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I Will Keep Appointment

In response to your question, “Will You Keep Your Appointment with April?” (April), I say that as a Calvinist I believe I will keep every appointment the Lord has made for me, rest or work.

David Grover
Dayton, Ohio

Great Work

Although I am a new subscriber I am much impressed with the character and quality of your magazine. Keep up the great work.

Mark M. Wikoff
Saint Louis, Missouri

Clearwater Beach Alive

Thank you for information concerning Clearwater Beach Alive as written in the March issue. This third year of ministry has been our most outstanding. The past two years we have been able to present the gospel of Jesus Christ a little over 2,000 times and have seen 200 decisions for Christ. This year the Lord blessed in greater ways than we could have ever imagined. Students had the opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus Christ 1,309 times during Spring Break. They have a recorded and follow-up decision rate of 213.

First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks would like to thank FJ, Dr. Falwell, and Liberty University for their support of this evangelistic outreach activity on Clearwater Beach, and for the tremendous representation, by young people, of our Lord’s gracious and saving work.

Bob Miller, Associate Pastor
First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks
Largo, Florida
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Join a rescue

The March 1989 article on the March for Life Rally neglected to mention the 170 rescuers who were arrested at a Washington, DC, abortion mill, while the march was in progress.

Over 170 men, women, pastors, and priests were brutally treated by Washington police. Arms of rescuers were bent behind their backs and over-tightly bound with plastic straps. Some were dragged down the aisles of jail buses on their backs, hands bound. Most had to endure pain for hours before they were released from the straps. Many suffered excruciating pain.

But babies were saved! The 170 rescuers directly saved babies. The thousands who march may eventually save babies. Every year thousands march and every year thousands of babies die. I encourage the marchers to join a rescue. If you really think abortion is murder, is marching really enough?

Ronald L. Isaacs
Carbondale, Illinois

Editor’s Note:
Some readers expressed a desire to see a picture of Paula Anderson (“God’s Special Arrangement,” May). Our sincere thanks to Paula for sharing her perspective on adoption.

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There are two Sauls in the Bible. One was a total failure. The other was a spiritual champion. What made the difference in the lives of these two very capable men?

Both Sauls came from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest of the 12 tribes. Each man's roots were as noble as those of the other. Old Testament Saul was Israel's first king. New Testament Saul was God's official missionary to the Gentiles. The Saul of the Old Testament started as God's friend but ended as God's enemy. The Saul of the New Testament began as God's enemy and wound it all up as God's friend. The latter far more desirable than the former.

Old Testament Saul, in his hour of death, appealed to the Witch of Endor for instruction and comfort. New Testament Saul, in his hour of death, wrote, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Why did one man leave this earth with a moan of defeat and the other with a shout of glory? One word distinguishes New Testament Saul from Old Testament Saul. The word is obedience.

Saul also committed a sin of omission. He did not do what God had commanded him to do. When God ordered Saul to utterly destroy a godless Amalekite city, Saul spared the wicked king and the best of the sheep and the oxen. Again the prophet of God confronted Saul to ask why he did this. And Saul gave two lame excuses. He said, "I did it because the people forced me. Everybody else was doing it and the pressure was on. And I did it to offer these animals to God as burnt sacrifices. I was doing it to worship the Lord. I did it for God's glory."

When Saul finally admitted, "I have sinned," it was too late—not too late for God's forgiveness, but too late for God's recovery. Samuel said, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." It is better to obey God now, than to offer a sacrifice after you have done a terrible thing. It is never right to do wrong to achieve right. If Saul had not disobeyed, the Lord would have established his kingdom, but now He was looking for another man. Saul was off the throne. He was on the shelf.

I would rather be dead than have God say He has no more use for me.

Saul (Paul) talked about that in the New Testament. He said that his constant fear was that after he had preached to others he might become a castaway. Do you know what that means? He knew that God would forgive him, but he feared being placed on a shelf, no longer of any use to God. It is possible to be forgiven, but a castaway. Forgiven, but on the shelf. And God finds someone to replace you, and your ministry.

Look at the New Testament Saul, standing in chains before King Agrippa. Instead of pleading clemency, Paul relates his conversion testimony, and then he adds, "Whereupon O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." In a nutshell, those 12 words explain the difference between the two biblical Sauls. New Testament Saul was never, never, never disobedient to that heavenly vision, not one time.

Do you want to succeed, or merely survive in your Christian life? The answer is found in your response to the word obedience. The first Saul failed. The second Saul succeeded. Obedience was the only difference. You don't have to be an orator, a singer, a leader, an administrator, highly educated. If you are simply a bond servant of Jesus Christ who obeys the Lord, God will bless and use you.

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The
Perfect Father?

by J. Grant Swank, Jr.
ot too long ago I heard the preacher tell the congregation all that a father is to be. He made us priest and king and prophet and disciple and companion. Then there were all those Scriptures to support his tal-
ly. It was neatly outlined. The delivery was impressive, too.

The only thing is that when he neared the end, I felt like David strapped down with Saul’s armor. I could not get up from the pew. Whew!

I glanced around to see other fathers in a similar mind-set. They, like I, were trying not to show it. Throughout the concluding hymn we men were wondering how we could bring it off. How do we match up to be “The Perfect Father”?

I know I am supposed to take the children to church regularly and teach them the Bible, the ways of prayer, and the salvation path early in life. I know also that it is probably more important for me to live the truth than to talk about it.

But what formula applies when spit-spats seem to increase within the family and the halo slips a bit off center?

In those moments I grapple with the priestly, prophetic, and kingly hats, only to find them slipping off my brow. And then I glance to right and left, hoping the world is not watching. As a Christian father am I not to live out the perfect example?

I must confess that I am not always up to it, whether the church is glaring at me or not. And the longer I live, the more I reason that few others are always up to it either. It has taken some time, however, to actually accept that as fact. I guess the attractive pictures on evangelical magazines—the ones with a handsome man surrounded by beautiful offspring and that gorgeous woman for a wife—really did brainwash this naive mind.

At times I would gaze at those perfect families seated on the sofa with the thick Bible positioned in the center and ask if they ever dropped French fries—catsup and all—on their laps. No, that could never happen to that family.

Nor could that lovely wife ever argue with that handsome husband with the large smile and dimpled chin. How could it ever be with such sweetness abounding?

I have seen those same perfect families walk into church. On some Sundays, especially in spring, with the buds just starting to bloom and the birds tweeting in the trees, I can see them still. They glide down the center aisle to take their places, with hymnals held high.

So, it really happens, I think. But enough years have gone by that I know neat dads and perfect families do not always come in such attractive packages. With that, I heave a sigh and recoup.

You see, being a good father is not a matter of appearances. It’s not even whether or not you could jump into that slick magazine cover with the large smile and dimpled chin. How could it ever be with such sweetness abounding?

“I always love you.”

“Daddy, do you love me even when I’m bad?” he asked in my ear.

“Yes,” I answered.

“Daddy, do you love me even when I’m bad?” he asked in my ear.

“Yes,” I answered. “I always love you.”

And mag to monow be a good dny, Lord, thank You for my boy. You know how much I love him. He means the world to me. Thank You for giving him to us. May he always serve You. Now we thank You for this night’s sleep. Be near us all. And may tomorrow be a good day. In Jesus’ name, amen.

He swung his body around toward me and hugged me tightly around the neck. His eyes were closed tight. There was no more reason to glance in wonder.

“Daddy, do you love me even when I’m bad?” he asked in my ear.

“Yes,” I answered. “I always love you.”

So, with that he said one of the most encouraging statements known to mankind. It isn’t novel or new. Yet it is powerful—that’s for sure.

“You’re the best daddy in the world.”

Right then I promised myself something. Yes, there is still much room for improvement as far as my being a father is concerned. And yes, I have goofed from time to time. Yet, that night, I told my memory to hold on to one thing as the years kept passing by. It was the innocent testimony of a little boy to a father who was sincerely trying. “You’re the best daddy in the world.”

Don’t forget it, I said to myself as I turned out the light. Don’t forget it.

J. Grant Swank, Jr., is a pas-
tor in Walpole, Massachusetts.
Winter came early and hard in 1977. A blizzard and a number of consecutive sub-zero days added up to one of the worst winters of Ohio’s history.

Our older sons, who were 8 and 9 then, were unable to go to school for the entire month of February because of the severe cold and a scarcity of heating fuel. The boys thought it was great for the first few days but soon they became bored. Not only were they unable to go outside into the biting cold, but constantly ice-glazed windows prevented them from even being able to see outside.

My wife endured the confinement with three active kids with her typical patience. However, she was relieved one day when, because of the weather, I was unable to go to work. She grasped the opportunity to turn over the entertainment duty to me, and I willingly accepted the challenge.

