paramount for everything we do, firstly as individuals, secondly as a couple, thirdly as a family, and then, as we relate to others in the community.

During those years in Pleasant Point, Keleva and I watched our three older boys begin school. Daniel was fine. Fitted in well and had many friends. He was outgoing with a strong personality (and he was the oldest!). Simon found school more of a problem – or was it the other way around? Everything seemed difficult for him, and he waded through remedial reading programs and individual attention from caring teacher aides. Diagnostic tests by the “professionals” were recommended with occupational therapy as a result. Despite all of this, progress was slow for Simon. Andrew, a quiet, studious, happy, third child followed his brothers to school. His personality changed. He became re-



port of homeschooling families a little further South. We attended monthly meetings organized by Maureen Duthie at the Waihola campsite. Our family looked forward to each meeting. Devotions, activities for all ages, a shared lunch together, free time for children to “socialize” and parents to catch up. I gleaned a lot of advice and encouragement from these wonderful days. It was a worthwhile day out of our routine (still miss those meetings Maureen!)

In hindsight it is easier to home educate from scratch! Of all the changes that took place, it has been the personality changes that have astounded me the most. Andrew cried for the first six months. I discovered that he had a lot of emotions that he had learned to “bottle up”. Slowly though, Andrew’s original personality blossomed again! This would be one of the main reasons we continue to home educate. We took our time and I discovered his beautiful work – produced if given time. He was – and still is in some ways – a perfectionist. He needs time to accomplish work. Now Andrew produces beautiful art work (pencil sketching to oil paintings) and is up to grade five on the piano. Whatever he puts his hand to he does a good job!

Simon had spent five years at school but sadly was still unable to read well. We started from scratch with phonics, etc., and picked up at a constant pace. Nowadays Simon is probably working at a lower level than others his age. But he is confident in what he does. His self-esteem has taken a lot longer to recover. He loves working with his hands. He is brilliant on the computer (produces more writing on this without the hindrance of having to use a pen!) and produces song mixes and background sound affects for different skits at church. Towards the end of last year, aged 17, he finally showed an interest in what he would like to do! He is hoping to get into Performing Arts in a year or so. He is a good dancer and has choreographed and performed a number of items at our church with other youth.

I should let you know that Daniel went on to finish his schooling. A shift to Auckland in 1999 and to a big school in South Auckland was a big change. He did battle with an attitude here that says, “do as little work as possible” but managed to survive through and come out with his character intact. He spent 2002 working at Foodtown, to save for University fees. He is enrolled to attend a music course.

Timothy, now thirteen, continues to work well with his academic studies. We are into our eighth year of home education! Timothy is very outgoing and chatty with no hesitancy in talking to anyone! He tackles life head on. He loves fishing with his Dad and playing outdoors. Gets through his school work as quickly as possible so that he can get onto more important things (to him!).

There has been no hesitancy for us in home educating our other children. Rasela-Joy, aged eleven, is very studious, is into poem writing and pen friends. She puts her energy into ballet, sewing and singing. She is a great cook and capable of preparing lunch – for a family of twelve I might add. She is also very capable of looking after the littlies and the “middle ones.” She is

looking forward to piano lessons this year. Joshua, aged ten, works well, although he likes to play with the younger ones more than “do” school work. He loves skate boarding and biking. He and Andrew do a lot of artwork together. He is excellent at drawing – we thought he was tracing the pictures!! Hana, now six is learning phonics and beginning to read. Maths is her favourite subject, and I slotted her in to level 2 as we had done so much manipulative work that she had a good grasp of basic concepts. A few years ago I never would have been game to do that! Nathan, aged four, has a personality very similar to Andrew; e.g. the toy animals HAVE to be in a straight line on his drawers, just like his printing needs to be perfectly formed ON the line! He revels in school work (more so than Hana) so I have started him on the basics.

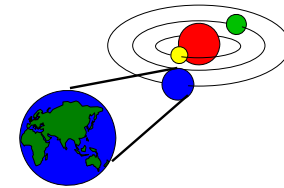
Faleatua (aged two and a half) and Sara (aged one and a half) are advanced scientists. They know that you can use a lever to open the childproof flour bin. And that tipping it on an angle creates the ability to cover just about the entire house with flour – no exaggeration. Weetbix – if crushed can achieve the same desired affect. And if the timing is perfect, the whole experiment (or is that experience?) can be achieved without the knowledge of the remaining eight to ten people in the house. (We do our school work in a sleepout, so it is possible!). Also, they are professionals at psychology. If they feel attention is lacking in their direction, they just have to chase each other around and around (and around and around) our school room to gain the attention of all other siblings.

Curriculum wise Alpha Omega has been great. I use it for Language Arts, Maths, some Bible topics and some History/Geography. I have found the workbooks have suited all my children in that you can pace each child according to his ability. My knowledge of this curriculum that I have continued to use over the years means I feel very confident, and I believe nowadays I get the maximum use out of it. I don’t feel so concerned for the children to complete each page. And I have learnt the signs of needing extra materials if a concept is not understood. With a large number of children at the same time I have needed the continuity of workbooks with self-tests that show up how each child is handling each topic. Also, over the years I have had to deal with “all day” morning sickness or lack-of-sleep days with a baby or toddler.....or both. So the children would work in their books and come to me if they had a problem. When I was feeling more able, we would go “hard out” on other subjects and catch up remarkably quickly. I use the ABeka science and health series. These beautiful textbooks provide a change from workbooks and are easier to do as a group discussion. Recently I have separated the younger ones from Simon and Andrew, as some topics were unsuitable for the different ages and level of maturity. We are trying out Diana Waring’s History series. I am also doing a course with a group of Home Educating Mum’s on “Teaching Writing: Structure and Style”. This has had an immediate impact on all of the children’s written work!

At the beginning of each year we spend some time

*(Continued on page 26: **Faleatua**)*

## World Views in Focus



### The Christian Mind vs the Secular Mind

by Harry Blamires

Briefly one may sum up the clash between the Christian mind and the secular mind thus: secularism asserts the opinionated self as the only judge of truth. Christianity imposes the given divine revelation as the final touchstone of truth.

The marks of truth as Christianly conceived, then, are: that it is supernaturally grounded, not developed within nature; that it is objective and not subjective; that it is a revelation [from God] and not a construction [of the human mind]; that it is discovered by inquiry and not elected by a majority vote; that it is authoritative and not a matter of personal choice.

Ours is an age in which “conclusions” are arrived at by distributing questionnaires to a cross-section of the population or by holding a microphone before the lips of casually selected passers-by in the street. In many spheres of activity, quality is measured by mass-preference. ... [Should we not be concerned about] the surrender of standards to the whims of the biggest crowd making the loudest noise? [Or about the way] status is conferred nowadays on the opinions of the uneducated and the ill-informed?

#### Objective not Subjective

For the secularist, God and theology are the playthings of the mind. For the Christian, God is real, and Christian theology describes His truth revealed to us. For the secular mind, religion is essentially a matter of theory; for the Christian mind, Christianity is a matter of acts and facts. The acts and facts which are the basis of our faith are recorded in the Bible. They have been interpreted and illuminated in the long history of the Church. The Christian mind is inescapably and unbrokenly conscious of the hard, factual quality of the Christian faith. The Christian mind is alert to the solid, God-given, authoritative factualness of the Christian Faith and the Christian Church. Christianity has been called the most materialistic religion in history. That is an illuminating point. For Christianity is so much more than a mere moral code, a recipe for virtue, a system of comfortable idealistic thought. It is a religion of acts and facts. Its God is not an abstraction, but a Person – with a right arm and a voice. Its God has moved among us.

*How wonderful are Thy works!* This is a persistent Biblical theme. Not, “How interesting are Thy theories.” Not, “How intense is Thy being.” Not even,

“How unanswerable are Thy arguments.” But, “How wonderful are Thy works.” For Christianity is a religion of things that have happened – a Baby born in Bethlehem, a body nailed upon a cross, [a Person risen from the grave, a Saviour ascended into heaven].

The secular mind will have none of this. It will treat the Christian Faith as though it were simply a series of interesting speculations. As Christians we are not surprised at this. [But when fellow Christians appear to regard the Christian Faith in the same way, there is then great cause for concern.]

#### Authoritative and not a Matter of Personal Choice

By the very nature of the Christian Faith the Christian mind has an attitude to authority which modern secularism cannot even understand, let alone tolerate. It follows from all that has been said about the God-given nature of the Christian revelation and the Christian Church that they must command a whole-hearted allegiance from Christians; for Christians are, by definition, men who accept the revelation and the Church for what they are, the visible vehicles of God’s action in the world. That which is divinely established and divinely guaranteed calls forth from men, not an egalitarian attachment, but a bending submission. Reason allows no place for a casual, one-man-to-another approach to God and His demands. It is either the bowed head or the turned back.

[The secular mind wants always to negotiate with authority, and especially, it seems, with ultimate, unchanging, divine authority. The secular man wants to be autonomous, calling his own shots, and wants the power to first personally approve of the authority and what the authority is telling him to do before he will willingly submit to it. Until he is converted by the Spirit of God, he will not understand the Christian’s unquestioning and even eager willingness to obey the commands of God’s word.]

