

# Keystone

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of New Zealand

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November 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



The Ryan Family  
Benjamin 11, Rebekah 9,  
Natalie 14, Robert Ryan, Kay  
Christensen.







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

course. Our days begin about 7.00am, when I crawl out of bed (mornings are not my strong suit) in time to start the day right with a half hour of short Bible readings, discussion, catechism, singing and prayer. Robert, I must point out, has usually been up for two hours or more doing his own Bible study by the time I even raise a reluctant eyelid.

From 8.30am I am working one-on-one with each child (as they are at different levels) covering the basics of English and maths. While I work with one child, the others are completing various “homework” tasks independently that I have set for them the day before or otherwise completing chores. I have found it necessary to assign work in this way for several reasons. First, it gives them goals to work towards independently that require some organization and commitment on their part. Secondly, it frees me up from much of the repetitious and time consuming practice needed for maths and reading. And thirdly, it helps them to stay focused during the morning while they await their turn with me. Even if the rest of the day falls apart, I can be content knowing that the basics have at least been attended to.

The afternoons are spent more leisurely on other subjects or interests, reading stories or going out and about. I have learnt not to race around too much filling in the day at a frantic pace because I find not only does it exhaust me, but it seems to slow down the children’s creativity. In their “spare” time they each have come up with such amazing stuff that I am loath to interfere with what I now regard as the essential learning of free time.

Robert is not usually around during the day for the routine stuff but is thankfully on hand to dissect possums, rip motors apart, undertake various projects and otherwise involve the children in what he is doing. Meal times are an occasion to review the day. This will often spark vigorous discussions on a broad range of topics requiring dictionaries, encyclopaedias and maps, etc., to be consulted alongside the potatoes and broccoli.

At the beginning of our homeschooling it seemed so important to know about books and methods and subjects. Without denying their importance, we have to admit that these matters consume us a lot less now than they did back then. A major reason is the confidence we have gained in the “process” of homeschooling and in the children themselves despite our fumbings and failings. Books also cannot account for the mysteriously wonderful “something” that is found in the sense of family, in the richness of God’s blessing as we live our lives obediently to Him or in the joy of community. In this latter regard we have been profoundly grateful for the friendships and support that have come our way from so many homeschoolers in all their diversity.

And so we are drawn back to our Friday night dates with God as the epitome of what homeschooling is all about for us. It is just these sorts of memories that Robert and I will cherish in the years to come and that we want our children to hold. Homeschooling has indeed blessed us and changed us more than we could ever have imagined.

# Teaching Tips

## Teaching NZ History



Apart from the normal library and bookshop sources, one should investigate:


1. *Old New Zealand* by Frederick Maning, written in the 1800s. Brilliant! It is out of print now.

2. *Christianity Among the New Zealanders*, by William Williams, written in the 1800s. This may still be in print.

3. An Aucklander, Laurie Morrison, wrote a history of NZ from a Christian perspective a few years ago. Copies can be obtained through Erena Fussell, Learnex, ph. (09) 269-3532, orders@learnex.co.nz..

4. Helen Pearson has a tape series done by history professor Dr Peter Lineham covering pre-European days to present. It gives a child’s perspective on events and what life was like. Contact Helen at interactive.education@xtra.co.nz, ph. (09) 424-1988. Apparently Peter and Helen are also collaborating on a written child’s history of NZ due out soon.

5. The Home Education Foundation has recently acquired a supply of CDs and tapes by Mike Harding who sings a great selection of NZ Pakeha folk songs about whaling, sealing, gold mining, gum digging, deer culling, railroads, etc. None of this material is crude, vulgar or full of left-wing protests: just ballads and such from the times. We love the stuff. Contact us at: hedf@xtra.co.nz, ph. (06) 357-4399.



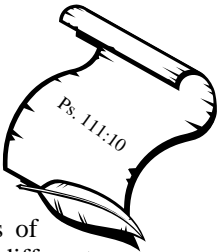
PAST TO THE PRESENT  
(NEW ZEALAND IN SONG)  
mike harding

- 1. The Night Train to Waiuku (City slickers just too tough)
- 2. The Banks of the Waikato (Bushman woes)
- 3. Alexander Whisker’s Song (Description of Maori wars)
- 4. The Hills of Coromandel (Overgrown gold diggings)
- 5. Up the Mangapapa (Trouble at shearing time)
- 6. Postholes (Empty wagons on Manawatu’s railways)
- 7. Gutboard Blues (Messy business at the meat works)
- 8. Come All You Tonguers (Shore whaling stinks)
- 9. Soon May the Wellerman Come (An unbeatable whale)
- 10. Davy Lowston (Tragedy for stranded sealers)
- 11. Packing My Things (Gold mining not brilliant)
- 12. By the Dry Cardrona (The demon drink did him in)
- 13. The Ghosts of Arrowtown (Past glory of the gold rush)
- 14. The Stable Lad (Heartbreak near Westport)
- 15. The Old McKenzie Trail (Famous sheep rustler’s story)
- 16. Black Matai (Deer culler’s lament)
- 17. The Old Dunstan Track (Gold rush & bullock wagons)
- 18. The Kingston Flyer (The days of steam locomotives)
- 19. Invercargill (She shot through due to neglect)
- 20. The Rolling Stone (No place like home)

Recorded 1989 - 1996 for  
this compilation © and ©

CDs, as above, \$30.  
Tapes, slightly different selection of 21 songs, \$15.  
Post to: Home Education Foundation, PO Box 9064,  
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

# Editorial



This issue is filled with a lot of thoughtful comment and observations, especially along the lines of lessons learned in life and how different things seem according to the world view one has. Kay Christensen is known to many of us through the email discussion groups and her involvement in the Auckland area home education scene. She makes some great observations as to what is important in the home education of your children in the Feature Family column.

In Faith of Us Fathers we look at how we might handle other people’s reactions to us due to the perspective the home education phenomenon engenders in them. When it comes to slavery, we have all heard one side of the story, the side the Christian Western nations played in the slave trade, that which was laid to rest well over 100 years ago. But somehow there is another side of the slavery story we never hear about, the part that existed before the West ever got involved, the part that continued all during the West’s involvement, the part that continues to this very day. Read the Bits of Books column and ask yourself “Why?”

Graduates Speak is a new column in which we hope to feature thoughtful contributions from young people who have been home educated most of their days. As with the Home Educators Did It column, it can be a showcase where parents just beginning can see the kind of quality the home education environment can produce and where home educated young people can share some of the insights they’ve gained by being outside the school system.

Aaron Ironside, the fellow who used to interview me about home education every Friday fortnight on Radio Rhema, left the station, and management decided to drop the half hour slot on home education. It was quite an opportunity while it lasted, to regularly rave on about home education to thousands of Christians all over New Zealand.

Barbara and I hope to do some serious writing and compiling of material we’ve already written into some kind of book form during the holiday period. The Lord has blessed us with many personal experiences, vicarious experiences and learning through many home educating friends, observations, books by experts, conversations with long- and short-term home education practitioners and the opportunities to tell of these things many times over. All this has combined to endow us with what may be a body of specialist knowledge worth distilling into book form. Let’s see if we can actually get something decent onto paper!

May the Lord give you all some great family time over the end-of-year break, some time for recreation and reflection and opportunities to refocus on the year ahead.

The verse to the right is one the Lord has really impressed upon us this year. We hope to major on applying it during 2004 and beyond.

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But one thing I do:  
forgetting what lies behind  
and straining forward  
to what lies ahead,  
I press on toward the goal for  
the prize of the upward call  
of God in Christ Jesus.  
— Philippians 3:12-13

**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 19 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 books the Foundation sells or making tax-deductible donations either by cheque, credit card or by automatic bank payment (ask us for a form). The Foundation can also be supported through Telecom 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 “Christian Home Schoolers & Home Education Foundation”, reference 10898651, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Telecom’s “School Connection” Programme. TelstraClear subscribers can ring 0508 888 800 and ask to support the Home Education Foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through TelstraClear’s “Friends of the School” Programme. Please ring today!

✂\_\_\_\_\_

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# Letters



**Inspiring!**

Wow! What a great time we had on Saturday! Thank you so much! We are so thankful that the Lord gave us this opportunity to attend your fine seminar. As a result of what we've learned we've already started revamping our whole approach to home education, having now put academics much further down our list of priorities. Today our boys have started making a poster about the main objectives you outlined, Barbara, adding their own practical ideas. John got up early this morning and spent some quiet time with our oldest. We have realised the value of a lot of the things we were already doing with our children, and plan to do more of the same. Some other things we'll be doing a lot less of or even eliminating.

You two are both inspiring! Craig, we love your ability to laugh - even at yourself. What a great quality! May the Lord bless you both, your work and your family. Your seminar was worth its weight in gold (if such a thing can be weighed - perhaps the combined weight of all the participants!) We will continue to remember you and your work in our prayers.

John and Hettie Arends and family  
Masterton

**Dear Anonymous Well-doer/s,**

Thank you very much for the two year gift subscription to *Keystone* I received recently. It is truly a wonderful gift as it is always a great encouragement to read the many articles on teaching and training children in God’s ways. I really appreciate your kindness and generosity and continue to thank the Lord for the amazing support of friends from all over especially in the past year.

Ilse Boessenkool  
Palmerston North

**Teaching the Trivium**

So appreciate your ministry through H.E.F. I have purchased *Teaching the Trivium* and find it hard to put down (probably why I’m writing this note at 1am!). Would you please send a copy of this book to a dear friend of mine, address below. She has five precious children six years and under, and she is struggling with her home schooling commitment. Being bombarded with all the usual outside negative comments doesn’t help, or lack of sleep through nightly feedings as we can all appreciate. I know this book will be timely in encouraging and inspiring her in her commitment to educate her family and alleviate her doubts and fears and give her a new perspective.

Deirdre Simpson  
Invercargill

**Breath of Fresh Air**

We subscribed to both *Keystone* and *TEACH Bulletin* for a year then moved to Queensland, Australia. My sister sent the September issue of *Keystone* which was a breath of fresh air to us. Although Home Schooling (not home educating) is legal in Queensland, there is

an “anti” feeling here. Most people are “outlaws”, meaning they don’t apply at all. Mind you, I have only managed to contact a group on the table lands who are unschoolers. These “natural learners” are not accepted by Queensland Education, so they are often scared to have their children out during school hours. I have spoken to one Christian HSer whose application for dispensation was rejected using ATI and only was able to keep going because the mother was a teacher and was accepted on the strength of that. Because of the hidden nature of home schooling here, it is very difficult to find other HSers. Our plan is to apply for dispensation on our own without the supervision of a Queensland Qualified Teacher which is compulsory and see what happens. We do have Church family here who are teachers as back up. Then to advertise ourselves as contacts. At present QLD is the worst state for HS.

Yours in Christ our Strength,  
N. F.  
Queensland

(Continued from page 28: **Summit**)  
have together. I really enjoyed getting to know you all a wee bit in the first meeting. Tonight I’d like us to share our spiritual journeys together. How did you become a Christian? What has God been doing in your life? I’ll start...”

**10:55pm – Nightwatch girl and a student**  
“Good evening girls. It’s your friendly nightwatch gal! Come to tuck you in and make sure you are all ready for bed! Would anyone like a goodnight kiss?”

“Goodnight kiss?”

“Yes! A Hershey chocolate Kiss!”

“Last night apple pieces sprinkled with freshly squeezed orange juice and tonight Hershey’s Kisses! What could be better?”

**11:30pm – Nighwatch crew**  
“All the girls are in bed and lights out.”

“The guys are too.”

“That was a fantastic idea to arrange for some of the guys from the staff choir to stand on the mezzanine and sing everyone to sleep.”

“*Goodnight Sweetheart* was an appropriate selection.”

“It was a hit with the students!”

**2:00pm – Nightwatch crew**  
During the night the nightwatch crew perform various duties such as taking out the rubbish, watering gardens, laundry and mopping the kitchen floor.

“Bear!”  
“Where?”  
“In dry goods...in the kitchen!”  
“What’s he doing?”  
“He, well, he’s eating the marshmallows!”

**Note:**

1. Focus on the Family and The Navigators along with the Flying W Ranch are all based in the area.



“This guy was so sincere. How wonderful to hear him encouraging the guys here to treat us girls as sisters – with respect and love.”

“I agree. And have you noticed? He really lives what he talks about!”

“I’ve found all the staff do! How does Summit find such a great bunch of young people to work for them?”

“Shhhh...Jeff Myers is about to start our first lecture.”

**10:00am – Classroom crew**

“I love being a classroom director. I’ve learned so much being able to listen to all these great speakers as a job! Jeff Myers is so inspiring with his leadership and communication talks. Look at his outline for today on attitudes and the Christian leader! As he shows how to develop proper attitudes he gives Scriptural references! I could just listen to this guy all day.”

“You can’t though. He’s about to finish and you’ll have to go introduce the next speakers: Eric and Leslie Ludy.”

**12:00noon – Two female students**

“Boy! The Ludy’s are a dynamic couple! Eric is so bouncy and enthusiastic. What did you think when Leslie said a woman’s perception of her own beauty comes from the men in her life?”