After depleting my reserve of “rainy day” childhood game ideas (about 15 minutes worth), I suggested that the boys have an art contest. They were not known for their...
artistic ability or even their desire for art, but they liked the idea, especially after I suggested that the objects of their artwork be each other.

They went to the kitchen table with their paper and crayons in hand and began the task. As they took turns posing, one could see a future artist in their methods. Thumbs up, noses twitching, mouths screwing, each worked diligently to create the best reproduction of his brother on paper.

At last the job was completed. I was to be the judge. Scott first revealed his picture of his brother Tim. Tim's face was covered with freckles. At the age of 9, he had few areas of his face that were unspotted. Scott had captured this attribute well in the reproduction of his brother. Tim's freckled face stood out like the proverbial "sore thumb." I poured out praises on Scott. "Scott, this is great!" I exclaimed. "It looks just like Tim. You really did a great job!" Scott proudly taped his masterpiece onto the family art showplace, the refrigerator, and sat down.

Tim then brought his creation to the judge. I took one look and began to laugh. Tim had given Scott a BIG head, BIG eyes, and BIG nose on a tiny body. It was like one of those caricature sketches mass-produced by amusement-park artists. Between my bursts of laughter I said, "Tim, this is terrible. It doesn't look anything like Scott. Are you trying to be funny?" My derogatory remarks were emitted without a speck of sensitivity and they pierced the heart of my son. The next thing I knew, Tim had picked up his picture, wadded it in his hand, walked over to the can, and tossed it in. He stood there crying uncontrollably.

I will never forget that moment, seeing my son suffering from the inconsiderate wounds inflicted by his insensitive father. I jumped up from my chair, hurried over to Tim, grabbed him in my arms, and tried to soothe his hurt. "I'm sorry, Tim. I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. I never meant to hurt you." The easily forgiving heart of a child is wonderful. As I hugged him, he hugged me tightly back, assuring me of his forgiveness, and we stood there sobbing together.

Later in the day I retrieved the crumpled piece of paper out of the trash and put it away to remind me of that emotional moment between father and son. I have thought of the incident often during the intervening years. I hope it has not remained a part of my son's childhood memories.

To me it was a lesson. How do we value the results of our efforts and those of others? Must the results always be perfect in order to be of value, or is the intent and effort to be considered?

When Samuel went to anoint the future king of Israel, he expected God to choose the one who was most visually appealing. The first of Jesse's sons to stand before Samuel must have been a striking young man. The Scripture records, "He [Samuel] looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

One by one the sons of Jesse presented themselves before Samuel, but each was rejected by God's great servant. When the final son had passed, Samuel asked, "Are here all thy children?" Jesse answered, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep."

To God neither David's age nor his lowly task mattered. God saw the heart of David, a young man who though he was to have many struggles in the future, had a heart that was totally committed to God. Years later David wrote, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my
strength, and my redeemer.” And “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” David became known as a man after God’s own heart.

Our value system is not God’s. We compare the beautiful child to the homely waif, the successful businessman to the civil servant, the wealthy baron to the lowly peasant, the great preacher to the timid saint, commending one and ignoring or condemning the other. But God penetrates the outward appearance, the obvious success, the eloquent speech, and He sees the heart.

Tim had worked hard at his drawing. He gave it all he had. He gave it his whole heart. He had done his best in an effort to please his dad. I will never forget seeing my son suffering from the inconsiderate wounds inflicted by his insensitive father.

and to evoke his praise. If I could re-live that moment, I would say, “A good job, Son! I’m proud of you.” But, of course, to return to the past to correct a wrong is impossible. Instead I must imitate my Father now and adopt His value system for the present and the future.

When I stand before my heavenly Father to present the fruit of my effort, His value system will be wonderfully demonstrated. He will not compare my fruit to that of others. He will overlook my faults and failures and see a heart totally committed to pleasing Him. Instead of words of derision and ridicule, His words will be those of commendation and encouragement. He will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” and I will be exhilarated by the praise of my Father.

Bill Middlebrook is a free-lance writer and an auditor in Pullman, Washington.
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You would expect Glen Keane to be creative and fun. After all, he is the son of Bil Keane, creator of the “Family Circus” cartoon strip, and is a directing animator at Disney. Those wonderful Disney movies like *Snow White* and *The Fox and the Hound* don’t just happen. They are carefully drawn, frame by frame, by a team of animators who must think, draw, and create in an identical style. Glen developed the characters of Georgette, Sykes, and Fagan in *Oliver and Company*, and he oversees teams of animators to make sure the work is cohesive and up to strict Disney standards.

But Glen Keane says that creativity is a gift for all people, especially Christians. “You can’t look at creativity apart from God,” he explains. “Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father, and He is the source of creativity—just look at the Genesis account of Creation. God said His work was good, and His gift of creativity is manifested in different ways through different people, whether through musical talent, drawing, or writing. I believe that as we use this gift to the best of our ability, we find the only way to really be happy.” Glen manifests his creativity in three areas: his job, his ministry through children’s books, and his family.

At Disney Glen learned that no one should ever be content to rest in individual accomplishment. “You have to get better and better,” he tells other Disney animators. “And sometimes you can’t get better until your pride is squashed by someone else coming along and showing you you’re not where you should be.”

When Glen first came to Disney he was told, “In order for your work to be good, it has to be sincere.” He wondered how to draw “sincere.” What did it mean?

Keane’s first animated character assignment was a segment of *The Rescuers*. His task was simply to show Bernard, the main character, sweeping. “I couldn’t quite get it right,” he recalls. I took my work in to an older guy, and he began to show me how to make it better. Suddenly what I thought was good looked dwarfish and gawky.”

“Let’s see,” asked the older man. “What sort of a guy is Bernard? Is he industrious? Does he really care about his work?”

Suddenly Bernard’s character came to life and Keane knew exactly how to draw Bernard. He became more than a cartoon. He was a real character. Keane then understood the meaning of sincerity, but he couldn’t help thinking that he had a long way to go.

“Don’t worry,” the older man smiled at him. “You’ll get there.”

Keane is currently working on *The Little Mermaid*, which will be released during the 1989 Christmas season. It is based on the Hans Christian Andersen tale, but the Disney version has a happy ending.
Soon after beginning his employment at Disney, Glen felt frustrated because he wanted to use his creative gift in a ministry. "It seems funny to me that so many Christians who are gifted artistically aren't really serving the Lord with their gifts in the same way that a musical person is able to minister. Perhaps there's not an open place in the body of Christ, but their gifts are just as vital as someone else's. I know that there is an important eternal decision that people have to make, but I couldn't see what my good work at Disney did to influence them."

Glen met and prayed with Henry Brandt and his wife for an opportunity of ministry. While driving home that night, Glen began thinking about what he would teach in Vacation Bible School the next day. He had been asked by his church to draw stories for the kids, but he did not realize this was the door the Lord would open.

"I started telling stories with drawing. I studied the Word first and sought for a way to illustrate it. That's how I came up with a story.

Glen invented Adam Raccoon, a little fellow who lives in the woods where the Lion rules. In Adam Raccoon and Forever Falls, Adam's disobedience to the king causes him to endanger his life until the king comes to the rescue. The story is John 3:16 in the form of a parable.

Glen took a leave of absence from Disney for two years to begin his "Parables for Kids" series. Five series books will be published by David C. Cook by the end of 1989.

"I used to go to my Christian bookstores and search for something I could use to teach a biblical truth to kids. There were Bible stories, but Jesus taught in parables, and I think the books give parents a tool to teach their children."

"You can't look at creativity apart from God. He is the source of creativity—just look at the Genesis account of Creation."

Illustrations by Glen Keane, used by permission of David C. Cook Publishing Co.
time of testing,” Glen says, “and at that point the Holy Spirit convicted me of sin and the need for forgiveness and the assurance that I was forgiven. I had been raised Catholic, so I went to confession, confessed, and was told I was forgiven, but that night for the first time I felt no assurance.

Glen’s wife, Linda, has been the greatest influence on his life. “When we got married, I was pretty much a wild man, and I didn’t realize how difficult it was for other people to be around me,” he admits. “Linda pointed out that I didn’t have to always be so out of control. She taught me how to consider what I say and keep myself under control.”

Glen and Linda met and married through a bizarre set of circumstances that Glen would not recommend to anyone. “We had known each other for only eight days,” he says. He met her, escorted her around town for three days, and corresponded with her briefly before receiving a “Dear John” letter. They broke up.

Glen went off to the California School of the Arts and entered a training program for Disney animation. He was paired with another young man who, curiously enough, spent each day’s lunch time reading his Bible.

“Why am I forgiven? I wondered.

