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Review: The Gospel According to Jesus

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he will not waste time by merely glancing over the Scripture while his mind is making great plays at first base. God says, "Give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. 4:13).

What should he memorize? A verse assigned to him, one that has spoken to his heart, or part of a passage that he works on over a longer period of time.

How long should he pray? A friend of mine challenged the children she teaches to begin by borrowing their mom's timer, setting it for 3 minutes, and talking to God during that time.

One boy reported his mother's timer could not be set for less than 10 minutes. He decided to spend that much time praying. Some children liked the idea so well they asked for their own timers for Christmas.

The discipline of a regular feeding from God's Word causes steady spiritual growth.

Obey God throughout the day. Read carefully 1 John 2:3. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." Your child is also feeding himself when he listens to God's voice—in the last inning, when he has dropped the ball, and his opponents are scoring the winning run.

Instead of becoming angry he calls on God for strength to be a good sport. He obeys God's commands to pray and trust.

Belonging to God must make a difference in your child's daily walk. Ask your child, "What do you *know* God wants you to do?" "How did God help you obey Him this week?" Give him time to praise God for the way He worked in him to do His will (see Phil. 2:13).

Gather a pile of pictures showing children in everyday situations. For family devotions, use the pictures to discuss a variety of questions with your child.

How could God help you in this place?

Pretend this is you. What could you pray?

What does God say you should (or should not) do in this situation?

What verse helps you know what to do when you feel this way?

This activity helps your child see how lessons apply to the world outside the walls of the church. He recognizes how God guides him throughout the week.

Watch for ways to witness. A child often enjoys sharing his faith. The dictionary says "witness" means "one who furnishes evidence." Encourage your child to express evidence not only about his salvation but also of Christ's work in his life. He can tell others how God answered his prayer, what he is learning from God's Word, how God helped him stop watching a TV program, how God gave him courage to congratulate the winner in a contest he wanted to win himself.

When anyone speaks up, telling how God is at work in his life, he encourages others.

Your child can remember these four areas if you teach him the following acrostic:

Go to church and Sunday school.

Read God's Word and pray.

Obey God throughout the week.

Watch for ways to witness.

Establish your child in these disciplines of the Christian life, and he will continue to grow, even when he is on his own.

■ *Sally A. Middleton*

Family Bookshelf

Let's-Talk-About-It Stories for Kids, by Lois Walfrid Johnson, are designed to help kids make right choices in the difficult "growing-up" stages. All the stories present real situations faced by every adolescent. Each one is followed by questions that make kids think about how to handle similar situations. A very good discipleship series, best-suited for ages 9-12. Titles include *You Are*

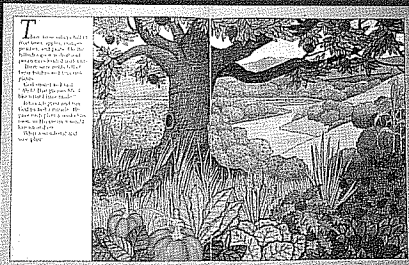
Wonderfully Made! (on sexuality and physically maturing—the author encourages parents to go through this book with their child and be open to questions), *You're Worth More Than You Think!* (on self-esteem), *Secrets of the Best Choice* (on making right choices), and *Thanks for Being My Friend* (on friendship). (NavPress, 177 to 184 pp., \$4.95 ea.)

■ *Cindy B. Gunter*

Six Busy Days—The Wonderful Story of Creation by Mary E. Erickson. Illustrated by David Acquistapace and M. C. Gary. What a magnificent presentation of the Genesis account of Creation! The story is told in down-to-earth language and filled with descriptive words that paint pictures in your imagination. There are

brilliantly colored illustrations on every page. Throughout the book God is exalted as the "wonderful and wise Creator." His power and compassion are brought to life. Highly recommended for children ages 4 to 7. (Chariot Books, 29 pp., \$7.95).

■ *CBG*



Excerpt from **Six Busy Days** by *Mary E. Erickson*

There were valleys full of fruit trees: apples, oranges, peaches, and pears. On the hillsides grew walnut and pecan trees loaded with nuts.

