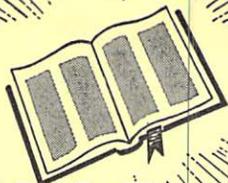
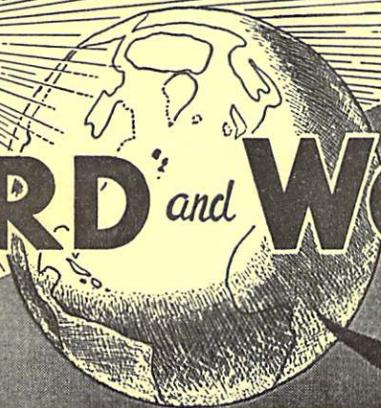


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*"Holding forth the Word of life."*

AUGUST, 1991

## **PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING**

### **A MOTHER'S MUSINGS**

Some day when my children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates a mother, I will tell them:

I loved you enough to ask where you were going, with whom, and what time you would be home.

I loved you enough to insist that you save your money and buy a bike for yourself even though we could afford to buy one for you.

I loved you enough to be silent and let you discover that your best friend was a creep.

I loved you enough to make you take a Milky Way back to the drugstore (with a bite out of it) and tell the clerk, "I stole this yesterday and want to pay for it."

I loved you enough to stand over you for two hours while you cleaned your room, a job that would have taken me 15 minutes.

I loved you enough to let you assume the responsibility for your actions even when the penalties were so harsh they almost broke my heart.

But most of all, I loved you enough to say "no" when I knew you would hate me for it. Those were the most difficult battles of all. I am glad I won them, because in the end you won something, too!

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*"Declare the whole counsel of God"*

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

The Word and Work (USPS 691-460) is published monthly except December under the auspices of the Portland Ave. Church of Christ, Inc., Louisville, Ky. Subscription: \$6.00 per year; bundles of 10 or more to one address = \$5.50 per subscription. Address correspondence to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville, KY 40212. Second class postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212.

Vol. LXXXV

AUGUST, 1991

No. 8

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**THEME:**

# Principles of Good Parenting

## Christian Courtship

Alex V. Wilson

Both this and next month's themes relate to family living. No subject is more urgent. This issue centers on parenting. But in the Christian view marriage precedes parenting, and courtship precedes marriage. Thus this editorial looks at courtship. *Share its ideas with your teenagers.*

### *Senior Panic*

During my college days a disease called "junior jitters" sometimes struck some of the students. Here were its symptoms: the patient became obsessed by the fact that she (usually) or he was already a junior in college but still had no boyfriend (or girlfriend)—no prospects of marriage; this realization was followed by a feverish attempt to change the situation, quick!

More common than that disease, however, was another one: "senior panic." The patient would reason thus with himself: "If I have spent nearly four years in the company of hundreds of young people and still have not landed a mate, it is extremely unlikely that I shall find one after graduation, for then I shall have contact with a very limited number of prospects, especially Christian prospects." Propelled by this fear, the patient would often disregard the proverb which advises us to look before we leap.

Once in a while, a student who had graduated with no life-partner would decide that the best way to remedy her or his condition was to return to graduate school. The motive was not academic, but romantic (hopefully). This affliction was termed "grad grab."

Our God makes a wonderful promise to us in Psalm 32:8, "I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you." Since that is true, we can relax and trust Him to guide us. By faith, Christian young people can make themselves immune to junior jitters, senior panic, and grad grab—or any similar sicknesses which often strike in earlier years. This does not mean we should not use our minds in courtship, for in order to have God instruct and teach us, we must be teachable. In fact the next verse says, "Be not like a horse or mule, without understanding." We should *use* our understanding, but not *lean* upon it (Prov. 3:5). Trust the Lord to lead you to His choice for your life-partner (or to satisfy you without one, if that's His will), and then

you need not be jittery, panicky, or grabby. For, "God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him."

Obviously, the proof of trust in the Lord is obedience to Him. No one can claim to be trusting Christ if he violates His commands, even that hard one that says Christians should marry only fellow-Christians. To marry an unsaved person is the same as telling Christ one of two things: either "I'm smarter than You are, Christ, so I'll follow my plans instead of yours," or, "You don't love me Christ, or else You'd let me marry this person." How sad that many people cheat themselves out of God's good plan for them.

### *Physical Expressions of Affection*

Changing the subject, let's think about some guidelines for dating behavior, especially in the area of physical contact. The first three suggestions below are based on the Golden Rule and the fourth one is based on simple biological facts.

1. In dating, don't do anything that you would be sorry for or ashamed of if you and your present friend broke up, each of you married someone else, but all four of you were regularly seeing each other, as neighbors or churchmembers together.

2. Don't do anything that you do not want your future mate to be doing with the persons that he/she is now dating.

3. Realize that what may not be sexually arousing, hard to stop, and troublesome to you, *may* be for the person whom you are dating. Thus you cannot evaluate by your own reactions and feelings alone. This is especially important for girls to remember, since fellows are much more easily stimulated than girls.

4. Realize that petting does not *satisfy*, it *stimulates*. That is its intended biological purpose, to prepare for full sexual union. Light petting naturally creates the desire for heavier petting, etc. thus a couple who are going steady or are engaged ought to discuss this and agree between themselves (and in the sight of God, remember?) to set definite limits. Restraint is needed, for once a certain level has been reached, it is very difficult to retreat to a lower level—should you realize you have been going too far. It's not safe to play with dynamite!

Only the Holy Spirit can produce purity of mind and self-control of action. Notice in Romans 1 that the natural result of ungodliness (19-23) is unchastity and uncleanness (24-27). But God's power can make us what we ought to be, even in these days when the moral atmosphere is like a sewer.

(More next month)

\* \* \*

Studies show that if *both parents* attend church regularly, 72% of their children remain committed to the church upon reaching adulthood. If only the father attended regularly, 55 % of the children remain faith. If only the mother attends regularly, just 15% of the children stay committed later on. And if neither parent attends regularly, only 6% stay involved in church.

# THE OLD BIRTH

Betty Knecht Allen

That's a switch! In Christian circles we are usually talking about *the new birth*. But perhaps at this point it is appropriate to talk a bit about the old birth, by which I mean our own physical birth or—since we can't remember too much about that—the birth of our children, or other children.

We don't hear very much about physical birth at church. It might be a good thing to hear more, since the birth process is an awesome demonstration of the infinite mind of the One Who designed it.

Just as being born is a crisis time for the infant, giving birth is a crisis for the birthing woman. And for those who do not give birth, childlessness is a heart wrenching crisis. God often allows crises to come into our lives so that we will turn our heart toward Him.

In a plumbing supply shop a number of men were gathered around a large poster of a woman taking a shower. Some were making lustful comments, and calling to others to notice the poster. Among those who were passing by was one of the Lord's own, and his comment was terse and effective. He said, "Isn't that beautiful! *God* made that!"

Indeed, the human body *is* beautiful. It speaks of God in every detail. The birth process, also, is such an intricate feat! Because *God* made it, and He made it to work.

This brings me to my first major point: *God* made the process. Can we, then, believe that He knew what He was doing, and can we trust Him, and draw Him into the birth situation? Is He interested? Nay, we don't have to draw Him into the birth situation—He will be there; that is, unless we carefully exclude Him.

My second major point is that there is a God-honoring way to give birth. "In all thy ways acknowledge him..." How is God acknowledged in a birth situation? You will answer this question for yourself; but here are a few thoughts.

We can think about providing a sacred atmosphere for the occasion. A hospital, by the way, can be a very public place, and an obstetrical case is so routine, that any thought of modesty or sensitive feelings or the sacredness of the experience may be lost. I still cringe at the Grand Central Station atmosphere of many delivery rooms—hospital staff in and out while the delivering woman is thoroughly exposed, repartee among them, and sometimes even crude jokes at the expense of the woman on the table.

Whose presence at the birth would honor God? Strangers? Technicians? All the friends and neighbors? The older children? Only the good old doctor? Who could be more concerned about the whole process than the longsuffering husband? And he is the one most often discouraged from being present. There is something not quite right when the husband is excluded from the great moment, and a stranger in a white gown is the first to lay eyes and hands on this new life. This is a time of special bonding between husband and wife; she

*needs* him, and he is there for her. The baby needs his father's touch, and it is a sacred moment when mother, father and baby get acquainted. Birthing has been so for thousands of years . . . how did it become a medical procedure with a professional doing the honors and holding all the power?

A third major point: successful childbirth is a supreme accomplishment—something the woman does to complete a long build-up. When a birth proceeds as God designed it, there is a sense of exultation, a great joy, and a sense of the Presence and favor of God! Only a few times in the course of a lifetime is a woman privileged to experience this. . . Does it honor God to wipe out this moment? Many women come to the moment of exultation sedated or saddle-blocked; some are even put to sleep and wake only when the baby is "safely" in the nursery. Then they may have sedation grogginess or "spinal headache"; and then those miserable stitches!! And when it is time for the baby to feed (immediately after birth is usually nixed in hospitals!) the poor mother may try in vain to get him interested because he has had a bottle of sweetened water before being brought to her. How have we laid "our tool" on God's exquisite design and marred it! Instead of completing a supreme achievement of womanhood, the woman becomes an object, and various things are done to her; she is not in charge, and everyone there seems to know so much more about it than she; and the strength and dignity of her husband is denied her. Is this not a switch from what God intended?