“You mean when they said that if a mother or sister is appreciated and complimented by her husband or brothers, etc., she will blossom under that treatment?”

“Yes! Don’t you think it was great that when the Ludys talked about complimenting and showing tenderness they said that this information was to be acted on within a familial context? They were so right to say that we should learn to love and be tender to each other in our families – this is the appropriate practicing ground for our future marriage relationships.”

“Mmm. Showing tenderness to the next pretty girl who comes along isn’t what they were encouraging. But showing tenderness to your mother and sisters! Wow!”

“And we to our brothers and fathers. Their talks on relationships always leave me inspired to better my relationships with my family.”

**1:00pm – Classroom crew**

“Lunch was so good!”

“You should see the meals the cook has planned for the rest of the week!”

“So who’s up next?”

“Kevin Bywater on cults. Shall you introduce him or shall I?”

“Let me! You check the sound system. I love this guy. He grew up a Mormon, you know, and the information he gives on identifying cults is really helpful. The stu-

dents are really going to enjoy this session.”

**2:30pm – Tour guide**

“My name is Chuck Edwards and I’ll be your tour guide at the Colorado Springs Zoo today. As we walk along you’ll notice the evolutionary content of the Zoo’s information on each animal. You need not read it at all as I’m going to conduct this tour from a Biblical Christian point of view and give you plenty of facts and figures about each animal. And as an added bonus, I’ll even point out some of the great designs God created in these animals...many of these designs have been adapted by scientists, engineers, inventors and the like for use in our everyday technology!”

**5:15pm – Two staff members**

“They’ve really put on a spread for us tonight! Home-made pizza, pasta and a good ol’ apple crumble!”

“There go the nightwatch crew. They look like they got a good sleep despite the scare with the bear last night.”

“Hey, have you heard Dr Bauman before? He is doing the open forum after dinner with the students. When I was a student, I remember him playing ‘devil’s advocate.’ He asked us about Job in the Bible and said it was just a fable. He said God wouldn’t use a person as a pawn like that. Some of the students got really mad. The discussion was rip-roaring! Dr Bauman wouldn’t let anyone ‘add his or her \$0.02 worth.’ If they were going to join the discussion they had to argue from the Bible. It really made us all realise that while we believed certain things we couldn’t adequately defend our beliefs on a lot of subjects. The Job discussion finished when one student found a reference to Job in another part of the Bible. This was evidence that Job was not a fictional character. The students are in for another such discussion tonight I imagine!”

**7:30pm – Summit faculty**

While the students have praise and worship and a worldviews hour with Dr Noebel, Dr Bauman leads the staff in a discussion on the subject of beauty.

“What is beauty? What are the essential elements that have to come together before we can say that something is beautiful? In a post-fall world tainted with sin, can we call anything truly beautiful?”

The staff jump into the discussion just as quickly as the students did on Job.

**10:00pm – Students**

“I have learned so much from hearing Phyllis Schlafly talk on feminism. I had no idea how far feminism has pervaded our society. After hearing her talk, I certainly agree with that quote she shared from Mary Kassian’s book *The Feminist Gospel* that feminists are becoming harder to identify not because they do not exist, but because the feminist philosophy has become so much the mainstream philosophy that the two are virtually indistinguishable!”

**10:10pm – Small group leader**

“This is the second of five small group meetings we

(Continued on page 29: **Summit**)

# The Ryan Family

of Auckland



Benjamin 11, Natalie 14, Rebekah 9.

our God, in an evening of fellowship, family worship and song.

It might not seem to be much of a homeschooling moment at all, because there is not a textbook in sight, and everything that smacks of the work day has been packed up and put away. Yet Friday nights are symbolic of the great changes that have taken place in our lives, that go beyond the obvious and deep into the heartland.

Neither Robert nor I could have predicted such a future. For one thing, we come from secular families but were both fortunate enough to be influenced by the godly people around us. The tragedy was that as we grew older, and of necessity grew apart from those influences in the normal pursuit of independence and employment, our spiritual growth slowed and eventually stopped in its tracks. Slowly, inevitably we returned to the world that denies God. By the time we married and had children, there was little to mark us out from all the other couples in our thoroughly secular lives.

Perhaps the return back to God begins rightly with our children whose entry into our world forced upon us the need to rethink our path. We were professional people, used to organizing our lives and those of others by the time our first child was born. From home births, to La Leche League, to playcentre, to homeschooling, we wended our way through the early years, making those many and varied decisions that separately might not have had that much impact but collectively would prove to have great significance in later years. Much of it was worked out as we went along, and as we did so, we were defining ourselves as parents and family.

Rather unexpectedly, we found ourselves disagreeing with society’s values and expectations. It hadn’t seemed to matter so much when we were single or newly married, but now with children our hackles were rising. It’s a strange thing indeed to be middle class,

conservative rebels, but without meaning to, our children were transforming us all into homeschoolers.

Playcentre proved to be more than a playground—it was an oasis where parenthood was valued, motherhood was esteemed and parents were taught to see themselves as their children’s teachers. It was during the Playcentre years that the seeds sprouted into full grown belief that parental involvement in our children’s education need not, should not, stop simply because they had turned five. As our eldest child was approaching her fourth birthday, we realized that sooner or later the great decision of school was about to confront us, and it wasn’t going to go away. Robert’s memories of his own unhappy school days surfaced, and neither of us could see ourselves abandoning our child to the care of strangers at school. Who were these people? What would they teach our children?

Our inability to answer these questions to our satisfaction propelled us into seriously investigating home schooling as an alternative to school. We knew little about the subject. Years before, I had seen a TV documentary, *Putting the Joy Back into Egypt*, about a New Zealand homeschooling family, but at the time it was about as appealing and as logical as living in a tent when there was a perfectly good house to be comfortable in. The bottom line was that it wasn’t a consideration for ordinary people like us.

Yet here we were now, seriously considering it as the next inevitable step. We questioned and debated and let the idea rattle around for some months, but it was only after Robert had dealt with the last remaining issues of socialization and future employment that we were able to feel we could give it a go.

We decided to try it out for the first year. Homeschooling in terms of school stuff proved a disaster. With both a needy toddler, and a needy newborn, teaching moments with an eager five-year-old were snatched in one minute blocks of time around the demands of real life and some real worries. Even so, our daughter thrived educationally despite the apparent neglect, and we quickly concluded that homeschooling was the way to go — it just felt right.

But there was one problem we hadn’t yet been able to solve — where were all the other homeschoolers? It was an incredibly lonely feeling being about the only ones we knew who wanted to homeschool. The only exception was a friend I had made at Playcentre, who in turn, had discovered a local group in South Auckland. Unfortunately, it turned out to be a Christian group.

I say “unfortunately” because after 20 years or so removed from church culture, you can’t get more scary than that. My friend had already run the gauntlet of conversion attempts by a close relative, and she was in



no mood to repeat the experience with the Manukau Homeschool Group. For myself, I lacked the courage to join without her. Faced with no alternatives despite our every effort, I made it my business to work on my friend until she finally, reluctantly, agreed to join with me. Safety in numbers.

It seems funny to look back and consider our apprehensions at the time. As it turned out, despite having the distinction of being the first non-Christians to enter the group, no one accosted us or pinned us into a corner thrusting a bible in our faces or made us feel uncomfortable. It was all a bit of a fizz really, and we quickly began to feel right at home. It was also an eye-opener to say the least, because for the first time in years Robert and I were mixing with real-life Christians who lived and shared their faith while welcoming and accepting us for what and who we were.

The group sustained us in those early years especially. Having a toddler and baby in tow was far more difficult than the actual homeschooling, although that was challenging enough too. I knew nothing, but felt I had to know everything, and it was a huge mountain of ignorance to overcome on a shoestring budget. We could have easily given up at this stage if it hadn't been for our Manukau group, and from my perspective, if it hadn't been for Robert. He was the anchor, the voice of reason whenever I was being driven to distraction with tiredness, child woes, homeschooling doubts and life's little bombshells. Through it all we discovered something very important. Homeschooling isn't about books at all — it's about family and relationships.

Although we were by now comfortable in our homeschool group, there was nothing faith-wise that challenged our intellects — so God kindly set to work on our hearts instead. The result was for both of us, about two years apart, a dramatic confrontation with the living God, unexpected and even painful. Just as our homeschool group had helped us with homeschooling, so now they helped us grow as a family in Christ.

Our homeschooling had thus entered a Christian era, but in those early days we found it difficult to teach our children any Christian concepts because we didn't really know them or understand them ourselves. For all our backgrounds and church influence of bygone years, we were spiritual babes in kindergarten once more. Over time however, the spiritual momentum gathered pace and the changes in our lives became more evident. We started to attend church with the help of one of our homeschooling friends, self-consciously started to give thanks before meals and began to pray with our children at bedtime. Although such small things on the outside, they were in fact the start of a radical shift that has overtaken our family for these last five years.

Today our children are 14, 11 and 9. Before long, we will be counting on our toes the number of years we have been homeschooling, having already reached the nine year mark, with at least another seven to go—God willing. I say “*God willing*,” because Robert and I are both aware of how fragile homeschooling can become when faced with the howling gales of life. Over the years we have seen truly committed homeschoolers

cave in to the pressure wrought by their children's demands, the financial burden, sickness or other circumstances that eroded their strength. We have faced some of them ourselves, as our greying hairs can testify and the occasional heaviness of heart, but still we are driven to pursue this course for as long as we are able.

Over the years we worked out our own pattern for homeschooling survival. First and foremost, we believe it is a commitment that must be made and acted upon by both parents. While I attend to most of the day-to-day stuff, Robert keeps the vision strong, and the heart beating. That vision, those fundamental reasons we have for homeschooling, keep us going when the daily reality grates for whatever reason (and there have been many).

The next important principle for us is “to love—anyway.” When things are going right, little effort is needed to keep relationships going. But homeschooling, we have found, exposes all of our weaknesses, and rubbing shoulders with each other demands that we face up to our problems rather than shelve them. It is these areas we try to address first, taking whatever break in schoolwork is necessary in order to do so.

Our third most important principle is to find contentment with who we are and whatever ticks for us. There is this destructive lie that preys on our vulnerability, telling us that our homeschooling is nowhere as good or thorough or exciting as that of our neighbour. I have been a victim as much as anybody, but these days I work strenuously to overcome that attitude and to own our particular brand of homeschooling as being right for us.

For instance, I've worked out that when it comes to maths, I need to stick to the textbook or else my heart gives out with insecurity. For English and science, I stick to the textbook but feel free to add anything relevant or topical. For virtually all else—history, geography, technology, etc., it seems to work best if we just go where our interests take us, and read heaps. We spend a great deal of time with our noses glued to story books, and our shelves are testimony to the hours spent searching out good fiction and non-fiction titles. In addition we do whatever outside courses, trips or activities we can afford and sustain, so that over the years we have covered the gamut from singing, to drama, art, dance, swimming and gym and are currently concentrating on French language.

As the children mature, their individual interests are coming to the fore. At 14, Natalie is an avid reader, writer and organizer, producing her own monthly newsletter for her friends. Benjamin is 11 and is constantly hammering, fixing and creating and loves to hunt and fish whenever someone will take pity on him. Rebekah is nine and being socially minded tends to enjoy whatever anyone else is doing, as well as loving reading and now writing.

Robert is like the family's coach, setting the goals, defining our commitment and generously giving us courage, discipline and inspiration to help us pursue the

(Continued on page 30: **Ryan**)

# 24 Hours at Summit: A Student/Staff Perspective

by Genevieve Smith



Summit Ministries is headed by Dr David Noebel, author of *Understanding the Times* and the abridged version known as *Battle for the Truth*. Situated near other big evangelical ministries<sup>1</sup>, Summit has found a glorious location for its activities at the base of Pikes Peak in Manitou Springs, Colorado. The focus of Summit Ministries is worldviews and teaching these to young folk before they head off to university. To this end, Summit runs 8 or 9 two-week-long camps every summer for young folk aged 16+. Summit staff are coming to the Compass program (advertised below) which is modeled on Summit Ministry's program.

## 3:00am – Nightwatch crew dialogue

“Bear!”

“Where?”

“Over there!”

It was the early hours of the morning and two members of the Summit nightwatch crew were doing their hourly rounds.

“It is in the Summit Village, just outside Doc's house, heading towards town.”

“Right. I'll call Animal Control.”

## 6:00am – Student

Beep, beep, beep. “Nnngh. 6:00am! Time for my run.

I'll have to pace myself better today. I'm not used to running up and down hills at 7,000 feet elevation. It really knocked the stuffing out of me yesterday. But the morning is so cool and the running group is going to try to make it all the way to the Garden of the God's today. Up and at 'em!”

## 6:30am – Nightwatch crew and a couple of students

“How are we going to wake the students up this morning guys? As our last task before WE hit the sack we should make it good! How about we read the weather report to them lads?”

“Do you hear those nightwatch guys devising ways to wake the guys up?”