There were fields full of berry bushes and

vegetable plants. God smiled and said, "Ah-h! That pleases Me. I like what I have made."

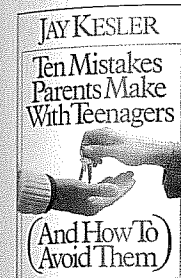
Into each plant and tree, God tucked a miracle. He gave each plant a seed of its own, so His creation would live on and on.

What a wonderful and wise plan!

TEN MISTAKES PARENTS MAKE WITH TEENAGERS

by Jay Kesler

Adolescence is the most dangerous time of life for teens *and* their parents! Teenagers and young adults, more than any other age group, are likely to fall victim to suicide, automobile accidents, mental or emotional problems, unwed pregnancy, arrest, drug and alcohol addiction, and most likely any other problems except a broken hip.



Jay Kesler writes to Christian parents in hopes of minimiz-

ing the turmoil of the teen years on both parents and teens. *Ten Mistakes Parents Make with Teenagers* is filled with concrete, practical, non-preachy suggestions on how to avoid making mistakes in teen-rearing. The chapter listing is a virtual summary of the problems counselors deal with when working with Christian families—consistency, admitting errors in judgment, honesty, nest-emptying, majoring on minor problems, communication, unwanted friends, sexual concerns, divorce, and more.

A recent survey asked people of all ages to identify their most and least pleasant time of life. Childhood was best for most, and adolescence was least pleasant. The second least favorably remembered time of life was spent parenting teenagers. *Ten Mistakes Parents Make with Teenagers* will diminish the too-frequent turmoil connected with parenting adolescents. Jay Kesler's book should prove invaluable to parents, counselors, youth pastors, and everyone serious about accepting the challenge of raising straight teens in a crooked world. (Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 142 pp., \$14.95) **David R. Miller**

An excerpt from TEN MISTAKES PARENTS MAKE WITH TEENAGERS

When our children experiment, they are not necessarily rebelling against our values. Usually they are just trying to get all the facts, by trial and error, before they draw their line.

This frequently happens with the matter of churchgoing. It is not at all unusual for teenagers to suggest that the church they've grown up in is boring, old-fashioned, or stodgy. This doesn't mean they're rejecting the faith of their fathers and mothers; they just want to explore what others

believe and make comparisons.

While adolescents are experimenting, however, while they're examining the options, parents must cut them some slack and honor this personal search for values and convictions. Decisions made after this kind of testing are often much more valid than those beliefs assumed without question. And parents who allow their children to express themselves, even to be critical of the family, will see less reactionary rebellion than those parents who are always defensive and condemnatory, trying to force their children into a mold.

Booknotes

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS

by John MacArthur, Jr.

With this timely work, John MacArthur seeks to fill a glaring need in American Christianity to address the problem of "easy believism" or "a form of Christ that does not call for commitment." Perhaps if he overstates his case at times he can be forgiven. He not only points out the gaping holes in much that now goes under the name proclamation, but, much more, gives careful exposition of the clear message of Jesus who asked, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" and said, "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother . . . and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

The importance of this book is twofold. In the clarification of the nature of the gospel message, church proclamation can again become fully biblical, and the throngs claiming a "born-again" experience but without change of life in

obedience toward God might be shaken and brought to a truly saving knowledge of Christ.

While this reviewer cannot claim to agree with all in this book, the primary message is basically right on target. (Zondervan Books, 253 pp., \$14.95) **John D. Morrison**

COME BACK, BARBARA

by C. John Miller and Barbara Miller Juliani

"Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind . . . is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. . . . Charity never faileth" (1 Cor. 13:4-8). *Come Back, Barbara* is the modern version of the "Prodigal Son," and a true story of 1 Corinthians 13 being practiced in day-to-day living.

When Barbara announced at the age of 18 that she would no longer accept the rules and morals of her mother and father she broke her parents' hearts. Her father, John, shares with the reader his anguish of heart and personal struggles over an eight-year period, reminding us that we cannot ask God to forgive a son or daughter while our own spirit is filled with memories of many wrongs done to us.