[Of course this scenario is not helped by those Christians who are as sceptical as the secularist and question and quibble at every one of God’s gracious requirements. Or those Christians who are so unthinking and uninformed of Biblical standards that they do just as they are bidden by unscrupulous and/or heretical “preachers”, rather than searching the word of God to see if the things these guys are telling them are so. (Acts 17:11).]

What the secular mind is ill-equipped to grasp is that the Christian Faith leaves Christians with no choice at all on many matters. The Archbishop of Canterbury has no more freedom than you or I to decide, Christianly, in favour of divorce. That is so by the very nature of the Faith as received by the Church of England. [Christians also have no freedom to decide that Christianity favours a non-divine Christ, a Jesus from a non-virgin birth, abortion, euthanasia or homosexuality.] There is only understanding of the Christian Faith on the one hand and ignorance of it

# Home Educators Did It

Sarah Marshall  
of Hamilton  
by Andrea Munroe



Sarah Marshall, who lives in Hamilton, is 16 years old, the daughter of David & Jill Marshall and the third of six sisters. Last year she sat an SAT test and passed with 1450 (out of 1600) points, acing the English section with a — slightly staggering — 100%. She soon received a letter inviting her to continue studies at Harvard.

So...what's an SAT test exactly? Sarah is happy to explain — it's an American thing, one that all US colleges use as a standardized way of testing whether students have the skills necessary for tertiary education. There are two types of SATs: SAT I, which Sarah did, is called the "reasoning test". It has an English section and a Maths section, testing general knowledge, critical thinking, vocabulary, and problem-solving ability. Most of the questions are multiple-choice. Students can sit it multiple times and use the best scores to enter college; at least half of all students do sit twice.<sup>1</sup> SAT IIs are subject tests — languages, sciences, etc.

Yes, it was easy, Sarah admits with regards to the English section. She was a little nervous about the Maths though. A guidebook containing two practice tests helped prepare her, although they were a lot harder than the actual. Which was helpful as it made her nervous and consequently study harder! The book was unauthorized and not particularly recommendable because many of the answers, according to Sarah, were wrong.

Sitting the three-hour exam was a rather stern experience. She had to travel to Auckland and sit it in a boys school, under instructions to report students if she saw them cheating. Each section had a strict time allocation of 30 minutes; it was cheating to skip ahead. Students were placed so that one's neighbours were doing different sections to your own, meaning that one couldn't check over someone's shoulder for an answer.

But these measures didn't seem to affect Sarah. Sure enough, once the results were posted on the Internet, an official-looking letter arrived...

Dear Miss Marshall,  
  
Congratulations on your SAT score.  
Welcome to Harvard!  
  
-Signed-  
Harvard College  
U.S.A

(Well...an invitation to that effect.<sup>2</sup> Prosaic license taken.)

Sarah didn't take up the invitation to Harvard, although she may do later on. In fact Harvard, unlike Waikato, may not offer the degree she is interested in: a Bachelor of Arts in Screenplay and Media Studies. This means a career in something like writing film-scripts.

What kind of films does she like? Ones that question reality...philosophical films. Like *The Matrix*, or *Star Wars*.

I asked a little bit about Sarah's home-schooling background, and she said she started being home educated halfway through form 3. Before that she had been to a Christian school for several years, which was good except for a certain immaturity in her classmates. She opted for a higher standard of socialization at home and has enjoyed getting to know her own sisters better. The best thing about homeschooling? Not having to do sport! And also working at her own pace is important.

At the moment Sarah is looking for a job so she can save for her degree. Her future dreams include going to America and maybe England. She was born in America and of course is well-prepared to study there if she wants to...so it seems an exciting future awaits.

### Notes:

1. According to [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). If you're interested in SAT tests this is an informative site, with sample tests etc.
2. Harvard, by the way, is America's oldest higher-level educational institution. Students are expected to have a good academic record; over 56% averaged 1400 or higher on their SAT 1s. Admission standards are getting higher — they can afford to be discriminatory.

Would you like to nominate someone for the "Home Educators Did It" column? Ph. Andrea on (09) 410-3933 or send me an email: [andrea.munroe@intouch.co.nz](mailto:andrea.munroe@intouch.co.nz)

**Andrea Munroe** of North Shore City was home educated all her days. She is an aspiring journalist, despite being currently halfway through entirely the wrong degree (bachelor of business). She hopes to graduate and complete a journalist post-graduate diploma, then go on to write lots of things (articles, books, music, doggerel, you name it), turn NZ completely upside-down and retire.



# The Faith of Us Fathers



## Say "No" to Busyness

by Philip Lancaster

One of the ways in which men exercise leadership in the home is in their control of the family schedule. Unfortunately, in too many of our homes there is no rational control of the schedule; we are tyrannized by the urgent demands of commitments we have made. It's time to step back and take a look at what we are doing. Too often we are doing just what the world is doing.

### "A Walking Shadow"

William Shakespeare had a way with words. He was also quite a philosopher, often distilling into a few lines a commonly held, but not often clearly expressed, view of life. In *Macbeth*, we hear this gem of nihilism as Macbeth learns that the Queen is dead:

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing. (Act V, Scene 5)*

Few people ever so eloquently describe the sense of emptiness and purposelessness they feel, yet I believe that most modern men and women, if they are honest with themselves, think that life signifies nothing. To crowd out this gnawing sense of futility, they fill their lives with sound and fury; they create an existence that struts and frets, pretending some significance to all their busyness. What they end up with is a walking shadow, a shell of a life. They look like they are living, but they are not.

Of course, this is precisely the truth. Living dead men — that's what the Bible says fallen men and women are. They were made for a living relationship with the living God who breathed into them the breath of life (Gen. 2:7), and who gave purpose and moral significance to their lives (1:26; 2:15-17). But their sins have separated them from God; sin has hidden God's face from them (Is. 59:2). Their lives have been quite literally emptied of meaning and direction. God himself is the fullness of life. Knowing Him and doing His will is the meaning of life. Without Him, life is a walking shadow.

### The Babel Syndrome

Cain was cut off from God by his sin. He was driven from the ground and forced to be a restless wanderer in the earth after he killed his brother Abel (Gen. 4:12). If he had accepted his punishment, the continuing sense of rootlessness may have served as a reminder to him and his progeny to return to God and

renounce the spirit of self-direction.

However, Cain chose to fill the restlessness in his life by building a city (4:17). His offspring coped with their purposelessness by engaging in all kinds of cultural activities, from raising livestock, to music and metal crafts (4:20-22). They tried to fill their empty lives with the work of their own hands. The epitome of this kind of effort, of course, was the tower of Babel, that monument to human independence (11:3ff.).

Mankind is the same today. To mask the emptiness of life without God, men are busily filling their lives with all kinds of activity: playing, making, building, watching, listening, going, coming — anything to avoid facing the fact that God has departed. Occasionally an event like the death of a loved one will intrude and the reality will hit home: life without God is busyness without purpose, like a tale told by an idiot.

Even Christians are tempted by the Babel syndrome. When God withdraws His blessing upon us because of active sin in our lives or through a passive failure to implement His revealed will, we are apt to try to fill the ensuing emptiness with the work of our own hands. When a husband and wife have a fight, he surfs the Internet for two hours and she cleans out a closet, both filling their time with distracting activity rather than dealing with the relationship in obedience to God's will. Parents sense they need God's work in themselves and their children, but they fill their schedule with sports and shopping and this and that, hoping somehow that all this fretting will add meaning to their lives. Churches, sensing God has withdrawn His blessing, start a building project or add another program to the already harried schedule of the people.

### Dust or Destiny?

We need to realize that we cannot redeem ourselves through our own activity. We cannot fill the void in our lives when God withdraws by any amount of busyness. I am afraid that our modern era provides such an array of distracting activities and trivial pursuits that it is easy to intoxicate ourselves with activity. We can even convince ourselves that the sheer busyness of our lives is the fullness God meant for us. Writing of the busyness of church life, Alan Peterson wrote in *The Myth of the Greener Grass*, "What we thought was the cloud of God's anointing over us was nothing more than the dust of our own activity (p. 154)."

That is true of many Christian families and churches today: they are so busy doing good things that they are sure God must be blessing. But families continue to fall apart, and churches have no power to transform their communities. Why? Because they are trying to redeem themselves through activity rather than returning to God and His word. We cannot create our destiny. God is our destiny. We must return to Him. Relationship, not activity, is the fundamental element of life. We must stop our busyness and get to know the living God again. There is no other way. He Him-



self is the fullness of our lives. His will is the purpose of our lives. When He withdraws, we must not distract ourselves with our own works; we must repent. We must get to know Him and do what He says.

Many of us are adding home education as another activity which we hope will be the key to help our families prosper spiritually. It will not. The only thing that will so help our homes is the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some who have put their hope in homeschooling have already given up on it because it didn't work. God never meant homeschooling to take His place. We should not view home education as something we do to make our family work better. We should view it as obeying the voice of the One who rules our home. He who is our life calls us to raise our children in His way. We just want to do what He says. That is all. The One who calls us into a relationship with Himself calls us into a relationship with our children. So we obey.