“Yeah! I'm glad we have our nightwatch girl! She is so sweet with her friendly 'Morning Girls. It's 7:00am!’ Let's get to the gym quickly. We have a few minutes for some exercises before the excitement of the day begins.”

## 7:30am – Head cook

“Ok, kitchen crew, have we got everything out? French toast? Syrup? Toast? Cereal? Milk? Fruit? Excellent! Take a break and come back shortly to start making preparations for lunch. It's lasagna and salad today!”

## 8:30am – Two students

“Wasn't that devotion great?”

“Yeah! I am really enjoying listening to the different devotions by the different young men staffers.”

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rain and wind. Does that mean God was judging gardeners? The whole book of Job is about this very puzzle – Job endured suffering past what many of us will ever be called to endure. Job lost his possessions, his children were slaughtered, he was afflicted with pus-filled boils and his wife told him to curse God and die. Job refused. Then his friends comforted him with the thought that it was his own fault that this had happened. He deserved it. But Job knew that he had not deserved it and wished that he could plead his case with God.

When God deigned to appear before him, did he answer Job's questions? No. **And that is the whole point of this book.** Shivers go up and down the spine when God answers Job out of the whirlwind, in Job 38. "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" Then follows an awesome declaration of the power, majesty, wisdom and glory of God. They are wonderful chapters. And what is Job's response? "I declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know". (Job 42:3) *Job did not have his question, "Why did this happen?" answered.*

Because God is God, and we are creatures, there will always be things we will not understand. To fully understand God, we would *be* God. The finite cannot understand the infinite. (Isaiah 55:8-9). What we *do* know is that God is working out His plan for His glory and our ultimate good.

So what do we teach our children when events happen that we cannot understand? Just these facts, that God will bring good out of evil circumstances, even though we may not see or understand it. I heard a missionary from Pakistan speaking recently. He said that Afghanistan was one of the most closed places to the gospel. With the Soviet-Afghan war there were many Afghan refugees fleeing across the border to Pakistan. There they came into contact with Christian missionaries who met their physical needs and shared the gospel. With American troops going into Afghanistan after September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Taliban was ousted, and refugees were able to return to their homeland. Some of them had been converted, and they took the gospel back with them. Did this happen by chance? Not at all. God brings good out of evil events. That is His nature. That is why we can trust Him.

The greatest demonstration of this is the cross. Satan was laughing when the Creator of the Universe was nailed to the cross and died. He had won. Evil had triumphed. Christ was dead. Three days later, different story. The **real** truth was that the last enemy, death, had finally been put under the feet of the Son of God, to whom the Father has given all things, and that an amazing redemption had been achieved for His people. This had been planned from before time began. (Ephesians 1:1-14) *Amazing!*

From the human perspective the Prostitution Law Reform Bill is a disaster. It will mean more exploitation of women, a further attack on families, evil being allowed greater freedom. Do we despair? No, we don't. We are still called to be a light to those who are perishing, to obey and trust our all-powerful, loving God and leave

the ruling of our nation to Him. Job's attitude was, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him"(Job 13:15). Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, in another spine-thrilling passage, Daniel 3:17-18, say, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O King. **But even if He does not**, let it be known to you O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." These guys were real heroes. They knew what they had to do: they trusted God, but let Him be God. They thumbed their noses at an evil king and refused to compromise their faith. What God did was up to Him, but they were going to trust Him and obey no matter what.

We have a glorious God. He is totally involved in human history. We are called to be faithful, continuing to obey Him, and to trust. The end is assured! The victory will be His, and *nothing, nothing, NOTHING*, will stand against it!

(Mark & Carol Munroe of Auckland have always home educated their five children, two now in tertiary studies. The books cited in this article are available from Christian bookstores and from Christian Education Services, cesbooks@intouch.co.nz, Ph (09) 410-3933.)

#### Notes:

1. David Noebel, *The Battle for Truth*, Harvest House Publishers, Oregon, 2001, p 301.
2. Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God, even when life hurts*, NavPress, Colorado, 1988, p69.
3. My emphasis.
4. R.C.Sproul, *When Worlds Collide*, Crossway Books, Illinois, 2002, pp 47,48.

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### Developing a Thoroughly Christian World View Requires Extensive Reading

Many [Christian] schools are using secular textbooks, and teachers on occasion must spend more time refuting the humanistic perspectives contained in them than they spend in positive presentation of the truth — and, meanwhile, praying fervently that their young, impressionable charges will not be seduced by the literature provided by the school.

An even more disastrous problem is related to the predicament of the teachers themselves. Most Christian teachers have received their education in public schools. While they are sincerely striving for educational reformation, they often find themselves fighting the Lord's battles with remnants of Saul's armour. Trained by secularists to perpetuate the humanist faith, they are overwhelmed by the task of implanting the Biblical worldview in their students. The daily grind of teaching, disciplining, grading, planning – and looking bright and fresh – affords little time for extensive reading in the necessary literature. It's easy to succumb to the temptation to let things slide along, to do things the way they've always been done, reassuring ourselves that "*anything* is better than public schools." Certainly, God doesn't want public schools – but He doesn't want just anything, either.

(From *Biblical Education* by David H. Chilton, 1980.)

# The Faith of Us Fathers



## Taking Possession of a Forceful Political Statement

by Craig Smith

The very act of keeping or bringing our children home to educate them ourselves is a rather forceful political statement. It is so contrary to "the way things are done"; it is such a challenge to the status quo; it is so totally incomprehensible to most people when they first hear of it, that people cannot help but think we must be some kind of radically unbalanced ideologues.

But we're not even trying to make a big political statement. Some of us actually loathe politics and politicians. We don't want our actions to be thought of as "political", nor do we want all the negative social implications that go along with it.

Sadly, these things are largely inescapable as home educators. It's all part of the territory. Let me illustrate.

As if the political thing isn't bad enough, for fellow Christians who know we home educate in order to more consistently disciple our children for our Lord Jesus Christ, yet who themselves send their children to the local temples of secular humanism (state schools), there is the added repelling factor that we have taken the moral high ground. We have chosen the hard way through the narrow gate, and our fellow Christians are greatly intimidated by this position. Why? Because they have not, even though their Lord calls them to do so just as He calls us to do so.

Fellow Christians who have committed their children to Christian schools plus our unbelieving friends who don't home educate are both often a bit wary of us as well, especially when we start getting enthusiastic about how home education is bonding our family closer together, causing us to feel more fulfilled, massively reducing the stress of everyday life, socially maturing the children so they're attitudes are far less rebellious and peer-oriented, etc. Again, although they see that we're onto something good, and even though they'd like those benefits too, the huge changes home education would make to their current lifestyles and income levels is just too big a hurdle to think about.

Then there are those who simply know very little about home education, who have a totally erroneous view of what it is, how it works and why we do it. They can only assume that we are cultic or fanatics of some kind who are best avoided.

And sure enough, some friends start to avoid us. They are scared the conversation might stray into areas such

as education, schooling, the children, godliness, etc., and they feel they might have to justify – out loud – why they aren't home educating or why they think what we're doing is daft. It is no wonder we make some people uncomfortable by our very presence.

Teaching our children at home is an in-your-face declaration, a statement of faith, an act of witnessing people simply cannot ignore. Make no mistake: it is highly noticeable, it is emotionally charged, and it carries some very weighty personal and political implications as well. Onlookers are plagued by questions such as, "How do they comply with Ministry of Education requirements? Who checks up on them? Why don't they want to be involved in the community? How will their children ever get qualified for anything? Isn't our local school good enough for them?"

These are the kind of vibes we are putting out, either intentionally (as in my case!!) or unintentionally. It affects our relationships and may well determine the degree of fellowship we can enjoy with others outside home education circles. As if this wasn't a bad enough cause of stress, our chosen lifestyle may be causing our children some real intellectual, emotional, social and even spiritual difficulties as well. Because this can be such a large, over-arching kind of thing, it is up to us Fathers to nail it before it becomes a problem....or tackle it as an existing problem head-on before it becomes any bigger.

What we are talking about here is how comfortable we are, or our children are, at being labeled "home schoolers", "home educators" or whatever, and how well we have come to terms with the wide-ranging implications of the home educator's lifestyle.

One aspect of this we have all faced is among that first lot of hurdles we had to jump over: "Is this for us? Am I doing the right thing?" (It is different from the other hurdle which can haunt many of us, totally unnecessarily I am convinced; the one that nags, "Am I capable of doing this?" I always answer, "Of course you are. In fact, as a parent with your own child in a tutoring or mentoring situation, you automatically have vast logistical and relational advantages over conventional teachers.") This question, "Am I doing the right thing?" hits at the whole idea of home education as a package deal. It wants to know how it measures up to conventional schooling over the long term.

To carry doubts about the very nature of home education will hinder every thing you do every day as a home educator. You need to take full possession of the title "Home Educator" and be at peace with the package. Otherwise it is like being lame, or as Elijah said back in I Kings 18:21: "How long will you go limping with two different opinions?" Or as James says in 1:8, "He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." Strive for unity of purpose. Maybe that need be only for a season: that is, give it your total dedication, your best shot, for a bite-sized period of time only: say one year and re-assess the situation after that. Such a strategy may be a lot easier to visualise, to take hold of emotionally, than thinking in a vague sort of way that you'll be burdened with what you're struggling with



now for the next 15 years! Get that monkey of doubt off your back, either permanently or just for a year, and you'll immediately notice a rise in your confidence level.

Once thus committed, you will not only be a lot more confident yourself, you will be able to inspire so much more confidence in your wife and children as well.

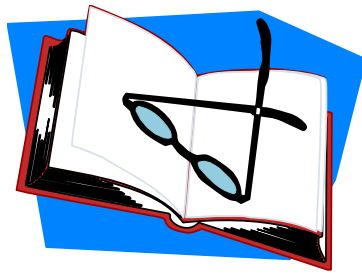
The attitude we carry around with us about our home education: whatever it is, one of insecurity, being unsure about it, worried it will stunt the children's growth somehow, or being totally convinced, excited about its benefits, a wild-eyed missionary for the movement.... this attitude we carry is an integral part of yours and – intentionally or unintentionally – your children's Christian witness. We home educators need to be aware of this first of all, and then we need to take possession of this in-your-face declaration we make simply by being home educators. And we need to help our children become comfortable – even proud – of making this declaration as well.

We have always told our children that they are different from the vast majority of people out there, not only because we are Christians but also because we are home educators. We are hated by the world, the Lord tells us, and will definitely suffer persecution (II Timothy 3:12). Home education ensures we will suffer a degree of persecution even from fellow Christians. Barbara and I delight in being different for Christ's sake, and this must rub off on the children. Their identity has been wrapped up in this: I tell them they are "Smiths" and that we Smiths belong to the Lord and fear Him, not the people around us. We told them the day would come when their friends would not just call them strange but would tell them that their parents (Barbara and I) were so unbelievably strict and old-fashioned that they're just plain weird. When that day came, our children looked at us with awe! We could foretell the future: we were prophets indeed!

Not bad, eh? Prophesying this kind of thing is a piece of cake for parents: we can think of a whole bunch of things our children will undoubtedly encounter, including attitudes they'll develop. "You know what's wrong with teenagers?" you innocently ask your 11 year old. "They think mum and dad don't understand." Your words will come back and haunt that 11 year old two or three years later when s/he says those very words, "But Mum, you don't understand!" All parents should prophesy regularly!

This and subtle things like calling children on the school playground "prisoners let out into the exercise yards" let your children know your mind is clear and made up. Of course, one of our responsibilities is to love both neighbours and enemies, so as far as it depends upon us, we live peaceably and harmoniously with others, outdoing one another in showing honour. Even so, your family unit wants to be self-sufficient socially, children best friends with their siblings, mum and dad obviously in love, so that hankerings to be somewhere else, doing something else with someone else don't subvert your home environment nor your children's contentment with your leadership.

# Bits of Books



## The Untold Story of Slavery

It was the slave trade that kept Khartoum going [in the latter 1800s. Khartoum is in Sudan, at the confluence of the White Nile and Blue Nile Rivers.] On a normal expedition a trader would sail south from Khartoum in December with two or three hundred armed men, and at some convenient spot would land and form an alliance with a native chieftain. Then together the tribesmen and the Khartoum slavers would fall upon some neighbouring village in the night, firing the huts just before dawn and shooting into the flames. It was the women that the slavers chiefly wanted, and these were secured by placing a heavy forked pole known as a *sheba* on their shoulders. The head was locked in by a crossbar, the hands were tied to the pole in front and the children were bound to their mothers by a chain passed round their necks. Everything the village contained would be looted – cattle, ivory, grain, even crude jewellery – and then the whole cavalcade would be marched back to the river to await shipment to Khartoum. Usually the alliances between traders and native chieftains were kept on from year to year, the chieftain building up a fresh store of slaves and ivory while the trader was disposing of the last consignment at Khartoum. Every trader had his own territory, and by mutual agreement the country was parcelled out all the way from Khartoum to Gondokoro [also on the Nile, 1,000 miles to the south] and beyond.