Point number four: how much technology does God need to carry out the process He designed? Fetal monitors? Amniocentesis? Sedatives? Ultrasound? Intravenous fluids? Oxygen for slow breathing infants? Incubators? Surgical lights? Sterile instruments? Drugs to precipitate labor? Drugs to slow labor? Trays of sterile instruments? Just remember, people were having babies long before all these things came into use; and in many parts of the world babies are still born without so much "help"!

A fifth point should be mentioned here: assisting at births has always been a woman's ministry to other women. Midwives are mentioned in scripture, and God worked with them (Exodus 1). One even successfully delivered a hand presentation, and twins to boot! Pause and think of that! A hand presentation is something a birth assistant hopes will never happen. But God was involved in that situation. We should note in passing that Rachel died in childbirth (Gen. 35:16-20). God was able to prevent it, but apparently chose not to do so. Women still die in childbirth, whether in hospital or out; if a doctor presided at the delivery people usually accept that it could not have been prevented. If a midwife is present at a death, she will certainly have legal problems—not always at the behest of the family, but usually at the ire of the medical profession.

Shall I make more points? You will be tired of reading! I could tell you of my own experiences—the ones that have opened my mind to this line of thought. But you could match mine, likely, with your own. I would love to hear of all your experiences, and perhaps you have reached different conclusions from mine. I wonder how many women approach their first delivery having never seen or assisted

at a birth? I have an indelible memory of young women coming fearfully into the labor room saying, "Where is my shot? My doctor promised me he wouldn't let me hurt!" Many of our older generation have never experienced a natural birth, and have been taught to be afraid. I remember being told very firmly as a nurse, "*Midwife is a BAD word!*" But we don't get that concept from scripture.

Just a word about the new-borns: they are different, too, in a natural birth. On the whole, they are not troubled with lethargy, because they have not been sedated through the mother. So they breathe much more spontaneously. They wait until "all things are ready" before they begin their exit, and they seem at peace about the whole procedure. They have not experienced violence as yet; that is, the womb that ushered them out was not stimulated to ultra hard contractions to thrust them out before they were quite composed for the exit; and they have not been pricked with monitors; and they have not had steel clamps locked onto their head to *pull* them out by brute force. They are not taken away from the warm body and the loving voice they have come to recognize . . . and they have been put to breast within minutes. To them the world must seem a more secure and comforting place.

It has been my great good fortune to be present at a number of "natural" births, where there was dignity and a sense of the Presence of God. By contrast, our generally accepted method seems like a three-ring circus, profane rather than spiritual. To a skillful midwife, our delivery room techniques would surely be shocking—maybe even barbaric. I wonder how the Lord Himself looks on them!

I fervently salute the women among us who have trusted God and honored him, in spite of traditions that frowned, and have allowed the birth of their child to be a spiritual high, as God surely intended. To those for whom this experience is yet future, and for older women who counsel, I appeal to you to take a long, objective look at our current childbirth practices, and think again about what God intended this experience to be.

\* \* \*

**Teaching Responsibility and Restitution:**

## **Helping Children Mend Mistakes**

Kathy Royer

The ball sailed through the air like a comet against the summer sky. The comet's perfect arc was jarringly interrupted when it crashed through Mrs. Jameson's patio door.

Our son Josh was playing baseball. I watched from the window as the game ended abruptly. I was tempted to go and talk to Mrs. Jameson myself and explain the exuberant competitive fever that had caused damage to her property, but I caught myself. I was in the midst of raising an eleven-year-old boy. I had done a lot of thinking about responsibility and how to teach it. In my own maturation process, I had also discovered that irresponsibility and guilt are close relatives.

Instead of relieving my son of responsibility, I chose to help him make restitution. I went with him to talk to Mrs. Jameson. We worked out an arrangement so that he would use some of his allowance to help pay for the window. Then he and his father went and replaced the old window with a new pane of glass. They glazed it, primed it, and put on the final coat of paint. It looked like new.

Josh learned how to repair a broken window. He had the satisfaction of knowing that he had taken responsibility for a mistake he had made. He realized that owning up to a mistake and acting to correct it are within the realm of possibility. He had the joy of working with his dad. All in all, it was a positive experience.

Restitution is a way of taking care of a problem in a constructive way. Since children can never expect to go through life without making mistakes, they must learn how to take care of them. We as parents are responsible to help our children learn how to face their mistakes—as teachers, not police officers.

### *Restitution Pointers*

The following pointers will help make the restitution process a positive learning experience.

- Do not present restitution as a punishment, but rather taking responsibility for one's actions.
- Work at setting restitution that will be possible for the child.
- Plan the restitution so that it can be completed within a relatively short period of time.
- Lend your moral and emotional support as the child goes through the process.
- Focus on the opportunity to do something about a mistake rather than on the mistake itself.
- Help the child understand that restitution is part of a reconciliation process. Mistakes can cause harm to relationships and mending mistakes can bring healing.
- Affirm the child when the task is completed.

### *Good, But Not Easy*

All this sounds good. It is! But just because it is good does not mean it is easy to carry out. If restitution becomes difficult for my children, I am inclined to take more than my share of responsibility to finish it up. My husband, on the other hand, tends to focus too much on the stupidity of the mistake that requires correction. One way to avoid pitfalls is to collaborate with one's spouse or another adult on planning and implementing the restitution process.

Restitution is not always monetary. Money is often an easy way of getting off. Restitution should take into account the ramifications of mistakes. In the case of the broken window, the cost of the glass was not as much of a problem for the elderly Mrs. Jameson as getting it fixed.

### *Restitution Brings Healing*

Restitution should always aim for healing a relationship. When a

brother or sister breaks something belonging to the sibling, it is important that they restore their relationship, as well as replace or repair the item. A conversation with the person whose property has been damaged or lost is often the first step toward restitution. Children will need help with this part of the process, just as they need help to save their money or do the work that is necessary to complete the restitution. Go with your child to talk to the neighbor whose window is broken; however, it is important for each child to speak for himself or herself. The parent is there for moral support and to help give confidence.

An important side benefit of restitution is that the child will usually take more care in the future to avoid mistakes. I believe that it is more likely to happen when it is not made the major purpose of restitution. Humans are a funny lot. We tend to repeat our mistakes when we are ridiculed or punished for them. However, if we know that we will have to wipe up the spilled milk, we often take care not to spill it again.

Children need to try their wings. They can feel safer trying them if they know that their parents are there to help them pick up the pieces when they fail. Restitution is one way to work at picking up the pieces.

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\* \* \*

## IS ANYBODY LISTENING?

Gordon R. Linscott, 1979

“Susan! When are you going to put that typewriter away? You’ve left it sitting out since Friday. Surely, since we went to all the expense to get it for you, you’d think you could be considerate enough to keep the cover on it!”

Susan (not her real name) didn’t say anything. She went to the typewriter, removed the sheet of paper that was in it, covered the machine and made her way to her room. As she closed the door and sat down on her bed, she felt tears come in her eyes. Three days she had left the sheet in the typewriter, and her parents hadn’t looked at it—or if they had, they hadn’t said anything about it. Susan looked at the sheet once again and silently read . . .

### *A Last Cry For Help*

Mom? . . . . . Dad?

Is anyone there?

I made a “D” in Biology

Oh, why should you care

Your appointments, your job,

The bills you must pay

I can’t tell you my problems

I’d just be in the way

You never listen to me  
Just occasionally hear  
You don't know any of my dreams  
My hopes or fears  
If just once you would hold me  
And show me you care  
Maybe a shoulder to cry on  
A friend always there  
You're too busy, though  
To hear what I say  
I need to be loved  
But you just turn away  
If you would only realize  
That I'm a person too  
It would be a lot easier  
To say "I love You"  
There's still so much more  
That I want to say  
Maybe someday we'll talk  
Before I go away

*Note:* This is Susan's own work, exactly as she wrote it, punctuation and all.

Over a period of many months, Susan had saved clippings about parent-child relationships from "Dear Abby" and other sources. She left them lying around in conspicuous places—for her parents to find until one day they got after her for "always cluttering up the house with newspaper clippings."

Brent and Brenda (not their real names) are rather ordinary parents. They are active—very active—church members. Both of them work. Susan is their only child, and they love her very much (after all, didn't they buy her a typewriter for Christmas?). They have the wisdom not to turn her loose in a car of her own, but even without a car she has more than most sixteen-year olds. Brent and Brenda are glad that they can provide for Susan many of the things they never had when they were growing up. They are especially glad that Susan is a good girl, never headstrong or rebellious. Once in a while there's a burst of temper that her parents can't understand, but before long she's meek little Susan again.

### **HOW SUSAN SEES LIFE**

Susan's parents live in a world apart from her. She can't catch their attention even with a D in Biology. They are preoccupied with the demands of making a living. Susan feels guilty; she thinks that she gets in their way. But she yearns to be loved, to be treated as a person, to be made a part of their world. Since it seems that there is little chance of this, she weighs the possibility of "going away"—suicide??

Susan is not unusual (or abnormal). She—and other children—base their judgment of others on what they see. Parents, meanwhile, intend to be seen in quite a different light. On both sides there is

always a possibility of misinterpreting a communication, but only the parents are in a position to take the initiative in solving the problem.