Many churches are sensing the withdrawal of God's blessing. Typically we then seek some new method of evangelism, a new discipleship program, a new approach to Sunday School (even an age integrated approach!), a new staff position, a new addition to the building. The glory has departed, and we try to convince ourselves that the dust of all our activity is the glory cloud of God's blessing. But as in our homes, the only thing that will help us is the presence of Jesus and obedience to His revealed will.

#### **Walking With God**

Cain's line was not the only human line back then. Scripture tells us that when, after Abel's death, Seth was born and then had a son, men began to call on the name of the LORD (Gen. 4:26). One of the descendants of Seth was Enoch who walked with God (5:24). Noah was the only righteous man of his day. Instead of relying on his own efforts to give his life meaning and purpose, Noah walked with God (6:9) and did everything just as God commanded him (6:22).

That is what we need to do in our day. We must not rely on the technology of family and church renewal, ever seeking some new approach, some new gimmick, some new activity to fill our days. We need to become people who walk with God. We are made for a relationship with Him, and nothing else can substitute. The fruit of that relationship will be that we do what God commands. We will abandon all the busyness that characterizes families and churches and concentrate on being the family and church that are revealed in Scripture, a loving community of people who together walk with God and do His will.

#### **The Rat Race**

Why is it that the generation with the most time-saving devices in history seems to have less time for intimate family interaction than those before it? Answer: because our generation (Christians included) substitutes activity for relationships, busyness for intimacy.

People may complain about the rat race, and parents talk like martyrs about how harried they are; but the fact is, they choose to live this way. They enroll themselves and their children in the classes, the clubs, the camps — the *good* things that consume the schedule of most families and leave no time for the *best* things: calm and quiet family times.

Busyness is addictive. The buzz of the frantic daily pace feels satisfying for people who find quiet face-to-face intimacy difficult and unfamiliar. Our generation doesn't know how to just be together. It doesn't believe there is a real value in simple, unstructured time together as parents and children. So the schedule is filled with doing — which often means splitting up the family, too.

#### **What Children Really Need**

The greatest need of children is not enrichment activities, classes, sports and clubs. Their greatest need is for intimate time with their parents and siblings. Children thrive in the uncluttered schedule that has maximum time for those treasures that are found most readily in family spontaneity: warm affection and affirmation, teachable moments springing from real life, parental modeling of behavior and attitudes, a parent-guided awareness of the moment-by-moment activity and love of God.

Home-educating families have rediscovered the sanity of the simple in education: Dad and Mom teaching their own kids in the quiet closeness of the home with its flexible schedule and familiar surroundings. They have escaped one of the greatest time- and intimacy-bandits ever devised: the school classroom. They stand counter-culture because they dare to believe that the home is superior to the classroom for training human beings — and they are certainly correct!

However, they are correct not just because the children receive a better academic preparation, not just because the children are spared the contagion of bad company, and not even just because the children can receive the spiritual training God requires Christian parents to give their children. They are correct — home is superior to the classroom for training children — because it encourages the strengthening of the most important relationship a child has: the parent-child bond.

God gave children to parents, not professionals. He placed them in families, not classrooms. I believe that the most important work that home-educating parents have today is to rediscover the potential breadth and joyful depth of the parent-child relationship. The danger is that having escaped the defects of the classroom, we will hang onto our culture's hyper-active extra-curricular lifestyle. Let's not blunt the potential of our educational choice by copying the frenetic, programmed, family-fragmenting pace of the children of Babel.

It is possible for a family to be involved in outside activities without destroying the intimate hours they

# **CHomeS Roundup**

## **Homeschool Ministry in Mexico**



Seven years ago, Mike Richardson, an American missionary in Mexico, launched an important ministry for Mexican families to teach them about homeschooling and training their children in the Lord. As a home educator himself with seven children, Mike has personally seen the tremendous benefits of homeschooling in helping build solid families. Faced with much poverty in Mexico, Mike realized that the most effective way to reach these people was to provide many FREE services to help train them in homeschooling and providing them with supplies to do it well.

Mike also has a church that he has started up in the mountain town of Baritillo. He lives with his family in a small cabin with no running water or electricity. They receive no income from their ministry either through the church or the homeschool ministry. Their family lives completely on the rental income from their house that they still own in Georgia, plus any offerings that they directly receive.

In the last seven years, they have been publishing the magazine *El Hogar Educador*. The first issue was sent free of charge to 76 families in Mexico. It is now mailed to families in 30 states throughout Mexico, the federal district, and 28 countries outside of Mexico. Over 2,000 Spanish-speaking families receive this 28 page homeschool magazine free of charge.

They have held seven annual homeschool conferences in Saltillo, with attendance now peaking at 1,000 families. They have also organized the first annual homeschool conference in Mexico City. Registration is free and speakers that have ministered down there include Ted Tripp, Gregg Harris, Michael Farris and Chris Klicka. All the sessions are taped and translated, and Mike Richardson has produced 94 different audio cassettes. He has sent out nearly 60,000 cassettes free of charge to Spanish-speaking families throughout Mexico and the world. He has also translated and published four books on homeschooling that are made available for sale to the Mexican people.

This growing, vibrant ministry has literally changed the lives of hundreds of families, giving them hope for the future for their children. When Chris Klicka spoke at the annual convention, he reported, "Families came to me with tears and heartfelt thanks for Mike Richardson's homeschool ministry. They testified to how their children were being blessed and they were able to train their children in the Lord and give them a good education." Chris Klicka also explained, "Because many of the families have very low income, Mike's ability to provide free registration at conferences, free tapes, and a free home education magazine enables these families to homeschool. Otherwise, without these free services

it would be an impossibility."

From about the time of the 11 September of 2001 terror, the funding to Mike Richardson's ministry has been severely limited by over 36 percent giving. However, their needs and the number of families they minister to, has risen by over 70 percent. Home educators know from personal experience the great benefits of teaching our children at home. To have the privilege of being able to help others who are far less able to home educate is a blessing from the Lord.

To send encouragement or donations, Mike's contact details are as follows:

Mike Richardson

*El Hogar Educador*

1001 South 10<sup>th</sup> St., Suite G-529

McAllen, TX 78501, USA

vnmm@characterlink.net

## **What Really Matters**

A few years ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run the race to the finish and win. All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times and began to cry.

The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back. Every one of them. One girl with Down Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said: "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line.

Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes. People who were there are still telling the story. Why? Because deep down inside everyone knows one thing for certain: What matters most in this life is selflessly serving others. "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." — Matthew 20:26-28.

## **The Central Message**

Psalms 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible, 594 chapters before it, 594 chapters after it. Just before it is the shortest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 117. It talks of the wonders of God's love and faithfulness. Just after it is the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 119. It talks about the wonders of knowing and obeying God's statutes, ordinances, commands, testimonies, counsels.... His every word. Adding the two 594s gets 1188, and Psalm 118:8 reads, "It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to put confidence in man."

There you have the only two options in life: to trust the omniscience of a holy, righteous and eternal God, or to trust the ignorance of fallen, fallible and fragile man.

Bank. So as we work on these unmet needs, we should see less withdrawals. This didn't happen over night for Craig and I. In fact we are still having to work on this. We have habits that are hard to break. Especially when we get busy we fall back into our old ways. Because we now **want** to have a good marriage does not by itself make it a good marriage. Effort is required. We need the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) operating in our lives to help us to make our marriage be the best it can be.

“I just wanted to write and encourage Barbara. Having received my *Keystone* today, I was reading the article she wrote on Helpful Hints for Dealing with Marriage Difficulties. \_\_\_\_\_ and I have gone through a very similar thing. Having been married now for 16 years, we have struggled most of that time. We did have other relationships before we got married, but I attributed a lot of it to the fact that I came from a ‘broken home’. My parents split up when I was 12. I didn’t have a Christian upbringing either, my husband did but he was adopted – which had issues he had to deal with also. The Lord has also been teaching us, and we have read the books you have suggested, but it is still a struggle. I believe the marriage is the foundation to the family, so if the enemy can disrupt that he will. Our son left home this week, but I feel a large part of it was because WE couldn’t get our act together!! Matt 12:25 says, ‘Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided itself will not stand’. And verse 29 says, ‘How can anyone enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house.’ And as Malachi 2:15 says, ‘Has not the Lord made them one? Because he was seeking godly offspring.’ And my favourite scripture Proverbs 14:1 which I got at an Above Rubies camp a couple of years ago: ‘The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.’ Yet this is what I seem to do all the time. **It seems knowing what to do and doing it are two different things.** Also if the husband isn’t doing his part. But we’re only responsible for ourselves. Sometimes I moan because I always seem to be the one trying to work things out, but I think females tend to be like that, and the Lord encouraged me to do it as ‘Unto Him’. This week I’ve been reading *Spiritual Mismatch* by Lee and Leslie Storbel. As 1 Peter 3 says – they’ll be won over without a word. It’s like *we* can change but we can’t force *them* too. I’m having to learn GRACE. While we were yet sinners Jesus died for us. Therefore we have to die to ourselves. And I’m learning the definition of love probably doesn’t even mean what we think it means...I have such a passion for this subject. I could go on all day, but just to encourage you, we’re not there yet either, but I feel it’s a real key for restoration in the whole family. And you’re brave being so transparent about it, I hope a lot of others will be encouraged as I was.”