“I went to my partner and asked him, ‘What do I have to do to go to heaven?’ He showed me John 3:16, and though I didn’t understand it all, I did know if I trusted Christ, my eternal salvation depended on Him, not on me anymore. That was a gigantic turn from the direction in which I had been going.”

With his life in order, Glen wanted to get married, and he thought of Linda. He had not heard from her in two years and did not have her address, but within a week or two, his mom called and said a letter from her had arrived at the house.

They wrote for two months. She flew out to meet him in California. He proposed. She accepted and went home to make wedding plans. They were married within a few months, and as they left after the wedding, Glen was excited about their new life together. “The sun was setting. It was a warm, beautiful evening, and I was exhilarated,” Glen recalls. “I looked over at Linda and saw she had tears streaming down her face. I asked her what was wrong.

‘I don’t even know you,’ she cried.”

Glen and Linda had a few tough years. They were both new Christians, and Glen resumed his attendance at a Catholic church. “When we had marital problems, the priest advised us to have our marriage annulled,” he says. “Our friends told us to get a divorce, and another counselor recommended a separation. But in my mind, I thought God had brought us together, and He intended us to stay together.

“Now I am thankful for those tough times because my faith grew, my roots went down deep into Him, and now I can’t be uprooted. It took a tough time to bring me to that place.”

Being a parent brings tough times, too. Glen and Linda have two children, Claire, 10, and Max, 8. Glen is learning that two individual children require different approaches.

As the son of an artist, Glen felt little pressure to follow in his father’s footsteps. “Dad worked at home and was always available for helping on...”

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Wanted: Christian Parents

Several years ago an eminent sociologist and author made an amazing prediction. The day might come, he said, when parents would let experts raise their children. We would see newspaper advertisements like this: 

Why let parenthood tie you down? Let us raise your infant into a responsible, successful adult.

Class A Pro-family offers: father age 30, mother, 36, grandmother, 67. Uncle and aunt, age 30, live in, hold part-time local employment. Four-child unit has opening for government standards. All adults certified in child development and management. Bioparents permitted frequent visits. Telephone contact allowed. Child may spend summer vacations with bioparents. Religion, art, music encouraged by special arrangement.

Five-year contract, minimum. Write for further details.

That prediction was made by Alvin Toffler in his best-selling book Future Shock. Another prominent author, Ferdinand Lundberg, in The Coming World Transformation made a similar prediction. He claims that the family as we know it is near point of extinction.

And there is some troubling evidence that in the past few decades there has been a serious decline in the traditional family. The divorce rate is soaring, homosexuality is touted as an alternate lifestyle, and in a large number of American families, because both the mother and the father work, the children are left at home to run the house.

Of course, Bible-believing Christians deplore those developments. We believe that God's standards for the family are absolute and that the family is essential to the survival of our nation. In fact, the very turbulence of our times makes the ties of home and family more important than ever. And although writers and commentators are boldly saying that conventional marriage has seen its day, and although permissive sex abounds, the marriage commitment and a stable home life remain first choice for the great majority of young people.

Better than anyone else, you who are parents know why that is true. Although it costs a great deal to establish and carry on a home, no other pattern of life can provide so much love and joy and genuine satisfaction. God has made the family an institution whose foundations are love, satisfaction, and mutual service. And when that institution passes away, it will mark the end of our existence as a people.

Why did God establish the family? Why is the family unit so crucial? Why could not the same love be shared in a different environment? What is it about the conventional family that God uses? I am persuaded that God designed the family for several reasons, but one of the primary reasons is the challenging task of caring for, nurturing, and training children—a task that could not be adequately fulfilled by any other means than the conventional family.

No other calling is more crucial. Great men in places of leadership make far-reaching decisions in government, science, and business. But parents set the course of a whole new generation! What an opportunity! And what a responsibility!

Each child is eternally important. That little human life God gave you at the birth of that tiny child will continue on, in heaven or in hell, forever. In his brief life on this earth he will leave a trail of blessing or a trail of ruin. And before he leaves this globe, he in turn will play a part in shaping the generation yet to come.

The calling of a mother or father is the most important calling on earth. If you are a parent, your responsibility to your children is more important than your job, your hobbies, or anything else. You could spend your life on. And parenting never has been a greater challenge than right now. The storms that lash and batter the family today have never been more violent. You ask. What can we do? Is there any hope? How can we fortify our homes? Can we prepare our children for what is ahead?

Yes, God's Word does give us some guidelines. In fact, if we go as far back as the Old Testament Book of Deuteronomy, we find that even when God gave Moses the Law, He had a word for the parents.

GOD DESIGNED THE FAMILY FOR THE TASK OF CARING FOR, NURTURING, AND TRAINING CHILDREN.

By George Sweeting

Listen to the Word of God from Deuteronomy 6:5-9.

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."
with the Word of God.

**Love the Word.** First, to be successful parents, we are told, we must love the Word of God. Love for God includes love for His Word. “Love the Lord thy God,” it says, “and these words... shall be in thine heart.” You cannot love God unless you love His Word, and you cannot love God’s Word unless you truly love Him.

Centuries later than Moses, Jesus said that this is the most important commandment in all the Bible, and it certainly is the foundation on which we must build our families.

Notice that we are to love God with all our heart, soul, and might. “Your heart” means your spirit—that part of you that is able to worship and have a relationship with God. “Your soul” includes the rest of your immaterial being—your mind, emotions, and will. And “your mind” refers to your physical being, or your body. This verse is saying that our love for God and for His Word must consume every part of our being—body, soul, and spirit.

Love results in obedience. Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words... He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings” (John 14:23-24). The greatest thing you as a parent can give to your children is an example of loving obedience to God and to His Word.

Paul wrote to Timothy of the faith that had been in his grandmother Lois and in his mother, Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5). In the same epistle Paul reminded Timothy “that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:15). Timothy had a grandmother and a mother who loved the Word of God, and Paul was reminding him that that was the greatest heritage he had. Timothy went on to become one of the greatest leaders in the early church.

**Teach the Word.** But it is not enough just to love the Word of God. David loved the Word of God, but that did not make him a good parent. We must also teach the Word of God. We cannot expect our children to find the right way by themselves. God’s Word reveals the way to salvation, security, and satisfaction, but each generation must be shown. They must be taught the Word of God.

Deuteronomy 6:7 says, “Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.” As parents it is not enough just to love and honor God ourselves. We must also teach our children, both with our lives and with our lips.

**GREAT MEN IN PLACES OF LEADERSHIP MAKE FAR-REACHING DECISIONS, BUT PARENTS SET THE COURSE OF A WHOLE NEW GENERATION!**

You cannot begin to teach your children too soon or repeat your teachings too often. The command is to speak about God’s Word “when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” God is saying to teach your children in every situation of life—morning, noon, and night. When you are at home, when you are driving in your car, while picnicking in the park, when you tuck them in at night, when they get up in the morning, teach them! Teach them!

Teach your children that God is the Creator, that He loves them, that He answers prayer. Teach them that wrong is wrong and right is right, and that sin destroys and separates. Teach them that we reap what we sow, and that the wages of sin is death. Teach them that Christ died for their sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day. Teach them that the one who believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Teach them diligently.

At least five times in slightly different ways the Bible says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. What a powerful phrase! The child in your home may become a brilliant scholar. He may receive degrees and honor and fame. But if he does not learn to know and honor God and His Word, he will grope and tumble and stumble through life as a failure and as a fool.

Only God’s Word applied to the life has the power to cleanse and deliver and give light. In Psalm 119:9 the psalmist asks, “Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way?” And then he answers, “By taking heed thereto according to thy word.” Teach your children how to apply the Word to their lives.

Happy are the young men and women whose parents have taught them to allow the Word of God to correct and shape their lives. Long after those fathers and mothers have stepped aside, the Bible will reprove and guide their children.

Paul wrote to Timothy and reminded him that he had known the Word of God from his childhood. Then he made this poignant observation: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). That means that the ministry of the Word of God in a person’s life is a ministry of discipline.

What is discipline? My dictionary defines it as “training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character.” Discipline, my friend, involves shaping and correction. It takes place only when the person involved can subject himself to another’s authority.

Hebrews 12:5-6 says, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him...” Parent, are you teaching your children that they cannot expect to call all the signals in their lives? Can they accept authority? They will have to learn eventually, but so many learn too late!

And are you teaching your children that they must be saved from their sin? By far your greatest responsibility as a parent to your child is to lead him to personal faith in Christ as his Saviour. Do not assume that because he has gone to Sunday school and church, to summer camp or Bible club, to vacation Bible school or to a local Christian school, that he has personally accepted Christ as his own. You cannot afford to be afraid or ashamed.

continued on page 38
Disciplining children takes courage these days. Christian parents believe in the biblical mandate to discipline children, yet when we consider all the recent publicity about child abuse, and hear the messages promoting leniency in the name of love, and that hugging is much preferred over hitting, we begin to doubt ourselves.