Why don't more parents take the initiative in solving family problems? First, they can't believe that a problem exists. Consider Brent and Brenda—there's nothing wrong with Susan. Really, they cannot see that there is a problem there. I run into this several times a day. I witnessed a preacher's son (Church of Christ) attempt suicide a good long while after his parents had been warned. I know a Church of Christ girl—a model student—who ran away from home. These things happen in the best of families. When it does happen, parents shake their heads in disbelief; they have never explored the child's side of the "generation gap."

### **TAKE TIME TO LISTEN**

Solomon gives us a keen insight into human nature in action in communication. "A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own opinion" (Prov. 18:2). Most of us would reject the "fool" label, but the description is a near-perfect fit. How often, in conversation, have I found myself not listening but mentally preparing an answer to throw in at the earliest possible moment! Our natural bent is not to "delight in understanding" the other person and his problems, complaints, etc. Much less is this true if it is a matter of understanding a teen-ager, and one of our own children at that! However, we will never even know the youngster's problems—much less understand them—if we do not first turn off the "revealing of our own opinion."

There is a wider application here. Consider the young people from the early teens on up; in some churches they feel they have no significant role. No one seems to delight in understanding them. Everyone appears ready to "reveal their opinions" to them, and they've had enough of this at home.

I am not suggesting that we go back to the "child-worship" which was so common for so long. Listening to our young people does not mean that we follow (or grant) their whims and desires. It does mean that we have time for them, time to talk about the things in life that really matter.

"My old man doesn't care what I do. He doesn't care what happens to me," one youngster said. "...what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline... you are bastards and not sons" (Heb. 12:7, 8). Children feel this whether or not they reason it through. They prefer punishment to being ignored. At least they know that they are noticed and they belong. Susanna Wesley, mother of 19 or 20, spent one hour each week with one child alone, the rest of the family shut out. No child of hers could ever say, "You never listen to me."

Just a little time for listening—carved out of an already impossible schedule—may very well forestall the spending of countless longer hours with counselors, clinics, and courts. A little self-discipline applied to the ears seems painful for the moment: "later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness..." And what joy!

# HOW PARENTS CAN BEST COMPETE WITH THE WRONG CROWD

Buddy Scott

All parents share this problem: They must compete with the wrong crowd for their children's lives. Some are fighting to prevent their children from becoming involved with the wrong crowd. Others are fighting to recover their kids from the wrong crowd. One way or another, all parents have to deal with the "wrong-crowd problem."

The stakes are high in this competition. If the parents win, they keep their kids. If the wrong crowd wins, the parents lose their kids. Since the risks are so great, we parents must prepare to compete with the wrong crowd.

To compete with the wrong crowd, we must have a good game plan. The following information is basic to success.

## *With what wrong crowds must parents contend?*

The first wrong crowd is comprised of peers or adults who influence your child toward degeneration rather than regeneration.

The second is the electronic wrong crowd, comprised of morally careless celebrities—actors, singers, discjockeys, sports figures, politicians, playwrights—who gain your child's attention via electronics. If your child is glued to the TV or headphones, giving his attention to someone who is contrary to Christ, then he is hanging out with the wrong crowd electronically.

These two wrong crowds work together to suck kids away from families. The electronic wrong crowd contradicts our values and weakens our children's inhibitions. They are then vulnerable to worldly-minded people who slip in to steal our children's heart and detour them into self-destruction.

## *How dangerous are the wrong-crowd types?*

God knew the lethal danger of the wrong crowd and throughout the Old Testament, sought to keep His people from their influence.

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul issued the following warning about wrong-crowd types: "Do not be fooled. 'Bad companions ruin good character.' Come back to your right senses . . ." (1 Cor. 5:33, TEV).

Based on the Scriptures and my counseling experiences with troubled adolescents, I've come to this conclusion: The wrong crowd is family enemy #1.

## *What are symptoms of wrong-crowd involvement?*

In my book, I list 24 symptoms that were identified by my parent support group. The 10 listed here will show you the trend:

1. Pulling away from the family emotionally.
2. Becoming secretive and evasive.
3. Becoming defiantly resistant to family rules and values.
4. Developing friendships with kids you've never heard of.
5. Becoming very defensive about friends.
6. Becoming unusually selfish and self-centered; falling back into immaturity.
7. Losing interest in achieving.
8. Becoming critical of straight kids.
9. Breaking

curfew but always having a good excuse. 10. Sneaking out of the house, skipping school and so forth.

*How can parents gain the advantage over the wrong crowd?*

Parents can gain the advantage if they don't become resentful, grouchy and rejecting. If parents are Christ-centered and loving, and peers are self-centered and selfish, then parents gain an edge in this "marathon."

To help parents have an attractive Christian witness before their children, I have developed seven commandments for developing a proper posture. These help resolve tensions in the seven areas where I've observed that parents have most of their problems. They are:

1) "Thou shalt monitor your attitudes and actions toward your children with the Good Shepherd by always asking, 'Will this heal?'" Monitoring one's parental posture with this question harmonizes mom or dad with heaven. Parents can't win their kids by acting like the devil.

2) "Thou shalt discipline rather than punish. (Be a shepherd, not a cow puncher.)" Punishment reeks of revenge. *Discipline* reminds us of *disciple*.

3) "Thou shalt not discipline for immaturity as you would for defiance." Developmental problems should not be disciplined with the same intensity as defiance. This commandment raises the judgment call from the subconscious to the conscience, where it can be made more wisely.

4) "Thou shalt not make giant hassles out of normal teenage problems." For example, holding the refrigerator door open while deciding what to eat is normal for teenagers. When parents discover what's normal their tensions relax some.

5) "Thou shalt remember thine own struggles as a child and be reasonably patient with your children." Remembering how messy you were and how you hated to do chores relaxes things a bit more.

6) "Thou shalt build your children's self-concept by genuinely appreciating their good attitudes and actions." I like to spell *self-esteem* self-eSTEAM because kids need a full head of steam to live wholesome lives in this mixed-up world. If parents break this commandment and convince their kids that they are complete disappointments, they take the steam out of their children's self-esteem.

7) "Thou shalt not disallow or put down your children's unique styles of personality." Having a child is a blind date for parents. Being born is a blind date for the child. Clashing personalities often are thrown together. Therefore, parents must avoid being at odds with their child just because he is offensively different from them.

Parents who memorize these seven commandments can reprogram their reflexes and react in Christian ways, protecting their Christian witness and keeping their advantage.

What can parents do if their child is out of control due to wrong-crowd involvement?

"Out of control" means that kids are sneaking out of the house, skipping school, refusing discipline, getting in trouble with the law,

drinking or drugging, being promiscuous or participating in a combination of the above, to the point that out-patient counseling is impractical. Out-of-control kids have to be stabilized before any constructive work can begin.

Based on my experience, this is best accomplished in a Christ-centered treatment facility. One that is not Christ-centered may comprise a third wrong crowd, one made up of mental-health professionals who have no respect for Christian values and resources. No respect equals disrespect in my experience.

The last chapter of *Relief for Hurting Parents* discusses how to choose an inpatient treatment facility. It begins with this sobering commentary:

In choosing an inpatient treatment center, you are choosing a "heart" surgeon and a "brain" surgeon for your child. You are trusting your child's heart and soul to strangers. You will take your child there, turn your child over to them, and drive away, and it will probably be against their policy for you to have contact with your child for several days. Mental health professionals will have access, without your presence, to your child's mental programming, and their purpose will be to adjust it to what they perceive to be an acceptable way to think and live.

The fact is, the wrong treatment facility may be comprised of all three wrong crowds: Kids from the wrong crowd, who are there to be rehabilitated; The electronic wrong crowd, TV shows and music of the patients' choosing; Mental-health professionals from the wrong crowd.

This concoction does not make up a therapeutic community that will deliver the healing which Christian parents are seeking.

A Christ-centered treatment center is the better prescription. Its healing program will be consistent with Christian-family values. Therapists there will help you put forth your "olympic" effort to recover your son or daughter and beat the wrong crowd.

(This article published by Rapha. Buddy Scott, president of His Love Ministries, is a professional therapist, noted speaker and author of *Relief for Hurting Parents*. Rapha, the nation's largest provider of in-hospital psychiatric and substance abuse treatment from a Christian perspective, has over 20 treatment centers nationwide and offers a full range of adult and adolescent therapy. National Headquarters, 8876 Gulf Freeway, Suite 340, Houston, Texas 77017.)

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## Could Your Son Have Written This Letter?

Dear Preacher:

I need help. I have been brought up in a Christian home, I guess. We go to church every Sunday at both services and Sunday School, and I go to young people's class and Sunday night. We go to Wednesday night services, and while I'm at church I feel like a good, fine God-fearing Christian; I really enjoy going. But it seems that the minute we get home(?), or should I say to the house, we seem to take off Christianity as we would change our clothes (me included).

My father is an elder and my mother is a Sunday School teacher. I personally feel that they as well as I, should try to meet the qualifications of an elder, a Sunday school teacher, and a young Christian. I try to be good, I try to help them, but it's just like the blind leading the blind, you know? We seldom say the blessings at meals, I rarely see my mother read her Bible (I rarely read it either). Sometimes I hear a few bad words running around in the air (I think them, and sometimes say them; but the thing is, it all bothers me and it doesn't seem to bother them at all). I'm not judging them, mind you, just myself and how I feel things should be and aren't. There has always been bickering at our house. Mother and Daddy say things, catty remarks to me to belittle the other one, neither of them will say it to the other's face... I smoke, our whole family smokes, and I say things I should not, but I want help. I want to go to heaven, but I want my parents there too. Sometimes I feel I act the way I do because of the example I have before me, but that is silly because I'm eighteen years old and should make my own decisions as to what is wrong and right. My parents really have tried, I think, but they don't seem to care anymore. Do you think there is any help for us?