I wanted this letter included because too often our children leave home as soon as they can because of the undercurrents in our homes. We not only have a responsibility to our spouses to make our marriage as good as it can be but also to our children. You may

# Letters



## ERO Review

Thank you for writing “Preparing for an ERO Review”, a home educators’ guidebook. We received the letter requesting a review mid-November 2002. To my dismay the day was only one week away! I dropped everything, had a panic attack, freaked out for a day, but then took a couple of deep breaths and searched through my box of goodies to find your guidebook. What a life saver it was! I read it over and over for a couple of days then felt confident enough to do it on my own without contacting fellow home educators who have had reviews.

I made sure I had my support team around me and everything the Review Officer requested to see at hand. Feedback from the Review Office was excellent, as was the written report we received. So your guidebook for me is a great resource, and I will recommend it to others. I also want to congratulate you on your articles in *Between Times*. Thank you once again and keep up the outstanding work you do to inform all home educators.

Juliet Apiata  
Turangi

## Nothing Like It

Thank you for the article “Keeping Going When the Going Gets Tough”. God’s timing is always right. Recognising all but one of the symptoms, we have ordered one of the books and look forward to the next article. Thank you for baring your soul like that: it cannot have been easy. I understand and identify with what you say as I did not become a Christian till late in life. I just want to encourage and thank you. By the way, we have nothing for homeschoolers like *Keystone* in the U.K. It is avidly read and I find it always a great encouragement. Keep it up!

Y. Jones  
Walsall, England

have often heard it said that the best thing we can be doing for our children is to love our spouses as God intended us to. Unhappy children who give us nothing but trouble and who can’t wait to leave home are the unhappy fallout of inattention to this duty to love our spouses as God would have us do.

“Thanks, Barbara, for your openness and humility in sharing the way you have about your marriage – may God bless you RICHLY, and I’m sure He’ll use it to bless many others (us included).”

And may God richly bless us all as we seek to be obedient to Him in our desire to please Him in our marriages. Let us remember to continue to meet the needs of our spouses we are already meeting well. Then work at improving how we meet other needs. We do these things, as difficult as they sometimes are, for the Lord’s sake, for the sake of our marriages, for the sake of our children....but knowing that we personally also benefit by enjoying the fruit of a more peaceful, enjoyable and satisfying marriage partner from now on!

need together; and I am not saying you are in sin if you allow your children to be in sports or clubs. I am saying: Watch out! Be careful! Make sure that you don’t fall into the activity-driven lifestyle of your contemporaries. Remember what your children need most: you!

I remember hearing of a father who was a little league coach for his son’s team. This man was shocked when his boy told him that all he really wanted was to play catch in the backyard with his dad. Now not every boy would say that. Many children want the activities — and the busyness may grow addictive to them, too. But it is the father who must decide what is best for the children, whether they agree or not.

Some years ago my oldest son wanted to play baseball on a team. At that time I established a policy for the family: no regular individual activities outside the family except for music lessons. I do not want my family to become driven and fractured by schedule tyrants. Some would say I’m depriving my children. Actually, I think I am protecting them from allowing the *good* things to consume the *best* things. Your choices may be different, but do err on the side of freedom and time — freedom from unrelenting obligations and time for unhurried family interaction.

## The Simple Is the Best

Here is a gem from a book we once read aloud as a family (*Caddie Woodlawn*, by Carol Ryrie Brink, p. 84):

*The long winter evenings in the farmhouse were very pleasant times. Grouped about the fire and the lamp, the Woodlawns made their own society, nor wanted any better.*

Can we say this of our families, that we make our own society, nor want any better? Do we know how to spend a quiet evening together, swapping stories and working on handcrafts as the Woodlawns did? Or do we need some place to go or something to watch on television?

I am struck by two things in this quote. First, the family made their own society, they worked at companionship. It didn’t just happen. They chose to interact with each other, to improve the quality of the natural bonds God had given them. Granted, they didn’t have all the distractions that we have. We are more free in the sense that we have more choices, more ways we can spend our time. But I dare say the Woodlawns were more free in fact, because they were not bound to busyness and technology for a sense of fulfillment. They enjoyed the liberty of the simple. It is ironic that in our day we have to work harder to get more simple in our lifestyle. But it is worth the effort. We need, our children need, the simplicity of intimate family society.

Second, the family found these simple family times to be the best times they had. They didn’t endure them, they relished them. They couldn’t imagine a better way to spend an evening! How tragic that in our day families have to make a special effort to plan a family night. We must have lost the natural enjoyment of family if we have to make ourselves spend time together.

Here again home education has opened new doors for many of us. God is using it to turn parents’ hearts back to their children. Many of us did not grow up in families that spent intimate time together, and it doesn’t come naturally to us. But we are not only learning its importance, we are also learning that there is nothing better!

**We did not grow up in families that spent time together, so it doesn’t come naturally. But we are learning its importance and that there is nothing better!**

## Take Control of the Schedule

James Dobson has some wise words for fathers (*What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*, p. 51):

*Prescription for a happier and healthier life: Resolve to slow your pace; learn to say “No” gracefully; resist the temptation to chase after more pleasures, hobbies and more social entanglements; then hold the line with the tenacity of a tackle for a professional football team.*

Don’t wait for your wife to get overwhelmed with carting kids to all their engagements. Don’t wait until your children are addicted to the busyness buzz. Act now to regain control of your family’s schedule. Tell them that you love them enough to want to spend more time together. Tell them that you want your life as a family to be more than a shadow life, an idiot-tale full of sound and fury — active but empty. Tell them you want your family to err on the Mary side of the Mary/Martha continuum.

Remember how Martha was bustling around with her preparations while Mary sat at Jesus’ feet. Martha was an activist. Mary was more concerned for relationships. Here is what Jesus said to Martha when she asked Jesus to make Mary help her: “Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41,42.)

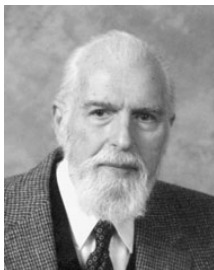
Let’s choose relationships over activities. Let this be a picture of your life as a family: sitting together at the feet of Jesus, spending time with Him and with each other.

Our Shepherd does not lead us in a rat race, He leads us beside quiet waters and restores our souls. Let’s return to a life of quietness and rest in the presence of our Savior. Say “No” to busyness.

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# Bits of Books



## Intellectual Schizophrenia

by Rousas J. Rushdoony

To understand modern educational theory, it is important to recognize the impact of John Locke (1632-1704). Locke’s influence was two-fold, both as an educational theorist and as the founder of modern psychology, through which he has had a continuing influence. It was important to Locke, as a zealous champion of the Enlightenment and a forerunner of Empiricism, to eliminate the effect of the past and wipe out any concept of the mind that would leave innate ideas or any stock of ideas to the individual. Accordingly, he gave to the Enlightenment its ideal weapon against God and the past: the concept of the mind as a blank piece of white paper. Although not entirely new, the idea received its influential formulation from Locke. The mind begins life without any burden from the past; it is like a white paper without any markings.

The marvels of this theory for educators of the Enlightenment are immediately apparent. Man was able to remake man, and the educator was able to play the role of a god. The hated and despised past could be cancelled out and man be given in effect a new inheritance. No modern goal in education is understandable except in terms of this hope of the Enlightenment. Such education became a veritable mania, a magical concept which was the cure-all for all problems – social, ethical and economic. Education would produce universal brotherhood and a paradise on earth, freedom and happiness for all.

The concept of the mind as a clean tablet was very quickly exploded as a psychological reality, but it remained as an *ideal*. It became the ideal concept undergirding *the idea of revolution*. History was to be wiped out by revolution, a clean tablet effected, and history begun anew. This concept dominated all thinking in the French Revolution (1789-1815) and extended itself to the point of beginning again in the reckoning of time. It was basic to the thinking of the anarchists, Marxists such as Lenin and others, and still underwrites all revolutionary expectancy. It has been basic to all Utopian thinking.

It has provided the ideal for *scientific thinking*. The true scientist ostensibly wipes his mind free of all preconceptions and approaches his subject with a clean-tablet mind, ready to see and interpret the facts in and of themselves. This scientific attitude is one of the great myths of modern times. Others have amply shown that the scientist actually approaches his subject with a variety of axioms of thought and pre-theoretical and religious presuppositions.<sup>1</sup>

But, more pertinent to our concern, the clean tablet concept has become *the* educational ideal. True education, we are told, involves a ruthless wiping of the slate, cleaning it of all ideas and opinions not derived from the educational process. Indeed, some professors self-consciously and conscientiously employ a kind of shock therapy designed to jolt the student out of all preconceptions, wean him from the past, home, nation and religion, in order that the student can now truly pursue knowledge.

Accordingly, while compelled by its own research to grant that the home and the community are essential to the mental health of the whole man, the home, community and church are reduced in importance in every way possible, being limited to a basically emotional influence and none other. In all matters of mind, the initiative must lie with education (the state schools) and the “scientific” thinker. Such an approach is destructive, however, of every cultural agency, including the home.