Are we really doing what God wants us to do when our children misbehave? Could we be misreading or misunderstanding the portions of God’s Word that seem to encourage physical discipline for children? If discipline is of God, why does spanking or privilege removal sometimes fail to produce the hoped-for change in behavior?

Maybe, just maybe, we are overlooking something about child discipline that would explain the apparent failure of discipline and point us to a more effective method. Perhaps the failure of discipline has more to do with the inner child and his circumstances than with the parents’ discipline methods.

One family and their misbehaving child taught me more about child discipline than I ever thought I would need to know.

Billy was some kid. He was 9 when we met—9 going on 15! In the previous few months, Billy’s behavior problems had escalated to the point where his parents could feel their power shifting in their son’s direction. They feared that if they failed to control Billy’s sassing, talking back, disobedience, and rebellion they were headed for real trouble. I agreed with them.

by David R. Miller
Billy's parents are Bible-believing Christians, and they practiced what they thought was biblical discipline with their son. But it was not working. More spankings led to fewer behavior changes, and Billy's dad was frustrated with his failure to help his son.

Both parents worried that an undetected mental or emotional problem might be causing their son's strong resistance to their attempts at getting him to behave. But Billy was not mentally retarded, nor emotionally disturbed, nor hyperactive. He experienced no problems that could explain the discipline failure.

They wondered if they were bad parents.

Most troubling of all was the thought that they had applied what they believed to be biblical methods right out of the Book of Proverbs, with no success. This failure threatened other areas of their Christian life. If the Bible could be wrong in the area of child discipline, what else might they be believing in error? They were at the end of their rope—and sliding fast.

Parents must choose a discipline method on the basis of a child's ability to understand, taking into account the intention of the child, the genuineness of his repentance, situational factors, and his age. Some children do not respond to discipline simply because they are too young, too undeveloped mentally to make the needed connection between their behavior and the consequences that follow.

But Billy was not too young to understand. What was his problem? In dealing with children like Billy, I have discovered some clear, understandable reasons why even biblical discipline may not work at times. Let me suggest some possible explanations for the apparent failure in the relationship between Billy and his parents. There is hope of restoring that indispensable element in Christian parenting—confidence!

The behavior may not be voluntarily correctable. Some children have little or no control over apparent misbehaviors. A minor birth defect, a postnatal complication, or an infant illness may limit a child in ways that produce behaviors taken for disobedience or rebellion. Hyperactivity is a good example. Hearing, visual, or learning disabilities also fit. Being raised in a cruel or neglectful home environment can also put a child at such a disadvantage.

Children in these circumstances need to learn discipline, just as other children. But they need to learn in different ways and with different methods. They will need extra help, time, and patience if they are to overcome their limitations.

Our first child was hyperactive. Linda and I battled this issue for the first seven years of our daughter's schooling. Believe me, we know about behaviors that cannot be controlled voluntarily. Find out if the child can self-control, and then make the appropriate discipline decisions.

The behavior may be in exchange for attention. I am working with some teachers who have "Billys" in their classrooms. Some have been totally thwarted in their attempts to improve the students' behavior. Most children act out in class to get attention from the teacher and from the other kids. Preschool children pursue attention by tantruming. Elementary school children clown and are verbally disruptive. Teenagers rebel and refuse to give in to adult demands. Whatever their age, children doing this feel left out, ignored, and insignificant.

One method of dealing with attention-seeking behavior is to simply give the child some attention. Choose him to erase the blackboard, collect the milk money, or be hall leader on the way to lunch. That usually eases the pressure to misbehave for attention. So many of these children build a "reputation" as bad kids that an overworked teacher may not think of this option.

A second method is to remove the child from the source of attention. This would probably follow the failure of the first method, but generally gets good results. This "time out" works because a child learns pretty quickly that sitting in the hall is even worse than being good in the classroom. At least there is some attention in the classroom. Once the child learns that his attention-seeking behavior results in less attention rather than more, the disruptive behavior should diminish.

The time between the misbehavior and the discipline may be too long. How long did Billy have to wait before he experienced discipline? If the time between his misbehavior and the discipline was too long, he may not remember or understand why he is being disciplined. The question of time delay applies mostly to younger children. Most 9-year-olds can be expected to remember their offending behavior. Younger children and preschoolers are another story.

Delaying discipline "until Dad gets home" is not a good idea. But when it cannot be helped, parents must make very sure the child remembers what he did and why it was wrong. Parents need to recreate the problem situation in the child's mind in order to minimize the potential negative effects of delayed discipline.

The method of discipline may not be strong enough. How did Billy react to the spankings and loss of privileges that resulted from his bad behavior? If he did not cry or
complain about being spanked or having to go to bed early, it probably did not bother him. That would explain his continuing bad behavior. Billy may have felt that the pain of discipline was worth the boost to the sense of independence he got when he talked back to his parents. Perhaps he was simply conducting an experiment to see how far he could push Mom and Dad.

No matter!

If the pain is worth the gain to Billy, his parents need to change the method or increase its impact, so Billy will think to himself, "It just isn't worth it."

When we get a child to think that magic thought, the battle is won. But we must be sure that good discipline does not degenerate into child abuse.

The method may be too strong. Here we are getting pretty close to the line that separates discipline from child abuse.

When forceful methods of discipline fail to produce good results, parents usually want to know if their child is emotionally disturbed or maladjusted. Can a sane child, they ask, continue a behavior in the face of severe punishment? Is it possible to keep increasing the intensity of discipline and still get no response?

It sure is possible!

Suppose Billy was being harshly disciplined, maybe to the point that Mom was cautioning Dad not to go too far in his anger. There are two possible explanations for Billy's failure to improve.

First, very strong physical punishment or harsh and vindictive withdrawal of love could create such anger and fear in the child that the lesson is smothered in a flood of other feelings. A child who is frightened of his father, or who is in great pain from a beating, will probably not be able to listen or internalize the message behind the discipline. The biblical caution against "provoking children to anger" speaks to this concern.

But there is another reason strong methods might not work. When a child is "roused to strife" by excessively harsh discipline, the anger may move him in the direction of getting back at his parents. An angry child who cannot strike back physically may continue to get into trouble specifically to upset his parents.

Experience tells me that Conservative Christian parents are more likely to be too harsh rather than too weak. These explanations sometimes strike awfully close to home.

Rewards may be mixed with discipline. Parents easily forget that we are dealing with an immature and undeveloped brain when we attempt to discipline children. Too often we assume that the simplicity which is apparent to us will be equally apparent to our children. Therein lies the problem.

Isn't it just possible that Billy's parents discipline within correct biblical guidelines, but add on something that spoils their efforts? Perhaps they are so concerned about Billy's anger toward them, or about his feelings being hurt, that they express affection to him too soon after discipline.

Billy is spanked for talking back or disobeying. He cries and says he is sorry, leading his parents to want to make up to Billy rather than waiting for him to make things right with them. Perhaps Billy's mom and dad have a habit of taking him out for ice cream after a spanking, just to show him that they still love him and that everything is all right now.

Billy's parents may be doing everything right and biblically, but their "after" behavior could be negating their "before" behavior. Following up on discipline with hugs, kisses, and ice cream may simply be confusing Billy, leading him to think that affection and ice cream normally follow misbehavior. So when he feels left out, lonely, or ignored, he talks back to Mom, gets a spanking (attention) from Dad, plus hugs, kisses, and ice cream. In this case the discipline has become a signal to Billy that good things will follow, thus smothering the lesson he needed to learn about bad behavior.

The misbehavior may be an imitation of the discipline. Many parents have seen their young children spanking or scolding a doll for some imagined misbehavior. Children easily imagine themselves as grown-ups and will copy their parent's methods of discipline.

The back talk and rebellion getting Billy into so much trouble may really be an imitation of what he observes in his parents. Perhaps Billy, in attempting to be like his parents, is copying too much of their behavior, including the scolding, mean looks, and shouting that often accompany child discipline. Back talk is nothing more than verbal aggression, an attack with words instead of fists. Billy's mom and dad might want to consider calming their methods down some, so their son sees a more rational, thoughtful approach to dealing with misbehavior.

There may not be enough teaching in the discipline. We all take too many things for granted. Billy's parents must be sure they are not assuming a level of understanding that may not exist. Sometimes parents assume that their children know (or ought to know) what they did wrong and why it must not happen again. I often ask parents, "How do you know your child understands what you tell him?" All too frequently the answer is a kind of amused-confused comment like, "Of course he understands. He's a normal kid, isn't he?" Normal or not, the way to avoid this trap is to consciously determine to ask questions and wait for the correct answers. Do this in three steps.