Please help.

—Name Withheld

\* \* \*

## Our Readers Repond —

# What My Parents Did RIGHT

[Some months ago we invited our readers to write re: this topic. We give your responses this month and next.]

## Wise Though Unschooled; Rich though Poor

Joyce Smith Broyles, Jennings, La.

1. What do you remember most fondly about your relationship with your parents while you lived at home?

Mom was *always* home when I returned from school. She sewed for me until she taught me how to do it myself. Dad worked hard to give us what we needed, and rarely scolded. Family devotions every night were a special time because everyone participated. This carried over into my own family after I married.

2. Which do you remember most: family times together or times alone with one parent?

Family times: working together in the fields; singing or playing word games; a family trip to Kentucky; regular family attendance at all worship services.

3. Did you go through a rebellious period as a teenager? How did your folks handle it?

Yes.

I wanted so much to be like the others, dress like them, go places with them, etc. I asked why not, and my parents used scripture to answer. It angered me. On my own at 21 years old, I tried a few things and decided my parents were right after all. I told them so and

they said they'd never stopped praying for me and loving me, although they were concerned about my behavior. They knew I'd been trained right and trusted that I would not forget that training.

4. How did you react to your parents' failures?

As a child, I thought they could do no wrong. As a teenager, I knew they couldn't do anything right! As an adult, I find myself quoting them, asking their advice, and realizing that at the times of greatest trials, our family grew closer together by growing closer to God for strength.

5. What is the most important thing your parents taught you?

A. *Put Jesus first.* Everything else will fall into place. If you don't keep Him first, He will rarely remain in second place.

B. Set your goals high so that even if you don't reach them, you will have made a worthwhile contribution to society.

C. It takes 100 years for God to make a mighty oak, but only 45 days to make a squash; Anything worth having is worth working and waiting for.

6. What did they do that was most important as successful parents?

They recognized that they had no education to make them wise in this world, so they placed their child-like faith in God, and He was most important in every decision and action taken. They surrounded us with Christian role models by opening our home to guests from KBC, and SCC, and took us to church activities in near-by churches to meet other Christian young people. They encouraged us to attend Christian Youth Encampment and participated in our local church youth group and chorus. The answers they could give us were based on scripture; the ones they could not answer were left at the feet of Jesus. They lived their faith as they professed it!

## LOVE AND PRAYER

Mrs. Shirley Schreiner Taylor, Louisville, Ky.

I should first say, life was far from perfect in the Schreiner family, but God's LOVE was always there to heal, cleanse and direct. To this day I continually thank God for the protection and love He surrounds me with, not only through my parents but five wonderful brothers. When their lives had to be directed elsewhere, He gave me to a wonderful husband (and four adorable children) who continue to surround me with God's LOVE.

The influence that I want to shout from housetops is "the importance of PRAYER" that they shared by demonstration. It was not just their prayer life that I saw—there were open Bibles always lying around where they were in constant study, and Jesus was easily talked about because *He lived there*. Yet it was their prayer life that made an *early* impression. As a very young child I understood the importance and sacredness of PRAYER. I think I experimented with it for myself because I knew how much my parents believed in it. God became very *real* to me when He answered *my* prayers.

Today I still carry the sweet vision of my mother kneeling on Wednesday nights with many other men and women in earnest prayer

at church. I had to be very quiet and could not talk to her during that time which made it a very reverent time for me too. Before I was in school I understood these important signs.

Just recently, Mother and I were given that privilege again to kneel together during a prayer time in church; we knew God's sweet Spirit was there too.

I long for those special times—we adults need so much to teach our children the special awesomeness invoked while *kneeling in prayer*. They will see power; they will see God!

I've thanked my parents often for that visual lesson that has kept me aware of the importance of a strong prayer life, both at home and in our churches.

## TRAINING BY EXAMPLE

Richard Lewis, Johnson City, Tenn.

1. Mother and Daddy planned family events. To be with family seemed important enough for them to make the special effort to visit and be with relatives. There were times of story telling, family news, discussing current events, and eating together. It seemed the larger the group the better. The other group times were the family vacations. A different location and trip was planned each year. New things were learned each year at the new locations. There were more things similar to all areas than there were things that were different.

2. The many memories individually with my parents are overshadowed by the things we did together. The encouragement in Scouting and athletics especially basketball in high school meant a great deal to me.

3. About a rebellious stage—I don't remember rebellion as much as being stubborn or determined. My parents seemed able to be patient and allow me some extra room while remaining firm. Overall, the teenage period is not remembered by me as a problematic period in my life.

4. There must have been failures by my parents but I do not remember them so there is no memory of reaction on my part.

5. There are several things I'm thankful they taught me. They emphasized the importance of the principles taught in the scripture. They attended every service of the church and took an active part in every way they could. As children there was never a question where we would be if there was a meeting at the church. Their life was one of honesty and righteous living in deed and language. They did not criticize, at least before me, the people in the church or the ministers. There were times they were unhappy and I knew it, but their conversation was not unbecoming.

Second, they taught me to work and be responsible at a young age. I was delivering newspapers, mowing lawns, and cleaning houses by the time I was nine years old. Mother always made sure I had time to help the widows and elderly. Soon jobs of baby sitting and taking care of coal furnaces for the widows were regular. Mother always inspected the job and made me do the job over if it didn't

meet her standards. I soon learned to do it correctly the first time because it was no fun working when all my friends were enjoying time together.

They were firm and the rules were strictly enforced. It never worked to say "all the others are going" or "everyone else is doing that." Just because someone else did something never meant I would be allowed to do the same thing.

Mother and Daddy were always hospitable. The visiting minister seemed to always stay at our house. I liked that very much. If there were visiting missionaries or choral groups our house was always open. They opened our home to all age groups at the church. The youth were invited often and adult social gathering seemed to regularly be at our house.

They insisted on honesty and hard work. Good principles and high standards were the norm. They demonstrated concern for the elderly and widows and set an example of hospitality.

Another thing important for me was to see that they did not always defend me. They would listen to the other parents, or teachers and most of the time believe them rather than believe me. At least it seemed that way. This action on their part meant it was almost impossible to lie about some situation and avoid discipline.

They put their every effort into helping my sister and me to learn the important lessons about life that would help us through our entire lives. I know, too, that they worked at living by the same principles they wanted us to live by.

\* \* \*

## **SPORTS and RELIGION**

James Craig

A friend is taking a sports history course at Purdue. He gave me an article by Michael Novak entitled, "The Natural Religion." Novak is an articulate, conservative Roman Catholic writer known for his critique of Marxism and other modern idolatries. Before discussing his article, allow me to tell a true story.

Three years ago I was asked to speak for an area Youth Rally in a nearby town. Plans were completed months in advance. The youth minister there was an exceptionally enthusiastic, well organized young man.

On the night of the rally, the youth minister, song leader, and I began to sweat as the 7:00 starting time came and went. At about 7:15, two high-school-age young people and their parents (who were also youth sponsors) slipped into the very back pew. The parents looked especially stern, while their youngsters stared down in that unmistakable "they-made-us-come" manner.

The song leader and I stepped down from the stage, walked to the back pew, and conferred with our audience. It seems the local high school girls' volleyball team had won their first tournament game ever and would be competing for the championship that evening. The entire county was at the big game.

After a uncomfortable half hour, we dismissed. The youth minister was near tears. A few weeks later he was fired for "failing to motivate the young people."

Novak's article goes a long way toward explaining that awkward, career-ending evening. He observes that many sports (such as the Olympics Games) have their roots in pagan religious worship. Sports language ("will, belief, sacrifice," etc.) is the language of religion.

Novak shows how sports attempt to meet human needs which are uniquely religious. We need to belong, to feel loved, and to have a goal which culminates in joy. Many of our young people look to sports for friendship and acceptance. Parents show real enthusiasm for their children's athletic achievements. Families find unity and purpose, along with shared joy and sadness in sports.

Moreover, according to Novak, sports teach humanistic themes such as the triumph of human will and the hunger for human perfection. It is impossible to be simply an observer of sports. Like religion, sports settle for nothing less than personal devotion.

The Apostle Paul was a great sports fan and found some of his best illustrations there. Many Christian athletes use their gift to glorify Christ. Wonderful! Praise God!

But let's not ignore Novak's critique. What is more important to you—your children's athletic development or their walk with Christ? If your young person was scheduled to serve communion and volleyballs the same evening, what would your decision be? Could you be more interested in a baptism than a slam-dunk? Let's keep our priorities straight!

\* \* \*

## Why Family Rules Are Broken

Rules are usually designed by adults for children to follow. But many are not followed because they are *ineffective* rules. Here's why:

1. *Rule-statements are often vague.* Examples: "Keep your room clean." Or "Be sure to *behave* yourself." These words mean different things to different people. They fail to describe the exact behavior desired.