Officially the trade was illegal, but the only effect of this was that the slaves were not sold openly in Khartoum; they were disposed of at established points of rendezvous in the desert outside the town, and thence marched off along the caravan routes to the Red Sea for shipment to Arabia or Persia, or sent directly down the Nile to Cairo.

This monstrous traffic had so ravaged and antagonized the tribes south of Khartoum that the whole country was in an uproar. This made it hazardous for any private traveller to proceed without a large armed escort, and there was another, more serious difficulty for explorer Samuel Baker: the Egyptian officials at Khartoum were by no means eager to have a stray white man roaming about in the slaving areas to report on their activities to the outside world.

[On 18 December 1862, Samuel Baker left Khartoum following earlier explorers Richard Burton, John Speke and James Grant all of whom were searching for the source of the Nile River. Baker caused quite a sensation by bringing along his wife, Florence, not just because she was a white woman, but because of her golden blond hair that reached to her waist. Upon arriving in the Kingdom of Bunyoro, just north of Lake

# Worldviews in Focus

## A Christian View of History

by Carol Munroe



"ONE VOTE! WE LOST BY ONE VOTE!" my 15 year old shouted on the morning of June 26<sup>th</sup>. "THAT'S NOT FAIR, IS IT?" He was referring, of course, to the passing of the Prostitution Amendment Bill in parliament the previous evening. By human reckoning, he's right. I spent the day of the 25<sup>th</sup> in bed ill, and when I saw the photograph on the front page of the *Herald* the next morning, it was enough to make me want to throw up again. Fewer bills have made me more angry. It was passed because one MP "didn't feel like" voting against it, and because "a church elder" – can you believe that? – supported it.

Did this happen by chance? Was this a random event? Could God have turned the hearts of these people to vote differently? Did Christians fail or not work hard enough? How are we to understand circumstances like this? How do we explain them to our children and help them understand?

The Christian worldview of history is very different to the humanists'. For the secular humanist, man is a product of chance, and is evolving into a higher social order and inevitable paradise. John Dietrich says, "There has never been any Garden of Eden ...there has never been any Fall; there has been a constant rise. Man has been climbing slowly up the ages from the most primitive condition to the present civilisation".<sup>1</sup>

For the Marxist also, history will always progress until the future establishment of some kind of heaven on earth and the redemption of man. It is an incredible irony that humanistic man, in taking God off the throne and putting man there, is by that very act causing man's destruction. God created man to worship Him, and only in that act is there absolute freedom for man, as he fulfills the purpose for which he was created. With the rejection of God we have abortion, euthanasia, drug abuse, suicide, venereal disease, prostitution, homosexuality (no reproduction), "low fertility" (unwillingness to have children), crime, destruction of the family – all these and more lead to the death of individuals and the death of a culture. Satan is the great deceiver – in promising life, "You will be as God" (Genesis 3:4,5) he produces death.

The Christian perspective also includes the redemption of man and the eventual establishment of heaven on earth. We believe in a linear view of history. It has a beginning, when God created the earth and placed man in the Garden of Eden; and an end, when Christ will return to recreate the heavens and the earth, and His people will reign with Him forever. This end will be inevitable. Nothing will prevent it. Satan is already

defeated. We are now in an interim period where God is working out His purposes to accomplish the end He has planned.

This means in practice that everything that happens is under God's control, from what happens in nations to what happens in our daily lives. He is the Ruler of all things (I Chronicles 29:12), the One who will not let a sparrow fall to the ground apart from His will (Matthew 10:29). In Lamentations 3:37, Jeremiah asks, "Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it?" Daniel 4:35 says that "He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'"

Could God, then, have caused the voting in parliament on 25<sup>th</sup> June to be different? Of course He could. Proverbs 21:1 says, "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord. He turns it wherever He wishes." Does this mean that the parliamentarians are not accountable to God for the decision they made? No, they will be held accountable for every decision they made when they appear before the judgment seat of God. How are we to understand this? The simple answer is, we can't. Jerry Bridges in his excellent book, *Trusting God*, says, "The Bible teaches both the sovereignty of God and the free moral choices of men with equal emphasis. Richard Fuller, the third president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, 'It is impossible for us to reject either of these great truths, and it is equally impossible for our minds to reconcile them.'"<sup>2</sup>

Jerry Bridges says there are two factors which determine God's planning of history. The first is His own glory. John 15:8, Revelation 4:11, 5:13, 15:4. The second is the good of His people (Romans 8:28-39). These two are intertwined: what glorifies Him is also for our good, and what is best for us also glorifies Him.

The difficulty for us as Christians is that we don't understand, in fact, **cannot** understand what God is doing in history when it comes to specific events. R.C. Sproul in his book *When Worlds Collide, Where Is God?*, tackles this head on. How does a Christian make sense of something like September 11<sup>th</sup>? After this event a number of Christians stated that it was a judgement of God on the nation because of abortion and the blatant sinfulness of America. Can we say that? Sproul says, "I don't know. I can't read God's mind. If you were to ask me, "Was God involved?" my answer, of course, would be yes...I'm convinced that God was involved in this act, that it was according to God's purpose. But what His specific purpose was in this event, I do not know ... but I cannot think of anything in the Christian worldview that would rule out the *possibility*<sup>3</sup> that it was an act of judgement".<sup>4</sup>

In other words, we cannot say whether God is judging in specific instances or not. A few years ago after the dreadful Hero Parade in Auckland there was a power crisis, and some claimed it was God judging Auckland for promoting homosexuality. In November one year the annual Garden Show was decimated with torrential



organisational and logistical workload was a nightmare, with the children’s programmes many times more work than the catering and adults’ programme combined. And guess what? The children’s programmes were exactly like the school outings we went through the exemption process to escape: no individual attention, too many badly behaved children due to a small number of minders who were not as familiar with or committed to the children as the parents would be, restrictive timetables, minimum time for each child per activity which didn’t begin to satisfy the curiosity of some or even begin to pique the curiosity of others. We as organisers would be exhausted afterward, and our own children’s home education efforts had been shelved for at least a fortnight both before and after the event.

Today’s smaller and more local one-day workshops, happening with spontaneity and regularity in many areas of New Zealand, appear to us to return much greater value for the much lighter workloads involved. People can attend more than one a year, rather than waiting for the one big one we used to do every second year. The few activities that do require a large group of children: a proper athletics competition, a Home and Country Show, a drama production, etc., are still being run by support groups. But the many smaller support groups springing up everywhere, some composed mostly of a local church congregation, often have the activities and field trips back where they belong: among the home schooling families who actually want them. Like-minded families are clubbing together for these as they want them, rather than an organiser putting something on to fill the blank in the events calendar for the month and hoping people show up. Organisers aren’t put out when few turn up, and those who don’t really want to attend don’t feel bad about not supporting the organiser’s efforts. The generally smaller groups are finding that this is a much better way to go. And the children are better socialised and the overall stress is nil compared to doing stuff for a large group of children.

### Church

The way our churches are structured today can cause a lot of stress in our families with a different family member at a meeting of some sort at Church most nights of the week. When is the family at home together? Very little. Preserving our family time together is precious, for it has become such a rare commodity. This family time will become even more difficult to preserve, and yet even more precious and necessary, as our children get older. Our family knows full well what it means to be booked out every day and night of the week. Having thought about it a fair bit, we’ve concluded we need to see ourselves more as a family unit and to be involved in the Church as a family unit rather than as individuals.

Eric Wallace in *Uniting Church and Home - A Blueprint for Rebuilding Church Community*<sup>1</sup> says:

*What I see happening in churches of all denominations is a movement away from the hurried, superficial, age-segregated, activity-laden ministry. They are moving*

*toward a whole different approach that centers on freeing up the body to build godly households through heart-level relationships and age-integrated ministry. The equipping that people need cannot be provided through the traditional age-segregated approach. Strong households are the core of strong churches, and strong churches are the foundation for outreach to our communities, nation, and the world.*

*Howard Snyder tells us in his book, Liberating the Church, “If the church is seen primarily as an institution, its ministry will be largely institutional and program-oriented. But if the church is viewed as a community, its ministry will be person-oriented, focusing on building structures of human interaction. And in this perspective, the structures of family, church and neighbourhood are most basic.”*

*Ministry that occurs outside of the home, generally speaking, is ministry that is out of touch with everyday life. I think this is why there is such an emphasis placed on hospitality in the New Testament. If you want to get to know someone, visit them! Have them over for dinner! It is difficult to know what someone’s needs are if we can’t see them in everyday life. Hospitality is not difficult. It involves seeing the daily activities of the home as expressions of God’s sovereign rule in our lives. In its simplest form, it is inviting people to our home for lodging, meals, activities or just a visit.*

*A household approach to ministry places an emphasis on building biblical households in which parents disciple their children and “adopt” other members of the congregation who do not have families, and where fathers practice spiritual leadership in the home. In effect, the leadership begins to work through fathers and mothers instead of working around them. Discovering the church as a household will impress people outside our churches because they see Christians loving and serving each other. They will not have to wait to hear the Romans Road, The Four Spiritual Laws or Evangelism Explosion. They will see it with their eyes and hear it with their ears! They will say, “Wow!”*

By thinking through our activities and reducing where possible, we have found we now have more time for the important things we believe God would have us do. We worship God at church together as a family twice each Sunday; we worship God together as a family after every meal each day. We are involved in the Church as a family, and we are involved with the community as a family. Our fellowship with other believers and our evangelism are centred in hospitality in our home or our friends’ homes. Our support group activities are more Church orientated now, and our involvement with the local Home Education Support Group is more on a parent-to-parent basis. We have stopped to think about what we are teaching our children and what will be passed on to the generations after them. We are working at having time to “Be Still, and know that [He is] God.”

### Note:

1. Available from the Home Education Foundation (see page 31.)

Victoria in what is now Uganda, they had to ask King Kamrasi’s permission to proceed to the lake.]

By the time they reached their destination [Kamrasi’s royal residence], Baker was so ill and weak that he had to be carried into the king’s presence on a stretcher and laid like a trophy at his feet. He was too weak to be bad. Thus reassured, the king set about the customary business of demanding presents – shotguns, beads, carpets, lengths of cloth, everything he could lay hands on.

It was a miserable time for the Bakers. The rain poured down. Regularly each day Baker was seized by a violent attack of malaria, and all his quinine was exhausted. Again and again he asked Kamrasi to supply him with porters and a guide, so that he could proceed to the mysterious lake, but he was invariably met with a demand for more presents.

The crisis came in February 1864. Kamrasi announced that Baker should go to the lake, but Mrs Baker must remain behind: he would provide Baker with a good-looking Bunyoro virgin in exchange for her. Baker drew his pistol and pointing it at Kamrasi’s chest told him he was about to shoot him dead. Mrs Baker, meanwhile, rising from her sickbed, rushed at the king with an outburst of furious indignation; and at this Kamrasi gave way. On the following day porters and an escort were produced, and the travellers set off. [Oh, that people today would also refuse to tolerate the intolerable!]

[At the end of January 1866, the great Dr Livingstone arrived in Zanzibar, an island in the Indian Ocean a few miles off the coast of Tanzania and south of its border with Kenya; at least another 1,000 miles south of Gondokoro in the Sudan.] Not a great deal had happened in Zanzibar since Burton’s time [10 years earlier]. The Sultan Seyyid Majid bin Said was still in power, and the island was being gradually drawn into the network of Western commerce and politics. Now there were half a dozen foreign consulates on the seafront, and many of the Arab and Indian merchants were growing rich. *The traffic in slaves had grown still heavier*; it was estimated that between eighty thousand and one hundred thousand were brought down from the interior every year, and although none were supposed to go beyond the sultan’s dominions, there was no real check on the dhows that sailed back to Arabia and the East.<sup>1</sup>

The traffic in slaves had *grown still heavier* by 1866, even though the institution of slavery had ceased in the UK over 30 years before by the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 and in the USA by the 13th Amendment in 1865, and even though both the UK and USA had declared the importation of Africans for slavery to be illegal way back in 1807. So who was buying all these slaves? The Arabs. The Arabs have always been the biggest slave traders.

Historians estimate a total of 12 to 15 million Africans were taken during the 300 years of the trans-Atlantic Slave trade. This number pales compared to what has been going on ever since the trans-Atlantic trade stopped. In fact, the number pales compared to what is going on *today*.

John Miller, who is a senior advisor to the secretary at the State Department [Washington, D.C.], says slave

trade in the world is still a growing industry, with the sex industry being the main slave market today. Miller says while there are many estimates, he thinks it is safe to say that more than a million people are in slavery or are enslaved every year in the world today.<sup>2</sup>

Gordon Thomas’ book *Enslaved* ssys there are today 200 million slaves. The only thing unique about slavery in the West is that is has been abolished. This is not yet true of Africa, the Middle East or Asia.