First, sit the child down and in a conversational tone of voice tell him what he did wrong and why it was wrong. Be specific. Avoid speaking in generalities.

Second, ask the child to repeat what he just heard. There is no other way to be really sure the child

We must be sure that good discipline does not degenerate into child abuse.

continued on page 39
How to Make
DECISIONS

The president of a large successful bank had gained a reputation for his business skill, taking the bank from a small building on the corner to ownership of the tallest building downtown. As he cleaned out his desk on the day of his retirement, a young vice president came by his office.

"How did you become so successful in banking?" the young man asked.

The elderly banker stopped and thought for a minute, then indicated his answer in two words. "Successful decisions."

The young man pondered the answer. That was not enough. He asked, "How did you learn to make successful decisions?"

The retiring president came around from behind his desk with one word, "Experience."

The young man was persistent. He wanted the secret to becoming a millionaire. "And how do you get experience?"

The gray-headed banker smiled to himself as he reflected on his life, and gave two words to the young hopeful. "Bad decisions."

Everyone makes bad decisions. It is simply part of the fact that we are born in sin and do not have perfect information. Our thought processes are faulty. Bad decisions can cripple a life or destroy a person's future. But when a person learns from his bad decisions he can go on to a successful life.

When I was a college student money was scarce. After working at a Christian camp throughout the summer earning five dollars a week, plus room and board, I was getting ready to return to school for the fall term. I needed shirts. In the bargain basement of a large downtown store, I looked among the 88-cent shirts in the sales bin. I did not think anyone saw me, so I bowed my head and prayed. I wanted God to guide my choice. But a fellow camp counselor was watching me.

"What are you doing?" my friend asked when I opened my eyes.

"Praying."

"What about?"

"I want God to help me choose the right shirt," I said straightforwardly.

"You don't pray about shirts," my friend chided me. "You pray about a wife and money to go to college... but you don't pray about shirts!"

I was convinced that God was concerned about every detail of my life. I remember one time not having a button on my shirt and I was concerned about my testimony. "God doesn't want me going around with a button off my shirt," I told my friend. But my friend rebuked me again. He felt a buttonless shirt revealed a character trait. It was not something that concerned God.

Is God concerned about small details? If so, how small?

When a woman goes shopping, is God concerned about every purchase she makes? Two women stand in front of the canned vegetables. The first woman buys the cheapest green beans because that is all she can afford. The second woman is entertaining her husband's boss and wants to make a good impression. She buys the finest beans, plus the best cut of meat. Should a housewife pray about the purchase of beans and meat?

Ruth was a freshman in college dating two boys. The first was a broad-shouldered, redheaded sophomore, a well-dressed young man who attended all the social functions. Most girls considered him a "good catch." The second boy had a funny name, was short, and did not have money for "good-time" dates. He worked in the college cafeteria, did not own a suit, and spent his spare time studying.

Ruth was faced with a decision of staggering consequence. Does she establish a relationship with the boy who can give her a good time in...
college, but is not concerned about getting a job in life? Or does she opt for the future and choose the boy who is success-motivated?

We make decisions every day of our lives, beginning with the alarm clock. “Will I get out of bed?” We decide to get up or to enjoy a few extra minutes in the sack. Most of us know people who help us with our decisions. When the alarm goes off your wife says, “You better get out of bed.” Sometimes she puts obligations on your decision-making process. “If you don’t get up you will lose your job!”

On the other side, the “positive thinkers” say, “Make up your mind before you make up your bed.” These are usually success-oriented people with a healthy attitude toward making decisions. Still others let circumstances control their lives. They yield to events around them and let fate determine their destiny. This is wrong. Our choices should determine our lives.

God made us with the ability to choose. He did not make us His robots, nor did He predetermine all our choices. God did not make a blueprint for our lives and expect us to conform to it. God created people who would love Him out of choice and worship Him out of their free will. Adam and Eve, our early parents, were creatures of choice, as we are, and their choices were of great consequence to us.

The power to choose is the freedom we love the most. Ask those enslaved behind the Iron Curtain or in prison. They will testify that they miss the power to choose or direct their lives.

Victor Franckle was imprisoned in a German concentration camp during the Second World War. He was interrogated, beaten, and humiliated. Franckle was stripped naked and lost all of his possessions, yet he said, “They can take everything away from me but my power to choose how I will think about them or react to them.” The power of choice made him the ultimate victor. His choice made him human and kept him living.

Choices are inevitable. Even when we postpone decisions we actually choose not to decide.

A minister went into a restaurant with several colleagues and played “musical menus.” The ministers were reluctant to choose a meal. My friend chose the worst selection. “I want broccoli, and liver quiche.” The others followed. “Sure, I will have that.” After all had chosen and the waitress began to walk away my friend changed his order. “I’ll have a cheeseburger and French fries.” Those following someone else’s decisions were not reluctant to change.

Choices are like throwing a stone in the pond. The stone quickly disappears but the ripples continue. We quickly make a decision, and the event sinks like the stone in the pond. But the consequences continue. Our choices affect us and the people around us.

We should make our decisions based on the lordship of Christ, not on the lordship of self, not as those conformed to the world, but as those who are transformed by the power of Christ. When we make decisions based on the Lord Jesus Christ, we make them according to the Word of God.

**Spend time in prayer.** Christians should pray about major decisions. But the real question is, “When did you pray about it?” If you are really living in the center of God’s will, you should pray about every decision before you even know you have a decision to make. You should pray about everything you do every day. The more serious a decision, the longer you should pray about it before making it.

Many Christians pray only when they get into trouble. All too often we want a sovereign God to get us out of a mess. At that point we are willing to make a biblical decision. Pray daily for the guidance of God in every area of life.

**Read the appropriate Scripture.** This does not mean to base a decision on one text. Base decisions on the whole counsel of God. Know the teaching of Scripture and apply it to your problem. Then look for a verse that reflects that truth.

Do not open the Bible, spin your finger in a circle over it, and land blindly on a verse—like a plane taking any port in a storm. That is the wrong way to look for spiritual guidance. You might be surprised at what you could prove with just one verse of Scripture.

Base your decision on the entire teaching of God’s Word. If God’s truth is right at one place, it will be right at another place. God’s Word will not disagree with itself.

**Think through the consequences of your decisions.** We make many of our decisions in the flesh. We reflect on the short side of the ledger sheet. Do not use “stopwatch” thinking in making a decision. Use “calendar,” long-range reflection on the consequences of a decision.

The first way to think through the consequences is to ask, “How will this decision affect me?” Ask how it will affect you physically, spiritually, and socially, but most of all how it will affect your family.

A father got a promotion and a large raise. He moved his family to another state, but could not find a biblical church. Previously, they had been growing in the Lord and serving Christ. But without the support of a good church they became backslidden. He based his decision on finances, not in light of the total consequences for him and his family. Before a father makes a
The night hours had slipped quietly away and dawn was breaking, that memorable day in 1872 at Dublin, Ireland. Some 20 Christian workers had spent a night of earnest prayer, which produced heart-searching, confession, and an unusual sense of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

During that sacred time D.L. Moody, a young Sunday school and YMCA worker from Chicago, and Henry Varley, a British evangelist, covenanted to yield themselves to God increasingly for spiritual strength in His service. Then Varley returned to London, Moody to the United States. But the influence of that providential contact, and of a seemingly chance remark by Varley, would reach far into the future.

On June 17, 1873, Moody returned to the British Isles, with Ira D. Sankey, both unknown. Within two years they were world famous.

Soon after arrival Moody sought out Varley. Recollecting the night of intercession, he asked whether Varley recalled his words.

"I well remember our interview, but I do not recall any special utterance," Varley replied.

"Don't you remember saying, 'Moody, the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him'?

"Not the actual sentence, no."

"Ah," declared Moody, "those were the words sent to my soul, through you, from the living God! As I crossed the wide Atlantic, the boards of the deck of the vessel were engraved with them; and when I reached Chicago, the very paving stones seemed marked with, 'Moody, the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him.'"

"Under the power of those words, I have come back to England, and...I must...let you know how God has used your words to my inmost soul."

Varley seems to be remembered today chiefly for this profoundly moving incident, which is so often garbled. Sometimes "the world has yet to see" is even attributed to Moody. If Varley had done nothing else, this pronouncement so powerfully affecting the greatest evangelist of the era would have surely guaranteed enduring fame.

But Varley did much more. He preached the gospel for half a century throughout the British Isles, as well as in South Africa, India, the United States, Canada, and Australia, winning thousands of precious souls. He built a large tabernacle; fought the destructive inroads of higher criticism, as well as vices such as gambling and opium; and was used to quicken and deepen the spiritual life of many Christians.