2. *Rules are sometimes unreasonable.* Examples: "I want you to be asleep by 8 o'clock." A child may be in bed but not sleepy by 8 o'clock.

3. *Some rules are unenforceable.* Examples: "You are not to eat fried foods or drink cola beverages." Or, "If you go to the slumber party, you must still go to sleep at 8 o'clock." A parent cannot follow a child around to see that these rules are obeyed. These should be phrased as suggestions, advice or hopes—but not rules.

### *Effective Rules*

Rules are more likely to be followed if they are:

*Written down.* They might be in a letter or note, on the refrigerator, on a bedroom door, in a poster, on a sticker or on a card at dinner.

*Reminded.* This is not harping but a simple question like "What is the rule?" Or, "May I remind you that . . ."

*Reinforced.* The rule maker must call the rule to the child's attention and make sure the consequence follows consistently.

*Reviewed.* Review of rules is essential in order to recognize improvement and modify rules as children grow older and more responsible.

—Adapted from Parents magazine

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## Lord, Whose Fault?

A young married couple was invited to Sunday school and to the church worship services. This is a record of response:

The first call: "We are going to start as soon as the baby gets old enough to come."

One year later: "We promised, but the baby is in that stage where she cries a lot. When she gets older . . ."

Three years later: "I know you think we are awful, but Dottie doesn't want to go, and we hate to force here . . ."

Eleven years later: "I'm glad you called. I want you or some of the elders to speak to Dottie. She is running around with the wrong crowd. Perhaps if the church would provide some kind of entertainment for her age group . . ."

Two years later: "Yes, Dottie is married. They were awfully young and he's not a Christian. But we hope things will work out."

Ten years later: "Well, Dot has finally married a man who can give her the better things in life. This is her third husband but she couldn't get along with the others. I had hopes that one would become a member of the church, but the pastor preached on marriage and divorce and he refuses to attend again. There must be something wrong with the church, or it would have had a better influence on Dot.

"Maybe they need to change preachers, I don't know . . ."

*Lord, whose fault?*

—Copied from Gallatin's bulletin

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## Answers To Questions On Prophecy

R. H. Boll

[Again we run answers to questions asked of our former editor. He would be the first to insist that he was/is no man's "pope," and that his views were neither infallible nor binding on anyone. He always urged his hearers to search the Bible, for God's Word—not any preacher's ideas—is our authority.]

*Do you believe that Christ will sit on a literal throne in literal Jerusalem, to rule the nations with a literal rod of iron?*

A "throne," in the Bible and in common usage stands for government rule and authority. The "rod" is the sceptre, again a common expression denoting the exercise of royal power. A sceptre of iron is a strong and strict rule. The "literal Jerusalem" will be transformed

and renewed, and the cloud of glory—the token of God's presence—which once led Israel in the wilderness and rested upon the Tabernacle, will be over her as a canopy. The impression that Jesus Christ will have His residence in Jerusalem under ordinary human conditions is too absurd to deserve a serious answer. Jerusalem will be His glorious resting-place, and the center of His world-government in the age to come. (Isa. 11:10; 4:4, 5; Psa. 132:13, 14.)

*Do you believe in a second chance?*

I believe in many chances while a man lives, but not in any chance *after death*.

*What will be the conditions of salvation during the Millennium?*

There can never be any salvation for anyone, anywhere, any time, except by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and obedience to the gospel. Whatever changes that new era may bring, there can never be any altering of this fundamental and essential truth.

*Will people be forced to accept Christ then?*

We must distinguish between government—the exercise of authority in maintenance of law and order—and salvation. The former must be enforced; the latter is ever a matter of individual choice and acceptance, in personal faith, obedience, love. With Satan bound (Revelation 20:1-3) the veil that has hid the light of the gospel will be lifted (2 Corinthians 4:4) and multitudes will humbly and gladly accept the free gift of God's grace.

*Will there be any sin during the millennium?*

If Satan were the only source and author of human sin, all sin would of course cease when Satan is bound and imprisoned. But that is not the case. Satan indeed tempts, deceives, blinds men into sin; but a man sins when he suffers himself to be drawn and enticed by his own lust. Although there will be far less inducement for such a thing there is evidence that there will be some sin even in the millennium. (Isaiah 26:10, 65:20; Malachi 3:5). But it will meet with swift recompense. The quick success of Satan's work at the end of the millennium, indicates the inward condition of many hearts. (Revelation 20:7-10.)

*If Jesus went to heaven, in the body of flesh and bones, which he had upon eating with his disciples after his resurrection, undergoing no change as he ascended, is he having to eat and drink now, to sustain that body of flesh and bones?*

*What about the language of 1 John 3:2 saying: "When he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."*

This questioner has evidently misconceived a few things. For example, that Jesus *had to eat and drink* to sustain that body of "flesh and bones" after His resurrection; and that the "flesh and bones" was just the common, natural, corruptible flesh and bones of our present bodies. And, laboring under such ideas, the gratuitous assumption that Jesus' body, after His resurrection, underwent another change as He ascended. In the first place, when Jesus rose from the dead, it was indeed the very body that was laid in the tomb that was raised; but in new and glorious life and power, immortal, incorruptible, endued with qualities and properties of which we cannot conceive. He could

be seen when He chose, or He could be invisible; He could be palpable to the touch—his very flesh and bones might be handled, and His wounds be seen and felt. (Luke 24:39, 40; John 20:20, 27), and, again, He could pass through solid walls; He could walk as other men (Luke 24:15), yet He did not have to walk; He was not bound to laws of space and gravitation; He could be here or there with the swiftness of thought. He could eat, and did so (Luke 24:41-43) in order to give His disciples convincing proof of His actual personal presence, and the reality of His body; yet He *did not have to eat*. His body was neither dependent on earthly life, nor on material sustenance; nor was it corruptible. He rose from the dead to die no more nor to return to corruption. (Rom. 6:9; Acts 13:34). There is not the remotest evidence that He changed bodies again, or that His body was changed at His ascension. As He is so shall we be—endued with like powers, and with immortality and incorruption when He shall appear.

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## VOICES from the FIELDS

Moto Nomura

Japan

July 29, 1991

The villagers who at first opposed our coming to the mountains saying "Jesus is coming!" (meaning Jesusites are coming!) are now friendly and we soon hope to start our Bible classes both in our home and wherever we are invited to teach in the mountains for the adults. We have made many precious contacts and people love us. The only problem is this, that we do need co-workers. I just can not wear several pairs of shoes at the same time. There are private high schools and colleges in the mountains for any American brethren to come and teach English. This way you can both make tents and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our Hachiman-yama house-church in Tokyo is meeting in our daughter's small two room apartment. Since we do not reside in the area, our services in Tokyo is now very much limited. We can not exercise our full strength there. Recent serious business recession called "bubble economy" in Japan has caused three households in our small church to become bankrupt. Most of our people who come to our fellowship belong to lower class in Japanese society, and now most of them often have to work on Sundays. These things are hitting us hard right now. Physically a two hundred mile drive on Sundays is a big burden on this 60 year old horse. Financially it also cost us about \$100 each Sunday to commute to Tokyo. So we are wondering and praying for His will for both our apartment church and my own family. We need workers badly.

Tom Nickell

Bible Translator, Philippines

July 31, 1991

Here are the good things I'm finding it easy to rejoice in:

- 1) A wonderful baby in the person of our 3rd son.
- 2) A good trip through Agta-land. A return to Blos River looks possible.

3) Gilliam is alive; not well, but alive.

4) A good opportunity to thoroughly critique my translation of Matthew and Mark. Now, with Gilliam here, I can try to put it together again in better form than before.

Here are the good things I'm finding it hard to rejoice in:

1) God is expressing Himself in nature, proving once again that He will do what He will do, following His own agenda (not necessarily mine!).

2) God can and does use our failure for good.

3) Leaving my lovely family in Bagabag to go it alone for awhile at Blos River.

Many of you are concerned about the Pinatubo volcano. We appreciate your concern. (Yes, we received a little ash here, but no, we are not endangered.)

About Blos River: I slept one night in our house there. The next morning when I saw the logging foreman on the road he said, "You know Kanela don't you?" (Kanela was the guerilla commander who pulled a gun on me three years ago, forcing us out of Blos River.) I said, well I just met with him once." "He committed suicide last night in town—drank Polidol." Word had gone out that the communists were searching for Kanela to "discipline" him for his "mistakes." For Kanela, suicide was less painful. There's no connection between my return to Blos and his suicide; though an interesting "coincidence."

Apparently there has been a shift in communist policy in our area. The pendulum has swung away from the terror extremes of the past few years and is moving back to a more charitable position to try to regain respectability. Some evidence suggests they might respect our neutrality again. Agtas have been sifting back into the area for the past two months. Signs look good.

I appreciate your prayers as I go back. I will need all manner of diplomatic skills-grace as I deal with neighbors who for the past three years have been hearing how horrible Americans are. The airstrip has been plowed in spite of the rent money I've continued to pay.

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## God and Jonah—God and Me

# GOD AND JONAH IN THE SEA

Florence Olmstead Collins

Part II: Jonah 2:6b - 10, NIV

2:6b *"But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord my God.*

7 *When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.*

8 *Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that would be theirs.*

9 *But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord."*

10 *And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.*

### JONAH'S ADORATION

Although Jonah is still in the belly of the "great fish"—a most unnatural environment for a human—he glorifies God for having saved him. He thanks God for bringing him up from the pit. The word "pit" is sometimes translated "corruption." Whether Jonah speaks of spiritual or physical death and corruption, he credits God with rescuing him from it. We note that at this time Jonah desperately wanted to live. Before being thrown into the stormy waters, he confessed that he worshipped *the* God of heaven, the Maker of sea and land. Now he intimately calls him "*my* God."