By contrast let us examine briefly one aspect of the education against which the Enlightenment rebelled: the education as manifested in the Pilgrims and Puritanism, who were contemporary with the Enlightenment. The Puritans were not past-bound, in that they did not look back to any past state, but sought rather to create a new order. They were, however, past-bound from the viewpoint of the Enlightenment in that they held to the infallible word, the once-for-all and full revelation of God, the Bible. They looked to the future but refused to be chained to it. Thus, the communism of the Pilgrims was quickly dropped when it failed. Education was a major interest, but on radically different presuppositions.

Education was for the Puritans inevitably a *covenantal act*, following after their Calvinistic or Reformed faith: an incorporation of the person into the life of a rich and vital body, an indoctrination into its past and a participation in its present and future life and power. The covenant, however, was not static; it was a covenant with promise, both for this life and the life to come. In terms of this life, for example, it looked to the beating of swords into plowshares, the earth filled with “the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9). Education did not function to sever home ties, for example, but to confirm them, in that it worked to develop more fully man’s knowledge, righteousness, holiness and dominion in terms of every aspect of life. It was thus concerned with the development of godly scholarship, and godly youth who would also be godly sons and daughters now and husbands, wives and parents tomorrow.

Thus, between the two concepts of education, the covenantal or Calvinistic on the one hand and that of the Enlightenment (as well as contemporary thought) on the other, there can be no compromise. They are in hopeless contradiction. The modern concept, with its clean-tablet ideal, is erosive and destructive of all aspects of culture except the monolithic state, which is then the ostensible creator and patron of culture. When it speaks of the whole child, it speaks of a passive creature who is to be molded by statist education for a con-

whispered sweet nothings to me, my heart responded positively to him. It made me want to meet a need of his.

Many of us are probably like this next person who wrote to us:

“I just thought I’d write and thank you for your input into my life with your magazine and your talks at homeschool conventions. I guess you’d be about five years ahead of us in the homeschool world — we benefited from you pioneering....But I particularly wanted to thank you for sharing your lives in ‘Over a Cuppa’. It has encouraged me to think that things could change for the better. I think I’d decided just to accept the good points of our marriage and thank God for them and leave my disappointments over unmet expectations with Him also. But perhaps growth is still possible! I had chucked in ‘marriage books’ a while back because I felt they just made one discontented! But if you are still growing and learning at your age (which is probably similar to ours) and stage, I feel encouraged! Thanks for your openness.”

Merely accepting the good points of our marriage and leaving the disappointments with Him is also what many of us do. This is the way so many of us are living out our married lives. We gel together as husband and wife well in some areas and not in others. We are meeting some of the needs of our spouses but not all of the needs. We settle for this half-way situation because it is too hard to do anything else. We are tired of the past hurts, so we accept the current situation and don’t work at it anymore.

Willard F. Harley says in the book *His Need Her Needs*, “Every couple has the choice to let unmet needs hamper or even ruin their relationship, or they can decide to preserve their marriage. Limping along in disappointment and bittersweet frustration doesn’t do any better. **A mature coming together to meet each other’s needs is always the best solution.**”

“Marital conflict is created one of two ways. (1) Couples *fail to make* each other *happy*, or (2) couples make each other *unhappy*. In the first case, couples are frustrated because their needs are not being met. In the second case, they’re deliberately hurting each other. I call the first cause of conflict *failure to care* and the second, *failure to protect*.”

“The [legitimate] needs are so strong that when they’re not met in marriage, people are tempted to go outside marriage to satisfy them.... But aside from the risk of an affair, important emotional needs *should be met* for the sake of care itself. Marriage is a very special relationship. Promises are made to allow a spouse the *exclusive* right to meet some of these important needs. When they are unmet, that is unfair to the spouse who must go through life without ethical alternatives.”

“Couples that find their needs unmet often become

thoughtless and inconsiderate. When that happens, marriages slide into ugly and destructive scenes. The failure to meet these needs is often unintentional, but reaction to unmet needs develops in intentional harm. That often leads to unbearable pain and, ultimately, divorce.”

Harley goes on to say, “In or outside marriage, most people resent denunciations, criticism, or corrections. If others tell us we have made a mistake, we often try to justify our failure or cast blame elsewhere.”

“On the other hand, if someone we care for explains that he or she would like us to meet a personal need, we are usually willing to help. As long as we are not criticized, we can willingly accommodate others with some change in our behavior.”

“Successful marriages require skill – skill in caring for the one you promised to cherish throughout life. Good intentions are not enough.”

Let’s look at these needs from *His Needs Her Needs* again. The husband’s five most basic needs in marriage tend to be:

- Sexual fulfillment
- Recreational companionship
- An attractive spouse
- Domestic support
- Admiration

The wife’s five most basic needs in marriage tend to be:

- Affection
- Conversation
- Honesty and openness
- Financial support
- Family commitment

So we settle for our spouse meeting some of these needs of ours and being resigned to never having other needs met. Disappointment and bitterness can play on our minds and hearts at this stage. And we are vaguely aware that we let our spouses down in some areas, that we’re not meeting their needs in one way or another, but just leave it in the too-hard basket. We may flirt with someone who somehow seems to be meeting a long-unmet need. In the worst case, even Christians have fallen into having an affair. Those who do end up in an affair usually find that this liaison only meets *one* of their needs! Suddenly they realise more of their needs were being faithfully met by their spouse than they realised. This new liaison may meet one need that was wanting, but it doesn’t come close to what they just threw away. So let’s learn from this horrible situation and look at our marriages: which needs of our spouses are we meeting and which ones do we need to work at meeting?

The needs of ours that our spouses are meeting will be filling their Love Bank with us. The needs that are being neglected will be causing withdrawals in that Love

twisted, and even maligned organizations called Christian households.

## The Doctrine of the Christian Household

Did you know that the Bible communicates at least seven crucial, culture-transforming missions for the Christian household?

1. The household is the God-ordained seat of **EDUCATION**.
2. It is the first place where we are to develop and communicate a distinctively Christian aesthetic for **CULTURE**.
3. The home is not to be relegated to a mere place for consumption, but transformed into a powerful tool for **INDUSTRY** and production.
4. In the household (not the state welfare agency) we find God's true pattern for multi-generational, covenantal **CARE**.
5. The home, not even the temple or church meeting house, has always been the God-ordained primary locus for *daily* **WORSHIP**.
6. Our homes not only provide us with a platform to honor God's non-optional commands for one-anothering and **HOSPITALITY**, but...
7. they were designed to be the most powerful forums for **EVANGELISM** and discipleship in the Christian's arsenal.

Of course, this vision for the Christian home presupposes a rigorous adherence to the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture. Unless we presuppose the Holy Scripture, not the traditions of man or the present cultural patterns, as the starting point for any coherent worldview or cultural vision, our thinking will, by definition, be muddled. Furthermore, this household vision of victory presupposes an appreciation for the doctrine of biblical patriarchy, which teaches the necessity of leadership in the home by fathers committed to family-unifying policies and a vision for multi-generational faithfulness.

When the household is functioning according to these God-directed purposes, it becomes the most powerful instrument available for the Church of Jesus Christ, next to the Bible itself, in its arsenal of culture-transforming, kingdom-building tools. When properly understood, the doctrine of the Christian household is the antidote to the palsied, family-fragmenting efforts of modern churches to resist the world through man-centered programs which do little more than bring the philosophies and methodologies of the world into the Church of Jesus Christ.

Long live the Christian family! Long live biblical patriarchy and the victorious household!

(Used with permission. Vision Forum e-Newsletter, e-news@visionforum.com, of Wed 25 December 2002 www.visionforum.org.)

# Over A Cuppa



## Keeping Going When the Going Gets Tough — Part 2

by Craig and Barbara Smith

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all the positive feedback from Part 1 of this article. We have never had so much feedback on an article we have written before. Because of that and realising that this is an area of real need, we thought that we would extend this series out a bit. So this article will be dealing with marriage again.

(If you have not read Part 1 that was in the November copy of *Keystone*, then please contact us for a copy of it as this Part 2 will make more sense after reading Part 1.)

When we have had marriage difficulties, we have to work even harder on our marriages. Some one wrote to us, "Really appreciated the November issue of *Keystone*. Thank you for your honesty and encouragement to others in your article on Burnout. Your honesty has been a blessing and a great benefit to us."

I want to be honest with you again and say that it has not been easy. I said in Part 1, "But we still had difficulties and had difficulty trying to work it out until we began reading *His Needs Her Needs* by Willard F. Harley Jr. This book is amazing! We are reading it **together**, and after reading the first three chapters, we saw our marriage do a complete turn around. It was unbelievably instant. It wasn't easy at first, as we faced the need to read this book **together**, but once we got into it and both wanted to work on it, all things came together for us."

There was an immediate turn around. This happened in our **minds and actions** towards each other, not that we suddenly were head over heels in love and lived happily ever after. There was quite a struggle to overcome the fear of being hurt again by both of us. We struggled with the need to come **together** to work on this.