Varley was born in 1835 at Tattershall, Lincolnshire, England. After his mother's death he was forced to make his own way in...
London at the tender age of 11—without money, relatives, or friends. But the ambitious boy worked hard at various jobs, and soon was in business for himself.

Saved at 16, he later went to Australia for a new start in business. There he prospered sufficiently to return to Britain, where he married and began preaching in a nondenominational church.

In 1880 he and his father-in-law built the West London Free Tabernacle, seating 1,700—with no public address systems or other modern facilities. He also erected a Workingmen's Hall and Tabernacle Schools in connection with the church.

Like Moody a little earlier, the merchant was vying with the missionary; soon the latter triumphed. In 1868 Varley gave up business, devoting his entire time to evangelism. Thus his income decreased significantly while his family was growing.

Varley’s formal schooling had ended at 11. Without benefit of college, seminary, or other aids, he ministered with increasing power and effectiveness. Varley had Plymouth Brethren leanings. Like H.A. Ironside and others, he refused ordination and rejected the title “Reverend.” Spurgeon facetiously called Varley “a bad Baptist and a half-bred Plymouth Brother”—but always cordially welcomed him to the great Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit.

At Birmingham, more people were outside than could possibly get in. Varley had a wonderful season. “The Spirit of the Lord was with me indeed and the whole house seemed full of His glory.” Belfast, Sheffield, and many other places saw similar results.

When calls for service elsewhere multiplied, Varley resigned the Tabernacle pastorate in 1882 in favor of worldwide evangelism. He felt that the pastor was, in effect, winning souls on a retail basis; he preferred to do business wholesale.

One of the greatest evangelistic efforts of all time was Moody’s 1893 World’s Fair Campaign in Chicago. While 27 million people flocked to the six-month exposition on the far south side, nearly 2 million were reached with the gospel in about 80 churches, tents, theaters, missions, and halls all over the area. Some services ran continuously from 9 a.m. to 10 or 11 p.m.

Varley was a major participant, being assigned to a section of that bustling, boisterous Windy City particularly known for vice. He wrote home, “More crimes and murders are committed there than in any other portion of the city.” God gave a great harvest of very needy souls (“But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,” Rom. 5:20).

In Melbourne one night with a police escort he visited 50 opium dens. These he exposed and fought at every opportunity, writing many letters to newspapers and attacking wealthy landlords by name.

Varley was an inveterate itinerant, making 35 trips to Australia, North America, and other points during his later ministry, according to Warren Wiersbe in Listening to the Giants. And of course no jets or others planes streaked over the ocean then. Like Tennyson’s Ulysses, he was “always roaming with a hungry heart.” “Born with his hat on” was another characterization. He preached from brief notes.

A memorial plaque permanently proclaims his simple creed: Ruin by the fall; Redemption by the blood of Christ; Regeneration by the Holy Ghost.

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bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

Of every soul begotten of God, whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, it is written, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus... For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:1-2). To the weakest as well as the strongest believer in Christ, the conclusive words are spoken. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24). The judgment of the sin of the believer was borne by the substitute and surety, Jesus Christ the Lord. On this ground alone the believer is free from sin, and is justified, sanctified, and glorified (Rom. 5:9-10).

Though all this is absolutely true, each believer, as a child of God, is responsible to Jesus Christ as his Lord and King. There is no proof of living faith where that lordship in life and works is denied. The truth is that the hour which through faith in Christ saw an end to our condition as condemned sinners, saw the commencement of our personal responsibility as the holy brethren of the exalted Lord. For the deeds done in the body after regeneration we are amenable to Him, whether they be good or bad. Everything henceforth has reference to Him. Whether eating, drinking, sleeping, or working—everything, everywhere, has relation to Him and is known by Him. “Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s” (Rom. 14:8).

I commend the whole of 1 Corinthians 3 to prayerful attention. There we read these striking words. “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest” (v. 10-13).

No doubt there is here special reference to faithful ministry. The principle laid down, however, has reference to our whole life. What startling and momentous words are these! See! Every man a builder!

Each believer is responsible to Christ as his Lord. There is no proof of living faith where that lordship in life and works is denied.

Each one erecting on the foundation. Some building on Christ, gold, silver, precious stones. Mark it well! Three precious things. Some building on Christ, wood, hay, stubble. Mark it well! Three things the very opposite of precious.

For your encouragement, I remind you of His Word. “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward” (v. 14). Not salvation observe, but reward. Salvation is not a reward; it is of grace, not of works. Salvation is God’s free and sovereign gift (John 4:10; Rom. 6:23).

We do not believe that the child of God, a partaker of the divine nature, will ever lose eternal life. The loss of eternal life by its possessor is a contradiction in terms. Obviously we cannot lose that which is an eternal possession. But we do believe that the child of God may, through want of faithfulness to His Lord, after his conversion, lose an exceeding great reward. Oh, this question of reward, as distinguished from the salvation of the soul, how it needs pointing out, teaching, and emphasizing.

My reader, I beseech you, hear my words. I speak to myself also. Shall we henceforth bring to that holy and living foundation “wood, hay, or stubble”? Shall we dare bring the withered grass of past profession? The faded flowers of man’s natural comeliness? Shall we bring stubble for building on the living foundation?

Oh, child of God! Oh, heir of glory! Be careful of thy superstructure. Is it gold, silver, and precious stones, which you are building on the glorious foundation? Is it the gold suited to His divine glory? The silver of redemption’s mighty price? The precious stones of a loving and recognized association with all His holy brethren? Art thou yielding the gold of pure doctrine; the silver of a redeemed and consecrated life; the precious stones which thou hast won for the bosom and brow of thy Lord—are these the intrinsic values which thou art carefully building on Him, in view of that day?

Solemnly and affectionately, I appeal to my readers to heed the language of the wise master-builder. “Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”

Adapted from Christ’s Coming Kingdom. Copyright 1893, Alfred Holmes.
As a young staff pastor in Arizona, I was amazed and indignant when Dave, the senior pastor, shared with me an infuriating tale about the carpeting in his office. I knew church life was tough, but not that tough!

As founding pastor, he had brought the church from five families to an attendance of more than three hundred in seven years. He and his wife had poured their lives into the congregation. One of Dave's few requests as they moved near completion of their second expansion was that red carpet be installed in his office. The trustees met, they voted, and they installed green shag.

"How can you put up with that?" I demanded. The attitude of those trustees toward this unselfish servant made me furious. Dave's response has never faded from my memory, and it still serves as a wise guide in my own ministry. "John, you have to determine what's worth going to the wall for. Not every issue is worth a fight."

The urge to push. I tend to be a perfectionist. I hate sloppiness and lack of commitment—whether in caring for the Lord's facilities, an individual's theological beliefs, or in relationships among members of the body. This personality bent has its strengths and weaknesses. It drives me to produce quality work, but at times it hinders my relationships with people. I sometimes cut across the ideas, convictions, and contributions of others.

After eight years of ministry with Dave, I packed up my family and belongings and transported them 2,600 miles to assume a senior pastorate in New Jersey. I did not realize that I also packed and carried with me a little piece of Dave. After a few months at the church, I decided to change the chancel furniture. Rarely had I used the pulpit when I preached in Arizona. Without giving it much thought, I placed the pulpit in a closet.

One Sunday after the evening service a dear woman came up and said, "Pastor, I wonder if the family who donated the pulpit is offended that you don't use it anymore."

Alice's concern was sincere. "Well, Alice, I'll have to give that some thought," I said.

The following week I asked our custodian, "Hey, Earl, have you noticed I'm not using the pulpit on Sundays?"

"You know, Pastor, I've been meaning to talk to you about that," he said.

From a random survey of others I concluded that for many in our congregation, an auditorium is not a sanctuary unless it has a pulpit. The following Sunday I preached (at least some of the time) behind the reinstated pulpit.

My tendency to fight over minor issues is also tempered by regular reading in the Book of Proverbs. Several proverbs warn us about going to the wall too quickly ("A fool's wrath is presently known, but a prudent man covereth shame, Prov. 12:16); too stubbornly ("He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy," Prov. 29:1); too vocally ("Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles," Prov. 21:23); too frequently ("The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise, Prov. 12:15). Most things look "right" from my own subjective vantage point. Before I go to the wall, I had best be convinced that my belief is worth fighting for instead of overlooking.

Interestingly, the qualifications for church leaders in 1 Timothy 3 include several "anti-wall" qualities: above reproach, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome. These qualities give the distinct impression that an individual who continually thinks he is right and frequently fights to get his viewpoint accepted is not the person who can lead a church to unity and maturity.

How do we determine what is worth, or not worth, a fight?

**Doctrinal Convictions.** In our own church we struggled over differing views of the role of women in ministry. After several marathon sessions that got nowhere, I wrote up my position and presented it as a motion to get something concrete on the table. My statement...
seemed to represent the convictions of the majority of the board. However, the view was completely opposite to that of one of our elders. When the board voted in favor of the motion, this elder resigned.