Save the Children reports a brutal new trade in forced labour in Romania, a country negotiating to join the European union in 2007, in which poverty-stricken parents sell their children into slavery for as little as £70. In late October this year (2003) Gheorghita Ciornei, 13, was taken to a hospital in Bucharest suffering from 60 per cent burns after an accident involving a power line. As doctors struggled to save the boy’s life, a farmer from Gostinu, a village 30 miles south of the capital, arrived to claim him. The man said he was the child’s “master”. Hospital officials refused to hand the child over and called the authorities. Investigators found that Gheorghita and his younger brother had been working on the Gostinu pig farm for more than a year, after the farmer bought them for £140. Police inquiries in Gostinu and the surrounding region of Giugiu found at least 16 other cases. “This is modern-day slavery,” said George Roman, a programme director for Save the Children. He said the boys were not alone and that dozens of others were doing hard labour, some as young as nine.<sup>3</sup>

In April of 2001 the world was shocked when a slave ship carrying at least 43 children docked on the West African coast — but this was only the tip of the iceberg. In all corners of the world, the young flesh of children is a valued commodity for easy exploitation. Over 3,000 Albanian children have been trafficked to Italy and Greece where they are forced to beg or clean car windows. Every year an estimated 5,000 to 7,000 Nepali girls, some as young as 9 or 10 years old, are trafficked to the red light districts of Indian cities. In some parts of Benin, one in every six children is sent abroad for a life of domestic servitude.<sup>4</sup>

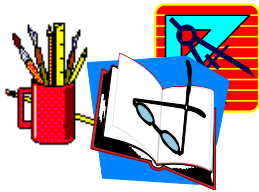
The United Nations proclaimed August 23rd 2001 as the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition. Yet more people are being trafficked today against their will than was ever the case with the African slave trade! With conservative estimates placing the number of trafficked humans at 700,000 each year, the issue is hardly just a matter of historical reflection. A rapidly growing problem, the present rate of trafficking is already ten times greater than the trans-Atlantic slave trade at its peak.<sup>4</sup>

### Notes:

1. Alan Moorehead, *The White Nile: the Exploration of the Great River*, pp. 63-64, 67-68, 76.
2. AgapePress News Summary, March 28, 2003, <http://www.agapepress.org>.
3. Belfast Telegraph, “Brutal child slave trade uncovered on Romanian pig farm”, (Source: *The Independent*), 11 November 2003, <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/story.jsp?story=462669>.
4. <http://www.globalmarch.org/child-trafficking/trafficking-campaign/index1.html>.



# Home Education Research



## Home Schooling A Gifted Child: One Mum's Experience

by Shery Butler

As a public educator, I frowned on parents who chose to teach their children at home — until I became one of those parents. My family moved to a rural town because of my husband's job. When my children entered the public school system, I was surprised to find limited services for the gifted and talented. Students with above-average ability were allowed unlimited access to the library and the Chapter One computer lab until school officials cited regulations that only students in the gifted program were permitted to use the lab. No other computers were available to students at the school.

I approached the school administration about making simple, inexpensive curriculum modifications like curriculum compacting and subject skipping for bright students. They responded positively to the request; however, when changes needed to be made to accomplish these goals, administrators said, "If we make changes to accommodate bright students, it will open a Pandora's Box, and we'll have to do it for others." I saw my children stymied intellectually in a system that was more committed to protocol than education. The intellectual dry bread and water being offered was hard to swallow. I elected to look for alternatives. Ironically, home schooling provided the answers.

### Who Home Schools?

Researchers who study home schooling estimate "about 1.5 million students in the United States are home schooled" (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1998, p. 66). Subsequently, there are as many reasons for home schooling as there are home schooled families. My family chose to home school for curriculum enrichment and acceleration opportunities. Other families choose home schooling for moral and religious reasons, to remove students from unsafe school environments, to save private school tuition fees, to meet specific needs of both the challenged and gifted learner, and to take advantage of travel opportunities. The paths that lead to home schooling are endless and personal.

### Parental Backgrounds

The educational background of parents who home school varies. A large percentage of home school parents have had some college and many hold degrees, though not all in the field of education (Rudner, 1998). Research reveals no relationship between student achievement and teacher certification among parents who home school. Generally, home schooling is successful not because of the special degrees held by parents who teach, but because "home school students and

their families are very serious about education." (Billups, 1999, p. A8).

### Curriculum Options

After understanding state requirements, as well as the pros and cons of home schooling, parents need to select a curriculum that meets educational and personal objectives. One of the best ways to learn about good curriculum is to ask other successful home schooling families what works for them. Find parents who have similar educational goals and personal objectives and examine the curriculum they use. Check the accreditation of the program before signing up.

After talking to a family and reviewing the materials, I used the Calvert curriculum from Calvert School located in Baltimore, Maryland. Started in 1897, the school offers placement tests, subject and grade skipping, an enriched curriculum and maintains an official transcript. The Calvert Program offers an advisory teaching service that allows students to get feedback from someone other than a parent and grades all tests.

Many home school curricula offer video instruction for advanced-level and enrichment courses. Investigate the services each company offers to see which one best meets the instructional needs of your child. Often, parents pull curricula from several publishers to get the materials that are best suited for their children.

### Advantages of Home Schooling

Having the ability to tailor curriculum to individual needs is one major benefit of home instruction. Students can work at or above their proficiency level. "Almost one in four home school students (24.5%) are enrolled one or more grades above their nominal grade," (Rudner, 1998, p. 15). Students are engaged in learning because the curriculum is selected specifically for each individual and is based on interests and needs. When my daughter was in sixth grade, she needed a challenge in mathematics. She took a math placement test from Calvert School that confirmed the need. She was then placed in a seventh-grade textbook for math. I wondered how skipping sixth-grade math would affect my daughter's Stanford Achievement Test scores. She rose one stanine in her total math score, and her interest and motivation in mathematics increased while she worked the more challenging problems. "The evidence is overwhelming that acceleration in some of its many forms should be included in any comprehensive set of services for the gifted. As in any provision, when it comes to deciding on the best services for a particular student, the needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses of the individual are the most important information," (Shore, Cornell, Robinson, & Ward, 1991, p. 79).

Families who home school enjoy scheduling flexibility that is impossible when students are in a classroom setting. Some home school families begin lessons each day promptly at 8 a.m., others start at 10 a.m. Each family sets its own schedule based on its activities and time clocks. Students can spend as much time on one subject as they like. If students are reading a particularly interesting history lesson, they do not have to stop

# Over A Cuppa



## Keeping Going When the Going Gets Tough — Part 7

by Craig and Barbara Smith

Life is just so busy, and at this time of the year it just gets even busier. Why is this always so? Is this good for us? Is it good for our children? Is there anything we can do about it? Should we be doing anything about it? How do we slow down in the 21st century? How can we do as Psalm 46:10 says: "Be still, and know that I am God."?

In the midst of all this busyness, can we say that the Lord is our refuge? Are we safe under the shelter of His wings? Do our souls wait in silence for God alone, for the hope of our salvation? Are we pouring our hearts out before God? Do our souls thirst for God? Do we have trouble sleeping at night because we are meditating on the Lord and just can't get Him out of our minds? Does our soul cling to Him? These verses from Psalms 61-63 have been a challenge to me over recent weeks. We need to "Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us." — Psalm 62:8. In all our busyness shouldn't we be pouring our hearts out to God for our spouses, our families, our community, the world and ourselves? Not just a casual prayer once or twice a day, but praying constantly as in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Wouldn't it be marvellous if we could say with the Psalmist, "My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips, when I think of thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the watches of the night; for thou hast been my help, and in the shadow of thy wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me." — Psalm 63:5-8. Let us be refreshed in the Lord daily and "Be still" when we can during the busy days ahead.

So, in practical terms, how can we slow down? We'll assume we are agreed: we *need* to spend time with our Saviour and to train our children to do this as well. Psalm 78:1-8.

There are areas in our lives that we can take a long look at to see if we are doing the best with our time and talents. There are so many good things out there to be involved in, so many needs to be met and so few willing people to meet them. Some of these things are *very good* and if nobody takes them on, they'll crash. We can't imagine Project A crashing, it's so worthy, so we add it to our busy load.

Stop right here. Let each of us take an honest look at our involvements and commitments. List them out. Are we making the best use of our talents and gifts in the context of those duties to which our God has clearly called us? This is a very difficult one to discern some-

times, for we are trying to discern the best on this side from the best over here. We can only do this with God's help: Proverbs 16:25 says, "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." Suddenly we see that we *must spend* that time with the Lord simply to ensure *any* of our involvements are right in the Lord's sight. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." — Proverbs 3:5-6. This will mean different kinds of involvements for different people because God created us as a body with many parts.

### Support Groups

When Craig and I began home schooling Genevieve in 1985, socialization was one of the main issues. (It hasn't changed much, has it, except that today most home educators would say character training is the biggie, while the normal concern of group socialization is a non-issue.) Over the years we've had contact with a number of home education support groups in New Zealand and the USA. Every one wanted to go on field trips and have all sorts of activities for the children. Many groups have been quite successful at this, often having several activities in a week, all to give the children great socialisation opportunities. The problem (in NZ or the USA) was that it seemed to fall on the same people week after week to organise the activities. Some activities would be well supported, others not, but either way, it meant the same workload for the organisers. Over time these leaders/organisers would burn out or give up. The good (serving others in organising socialization activities) caused the best (home educating their own children) to be compromised or discontinued altogether.

Over and over we've also heard it said that the families who went to *all* the activities were often the families with the naughtiest children. So much for socialisation! Older parents began to see that children need consistent discipline, which is best accomplished when their surroundings are constant rather than constantly changing. In other words, younger children especially became insecure and confused about their boundaries when the surroundings and the accompanying rules kept changing. Few parents can be so disciplined themselves as to clearly and consistently set new boundaries for their children for every occasion, several times a week, especially when a new mix of peer children would be calling them to a new set of spontaneous extra-curricular socialisation experiences.

So what is the function of a good Support Group? I believe support groups are for the parents, not the children. Parents need encouragement to get started in home education and to keep going. Workshops, Conferences, Seminars and camps are ideal.

When we began home educating, there was virtually nothing like this going on. Craig and I began to put on two- and three-day National Christian Home Schooling Conferences, with programmes for the entire family, the first in 1987, the last in 1996. While the feedback was always very positive, the logistics and costs to the families attending were considerable. But the overall



Something that I am learning is that surrender is not a one-time deal. So many times I tend to think of it as being an experience when really it is a day-to-day walk of obedience. Luke 9:23 commands us to take up our crosses *daily*! To the Romans, the cross was a symbol of torture. For many of us, this cross will be the cross of singleness. This cross is a hard one to bear, but we are called to daily bear it and follow Christ.

To me, this gives the idea that a life of surrender is a continual process of growing and enduring. It doesn't necessarily mean that I will say one day, "Lord, I surrender," and that'll be it. I will be called to do it day after day after day. And it won't stop with courtship, for after courtship I will long to be engaged. After engagement I will earnestly long to be married. After I am married I will long for children. Girls, we are called to surrender our *entire* lives.

### Are Our Desires Sinful?

Now does that mean that it's wrong to want to be married? Does that mean it's wrong to want to have children? No way. Those are natural desires, and if God wills those things for your life, they are actually *His* desires. Sometimes we tend to think that if we want something, it's wrong. But that is not always the case! It isn't sin to have that desire; it's sin to be controlled by that desire.

For example, I am going to hear the Vienna Boys Choir live in less than a month. This is something I have wanted for years, and it's like a dream come true for me! Now if something were to happen to prevent me from going, I would be majorly disappointed. It would be hard. I would shed tears over it. But does that mean that it was a sin for me to desire to go in the first place? No way. Now, granted, it would have been sin if I had been obsessed with the Vienna Boys Choir concert. But just wanting to see them is not wrong.

This truth is clear all over Scripture. In fact, even Christ Himself demonstrated it. When He prayed to God the Father right before His death on the cross, He expressed His desire. Did Christ have a preference as to whether He lived or died? We find that He did, because He prayed,

"Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless *not My will, but Yours, be done.*" — Luke 22:42.

So true surrender, then, is taking these desires and offering them back to God, giving Him the "right," if I may use that term, to do whatever He wants to with your desires. It is *total vulnerability*. One thing we must keep in mind is that surrendering these desires doesn't mean that God will take them away. When Abraham surrendered Isaac on the altar, it didn't mean that He didn't care whether Isaac lived or died. He did not enjoy the idea of slaying his only son. But God came first, and so Abraham surrendered his will, no matter what the cost. And God chose for Isaac to live. So don't just assume that if you surrender your heart to God, He will take away that desire for marriage. He may, but on the other hand, He may not. I love the way Elisabeth Elliot

put it in *Quest for Love*. When asked, "What if I never marry – will God then take that desire away?" she replied:

*Perhaps He will, quite suddenly and completely, that we may be freed from that burden in order to assume another. Perhaps He will not, in order that we may understand what it means to be "poor in spirit" – aware of our essential poverty and helplessness, having nothing to be proud of, nothing that would encourage us to think well of ourselves.*

### Our Surrender Will Be Tested

So the idea here is one of total dedication, allowing God to control what happens with your heart. As I discussed this with a young lady recently, she shared that she told God she surrendered every day. "But how do I know if I really have surrendered?" she asked. At the time, I wasn't exactly sure what to answer, but since then I believe I have finally found the answer. And that is, *we know we are surrendered when our emotions no longer rule our actions*. Throughout Scripture, when a believer surrendered to God, they were then given a test. Of course, my favourite example is that of Abraham. He was having constantly to obey God to demonstrate his surrender. He surrendered to God, and God called him to leave his home and journey to a strange land. He surrendered to God, and God called him to take his son, his only son whom he loved, and offer him to God on the altar. And Abraham did it.