Jonah's prayer rose to "your holy temple." Many commentators are certain this temple is not the building in Jerusalem, but the heavenly palace of Isaiah 6. However, Jonah expects to "look again toward" it (v. 4) "Regardless of where God's people were, even in a land of captivity (for Jonah, Sheol), if they humbled themselves and prayed toward the temple in Jerusalem, the Lord would answer from heaven." (Kohlenberger)

Jonah had hope of seeing the temple again because he had experienced God's grace (2:8). R. H. Boll wrote, "What then is grace? It is favor from God. Its essential point lies in this, that it is *free*, undeserved, unmerited favor. God justifies the *ungodly* (Romans 4:5)." Jonah's mention of God's mercy is the only suggestion of penitence in his prayer. By it, however, we can know that Jonah felt his guilt and knew that he did not deserve to be saved by God's sending the fish to protect him. But scripture doesn't tell us that Jonah verbalized his penitence in detail.

Because the great fish had saved him, Jonah learned that salvation comes only from God (2:9). He alone can deliver us from the world, Satan and our own selves. Upon learning this truth, Jonah does the natural, normal thing: He gives thanks, not only in words, but with melody. From inside the fish's belly he sings a song of thanksgiving and promises to keep his vows. Having been in the sea and in the fish with God, Jonah now knows God better, and trusts him more. The Lord has prepared Jonah to serve him again. At a word from God, the fish vomited Jonah on dry ground.

God's grace demands our obedience. Therefore, Jonah is now ready to receive his orders.

\* \* \* \* \*

Since Jesus compared his time in the tomb to Jonah's time in the whale's belly, we must discuss Jonah as a type of Christ. Many teachers rightly believe that Jonah was held in the creature three days and nights to specifically create the type of Jesus' burial and resurrection.

Others go further and compare Jonah's voyage to Jesus' first advent from heaven. They also say that Jonah's offer to give his life for the sailors is a type of Christ's sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world. Some even surpass this comparison in their search for collations.

These additional likenings fall apart when we consider that when Jesus was sent by God, he obeyed. Throughout his life on earth his "meat" was to do the will of God (John 4:34). In contrast, Jonah rebelled and his constancy of faith left much to be desired. But we are thankful that Jesus gave credence to the account of Jonah' experience.

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## **Dateline: ALBANIA!**

A report from an Open Doors courier just back from Albania . . .

From Albania's major city Tirana, I traveled by bus into the countryside. After about an hour's drive, the bus suddenly stopped in the middle of nowhere because there was some trouble up ahead. Everyone used the time to get off and take some photos of the beautiful Albanian countryside.

As I walked around the bus, I noticed a small girl standing off in the distance who looked just like my granddaughter. She was about four years old, and she led me over to the farm where she lived.

Her family had just slaughtered a pig, so all of them were out in the yard. When I asked the little girl if I might be able to take her picture, she nodded "yes." I asked her parents if they would like to pose too.

As they all stood ready for the picture, her father asked me, "Italian?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Do you speak Italian?"

"Yes," I replied, "Do you?"

"A little," he said with a smile.

Then he immediately asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"Yes," I answered, "I am a Christian. I love God because when I see the beauty of your country I am convinced that there can be nobody else who has created that but God."

Then he motioned for me to sit down next to him and a couple of minutes later he began telling me his life story. His father had owned a Bible and had been active as a preacher. However, when Albania organized its crusade against religion in 1967, his father was put in prison and his Bible confiscated.

Several years ago his father passed away, Just before he died, he whispered, "Son, be strong and brave, preach the gospel if you have a possibility, and preach it through your own life. We shall not see each other again here on earth, but we shall meet again in heaven, where we shall see the fruits of our preaching.

I was touched by his story . . . but also shocked. I asked him, "Haven't you read a Bible since 1967?" With tears welling up in his eyes he said, "No, but I still remember a lot of verses from it."

Then I asked him, "Would you like a New Testament? You can have mine, although it is in Italian."

With great anticipation in his voice, he answered "Yes." Shortly after giving him my New Testament, I heard our bus driver calling us

to get back on the bus. The road ahead had been cleared and it was time to move on.

As I walked away, I turned back to wave good-bye and saw this wonderful man clutching my New Testament to his heart, his eyes raised toward heaven in praise.

As the bus began rolling along once again, I sat there in my seat completely amazed at how God performs His miracles. Here I was—out in the middle of nowhere—stopped only for a few moments, but long enough for me to give a New Testament to one of His faithful followers who had been without one for 25 years.

And . . . how happy I was to be used of God in such a touching way.

—Open Doors With Brother Andrew, P.O. Box 27001, Santa Ana, CA

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## **How To Change Your Reactions to Life**

by Dr. Henry Brandt,  
a pioneer in the Christian Counseling Movement

I had an interesting conversation with a man following a speech I made centering in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10. These verses explain that there is a power that will enable a person who is in trouble, perplexed, or persecuted to deal with his situation without distress or despair—and without feeling forsaken or cast down.

This man (let's call him Mr. Black) is an engineer. He designed and built some of the equipment that harnessed atomic energy and made possible the bomb that was dropped over Hiroshima. He has a great awe and respect for the tremendous power of the atom. But for years he was a troubled man, in conflict with his boss, who frequently changed Mr. Black's designs apparently without careful study. As a result, sometimes the equipment worked well when it was built and sometimes it didn't. When it worked well, his boss took the credit. When the equipment failed, Mr. Black got the blame. He said nothing but became a very bitter man. These bottled-up resentments caused Mr. Black to take out his feelings on his wife and children. He spent tormented, sleepless nights, endlessly reviewing his grudges about his boss. He suffered remorse over his cruel words and deeds that made life miserable for his wife and children.

One day, when his boss insisted on a change that Mr. Black disagreed with, he slammed his fist on the desk and vented his wrath on his boss. He flatly refused to work for him another day. It was an embarrassing temper tantrum, and he was unceremoniously transferred to another department.

As the weeks went by, he developed the same trouble in the new department. His new boss pushed him to get the work out, Mr Black felt they were working too rapidly, and again the tension began to build up within him.

"Slowly it began to dawn on me that perhaps I was wrong," he told me. "As I looked back on my life, I had to admit that this bottled-up rebellion had plagued me most of my life. I began to see that I

needed to change and I searched the Bible in hope of finding an answer." He found it in Colossians 3:23-25: "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."

"Upon reading this I broke out in a sweat and began to tremble," Mr. Black continued. "It dawned on me that I was acting like a little boy, sulking at my drawing board and venting my wrath on innocent people. It was a relief to see this and admit it. My heart turned Godward in repentance with a prayer for the power to act like a man, to do my work heartily, to serve God, to let other men's decisions rest with God. Ten years later, my boss still pressures me and changes my designs, but work is now pleasant."

Before his discovery, Mr. Black's *reactions* were bitter, rebellious, hostile, wrathful. Then he turned to God, began depending on God's power, and work became pleasant. Mr. Black was at ease, relaxed?

What happened? The power of God changed his *reactions* to life.

### *Do you ACT, or React?*

Formerly the Christian Counseling Clinic in Detroit, my staff and I used to see about 100 people each week. The ones who came were driven to us because they suffered torment that was sometimes beyond human endurance. If not given help, many would break down completely. This torment was the result of hate, rebellion, indignation, anger, bitterness, desperation, guilt, resentment, cruelty, remorse—an "internal" struggle causing tension and often sleeplessness.

These were the reactions of talented, well-educated, well-read, highly-trained people. It is the other fellow or the circumstances that are at fault, they reasoned, and their reactions under the circumstances were quite normal and natural. Weren't they being mistreated, misunderstood, not appreciated, rejected? Isn't it normal to be upset and fight back in order to free themselves from the turmoil within them? As many counselees put it, "Anyone in my shoes would react the way I have. When I get out of this situation, my natural spirit of goodwill, good humor, friendliness, generosity, and unselfishness will return."

Yes, the troubled one believes that the turmoil within will be relieved when the trouble is gone. It is natural that people get upset in the midst of trouble. Many people have been terribly mistreated since childhood. They have tasted of other people's selfishness. It is unbelievable how hard, harsh, scornful, vicious, and inconsiderate people can be. Curiously enough, many individuals who have received terrible, shameful treatment in the past will themselves repeat the same treatment, or even worse, toward the people in their lives. They will attack or withdraw from anyone who resembles the past—retaliating, wallowing in self-pity, unforgiving. One would think that they would be very considerate and understanding of others since they know what it is to suffer from cruelty, harshness, selfishness. Are they innocent victims of the past and therefore not accountable for their attitudes and conduct?

It is true that a troubled person calms down and is happier when circumstances and the other fellow's conduct become more acceptable. Many in the counseling field reason, therefore, that it is the environment that causes the individual to be upset and to retaliate. They consider man basically friendly, generous selfless, good. These qualities, some counselors say, will be there if the patient can find the environment that will allow the qualities to come out, or if the individual can be taught to channel any aggressive tendencies into constructive activities.