I disagreed with Dick’s position, but I had to compliment his integrity. Even though our church lost a leader, he was being consistent, and we accepted his decision.

Doctrinal convictions are worth fighting for and, at times, resigning over. At other times, however, perhaps the thing to do is not to resign but to continue pressing one’s viewpoint, lobbying for change.

The way we continue the fight is crucial. Someone once said, “God is not against us for our sins; God is for us against our sins.” I’ve found a similar principle effective in dealing with people who disagree. I can either be against my opponent, or I can be for my opponent and against the problem. By not condemning my opponent’s feelings, I give the person’s motives the benefit of the doubt, which makes him more likely to listen to my convictions. When going to the wall, you want to make sure you are heard.

**Philosophy of Ministry Issues.**

I will not go to the wall over whether or not we have children’s church. Some people believe children should learn from adult models by sitting through the entire worship service. Others believe children should receive instruction geared to their own age level. Some parents feel more in tune with the service when their younger children are out. Most of the children also prefer their own class with special activities. My conviction is that we should try to accommodate the desires of both parents and children.

If the Christian education committee or the board of elders, however, recommends that children should remain in the service, I would probably not go to the wall on that issue. Integrity would cause me to hold to my conviction, but respect for the church means that I would have to make a change when there is an impasse. But some major ministry convictions are so important that integrity necessitates insisting on them, even if it means quietly moving to a new ministry.

**Violations of Personal Authenticity.** This is probably the most dangerous area when it comes to deciding whether to fight. Discernment is not easy because we are so subjective. God has made individuals unique; we are each one of a kind. Recently a friend said, “No offense, John, but Charles Stanley is my favorite preacher.” That statement did not offend me. If God wanted me to be Charles Stanley, I would have been born to Mama Stanley! I must minister within the vortex of how I’ve been knit together by God. Authenticity demands that I do not vacillate back and forth trying to please everyone. My effectiveness in preaching and leading is directly related to its congruence with who I really am. We should know ourselves well enough to fight to be effective in ways God has designed us.

Several years and 2,600 miles have separated me from my friend and mentor, but his advice is as wise in the east as it was in the west.

Thanks, Dave.

- **John R. Cionca** is dean of students at Bethel Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota.
He stands 6 feet tall, and despite his 75 years S.M. Lockridge is as straight as an arrow. His figure and his voice are firm, commanding respect. In the 48 years he has been preaching, neither his voice nor his vision have faded.

Shadrach Meshach Lockridge was born the son of a preacher. "My father was a preacher during the Great Depression," he recalls, "and I looked at the ministry from a material angle. I saw him suffer with small churches. People at the time were mean, contrary, and difficult. I thought I could do anything but be a pastor. When I graduated from high school at 18, I felt a call of the Lord, but I thought I could escape."

Lockridge enrolled in Bishop College to learn "anything besides preaching." After graduating from Bishop he taught high school in Lorena, Texas, but he found himself preaching in the classroom. While teaching a physical science lesson one day, he stood in front of his students and proclaimed the truth. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Lockridge chuckles. "I tell people I'm preaching because I can't help myself. I didn't want to do it, but now I wouldn't take anything for it. I just wish I had accepted the call long before I did."

Strangely enough, it was the influence of people of God that kept Lockridge from salvation at an earlier age. "The people of my father's church picked at me because I was a preacher's son. They'd say, 'You ought to do this because your daddy's a preacher.' But they never told me who Jesus is or tried to lead me to the Lord. Whenever I'd see them coming I'd leave home and try to stay out of their way."

"He is all that you would expect a Christian to be in one package. He never changes, never wavers. He takes time for anyone who needs him."

Lockridge's two younger brothers joined the church and Lockridge had to endure another round of public remonstrance. "Look, you let your little brothers beat you," people would chide him, their heads wagging in disapproval. "You're a big boy. You ought to be singing in the choir."

He never heard a word about the Lord from those well-intentioned people, but one night as a senior in high school Lockridge went for a walk by himself. Looking up at the starry sky, he thought of how high and holy God was and how lowly and unworthy he was. "I looked up and gave the Lord my heart," he says, smiling. "I asked Him to come into my soul, and He did."

Lockridge pastored churches in Texas for 12 years, and after his graduation from Southwestern Seminary in 1952, he accepted the pastorate of Calvary Baptist Church in San Diego, California. He has pastored there for 37 years, and his people love him for his compassion, patience, kindness, and consideration. "He is all that you would expect a Christian to be in one package," says Pearl Ward, a church member. "He never changes, never wavers. The church people love him because despite his busy schedule, he takes time for children, old people, the youth, and anyone who needs him."

Lockridge's greatest joy is preaching the gospel. "I love preaching. I love teaching," he says with enthusiasm. "My greatest opportunity was a few years ago when I was used in 44 countries to spread the Good News. I was sent by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to several mission fields. I preached in Southeast Asia just as the war was winding down. One of the greatest opportunities for service I've had was preaching at 21 Air Force bases around the world, beginning at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs."

Some members of his church have resisted their pastor's popularity as a preacher/teacher. During a 20-year period Lockridge was gone the first part of every week preaching in many cities around the world. His people urged him to stay put.
"We called you to stay here." But Lockridge replied, "The Lord called me not only to witness to those here in Jerusalem, but in Judea, and in the uttermost parts of the earth." Whenever the Lord sends an opportunity to spread the gospel, Lockridge answers the call.

His attitude has earned him the love and devotion of the members of Calvary Baptist Church. Lockridge deeply loves being their pastor. "The best thing about my people is that most of them love the Lord and love to learn about His Word and share it with others. That's what I love about this church."

Along with his duties as pastor, Lockridge also serves as a professor of homiletics at the California Graduate School of Theology in Glendale. Anyone who has ever heard S.M. Lockridge preach will not soon forget it. His sermons are legendary. He has a talent and the necessary skill to breathe life into otherwise routine preachers' stories. His presentation makes the Scriptures come alive. He particularly enjoys the use of humor in his sermons. "There is a definite place for humor, even in the pulpit," he says. "It captures people's attention. If you can say something that people are interested in hearing, they will listen to you more carefully."

As much as he enjoys preaching, Lockridge has found the ministry is not without its frustrations. "The thing I find frustrating is the lack of commitment on the part of those who claim to be called to spread the gospel—that's really disgusting to me," he says flatly. "I see many fellow preachers who view the ministry like a 'chosen profession,' and they try to pastor a church on a social and secular basis."

He shares the view of other black pastors that too many black churches are overemphasizing the social aspects of the gospel rather than evangelism. "Some in our church would like this to be a 'black folks' church,' but I preach, 'Whosoever will may come.'"

When he goes out to witness to the lost, Lockridge approaches anyone he meets. "I don't witness to just black folk. I take every person as I come to him, regardless of his race, economic status, or how he looks. I had to convince many people that, yes, I'm called to pastor this church, but I'm also called to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

For younger preachers, Lockridge has this advice. "Stay in the study chamber of faith and on the watchtower of prayer. Study the Word, and proclaim it as the Holy Spirit leads you. Don't try to copy anybody else like I did. I wanted to be like this preacher and that one, but I found that the Lord called me individually and if I waited on Him, He would give me what He wanted me to have."

His favorite words of wisdom are found in Isaiah 40:30-31. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

"Even as a young Christian I still found temptations to follow the crowd and go wrong. But I had to trust in the Lord and wait on Him. When I began to practice that, I became stronger as a Christian, and I could stand on my own feet and not try to copy anybody else. When I saw older pastors getting into trouble, I was more determined to do what was right. Those verses were a guideline for my life and ministry. Every man is likely to fail if he doesn't follow and trust in the Lord."

Lockridge has been married to his wife, Virgil Mae, for 48 years. Does he have any plans for retirement? "People began asking me that when I was 60, and I told them I retired every night right after the eleven o'clock news," he jokes, his warm laughter flowing freely. "But I'm going to go as far as I can go. When I can see that I can't go any further, I'll retire."

His church members sincerely hope his retirement will not come in the next few years. There are too few preachers like Shadrach Meshach Lockridge.
to talk to him personally about it.

**Keep the Word.** Finally, Deuteronomy 6:8-9 says that it is our responsibility as parents to *keep the Word of God.* We are to bind the Word on our hands, put it as a frontlet between our eyes, and put it at the entrance to our houses. Traditional Jews bind their arms and foreheads with phylacteries when they pray, and put mezuzahs on doorposts because of this verse. But I am convinced that the meaning of the verse goes far deeper than that.