So first we made a clinical commitment to each other. Our love actions towards each other were clinical. We both knew that they were clinical: you know, doing nice things to each other because the Bible and the book said we should more than because we suddenly had this spontaneous, romantic desire to. We neither of us had it in ourselves for it to be otherwise. We were doing what we knew was right to be doing for the other. We thought it would come across as really fake and put-on, which made us hesitate to do anything at all, which would only leave us back where we started: doing nothing. But you know what? *The emotions and feelings followed the actions!* It was unbelievable when we knew each other was acting clinically towards each other that other good feelings could come out of it. So when Craig took my hand, or put his arm around me, or

cept of "the good life" radically divorced from God and from all transcendental standards.

Modern education thus is statist education, and the state is made the all-embracing institution of which all other institutions (such as the church, the school, the family) are but facets. The state and the person; the government and the individual become thus the two realities of such a world-view. Both demand freedom and power for themselves. The state recognizes no law beyond itself, such as God's law; and the individual insists on his own autonomy and ultimacy. Thus, *the one and the many* are in perpetual tension. The individual and the state can only each affirm themselves at the expense of the other.

[We see this manifested today in the state taking to itself greater and greater measures of "responsibility" for the health, housing and education of individuals and assigning to itself the protection of individual rights. These rights are often first enumerated by the state and are applied in a radically individualistic way, ignoring the familial, cultural and religious contexts. Consequently we see the state wanting to ensure the right of a child to a secular education by making it compulsory and increasingly difficult to home educate or operate truly independent schools. We also see the state desiring to protect the child's right to freedom from physical pain by forbidding the child's own parents from exercising the Biblical method of corporal correction. Yet at the same time the individual is seeking, and gaining from the state, an increasing amount of autonomy to do as they please....in the moral realm. The state is happy to reduce all moral restrictions to a minimum, and so contemporary societies see an increased validation and acceptance of homosexuality, prostitution, murder (by abortion and euthanasia), adultery, fornication, polygamy, de facto relationships, theft, destruction of property, blasphemy and idolatry (special privileges to false religions while the true Christian faith is restricted).]

Against this the consistent Christian philosophy, by beginning with the Biblical revelation and the ontological Trinity, begins with the equal ultimacy and the fundamental congeniality of *the one and the many* in the Trinity, three Persons, one God. The concept of the covenant furthers this unity in that the self-realization of the individual is the advantage of all and is advanced by and integral with the self-realization of others. (In the modern conception, the fulfilment and self-realization of the individual are at the expense of others and may involve their sacrifice.) For the Christian, self-

realization apart from the covenant is an impossibility, for it involves life in an organism, the true body of Christ. This concept of the body of Christ asserts emphatically in all its Biblical statements that individuality is not monotonous repetition but the fulfilment of varying functions and callings as individuals who are yet part of a common whole. The service of the body [the one] requires the fulfilment of the individual [the many individuals]; the eye must fulfil itself as an eye that the entire body as well may prosper.

Covenantal education holds man to be not a passive and blank object, nor a creature of the state, but God's vice-regent, created in His image and called upon to establish dominion over all creation – and over himself. [Contemporary statist education holds students to be part of the nation's natural resources, to be used to accomplish the political agendas of the ruling elite. Such students, trained up and treated as if they were blank tapes, cannot exercise dominion over the earth. As the state removes more and more legal restrictions they are also increasingly unable to control their own fallen lusts and desires. Moral weakness leads to physical and intellectual weakness and a state of helplessness in which individuals look all the more intensely to the nanny state – rather than to Jesus Christ – for their help and salvation.]

### Notes:

1. Herman Dooyeweerd in *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* and *In the Twilight of Western Thought, Studies in the Pretended Autonomy of Philosophical Thought*. Cornelius Van Til in *The New Modernism, The Defense of the Faith, The Metaphysics of Apologetics* and *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*.

(Condensed and edited from Chapter 1, "The School and the Whole Person" of *Intellectual Schizophrenia: Culture, Crisis and Education*, R.J. Rushdoony, 1961.)



# Learning Disabilities



## Down Syndrome Family

By Barbara Frank

Until 1993 we were your average homeschool family. We had been happily homeschooling our older two children for five years and had an adorable little toddler who kept us busy and made sure we weren't getting too set in our ways. In addition, we were expecting baby number four.

Joshua was born shortly after midnight one rainy March night. He was a little woozy but as cute as a bug. I spent his first day cuddling him. He wasn't too interested in eating, and while the nurses seemed concerned, I wasn't. I figured he was just worn out from the birthing process and would probably be more energetic the next day. Such is the confidence of a fourth-time mom.

He was about 18 hours old when he started having trouble breathing. We had just sent him to the nursery so that we could eat the fancy dinner the hospital provided each couple. I was biting into a chocolate eclair when a man I'd never seen before came into the room and told us that he was Dr. So-and-so and that our son was having trouble breathing and his heart wasn't working right. He said they'd put him on oxygen, but he really needed more help than they could give, and they wanted to transport him to a bigger hospital. Then he added a little p.s.: "We think he might have Down Syndrome."

And that's how our adventure with Joshua began. As it turned out, he did have Down Syndrome, and he did have to go to the larger hospital where he was admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Over the course of the next month, the staff would find scary things that were wrong with him, try to fix them, succeed, and say he was ready to go home. But before we could pack up the baby seat and the snowsuit, we'd get a call telling us they'd found something else, and he could not yet be released. After going through this process twice in order to find he had reflux and jaundice, we were pretty discouraged. We wanted our baby home.

But we had to go through it one more time. That's when we found out that he had central apnea: basically, he had a tendency to stop breathing. If he hadn't already been in the NICU for the other things, the apnea might not have been discovered, and he could have been a crib death. So God worked the whole thing out for good.

But during the time Josh was in the NICU, there was a strange dichotomy going on. There were so many good medical professionals working to solve our son's serious problems and keep him alive, and none of them could promise us he would make it through his first month. And yet, after doing procedures on him, puz-

zling over him and looking very serious, they would turn to us and ask the same question: "Have you signed him up for early intervention yet?"

We were perplexed. We knew early intervention was some kind of special education. But was it so special that their concern about it rivaled their concern for saving his life? Yet it seemed to be the question on everyone's mind. At least once a day, a nurse or a doctor or a therapist or all three would ask us that question. We were new to the world of special education, and their incessant questioning made us nervous. Why were they so concerned about this, when they weren't even sure he was going to live?

As time passed, Josh started to improve, and the questioning became more pointed. As wary homeschoolers, we wanted to keep our options open until we knew exactly what early intervention was and what it entailed from a legal standpoint. But we also knew enough to act interested so they wouldn't think we weren't going to take their advice. So we started asking each one what exactly they thought Joshua would need.

They were pretty much in agreement: he would need occupational, physical and speech therapy several times each week, plus early intervention classes from birth to age three, and then special education preschool from three until he reached school age. They also advised us to get in touch with a Down Syndrome support group for his socialization needs and a charitable group that raised funds to help out families with special needs kids.

I couldn't imagine the kind of life they were describing. We were already very busy with our three other children. How could we possibly find the time for all these therapies? I pictured our lives turned upside down as we dropped everything we had been doing in order to cart our little baby to therapists and classes and group meetings. We were told he would also need to be seen by several other professionals, including a cardiologist and a paediatric ophthalmologist. It sounded as though we would have to spend every waking hour doing what needed to be done for him. There wouldn't be time for anything or anyone else.

One night on the way home from the hospital, I turned to my husband and cried, "I don't want us to be the Down Syndrome Family!"

He felt the same way, and reassured me that we would not allow that to happen. That was the beginning of our determination to provide a normal life for Joshua and for his siblings. Even though the professionals were telling us that these therapies were his only chance for making progress despite his disabilities, we felt that there had to be another way to help him without hurting his brother and sisters.

We started by calling HSLDA (Home School Legal Defense Association). We had been members for several years but never called them for help until we had Joshua. The Special Needs Coordinator told me she would have to call me back with the information, but said in the meantime to be careful not to sign anything

# Tough Questions People Ask



## You Home Educators Have Few Outside Commitments. Why Don't You Run the Church's Youth Programme?

by Doug Phillips of  
Vision Forum

I have the privilege of worshiping in a small, family-integrated church. When asked about our various church programs, I explain that we are blessed with more than thirty different organizations to which our members belong — they are called families. I further explain that we have more than sixty youth directors — they are called parents. In fact, we have such a full schedule of events that there is a mandatory activity every day of the week — it is called family worship.

Both through the preaching of the word and informal shepherding of the congregation, the church leadership

aspires to equip our dozens and dozens of youth pastors to successfully minister to the diverse needs of the many individuals and special interest groups within their respective organizations (called "families", remember). Because we don't want to leave anybody behind, we have instructed these church organizations to reach out to the young, the old, and the infirm; to the singles, the divorced, or abandoned — everybody, such that we will have a comprehensive outreach for every special interest group represented by the membership of our assembly of believers. As a result, these organizations sponsor events that include hospitality and evangelism outreach, one-room schoolhouses (usually meeting in the family den), foreign missions (to Mexico from our premises in San Antonio, Texas) and literally hundreds of other activities designed to meet the needs of the organizational members.

The amazing thing is that our financial budget to accomplish these goals is \$0.00. Well, that is not exactly true — we do spend some money on photocopying, tape distribution, and various other training tools that we place in the hands of our youth directors.