The same happens with us. When we give an area over to God, we should expect that He will then test us so we will know whether or not we were sincere. This test will come by God's calling us to either do or not do something. Whether or not we obey will show us whether or not we are surrendered. If we are allowing God to control our will, we will obey. If not, we will go with our feelings. If I surrender to God and really mean it, I will faithfully obey what He tells me to do in that area. If I find myself being attracted to a guy and surrender that to God, He will test me by asking me to obey. This may mean God asks me to totally give up that desire. Will I do it? If so, then I am surrendered. It may mean that He will lead me to try not to spend time with that person. Will I obey? If so, I am surrendered. Whatever it is, you can be sure He will lead you in obedience. And if you do not obey, you have not surrendered that area to God. If you do, you have. It's that simple.

*This is emotional purity.*

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(Want more on this subject? Write to Genevieve Smith, 4 Tawa Street, Palmerston North for a copy of *Emotional Purity* by Heather Paulsen — see ad on page 15.)

after an hour and wait until the next day to complete the reading. They can finish that chapter and go on to the next, if interested. The same is true with mathematics: if students need more time to grasp a concept, they've got it. If students are breezing through an English lesson, they can complete it and move on to another subject. They don't have to do busy work or wait until classmates are through to move to the next subject.

The amount of time to complete a set of daily lessons at home is considerably shorter than it takes at school, largely because students are self-paced. Students can also bring textbooks with them and study almost anywhere. My children once took their books to the beach, studied each morning and explored the ecosystem in the afternoons. When students finish schoolwork, there is plenty of time left in the day to study topics of interest, develop hobbies, practice instruments, help with community service projects, create web pages, participate in mentorships and so forth. Like many children, my son had an intense interest in computers when he was in junior high school. As part of his home school day, he independently studied computer programming manuals and worked with mentors to learn what he needed to develop his own web page. Thereafter, he served as a mentor to online friends who also wanted to develop personal web pages.

Severe weather, health and safety concerns are minimized when students study at home. When students are physically ill, they can study in their pajamas, at a slower pace or simply rest until they feel well enough to tackle a lesson.

### Disadvantages of Home Schooling

Whenever home schooling is brought up, someone invariably states that lack of socialization is the number one disadvantage to home education. In reality, home schooled children are socialized in a variety of settings. The public school system does not possess the only means by which an individual may be socialized. "The typical home schooled child is regularly involved in 5.2 social activities outside the home, according to a recent study by Brian Ray of the National Home Education Institute," (Mattox, 1999, p. 13A). Children who are home schooled interact with others in public settings (i.e., libraries, restaurants, theaters, churches, clubs, sports teams and sporting events, field trips, music, dance and art lessons, Scouting, 4-H ["Head, Heart, Hands & Health", youth clubs run by the US Dept. of Agriculture] and so forth). Add to this list interaction with family, neighbors and friends and one can see the possibilities for social interaction in many arenas with interesting people of all ages. Home-schooled students develop social confidence with parental guidance and support. Generally, parents who home school do not list lack of socialization as a disadvantage because their children are socialized – just differently.

One disadvantage to home schooling is the loss of an income in a family. Many home schooled families have made a decision to live on a single income so that one parent may be dedicated to the task of instruction. Can the family manage on one income for a sustained period? One mother who needed a second income drove a school bus and taught her children when she came home from her morning route. She admitted the difficulty and the confinement of the job, yet she believed home schooling was best for her children and saw the part-time job as a way to help her family financially and follow through on her commitment.

Some families find home schooling confining. "In it's day-to-day reality, home schooling demands not merely time and energy, but a sense of direction and a plan," (Guterson, 1998, p. 71). There is a certain amount of time each day that must be set aside for instruction and schoolwork.

Neighbors who like to drop in and visit or friends who like to phone regularly have to be invited to do so at noninstructional times.

### How do Home School Students Compare to those Educated Publicly and Privately?

Lawrence M. Rudner, professor at the University of Maryland, independently compiled a survey for the Home School Legal Defence Assoc. (HSLDA). Rudner looked at the achievement test scores and demographics of 20,760 home schooled students in 11,903 families (Billups, 1999). According to his report,

On average, home school students in grades 1-4 perform one grade level higher than their public and private school counterparts. The achievement gap begins to widen in grade 5; by 8th grade the average home school student performs four grade levels above the national average. Another significant finding is that students who have been home schooled their entire academic lives have the highest scholastic achievement. The difference becomes especially pronounced during the higher grades, suggesting that students who remain in home school throughout their high school years continue to flourish in that environment. (HSLDA, 1999)

### How Did Home Schooling Affect My Family?

In May my son graduated from the Alabama School of Mathematics and Science in Mobile, Alabama, a residential high school for bright students. He was home schooled for two years and skipped a grade in the process. This example may not demonstrate any advantage to having once been home schooled, but perhaps it shows no liability in his education or socialization. At age 13 my daughter, who was home schooled for four years and also skipped a grade during that time, re-entered public school last fall as a ninth grader. She maintained a spot on the A-B honor roll each reporting period and was one of the school's athletes, playing on



both the school's volleyball and basketball teams.

When I was home schooling my children, I had a public school educator tell me that I would never work for the public school system again because of my decision to home school. I understood her feelings against this form of education because I once shared her beliefs. However, she was incorrect. I am currently employed as a teacher to gifted students. I am a public school educator who now has a heart for education in all of its

forms: public, private, home schooling, mentorships, and apprenticeships. As an educator, I've come to realize I do a disservice to my calling to only smile on those forms of education that authenticate my background. I have looked at home schooling from the inside and found a movement that helps individual students maximize their potential. I challenge other educators to become informed and supportive of this positive alternative in American education.

### How Did Home Schooling Affect My Public School Teaching?

[Editor's Note: To a committed home educator, some of the following sounds irksome and patronising to parents. However there are a lot of tips we home educators can apply to our situations as well: try to read with a receptive mind.]

Three lessons from my family's home schooling experience can be applied to the classroom:

- Lesson 1:** Allow bright students to work at their pace, and use rapid pacing where appropriate for group lessons.
- Lesson 2:** Provide opportunities for students to conduct in-depth research in an area of interest.
- Lesson 3:** Most importantly, provide opportunities for parents to actively participate in student learning.

Bright students work faster than many of their peers, so allow them to work at their own pace. Students are more engaged in learning when pursuing an area of interest; therefore, provide opportunities for students to conduct in-depth research in an area of their choosing. An interest inventory, such as Renzulli's Interest-A-Lyzer, can be administered to help students pinpoint these specific areas (Renzulli & Reis, 1985).

All caring parents can be front and center in educational practices in the home by establishing consistent guidelines that can be conveyed through the school.

1. Communicate a belief that learning is important. Set high expectations for students. If students are not learning at levels of expectation, find out the reason and kindly make modifications.
2. Meet with teachers to find out how to reinforce at home what is being taught in the classroom. Be persistent in requests and follow through on teacher recommendations.
3. Establish a "Homework First" policy. Outside activities come second. This confirms the belief that

learning is important.

4. Establish a reading policy. For example, students must read at least two books a month.
5. Turn off the television or, at least, limit television and video viewing. Turn off or limit video and computer gaming.
6. Establish study hours. Use the time for drill, recitation, reviewing for tests, reading and as a time for sharing new information learned. When all family members participate, this communicates that learn-

ing has significance that sends a strong message to students.

7. Establish family fun hours for recreational and social activities. Make sure lots of laughing is on the agenda. This can be as simple as playing board games or seeing who can create the most unusual ice cream sundae — and eat it. This builds bonds, establishes trust and creates an environment for sharing.

Please note, in every objective the emphasis is on learning, not grades. Working for grades is stressful. Learning is fun, powerful and lifelong; parents are vital partners in that process.

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(Edited from: Butler, S. (2000). "The 'h' word: Home schooling". *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 23(5), 44-50.)

# Graduates Speak

## Emotional Purity

by Mandy Bearden



God has really taught me a lot in this area over the years. Many times the lessons have come from some hard circumstances, but they were always worth it.

One problem I've noticed in my life and in the lives of others in this area is that our tendency is to ignore any attractions we might have to the opposite sex. We tend to feel guilty, like it is wrong to have those attractions, and so our tendency is to stuff the feelings down inside and ignore that they're there. We won't admit it to ourselves or our parents, and thus we live our lives in insincerity.

The problem is, those feelings are bound to come out somehow. So rather than admitting the feelings to ourselves, our parents and God, these feelings manifest themselves in immature ways, usually by flirting or constantly talking about a certain guy every chance we get. They also come out by manipulating and contriving schemes to get the guy's attention. We handle our feelings all wrong, and it results in heartache.

Thus, I have found that attractions to the opposite sex are, in and of themselves, not sinful. We are not to be consumed with the idea that if we feel attracted to someone, we have failed in our spiritual walk with God. This only results in insincerity, deception and a lack of focus on the love of God. So here is what I have found to be very freeing in this area of emotional purity:

### Admit Your Feelings

Don't try to pretend like they are not there. Recognize that you have an attraction. Any time we don't admit feelings to ourselves, it results in insincerity, which God hates.

### Seek the Counsel of Your Authorities

Tell your parents or authorities how you feel and seek their counsel. I have found in the past that my mom always offers a fresh perspective to any situation I may be in, and she always encourages me in the way I should go.

### Refocus Your Attention on Worshipping God

Worshipping God means loving Him with all our hearts, submitting to Him with our will and knowing Him with our minds. Scripturally, there is absolutely nothing that matters more than worshipping God. We should be consumed with this and constantly live with

an attitude of worship. When Christ comes again to set up His kingdom, all we will want to do is worship. At that point we will be worshipping Him in the fullness that God intends for us. (Rev. 7:15-17). But now, if we have accepted Christ, He *lives in us* so we are able to have a foretaste of the glorious time of worship that's to come (Col. 1:27).

To me, the most relevant Biblical example of this is Abraham. In Genesis 15, God calls Abraham to feast upon His glory when He exclaims, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." God was reminding Abraham of the first and greatest commandment, to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mt. 22:37). He wanted Abraham to see that his treasure was not in his offspring but rather in *God Himself*. The result was total submission to God. When it came time for God to ask Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on the altar, Abraham was ready. Why? Because he saw that *God* was his reward and because he was willing to do whatever it took to be in fellowship with God.

This is the same thing God is calling us to in our guy-girl relationships. He wants us to fall in love with Him. He wants us to be so consumed with Him that we are willing to count *all things* as loss that we might gain Christ (Phil. 3:7-11). He wants to see not marriage or a certain person but *Him* as our exceeding great reward. Unless we are totally satisfied in Him alone, we will not be content in our single years or our married years. We have to find that He is *the only thing* that will satisfy our lonely and hungry hearts. If we look for it in anything or anyone else, we will be utterly disappointed.

In fact, the joy we receive from marriage should ultimately be because we are seeking God together with our husbands — that we are exalting and magnifying His name together (Ps. 34:3). This should be the driving force behind all our horizontal fellowship, whether with a husband or friends. We have to learn that our ultimate purpose in life is to bring glory to God by fulfilling the greatest commandment — loving Him with our whole beings.

### Submission of the Will

God has given each of us a will of our own. He has done that with the desire that we might bring our will into submission to His will. This is surrender. God calls us to surrender every part of our lives to Him and will prune us through painful situations to bring us to the place of total surrender.

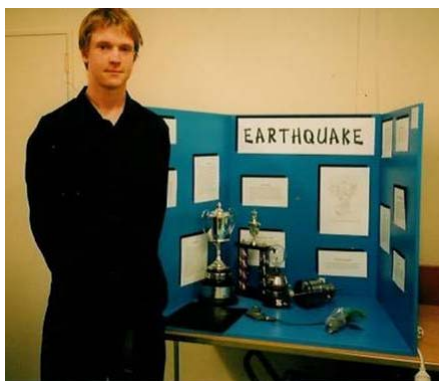
For single young ladies, probably the biggest thing we will have to surrender is our desire for marriage and romance. I know this is debatable, but I firmly believe that these desires are not wrong; they are God-given. But we must bring those desires under His control; we must surrender them. For us young ladies, this is very difficult, because this is probably the biggest desire we will have. But we can constantly thank God for the opportunity to learn to surrender those desires to Him, because it means He is working in our hearts to cause us to surrender the *dearest* thing to our hearts.



# Home Educators Did It

**Stephen Florance**

by Andrea Munroe



It's Monday evening and I approach the phone in some trepidation. I'm rather shy of ringing Stephen Florance for an interview; I have never heard of anyone winning so many awards as he has in my *life*. Let's see, seven here, plus another three, four, five, that's twelve that Mrs McCoy-Florance has listed for me, and I shouldn't be surprised if there are a few more stashed away in dark cupboards. (Nods sagely.) He could well have an Oscar or something hidden somewhere.