But the truth of the matter is: trouble exposes man's natural tendency to react in an unfriendly, selfish, or bitter way. But when circumstances and the conduct of others are acceptable to the individual, his basic *evil* nature is not so obvious.

I know many people in trouble who struggle within themselves. They were distressed, in despair, feeling forsaken, and cast down. They found help only when they faced the truth about themselves and then turned to God for the power to change themselves in the midst of trouble. Their problems didn't disappear; their *reactions* changed. They discovered that it is not a problem-free life they need, but a change of heart or to lean more firmly upon the God who had already changed their hearts. Those who had not had a changed heart experienced *reactions* of hate, rebellion, indignation, anger, bitterness, lust, guilt. Now, with a changed heart, they experienced relief, newness, joy, peace, hope, love, patience, kindness, longsuffering. Yet the same circumstances and the same people are there. Problems still must be faced. But they find a new resource, a new spirit, a new attitude toward troubles.

My approach to counseling is based on the Biblical truth that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), and that "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). Since this is true, trouble exposes the basically sinful and unrighteous nature of a man. This raises an important question: "What is sin and unrighteousness?" We turn to the Bible for the answer.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth the law, for sin is *transgression* of the law" (1 John 3:4). A sinner has transgressed the law of God in the same sense that a traffic violator has transgressed a traffic law. Nothing can change the fact that he is a *violator*. We have all experienced the sense of relief when we get out of a 20 mph traffic zone when we were traveling at 40 mph. We vaguely experience the same tension when we violate the law of God. Thus, *sinner* and *violator* are alike in meaning. To declare that a man has sinned—that is, he is out of line with the standard of righteousness—is not to condemn him. We do not leave him there. The Bible makes it clear that there is a way out in such passages as these:

"God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17).

"In whom [Jesus] we have redemption through His blood, the *forgiveness* of sins, according to the riches of His Grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

We find that when one comes to Christ with his confession of sinfulness, seeking forgiveness, he receives a relief from guilt. He

experiences a sense of being renewed, washed, restored, forgiven—and there's new hope. His troubles remain to be confronted, but his *reactions* to them change.

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## THE INFLUENCE OF A DEDICATED LIFE

Antoine Valdetero

I heard recently of a poll taken in which one question was: Who is the woman in the Bible you admire most? second? etc. One would probably not have to guess to know who #1 was: Mary, the mother of our Lord. And who do you think was #2? The poll said that Ruth, the Moabite. Think with me, could there be one who might be #2 in Ruth's place—and that is to take nothing away from Ruth. Ruth came out of a society that was steeped in idolatry. There has to be one who influenced her and helped change her life. With no thought of trying to cause an argument I would think that maybe Naomi might rate #2.

No one can deny that Ruth saw something in Naomi that caused her to give up her homeland, her kindred and her god in order to follow her mother-in-law. The greatest testimony that anyone can have for the Lord is found in Ruth 1:16, "thy God my God." Ruth had seen in her mother-in-law a dedication and devotion that caused her to want what Naomi had. We all know that religion is a touchy subject, but there is no evidence that Naomi did any "preaching" to Ruth. Ruth saw in Naomi something that Naomi's God had given her that she didn't have. I am reminded of Peter's statement in chapter 3 of his first epistle. He told the Christian wife with the unbelieving husband that "they may without the word be gained by the behaviour of their wives." This statement is far more reaching than just the home. Do people who attend school with us, work with us, live with us want our God to be their God? Is the influence and testimony of our lives so strong that they want what we have.

Unselfishness is an outstanding trait of Naomi. In 1:6-14 we have Naomi encouraging her daughters-in-law to return to their homeland and find a husband. In v. 13 she states: "It grieveth me much for your sakes..." No matter how lonely the future was for her, Naomi was much more concerned about her widowed daughter-in-law than she was about her own plight. In 3:1 she says to Ruth: "My daughter, should I not try to find a home for you, where you will be well provided for?" (NIV) How opposite are these statements to many we hear today where everything centers around "I", "my", or "me".

The first lesson we glean about Naomi is this: We see in her "the power of blessing of *one* consecrated life." It is so easy for us to think that what I am, what I do, what I say has no impact on others. In Romans 14 where Paul deals with the meat eating question he tells us in verse 14: "For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself." Like it or not, we are having an influence for Jesus every

day. It may be a negative rather than a positive influence, but others are affected by our lives.

You're writing the Gospel  
A chapter each day,  
By the deeds that you do  
And the words that you say.  
People see what you write,  
Whether faithless or true,  
Say, how is the Gospel  
According to you?  
(unknown)

A second lesson we can learn from Naomi is this: Through life's greatest sorrows come life's richest gain. She had lost a husband and two sons, but her influence had gained the respect of Ruth "who is better to thee than seven sons." It takes time for us all to learn that sorrows can become one of life's greatest possessions. The heart-aches, the tears, the disappointments of the past faded away as Naomi held little Obed on her lap. What joy new-born life brings to us all!

No matter what you think of the poll, it might be well that we all consider the influence and the impact of Naomi. It might well be true that those who are lessor known are those whose influence will be the greatest!

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**A Book Review by the Editor:**

## **The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church**

*by Marvin Rosenthal*

(Published by Thomas Nelson; paperback, 319 pages)

This is the recent provocative study of prophecy mentioned briefly by Julius Hovan and myself in the preceding two issue of *W & W*. Its author is a well-known minister in Christian outreach to the Jews. The circumstances which led him to write the book were mentioned in last month's editorial. A friend's repeated questionings led the author to restudy and revise beliefs he had held, cherished, preached and written about for over thirty years.

As a result of his changed view he left the organization which he directed, and lost some friends. As he comments in the book, "Any consideration of the timing of the Rapture carries with it the potential to stir great emotion. . . In reaction to those potentially unpleasant prospects, some have relegated the study of prophecy to 'the back burner,' or worse, taken it 'off the stove' altogether. What an indescribably tragic mistake! [For] it has been estimated that as much as one third of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written." (p. xi)

Later Rosenthal makes these significant statements: "For me, the more I have grappled with the issue of the Rapture, the more tolerant I have become of other Rapture positions. There is absolutely no inconsistency in having a strong personal opinion and yet being

tolerant of other views.” He also quotes the admission of John Walvoord, a leading proponent of the pre-tribulation view, who wrote, “The fact is that neither Posttribulationism nor Pretribulationism is an explicit teaching of Scripture. The Bible does not, in so many words, state either.” Rosenthal concludes that since this is so, then these views are based on *inference*, and thus differing opinions regarding them should *never* be a ground for disfellowship or even non-cooperation. In this conclusion about fellowship and opinions he of course echoes Thomas Campbell, R. H. Boll and many others in the Restoration Movement through the years.

### *Spelling out his Views*

What then is this viewpoint, which the author claims differs somewhat from standard pre-, mid-, and post-tribulationism, all three! He gives a brief overview of it early in the book, as follows: “The objective of this volume is to demonstrate that the Day of the Lord is the time of divine wrath. It will be recognized as about to begin by the cosmic disturbances associated with the sixth seal (Joel 2:10-11, 30-31; Rev. 6:12-17; cf. Matt. 24:29) and will begin with the opening of the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1). The Rapture of the church will immediately precede the Day of the Lord [which] will begin sometime within the second half of Daniel’s seventieth week.” This position “preserves and defends the major premise of pretribulationism that the church is ‘not appointed . . . unto wrath’—not simply a brief span of wrath, but a substantial period of time encompassing the trumpet and bowl judgments. The issue is, When does the Day of the Lord’s wrath begin?” (33-35).

After elaborating on these and other matters, at the end he summarizes his view in 15 points, *most* of which follow: “1. There is a still-future 7-year period to occur. Within that period the Antichrist will arise, the Great Tribulation will occur, the church will be raptured, and the Day of the Lord’s wrath will commence. That time frame is called the 70th week of Daniel, *never* the Tribulation. 2. There are 3 major sections to the 70th week: the beginning of sorrows (Matt. 24:8), the Great Tribulation (Matt. 23:21), and the Day of the Lord (Matt. 24:30-31). 3. The Great Tribulation (“the time of Jacob’s trouble”) begins in the middle of the seven-year period but does not continue until its end. The Great Tribulation is cut short and followed by cosmic disturbance (Matt. 24:22; Mark 13:24-25 . . . [From here on we’ll use *GT* and *DL* for the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.—AVW]

“5. The apostasy and revealing of the man of sin must precede the DL (2 Thess. 2:1-4). The apostasy and revealing of the man of sin occur within the seventieth week. Therefore, the DL cannot begin at the beginning of the 70th week.

“6. A cosmic disturbance immediately precedes the DL (Joel 2:31). It begins with the opening of the sixth seal, and occurs some time within the second half of the 70th week. 7. The DL will commence with the opening of the seventh seal. (Rev. 6:17). 8. The DL is a time of unprecedented judgment upon the whole earth. It will also be a time for purifying Israel. . . .

"10. The second coming of Christ (*parousia*) speaks of a coming and continuous presence to accomplish a number of divine purposes. It will begin with the Rapture and be followed by the DL wrath and the Lord's literal return to the earth.

"12. The church is to remain on the earth until the *end* (Matt. 28:20). The *end* is always a reference to the end of the age (Matt. 13:39-40). The *end* occurs inside the seventieth week, not immediately prior to its beginning.