As an example to the congregation, the elders are required to be youth directors, too. In fact, if the elders don't manage their own youth programs well, they have to step down from being elders. (See I Timothy 3:4-5).

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With so much responsibility on their hands, our youth directors have to really get their collective acts together. (I happen to be one of the youth directors, so I speak from personal experience.) They have to study God's Word more than they have ever studied before so they can wisely lead their organization. They have to be creative so they can solve the diverse problems of their special interest groups. They have to learn to be patient. They have to learn to love. They even have to re-prioritize their lives.

This last part is crucial. Only by re-prioritizing life, and structuring their organizations properly, will our youth directors be successful. They know that. They also know there is a price to pay. But most of them are willing to pay the price, because they have decided that the greatest activity they can do in this life is to be a youth pastor and to run a special interest organization called the Christian family.

Here is what we are discovering: The more we commit to faithfully shepherding our mini-congregations, the more blessing we experience. Moreover, the more we study what God's Word says about these little congregations, the more we see the wonder and the brilliance of God's plan of equipping the Church and transforming the entire culture through these often forgotten,

# Exploring God's Creation



## Evolution Is Scientific Fact; Creation Is Religious Belief

(rewrite of an article by Carl Wieland, M.B., B.S.)

The fact is, many highly qualified scientists today accept the direct creation of a functioning world (just as it says in Genesis) and reject evolution. In the U.S. alone it is conservatively estimated that there are upwards of 10,000 professional scientists (the vast majority not officially linked to creation organizations) who believe in Biblical creation. In 1993 in South Korea, for instance, the Korea Association of Creation Research already had a membership of over 1,000 scientists, the majority with at least a Master's or Ph.D. degree in some area of science, and including 100 full-ranking university professors. The Moscow Creation Science Fellowship was formed with 10 members. A year later it had escalated to 120 holders of advanced science degrees.

Most university professors have one earned doctorate; we know of members of the creation movement (e.g. Professor A.E. Wilder-Smith) who have the rare distinction of three such doctorates. Historically most scientific disciplines were founded by great scientists (Newton, Pasteur, Faraday to name but a few) who were all creationists.

Real science depends on measuring or watching something happen and checking it by doing it again. Even if, for example, reptiles *did* change into birds millions of years ago, as evolutionists allege, the scientific method could never prove that as a *fact*, because it was not observed happening. If you *could* somehow turn a reptile into a bird today, even that wouldn't prove it happened millions of years ago. Equally you can't insist that God should repeat the miraculous creation of many groups of birds and reptiles, programmed to reproduce after their kind, just so you can watch it.

You see, both special creation by God in six days as described in the book of Genesis and evolution over millions of years as pushed as fact by today's secular educational establishment are ideas held on faith; each is a belief system which offers its own arguments and evidences to bolster its own position. Creationists maintain (and with a lot more credibility to the dispassionate observer, should one ever be found!) that theirs is a *reasonable and logical* belief system, backed up by the weight of evidence observable in the *present*.

## Does It Really Matter Which View You Hold?

For those who call themselves Bible-believing Christians, it is very important for at least two reasons.

First, evolution justifies atheism. Everyone who insists

there is no God relies upon evolution to explain the complexities, balance and beauty of the natural world without a designer. It is the necessary foundation for many religious world and life views such as atheism, agnosticism and the associated secular humanism with its motto: "if nobody made us, nobody owns us, so there's nobody to set the rules except us". There is no logical reason to be bound by the principles set out in the Ten Commandments, for example, if other parts of the Old Testament (e.g. the book of Genesis) are rejected as "cultural myths".

Second, there is running right through the entire Bible the theme that God made a good world, one in which was no death, struggle, violence, cruelty or bloodshed. We have these things today because the entire universe has been cursed by God (see Genesis 3 and Romans 8) as a consequence of the sinful rebellion of the first man, Adam, against God his Maker. That is, these bad things entered the world only *after* Adam and Eve committed sin. Evolution would say that these bad things have *always been* an integral and necessary part of life on earth to ensure the survival of the fittest and succeeding generations which could carry forth the beneficial mutations said to be the building blocks of the evolutionary process.

The conflict between these two mutually exclusive positions, that death has always been a part of life or that it is part of the curse placed on us as a result of our father Adam's sin, is resolved only with the abolition of one of the positions. Either the idea of billions of years of death and bloodshed as a normative condition of life has to go or the idea that death first entered the world through Adam when he and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden has to go. If the second one is tossed out, with it goes the historical Gospel of Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. You see, Jesus Christ (as the second Adam — see Romans 5) was sent to redeem us from the curse of death, to rescue us from its fearful prospects of an eternity in hell on the other side of the grave and eventually to *restore* us to a sinless, deathless existence in paradise. Evolution means there never existed a sinless, deathless paradise to which we can be restored. It also means a real Garden of Eden, an historical Adam and Eve and the Fall are only myths.

There is no intellectual integrity in suggesting that perhaps the Genesis account of creation was meant to be something other than real, true history. According to one of the world's leading Hebrew scholars (James Barr, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, a man who does not believe in the literal truth of Genesis), all world-class university professors of Hebrew he knows of are unanimous that Genesis 1-11 was written to tell us of a real, recent creation of all things in six ordinary days and a globe-covering catastrophic flood.

Other ideas about the meaning of Genesis almost always arise from trying to make the Bible somehow fit with *other beliefs*; that is, compromising its plain message, making it say something else.

(Edited by Craig Smith from *Stones and Bones*, 1994, Creation Science Foundation, Australia.)

that had to do with therapies or early intervention. That startled us. Why did we have to be so cautious?

The next day she called back, and we spent over an hour talking. I learned so much from her that day. She told me that in the state of Illinois, if we signed paperwork putting our son into early intervention, we were actually hooking him up into the public school system. Depending on the documents used, we could be signing away our right to make decisions about his education until he was 21. No wonder she said not to sign anything.

She then explained that early intervention was a catch-all term for putting a new baby with disabilities into state-supported programs featuring recommended therapies and other stimulation. The babies were assessed regularly, and then at age three, funnelled into a special education preschool, run by our local school district.

As homeschoolers we had avoided any contact with the public schools and had no intention of starting up with them just because we now had a child with disabilities. To my relief, she assured me that many people were homeschooling disabled kids, and they were thriving. This was the first encouraging word I'd heard since Joshua had been diagnosed.

She recommended a book to read that would provide a good idea of what was involved in early intervention. *When Slow is Fast Enough*, by Dr. Joan Goodman, is a detailed description of Dr. Goodman's study of early intervention for small children with disabilities. Reading that book helped me realize that we would want to homeschool Joshua for all the same reasons we homeschooled his siblings. And so we did. Homeschooling him has been a team effort. We have all worked with him, played with him, and sometimes civilized him.

Over the years, we have had Joshua in some therapy. He was in private speech and physical therapy when he was a baby, but we stopped both by the time he was two. The therapists were very young and by-the-book, and we felt it wasn't worth the time and money involved. But we still wanted some form of speech therapy for him, as his greatest delay is in speech. While he is very aware of what is going on, he cannot express himself clearly. Of course, he still manages to make his desires known, and we can generally tell what he is saying, but he needs to be able to communicate with others outside the family, too.

Fortunately, a fellow homeschooler recommended a wonderful speech therapist to us several years ago, and Josh has been seeing her weekly for the past few years. She is friendly to the idea of homeschooling, and during his sessions, I sit in and she shows me what to do with him at home. I have learned a lot by watching her. She is patient yet persistent, and that is what he needs.

Josh likes to "do school" because he sees his brother and sisters doing their schoolwork, and he wants to be like them. As the youngest sibling, that is his prime motivation. In fact, I often say he has Youngest Child Syndrome. He wants to do whatever he sees them doing,

and that is so good for him. He has learned to play games on the computer, hit a ball pitched to him, make a basket with the basketball and draw elaborate pictures, all because he started out imitating one of his siblings doing those things. When he sees them involved in something interesting, he'll call out, "Me do it!" And then he does.

His siblings are on the phone a lot, and he wants to talk, too. We have found that handing the phone to him when a telemarketer calls makes him very happy. He jabbars away in his own language, then scowls and says, "Hey!" when he hears the inevitable dial tone.

We feel that his natural inclination toward mimicry would not be good for him if he were in special education. He has enough difficulties without adopting the idiosyncrasies of children with other disabilities. If he's going to mimic others, we'd rather he mimic normal kids. Education experts call that mainstreaming: putting kids with disabilities into classrooms with normal kids. But we don't want him to mimic schoolchildren — we didn't want our other kids to do that either. We'd prefer that he learn from watching his siblings.

Now Josh is eight, and we've gotten to the point that he can sit working with me one-on-one for an hour at a time. Although a psychologist we hired once told us that he relies too much on his visual strengths, we find that he learns better visually. So we do lots of puzzles and games. He likes sequencing cards and number puzzles. He can read about thirty words now, and writes several of them. He loves books; right now he's on a "Where's Waldo" kick. I buy curriculum for him the same way I did for his brother and sisters. If it looks like it will work well for that specific child, I buy it. If it doesn't work, I try something else. In Josh's case, one of my best purchases for him has been Rod and Staff's series of preschool workbooks.