But Stephen's awards tend to relate to science; he's a budding electrical engineer from Gisborne. Two and a half years ago, in 2001, he entered a Tesla coil in the science fair and won the engineering award. A Tesla coil is a power-transmitting device modeled on an experiment by Nikola Tesla. (In 1898 Tesla was having fun in his New York laboratory with a vibrator attached to an iron column. When he made it vibrate at different frequencies, different pieces of equipment would jiggle in places around the room. What Tesla forgot was that the column connected to the foundation beneath the building and was consequently transmitting his vibrations all over Manhattan. He did become a little worried when the walls and floor began to shake — he'd started a small earthquake in the neighbourhood which had smashed windows, swayed buildings and completely freaked out the neighbours. Police came flooding to his laboratory and it was all rather amusing.)

In 2002, Stephen entered the science fair again, this time with a portable laser that can cut plastic and heat or even melt substances. It won everything possible:

Special Award – Best Exhibit in Fair  
Special Award – I.P.E.N.Z. (Engineers)  
Special Award – Optometrical  
Special Award – Overall Senior Section  
Special Award – Overall Technology  
Special Award – Business Application Ltd Award  
Special Award – Treble Court Photos Award

Following that he was able to enter in Auckland's Genesis Energy National Science and Technology Fair in December 2002 and won the "Electricity Supply Industry Training Organisation" award!

Stephen is quiet and unassuming. Over the phone he comes across a little shy. Currently Stephen attends a local boys' high school. He was homeschooled up until he was 15 1/2, then entered school mid-year and was advised not to sit school cert because he had not been studying the set curriculum, so he repeated 5th form the next year. Now 19, Stephen is finishing his 7th form

year in a string of science subjects: chemistry, physics, graphics, maths with calculus, and statistics. Funnily enough, Stephen struggled all his life with maths until he was about 17 years old, when he suddenly was able to do it and even *liked* calculus! (Wow — maybe there's hope for me yet...) Mrs McCoy-Florance says it was an answer to prayer.

According to Stephen, if it weren't for homeschooling, he would probably not have been so scientifically intelligent (to coin a phrase). Homeschooling gave him the freedom to read what he wanted in this free time, and so he'd read about electrical things and then go and experiment in his self-funded workshop.

Thus Stephen's fervour for electrical inventing was unleashed upon the world. Just this month, he entered the 2003 Science and Technology Fair with an anti-earthquake machine and won Best Project in the Fair, Best Engineering Exhibit, Best Year 11-13 Technology Exhibit and a Gold Prize.

Interestingly, Stephen is dyslexic. "I can't spell", he says frankly. Stephen says that while dyslexia is a hindrance in some ways, in others it's an advantage because "you learn things differently to other people. You see things from a different perspective." Stephen's two other siblings, Michael (21) and Benjamin (16) are both dyslexic, a condition inherited from their father. Asked how she has handled this as a homeschooling mum, Mrs McCoy-Florance said that it is hard work and there is no easy answer. She attended a SPELD course, consulted books, and pursued all the avenues she could. "I believe if you can find an interest and focus on it, they (like all of us) are greatly encouraged. It is great if it is an interest that can be developed for their future careers."

As for the future, Stephen has enrolled in Waikato's four-year Electrical Engineering degree, and is applying for scholarships to see him through. A degree in electrical engineering would enable him to work with developing electrical components for appliances or that type of field. He has also been invited by the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology to attend the APEC Youth Science Festival in Beijing in 2004, which is held only every three years.

So — keep inventing and making things, Stephen. And we'll be scrutinizing every trophy and silver cup we come across to see if it has your name on it.

**Andrea Munroe** of North Shore City was home educated all her days. She is an aspiring journalist, finishing off a bachelor of business degree. 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.



# Learning Disabilities



## Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Foetal Alcohol Effects, Part 2

by Linda Dillon

One time we had a teenager baby-sit our children in our home. When we came back the other children were all coloring pictures nicely at the table, but Gene was cracking nuts open on the kitchen floor with a big 2 by 4 board! He had told the baby-sitter he wanted to show her how we crack nuts at our house, and she had believed him.

One day Daddy was fixing something in the garage, while he was watching the children. While Daddy was occupied, 9-year-old Gene got down three spray bottles containing bleach, slug-killer and Windex from the top shelf in our bathroom. He dumped the contents in the toilet, filled the bottles up with water and took them outside to play squirt guns! When questioned about it later he said that he had found the bottles outside and they were empty. His little sister, Sarah, who played squirt guns with him and had seen the whole thing, told us the truth. Although we were very disappointed about the stealing and the lying, we were glad he had dumped out the contents of the bottles instead of playing squirt guns with poison!

My friend's 9-year-old son with FAE convinced a teenage baby-sitter that "it was time for his medicine." The baby-sitter believed him and actually gave him a spoonful of allergy medicine that had a prescription label dated a year previously. He just liked the taste, and decided to try to con the baby-sitter into something he wouldn't get if his mother were home. My friend was upset when she found out about it, and that was the last time she called that particular baby-sitter.

These are some examples to show the importance of choosing your baby-sitter carefully and training them well. The baby-sitter needs to know that the FAS/E child must not be out of sight, and must be supervised as if he or she was a much younger child. Someone who knows the

child well and knows the rules of your house would make the best baby-sitter.

## FAS/E Behaviours

Before I can talk about homeschooling, I must address the behavioural challenges and some possible solutions. These behaviours continue throughout the day, whether it is "school time" or not.

1. It is best to give only one instruction at a time. If we say, "Carry your dishes and then go to the bathroom," Gene will confuse the two things and carry his dishes into the bathroom! So break it down into two separate parts and wait until the first one is completed before giving the second instruction. He also has trouble doing two things at the same time. For example, Gene cannot eat dinner and watch a movie at the same time. It is too distracting for him. Sometimes on a special occasion we will eat dinner in front of a video movie. When the movie is over and everyone else is carrying his or her empty dishes away, Gene is still sitting there with a whole plate of food in front of him.
2. Use eye contact and say the child's name before giving directions. I ask Gene to look at my eyes, then I give him instructions. When he is involved in an activity, he may not respond to group instructions like, "Everybody get in the car."
3. Use simple, brief language when telling the child something. Use concrete vocabulary and avoid metaphors or expressions like, "Take the fork in the road." He will imagine an eating utensil lying in the street.
4. Choose your movies very carefully. A movie with even a slightly scary content will give Gene bad dreams or keep him awake all night. Some of the movies made for children these days are really bad for children. We recently rented the children's animated movie "Anastasia" because we thought our boys might

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enjoy seeing a movie about a Russian princess. It was really awful, with a wicked sorcerer, magic spells, green goblins, etc. Gene was so scared he was up almost all night and was afraid to have the light turned off in his bedroom.

5. Gene and Val both can get hyperactive when people are visiting or anything outside of the normal routine is happening. Sometimes they act really silly, hiding behind the sofa or under the table, giggling or wrestling together. Some parents have found success with creating a quiet corner or special chair where the child can go to be alone and unwind for a few minutes when he is over stimulated. This spot is comfortable and is not a punishment. We have found that Gene will often go out by himself and just sit quietly on our swing set after playing an exciting board game with his siblings. We see it as a sign of Gene's growing maturity that he, subconsciously or not, realizes that he needs that quiet spot, finds it himself and uses it appropriately.

6. These children have difficulty generalizing from one situation to another. For example, Gene knows that our woodstove is hot, and he does not touch it. When Gene was eight years old, we went to visit our friends the Bushnells in the winter time. We took all of our children right over to the woodstove and said, "This is the Bushnell's woodstove. It is very hot. Do not touch it." Later we saw Gene shaking his finger around in the air and blowing on it. We asked him why he was doing that. He said he had touched the Bushnell's woodstove to see if it was hot! He did not believe or understand that if our woodstove at home was hot, this meant that a woodstove in another house would also be hot. None of our other children, older or younger, touched the Bushnell's woodstove.

7. Some FAS/E children are orally fixated. Even now at age nine, Gene usually has his fingers in his mouth while he is doing things such as schoolwork, computer games or watching a video. We make him aware of it by saying, "Fingers," and he puts his hands down. He also puts toys, pencils and other things into his mouth.

8. It is important to check the child's clothing every morning. At age nine Gene still often puts on underwear, pants and shirts backward or inside out or his shoes on the wrong feet. His zipper is usually down after a trip to the bathroom. He also will put on a coat to go outside when it is 90-degree weather or forget to put on his coat when it is snowing outside. So FAS/E children need reminding.

9. These children may be overly affectionate with strangers. When Gene was younger, he would try to hold hands with a neighbour we just met, hug the deliveryman or jump into the lap of people at church we did not know well. We had to explain to him that we only sit in the laps of people who are relatives, like parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc. We only hug relatives like our cousins.

10. The child may become distracted and forget what they are supposed to be doing. One day we told the children to get in the car for church. Gene got distracted

on the way to the car and started playing in the sand-box. We realized he was missing and someone had to go look for him. These children need extra reminding to stay on their task. Gene also used to get distracted in a store and just wander off to look at things, and we had to search through the whole store to find him again. Now our children have learned the three rules for going into a store: don't touch anything, don't ask for anything and stay with Mom. We have found that the best way to keep track of Gene in the store is to have him keep one hand on the side of my shopping cart. My friend now makes her 9-year-old son keep both hands on the shopping cart, because one day he used his free hand to impulsively pull open several of the "pop-top" cat food lids as he went down the aisle. She had to pay for a whole bag of opened cat food cans, and she doesn't even own a cat. Her son had to pay her back for the cat food with his allowance for quite a while.

11. The child may be forgetful and lose things. Gene loses his toys around the house and forgets to hang up his wet towel after a shower. He forgets his coat or Bible at church. He loses his coat or mittens outside. He leaves his bike or coat out all night in the rain. So before he comes inside, we say, "Put your bike away." We remind him, "If you are finished with your mittens, bring them to me."

12. The child may have late potty training and nighttime bedwetting. Gene wet the bed until age seven and had many daytime accidents when he was too busy playing to listen to his body signals. We put a plastic cover on the mattress, and for a while we put big diapers on Gene at night. He also had many accidents involving a bowel movement in his pants, especially in a new place or when he was really excited about something. One time when he was about six years old, we went to a wedding at our church. He was very excited while he was playing with the children outside before the wedding started. When we called the children inside, we smelled something, and we asked him if he had pooped in his pants. He said yes, so I took him to the bathroom. But there was not much in his underwear. He explained that the poop had rolled down his pants leg and onto the ground. I asked him where this had happened, and he said he didn't know. So Gene and I, in our best church clothes, took some paper towels and went outside looking for his lost poop. We finally found it on the playground and cleaned it up. Unfortunately, we had no change of underwear for him with us, so he had to sit through the wedding and the reception in dirty pants. So we learned to always carry a change of clothes because of possible mishaps, such as a mud puddle, car sickness, spilled juice or a bowel accident.

(Continuing.)

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# Tough Questions People Ask



## How Do You Strike the Right Balance of Accountability and Structure?

by Andrew Haylett  
of Cambridge, UK

Freedom and flexibility are not opposites to nor enemies of accountability and structure. Some things to keep in mind:

1. A "via media" is needed, steering away from both rigid and unyielding adherence to a formal program and from an entirely undisciplined approach that fails to guide and motivate the child. I doubt that many people fall into either of those extremes, but those arguing from the opposite direction often think that they do!

2. Use of curricula is not in any way incompatible with imparting life skills.

3. "No pain, no gain" is a biblical precept, as I understand it. 1 Corinthians 9:27, Philippians 3:14 talk of effort and denial in the cause of Christ.

4. Both study and work can be wearisome, and this is not surprising. The curse on Adam means that work can be hard. Our children need to understand this, so that they can realistically take up the command given to them by God. This is not to say that we deliberately make life hard for them, but we show them that things worth doing can be hard and require effort. Taking a medical (or other) degree shows that study is not always pleasurable!

5. Modern academic instruction has not developed primarily as a result of social engineering but in many cases because technology is advanced and requires in-depth training. There's an awful lot more to be learnt about many subjects now than there was several hundred years ago.

6. We need to understand our children as we teach them. Most of all, we need to understand them in their basic nature, shared with all children: they are created in the image of God (which is reflected in their creativity), but they bear the stain of Adam's first sin (which is reflected in laziness and rebellion). Also, we trust, they bear the image of Christ and are being transformed to be like Him. Only as we understand these principles can

we begin to instruct our children faithfully.

7. The disciples were indeed trained "informally" and in real-life situations by Jesus. But then, that was the appropriate mode of instruction for their calling. It is not necessarily normative for other vocations. Even pastors nowadays, needing as "tools" a facility with the languages of Scripture, are unlikely to be able to learn Greek and Hebrew without some fairly hard (and laborious!) study.