"14. At Christ's return a surviving remnant of Jews will be regathered to Israel and saved. God's covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be literally fulfilled (Matt. 24:31; Rom. 11:25-26) . . ." (pp. 293 - 5).

Rosenthal distinguishes between the pre-trib. view of *imminent* rapture and the more accurate (it seems to me) view of *expectant* rapture. "By *expectant* rapture is meant that every generation since the first century could have been the generation that entered the 70th week to experience the Rapture. A careful appeal to verses said to teach imminency (no prophesied events must occur before the Rapture) will reveal that what they actually teach is *expectancy*—the belief that any generation could be called upon to enter the 70th week and there, in the midst of adversity, to remain true . . . with the certain hope that those who endure to the end will be delivered by rapture before the Day of the Lord wrath is poured out on the unregenerate world."

This seems Biblical to me. After all, Christ taught that certain things must come to pass before the end (Matt. 24:5-14). In addition to the several events mentioned in that passage, He revealed that something else definitely had to happen before the rapture. Peter had to get old and die! For Jesus told him, "When you were young, you walked where you would; but when you are old, another will carry you where you do not wish to go." This referred to Peter's death (John 21:18, 19). In line with this, Peter expected to die (2 Pet. 1:14). Therefore the rapture could not occur at any time, on any day, during the first decades of the church. Christ would not come for His people until after Peter's death, which occurred during the 60's A.D. If "imminency" was not a requisite during those years, neither is it now. All of this fits the above quote from Rosenthal.

I personally don't agree with everything in his book. But my own study years ago led me to believe most of his major points, and this book inclines me to accept a few more (Points 2 & 3 above). I commend it to you as well worth studying—for he may be right!

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## Quiz Yourself on Hymns & Writers

Following up *Word and Work's* theme in May about hymns and their writers, here is a quiz based on the hymnal *Great Songs of the Church*. Take it yourself, then ask others.

1. Who wrote more songs in this book than anyone else? 2. Who comes in 2nd and 3rd place? 3. Who else wrote 5 or more songs in

*Great Songs?* 4. Which of these people was killed in a train accident at the age of only 38? 5. Which was an outstanding evangelist, who led hundreds to Christ in open-air preaching? 6. Which one was a slave-ship captain formerly? 7. Whose life-story was told in *W & W*? 8. Whose life is the subject of a video?

ANSWERS: 1. Fanny Crosby has 24 songs in this hymnal. 2. Isaac Watts has 16, Charles Wesley 13. 3. P.P. Bliss has 9; Frances Havergal 8; John Newton, T.O. Chisholm, Frederick Faber and Henry Lyte each has 5. 4. Philip Bliss. 5. Charles Wesley. 6. John Newton. 7. Frances Havergal; see June '90 *W & W*. 8. Fanny Crosby; the hour-long video is called *Blessed Assurance*.

Margaret Clackson, whose article and hymns appeared in our May issue, is best known for "So Send I You," but she has written over 100 hymns. The ones we picked to be in *W & W* all could be sung to well-known tunes. I hope you sang them, as we did in an evening church meeting, and a fellowship group, and a family gathering. It was my privilege to meet Miss Clarkson in Toronto in July. —AVW

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## NEWS AND NOTES

### Louisville's Loss, Louisiana's Gain

We thought we had mentioned earlier but somehow it fell through the cracks, that David & Karen Johnson moved in late May to Alexandria, La. David began his ministry there in June, and led a young man to Christ that first month. Dave was an outstanding student at School of Biblical Studies in Louisville for 2 years, also serving as assistant minister at Iroquois Church. His faith & enthusiasm were appreciated, and we commend him to the churches in the South.

### Louisville Christian Fellowship

Helpful teaching, good singing and wonderful fellowship with Christian friends from near & far—these were enjoyed from Aug. 5-8. Attendance seemed down from the past year or two, but \$1,903 was contributed in the offering for missionaries.

### School of Biblical Studies, Louisville

The annual promotional dinner was held during the fellowship week. Attendance at the dinner was good. Jon Mayeux from Washington, La., who has enrolled for the coming school year, shared his call and vision for studying & ministry. He admitted he was as nervous as the groom who kissed the preacher and gave \$50 to the bride!

Sam Marsh told of the helpful extension class which SBS held at Lilly Dale, & Dennis Kaufman told of the interest which several other churches have expressed in having extension classes held. Dennis also reported about the closer (but limited) ties between SBS, Louisville Bible College, & College of the Scriptures. Also he mentioned the need for someone to replace him as director of SBS & chairman of the board, by Jan. '92. Please pray for SBS.

### Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville

The Missions Committee would like to give special recognition to Martha Embree for hours/weeks/months of research work and the final reports and bulletin boards that she coordinated and developed on the mission works in Africa and the Philippines. It was very informative.

We are planning a program just for Seniors age 55 or above (or under) and we need everyone's help for this program to succeed.

Beginning in September, A Women's Sunday School Class will be formed. Open to all interested women, this class will begin a study of Women of the Bible with applications as to ways women can serve the Lord today.

(Continued on Inside Back Cover)

## NEWS and NOTES, continued

### Sorry about that!

We are sorry that our June and July issues were both late, caused by some circumstance beyond our control. We hope you pray for the ministry of this magazine, in all aspects. AND PLEASE ENLIST A CHURCH REPORTER TO SEND US NEWS, or else mail us your bulletins. Some churches that did that before have stopped—so we get no news from them except occasionally by word of mouth. For instance, we recently heard that the Jennings, La. church recently appointed some new elders and called a new preacher!

### Woodland Bible Camp, Ind.

Harry Coultas reports in his bulletin from Linton that there were 44 campers & workers for Junior Week, July 14-20, and about 65 for Intermediate camp the following week. And we heard that Senior week (high school) was one of the best ever held! Cooperation was excellent and interest ran very high.

We would love to get reports from Antioch Camp near Frankfort, Ky. & C.Y.E. in Louisiana too. Sharing news stimulates interest in others!

### Ralph Avenue Church, Louisville

Wonderful Homecoming Day: 109 were here! For Bro. Bill Smallwood it was a record day. The first time he had ever had over 100 in a church where he was preaching. We were so glad to have all of our regular family plus many visitors.

### Borden Church of Christ, Ind.

Praise God for July! For at least two reasons; because it was a month for good growth and because I survived it. Growth is great, but it is tiring. Helping me survive one of those growth spurts was a great VBS staff. Teachers, assistants, craft & refreshment people, and of course the skit crew; everyone did a wonderful job. After VBS came Bible Camp. Eleven from this church went with me. We enjoyed the biggest week of the summer at the camp. I saw a lot of growth from different ones at camp.

—Mike Abbott

### Gallatin, Tennessee

The Teacher Appreciation Banquet will be held in the new Christian Enrichment Center. In preparing for this

event, the Education Committee requests that pictures of students, teachers, Sunday School events, etc. be submitted to the church office. These pictures can be recent or reminiscent of days gone by!

### CALLING ALL LADIES!

A Ladies' Retreat is planned for Oct. 4-5 (Fri. night 6:30 to Sat. afternoon) at Antioch Christian Camp near Frankfort, Ky. Cost is only \$7.00. Bring a covered dish for Fri. evening. Bring bedding. The theme is "Women Encouraging Women." Call Ruth Wilson, 502-897-2831, if you have questions.

Every Sunday morning an old man walked several blocks to the church in his neighborhood. He was deaf, so he couldn't hear the sermon, the music of the choir, or the congregational singing. "Why do you spend your Sundays in that church when you can't hear a word?" a neighbor asked. "I want the people around here to know which side I'm on," he replied. How about you? Do your neighbors know which side you're on, on Sunday morning?  
—from Ralph Avenue Church bulletin

### Buechel Church, Louisville

Right now in Wichita, Kansas people (by the hundreds) are being beaten, walked on by mounted police horses, abused, and then thrown in jail. It is unlikely that you will see this being reported on the national news though. Why? Because these people are a part of Operation Rescue, a group which organizes sit-ins at abortion clinics. They seek to prevent mothers from going into the clinics to kill their babies. I recently saw a bumper sticker that explained it quite well: "Only half of the people who go into abortion clinics come out alive." So true. So sad, but so true.

What are you doing about it? Can you sit back and let babies be cut up and thrown away without caring?

In September the Ky. Right To Life Assoc. will sponsor a "Walk-A-Thon" to raise much-needed funds. If you can be a participant, do so. If you cannot, sponsor me or some one else you know that is going to participate. Together, we can make a difference. It is time to start loving children again.

—Duane Smith

99-12 2:5

Mike Haenning  
3429 Byron St.

Ft. Pierce

FL 34946

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## How to Have Good Children

- If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn;*  
*If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight;*  
*If a child lives with fear, he learns to be apprehensive;*  
*If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself;*  
*If a child lives with jealousy, he learns to feel guilty;*  
*If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident;*  
*If a child lives with acceptance, he learns to love;*  
*If a child lives with tolerance, he learns patience;*  
*If a child lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative;*  
*If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself;*  
*If a child lives with recognition, he learns to have a goal;*  
*If a child lives with fairness, he learns to have justice;*  
*If a child lives with honesty, he learns to tell the truth;*  
*If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith in himself;*  
*If a child lives with friendliness, he learns to accept the world as a nice place to live.*