I have found the grocery to be a good learning experience for him. I let him push the cart, but he has to follow my directions or I'll take it back, which he can't bear. We count everything: cans, loaves of bread, bags of chips, you name it. We work on listening skills; I tell him where to turn, and ask him to get certain things within his reach ("We need three of those green cans, Josh — put them in the cart gently, please.") It takes us a while to go through, and sometimes people stare at us. But repetition is so important for him that I have gotten used to shopping that way. When I shop alone, I get done so much faster. But I try to enjoy the process when I am with him. It has taught me patience.

His teenage siblings became crackerjack baby-sitters, in much demand in our neighborhood, and I think he was part of the reason. They were used to baby-sitting their brother, who had to be watched every minute, because he would break out of the house and run away if you weren't keeping an eye on him. After watching him, the neighbor kids were a breeze.

Josh's big brother taught him to play Sega (a video arcade game), which has given him great pleasure. Josh and his dad also play golf on the computer together.

(Continued on page 26: **Downs Family**)



# Home Education Research



## Teacher Certification Reconsidered: Stumbling for Quality

by Kate Walsh  
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The Abell Foundation  
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### Executive Summary

Maryland's requirement that individuals must complete a prescribed body of coursework before teaching in a public school is deeply misguided. This process, known as teacher certification, is neither an efficient nor an effective means by which to ensure a competent teaching force. Worse, it is often counterproductive.

### Certification Not Linked to Student Achievement

All states, including Maryland, have developed regulatory policies under the seemingly logical theory that requiring credentials of teachers is simply good government in action. At the heart of these policies is a claim by the education establishment that taking the coursework needed to obtain certification is not only the best, but also the only acceptable means for preparing teachers. This assertion, some claim, is supported by a body of research consisting of 100 to 200 studies.

This report reveals in detail the shortcomings found in this research. In fact, the academic research attempting to link teacher certification with student achievement is astonishingly deficient.

To reach this conclusion, we reviewed every published study or paper — along with many unpublished dissertations — cited by prominent national advocates of teacher certification. We found roughly 150 studies, going back 50 years, which explored or purported to explore the relationship between teacher preparation and student achievement. To our knowledge, there has been no comparable effort by analysts to drill systematically down through these layers of evidence in order to determine what value lies at the core.

The following deficiencies characterize the work advocating teacher certification:

- Research that is seen as helping the case for certification is cited selectively, while research that does not is overlooked.
- The lack of evidence for certification is concealed by the practice of padding analyses with multiple references that appear to provide support but, once read, do not.
- Research is cited that is too old to be reliable or re-

trievable.

- Research that has not been subjected to peer review is given unmerited weight, with particular reliance on unpublished dissertations.
- Instead of using standardized measures of student achievement, advocates design their own assessment measures to prove certification's value.
- Basic principles of sound statistical analysis, which are taken for granted in other academic disciplines, are violated routinely. Examples include failing to control for such key variables as poverty and prior student achievement; using sample sizes which are too small to allow generalization or reliable statistical inference; and relying on inappropriately aggregated data.

### Seeking Effective Teachers

For as long as the teacher certification process has existed, there has been dissatisfaction with it. One after another reform of the process has been promoted, usually from within the ranks of the education establishment. These reforms do not address a fundamental weakness of the certification process: its crude capacity for ensuring quality under any configuration. This process consists primarily of counting course titles, showing no regard for the possibility that knowledge can be acquired by means other than coursework, for the actual content of a college course or the quality of the instruction, for the educational standards of the college, or for even the grade earned. These omissions render the process incapable of determining the true quality of teacher candidates.

Certification deems substandard all uncertified candidates, no matter what other attributes they possess, including those attributes that research correlates with effective teaching. There is a scientifically sound body of research, conducted primarily by economists and social scientists, revealing the attributes of an effective teacher, defined as a teacher who has a positive impact on student achievement. This research does not show that certified teachers are more effective teachers than uncertified teachers. In fact, the backgrounds and attributes characterizing effective teachers are more likely to be found *outside* the domain of schools of education.

The teacher attribute found consistently to be most related to raising student achievement is *verbal ability*. Most researchers understand verbal ability, usually measured by short vocabulary tests, to be a measure of a teacher's general cognitive ability. Recent research has altered significantly our understanding of cognitive ability or intelligence. A person's cognitive ability is no longer understood to be an exclusively innate quality that depends entirely on our genetic composition at birth. Verbal ability is to some degree plastic in nature, capable of being improved at all levels of schooling, including college.

Not surprisingly, the importance of verbal ability aligns with similar findings that teachers who have attended selective colleges are more likely to raise student achievement. Private school principals routinely seek out teachers who appear to be bright and use the

selectivity of the teacher's college as a possible indicator of a teacher's aptitude. On the other hand, Maryland and its public school districts not only fail to recognize the importance of these qualities, but also often eschew them, a rejection that contains a strong undercurrent of anti-intellectualism. Certification is an inhospitable process, deterring from entering public school teaching many capable individuals who possess the most powerful attribute identified for raising student achievement.

### The Practice in Maryland

State Schools. The Maryland State Department of Education appears to place considerable confidence in traditional teacher certification process, without any evidence that its certification regulations improve teacher quality. It has never sought to determine the value of its costly and time-consuming certification process.

Maryland, not unlike other states, lists 66 different kinds of teaching certificates in its regulations. This regulatory excess contrasts with medicine, law, accounting and dentistry, for which states typically issue only one license.

In its 1990 report, the Maryland Governor's Commission on School Reform put education reform at the forefront of policy changes needed in the State. The report called for the elimination of rules, regulations, and other constraints on school staffs, specifically citing its suspicion that state teacher certification requirements impede quality education.

Private Schools and Public Colleges. In contrast to its policy regulating public school teachers, Maryland does not regulate private and parochial school teachers; nor does it regulate teaching faculties at either public or private colleges and universities. Given this disparity and the lack of research to support its regulations, Maryland's zeal for certifying public school teachers does not appear to be premised on certification's ability to assure teacher quality, but rather on protecting the power wielded by the State's education establishment and national teacher organizations such as the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCATF) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Their overwhelming self interest is aligned with rigid state regulations of the teaching profession.

### Recommendations

An overhaul of the teacher certification process in line with the finding of this study would represent a direct threat to schools of education and other education groups that benefit from the flawed certification process. Although these groups will readily admit that the teacher preparation system is in dire need of repair, their reform agenda consistently leads to heavier state regulation, more time for prospective teachers in schools of education, and a crackdown on alternative certification routes and waivers. It is patently insufficient to consider another re-tooling of the certification process. Reinvention is in order.

(Condensed from *Teacher Certification Reconsidered: Stumbling for Quality*, October 2001, by Kate Walsh of the Abell Foundation, 111 South Calvert St., Suite

2300, Baltimore, Maryland 21202-6174; ph. 410-547-1300; email: [abell@abell.org](mailto:abell@abell.org); [www.abell.org](http://www.abell.org). Full report at [http://www.abell.org/pubsitems/ed\\_cert\\_1101.pdf](http://www.abell.org/pubsitems/ed_cert_1101.pdf))

Implications of this study for home educators are obvious: Ministries of Education world-wide have little reason to make it difficult for parents to teach their own children at home because the research does not show that certified teachers do a better job.

Negative responses to this study were not long in coming: Linda Darling-Hammond, the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University, produced *Research and Rhetoric on Teacher Certification: A Response to "Teacher Certification Reconsidered"*. (Full report is at <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v10n36.html>.) There follows a response to Darling-Hammond by Michael Podgursky, Chair, Department of Economics, University of Missouri-Columbia (full report at [http://www.abell.org/pubsitems/ed\\_cert\\_rejoinder\\_1101.pdf](http://www.abell.org/pubsitems/ed_cert_rejoinder_1101.pdf)):

In a lengthy response to The Abell Foundation's *Teacher Certification Reconsidered: Stumbling for Quality*, Linda Darling-Hammond mounts a considerable effort to discredit the report. In doing so she misrepresents the report's numerous facts and recommendations. She shifts the debate off the primary concern of Abell's research: does research exist proving that certified teachers produce greater student achievement than do uncertified teachers? She dismisses Abell's review of *every* study that she and others have cited on this subject, insisting that there are large numbers of studies still unexamined. She then continues to misrepresent the design, methodology and findings of the few studies that do meet basic scientific standards. Darling-Hammond revisits a few of the authors with whom Walsh had conversed, but nothing in her retelling of these conversations alters Abell's written analyses.

Even if one were to overlook the inferior design and methodologies that characterize the 19 studies cited by Darling-Hammond in her response (down from over 200 that Darling-Hammond has referred to in previous writings), and which she claims demonstrate the value of teacher certification, these studies have little to offer. Viewed through any lens, they certainly do not provide sufficient evidence to justify the current policy of 50 states that bar teachers from the classroom who are not certified. The issue at hand here is not whether schools of education offer some helpful and valuable coursework. They undoubtedly do. The issue is whether individuals who have not taken any education coursework (valuable or not) are at such a disadvantage that they should not be allowed to begin teaching. The evidence that would justify such a restriction is simply not there.

While professional educationalists argue both points (using our tax dollars), we home educators just get on with the job of actually teaching children.