8. Children learn a great deal from their parents, and I'm thinking primarily of character traits rather than specific domains of knowledge. We must pray that the Lord will work in us to make us good examples to our children and that we will bear in mind their limitations, not discouraging them nor provoking them to wrath, but showing compassion and kindness towards them. We must also show them examples of perseverance, patience and hard work.

(Andrew was converted to Christ while studying engineering at university and has worked since then as a software engineer and manager. He married Annabel in 1993, and the Lord has blessed them with four children: Matthew (8), Catherine (7), Jonathan (5) and Joanna (1). These have all been home educated from the start. The family are members of Cambridge Presbyterian Church, England, where Andrew serves as a deacon.)

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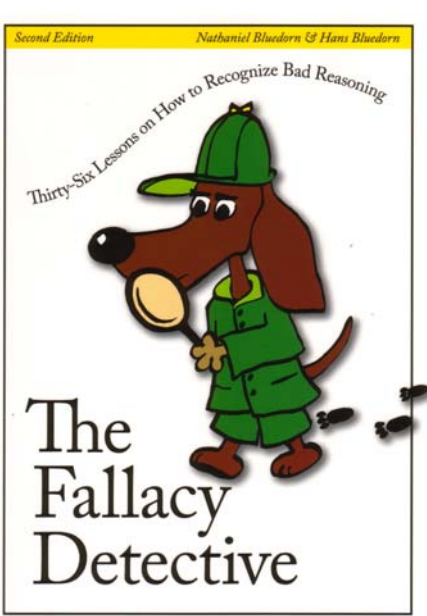
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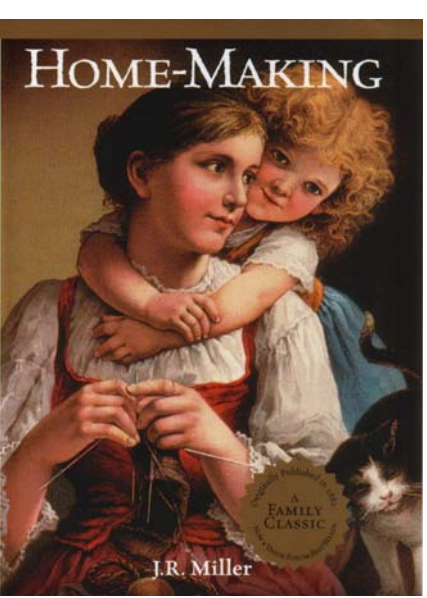
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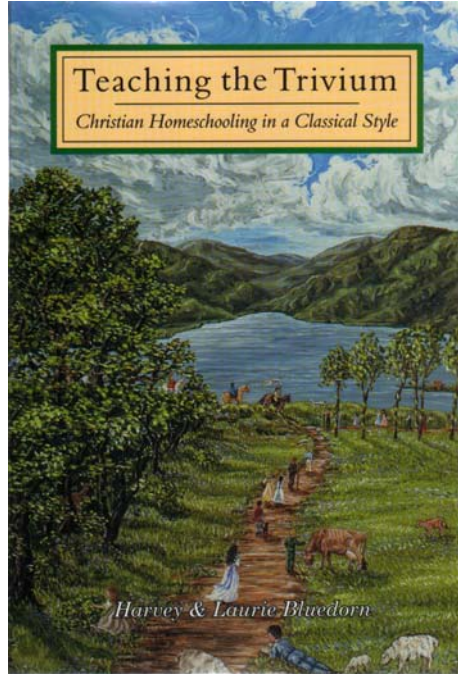


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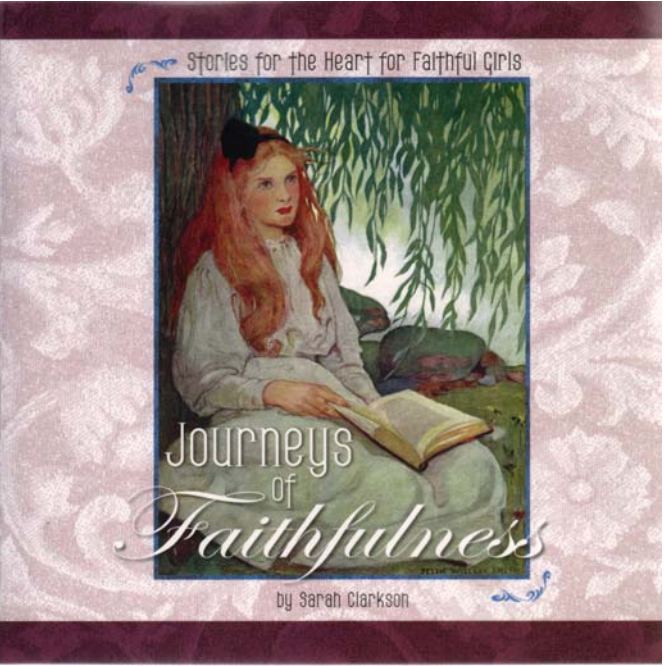
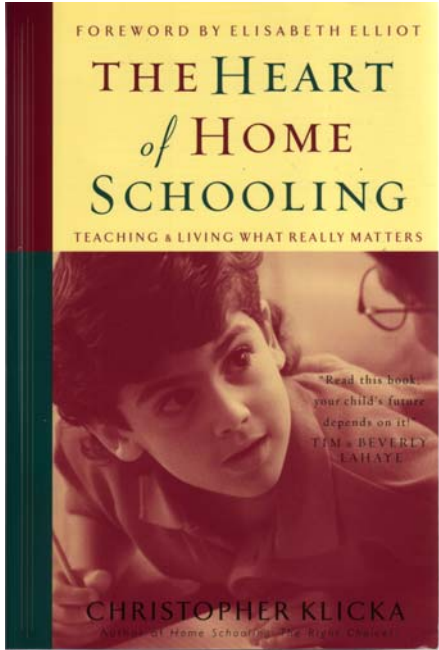
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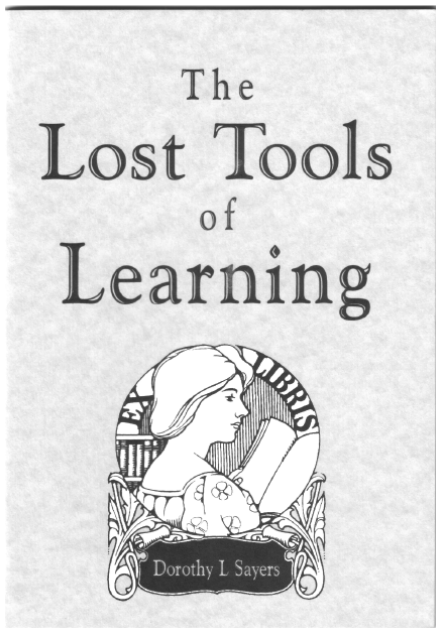
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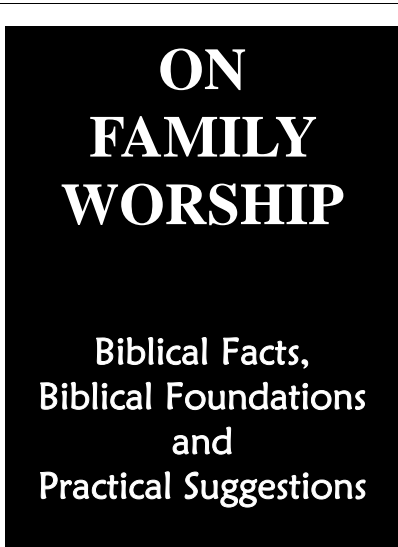
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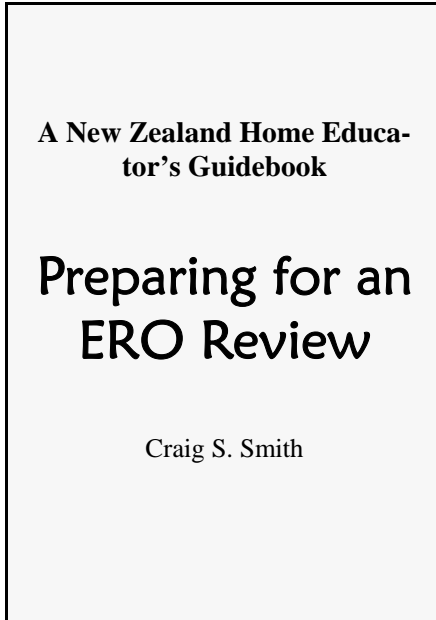
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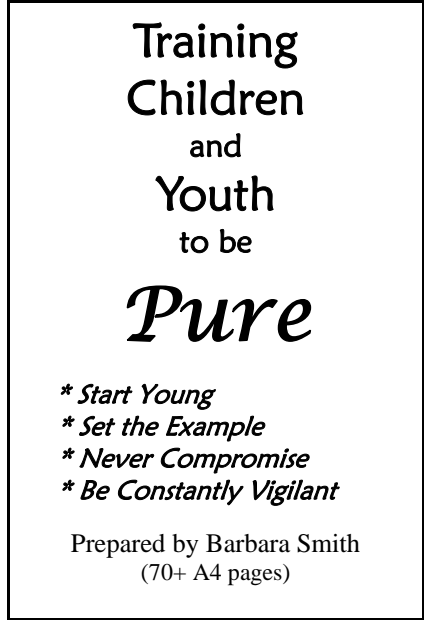


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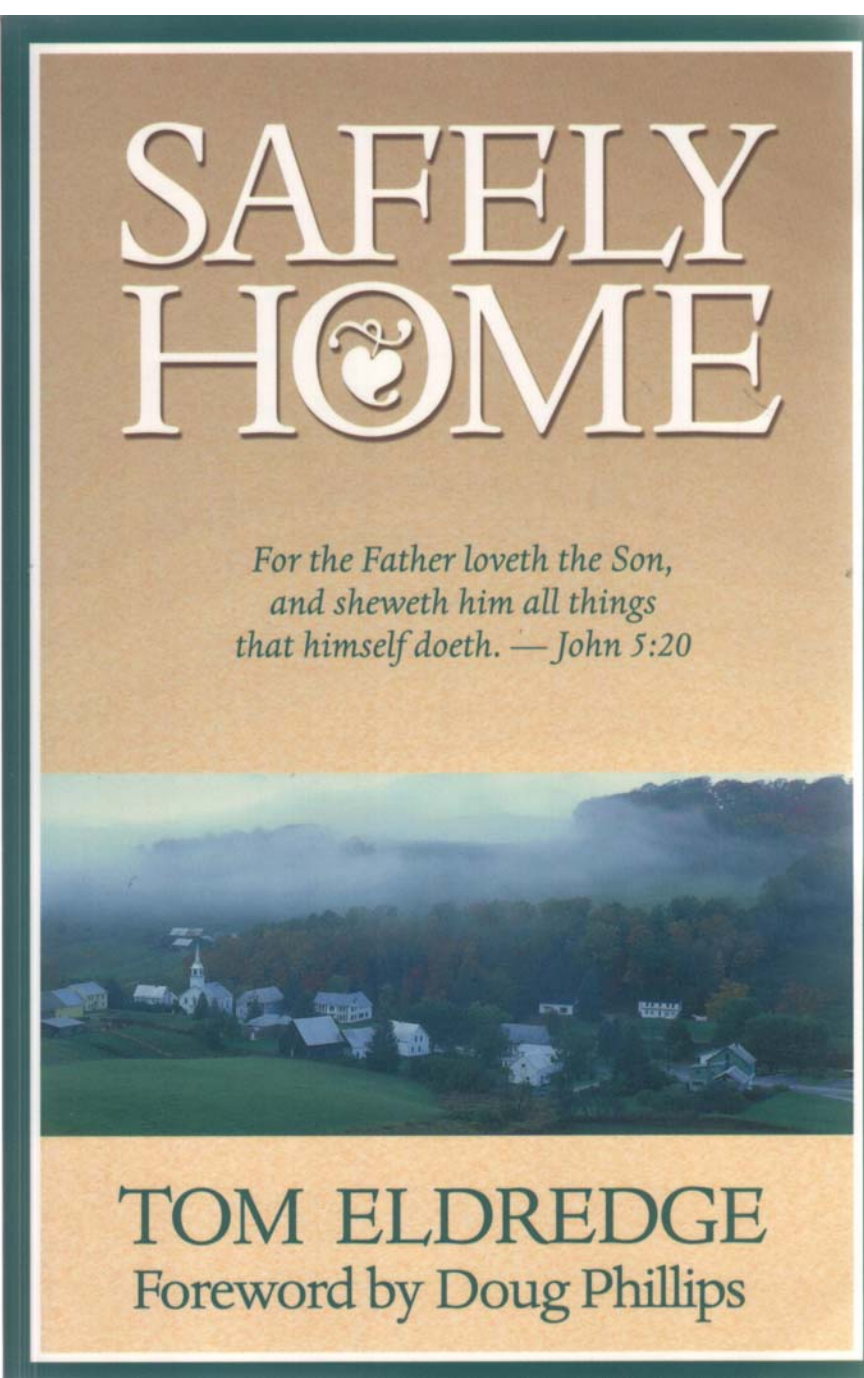
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