Binding the Word on our arms signifies the *practice* of God’s Word. Deuteronomy 6:8 is saying that whatever our hands do, they should be guided by the Word of God. The Bible gives us direction as Christian parents. We are to learn from the examples in it, obey the commands in it, and follow the guidelines in it. In doing so we not only serve as examples to our children, but we bring glory to God as well.

Keeping the Word of God as a frontlet between our eyes suggests the *presence* of the Word. We are to keep it ever before us, out in front where we can see it, and let it be a reminder and a guide to us.

Do you remember the call of Moses? God wanted him to lead His people out of slavery in Pharaoh’s Egypt. Moses was overwhelmed. Perhaps you feel the same way when you think of your responsibility as a parent. Despite 40 years of the best training Egypt offered, Moses felt inadequate.

God’s answer to Moses was all that he needed. He promised him His presence. “Certainly I will be with thee,” He said (Exod. 3:12).

Later in the life of Moses, at a time of great discouragement, God renewed that promise to him. God will help you to be an effective, faithful parent, and if you are a believer, you have the promise of His presence. But look at what Paul wrote to the Colossians. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom” (Col. 3:16).

As a parent, you need to memorize the Word of God. You need to meditate on it regularly. You must let it dwell in you richly, and let it be as a frontlet before your eyes to remind you of God’s presence and give you guidance.

Binding the Scriptures on our arms signifies the practice of God’s Word. Letting it be a frontlet before our eyes suggests the presence of God’s Word. And writing it on our gates and doorposts shows the prominence of God’s Word.

**Parent, how prominent is the Word of God in your life?** What is the testimony of your home to those who see it from the outside? Is the Word of God written on your gates and doorposts? I do not mean that you necessarily need to put a sign with a Scripture verse on your door. What I mean, and what I think Deuteronomy 6:9 teaches us, is that the testimony of God’s Word should be so prominent in our lives and families that when an outsider sees us, one of the first things he should be able to tell is that our family reveres the Word of God.

What is the testimony of your life? What is the testimony of your family? Do you love the Word of God? Do you teach the Word of God? Do you keep the Word of God? If so, you are the kind of parent America needs.

A Christian home must have Christian parents who are sensitive to the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Perhaps you need to receive Christ as your Saviour yourself. Perhaps you need to commit yourself to a new loving obedience to the Word of God. Will you do it today?
move concerning his job, home, or even a vacation, he needs to ask how it will affect his family.

Lot moved to the well-watered plains of Sodom and Gomorrah because it was the best place in the area (Gen. 13:10-11). However, his decision destroyed his children, and he lost his wife. He made a wrong decision and lost everything. Even though Lot got out of Sodom with his life, his family suffered eternal consequences.

Consider all the options before making a decision. No person will ever be perfect in making decisions. However, a person should gather as many facts as possible before making any decisions. He should look at both sides of the issue. One of the best ways to make a decision is to list the different options on two sides of a sheet of paper. List everything, the assets and liabilities, not just the things you want to do.

List the consequences. What will happen if I decide to move? What will happen if I stay? You cannot make a heavenly decision when you consider only the earthly fate. List the biblical principles and values on your sheet of paper. Yes, you ought to read the Scriptures, and you ought to pray, but do not be mystical in decision making. Ask God to guide you, and then do all your earthly homework. Do not ask God to give you a heavenly decision if you have not done your earthly homework. Nor can you make an earthly decision without heavenly insight. Until you have your feet on the ground, you cannot look into heaven.

Look at all the facts and do not wait for hunches, urges, or inclinations. Be careful when your hunches go against facts. Good decisions will lead to a good life.

Some people go from one bad decision to another. They have never learned to make good decisions, so they cannot give good direction to their lives. Like a woman who goes from one bad husband to another, some people think they have “bad luck.” There is no such thing as bad luck, just bad decisions.

Consider all the options before making a decision. No person will ever be perfect in making decisions. However, a person should gather as many facts as possible before making any decisions. He should look at both sides of the issue. One of the best ways to make a decision is to list the different options on two sides of a sheet of paper. List everything, the assets and liabilities, not just the things you want to do.

List the consequences. What will happen if I decide to move? What will happen if I stay? You cannot make a heavenly decision when you consider only the earthly fate. List the biblical principles and values on your sheet of paper. Yes, you ought to read the Scriptures, and you ought to pray, but do not be mystical in decision making. Ask God to guide you, and then do all your earthly homework. Do not ask God to give you a heavenly decision if you have not done your earthly homework. Nor can you make an earthly decision without heavenly insight. Until you have your feet on the ground, you cannot look into heaven.

Look at all the facts and do not wait for hunches, urges, or inclinations. Be careful when your hunches go against facts. Good decisions will lead to a good life.

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MARRIAGE INSURANCE
by Willard F. Harley, Jr.

Is it possible to "divorce-proof" a marriage? We know about the value of rust-proofing an automobile and the wisdom of purchasing a moisture-proof wristwatch, but can marriage really be "divorce-proofed"?

Willard Harley thinks so, and sets forth his plan of "comprehensive coverage for protection against divorce" in his new book Marriage Insurance.

Harley proposes that Christian couples begin this process by carefully examining their presuppositions, the "illusions" brought with them as they entered their marriage. Illusions include the belief that care in a marriage is unconditional, that romantic love is permanent, and that a husband and wife should love and accept each other as they are and should not try to change one another.

The author suggests several "realities" as replacements for illusions in marriage and does an excellent job of providing concrete ideas for marriages in need. The opportunities for marriage enrichment are endless, but there could be negative side effects too.

Harley seems to suggest that marriage is a "conditional contract," one that may (perhaps, should) be broken if a spouse fails to give as he has received. Some readers may reach the conclusion that divorce (in the author's view) is a more acceptable option than is traditionally taught in God's Word.

Research clearly shows that good marriages and healthy families are based on commitment, appreciation of one another, open and honest communication, a desire to spend time together, the ability to face and deal with crises, and a strong value system that includes a positive religious orientation.

Marriage Insurance teaches how these valuable and often scarce characteristics can be built into a new marriage or "retro-fitted" into an older marriage. Most couples will find this comprehensive book very valuable (Fleming H. Revell, 224 pp., $13.95). David R. Miller

An excerpt from MARRIAGE INSURANCE

When marriages are unhealthy but not on the verge of divorce, I recommend an intermediate amount of time alone together, somewhere between twenty and thirty hours each week. Without the crisis of divorce at hand, I usually have great difficulty talking people into being alone this long.

It has always been a mystery to me how workaholic businessmen find time to have an affair. The man who can't be home for dinner is scheduling mid-afternoon adventures three times a week. How does he get his work done? The answer, of course, is that he had the time all along. It was simply a matter of priorities. He could just as easily have taken time to be with his wife. Then he would have been madly in love with her instead of his secretary.

The reason I have so much difficulty getting some couples to spend time together is that they're not in love. Their relationship doesn't do anything for them, and the time spent together seems a total waste. But it's with that time that they can learn to re-create the romantic experiences that first brought them together in a love relationship. Without that time, they have little hope of restoring the love they once had for each other.

Whether your marriage needs fifteen hours a week or more than that, remember that the time spent is only equivalent to a part-time job. It isn't time you don't have; it's time you've filled with something less important.

Booknotes

LOVE, DAD
by Josh McDowell

Love, Dad is Josh McDowell's newest contribution to the Christian family, and it could not be more needed. Evidence of the collapsing Christian family confronts the church of Jesus Christ at every turn. Divorce, separation, and child and spouse abuse are at an all-time high, in spite of recent statistics showing a return to traditional church marriages and a design for children.

McDowell concentrates his efforts on dealing with the sexual concerns of American teenagers. He knows the danger of unbridled sexual activity, both in terms of unwanted pregnancy and in relation to the future success of a marriage that lacked premarital self-discipline.

Love, Dad is a collection of letters this Christian father has written to his son and daughter on the subject of sexual responsibility under God, a responsibility modeled for the McDowell kids by the McDowell parents. So many parents,
Christian and otherwise, have not been the example they should have been before their children—and this book will discourage some. If Love, Dad has a flaw, it is that too many parents will read the book and respect the McDowells, but say to themselves, "I can’t do that. It’s too late."

But there is hope in this book, a hope that some teenagers and some parents will read it and get the message Josh McDowell is sending. Sex is great, beautiful, wonderful beyond description, but loaded with danger for those who go outside God’s limits for sexual expressions. Sex after marriage, and limited to the future evolution of the marriage, is the message teenagers read in this book. The key to understanding the problems McDowell addresses is not so much the letters he writes to his teenage children, but that the husband and father was still there when his children needed him, something 42 percent of American children are not able to experience (Word Books, 149 pp., $8.95). DRM

THE SEDUCTION OF POWER
by Ed Dobson & Ed Hindson

This book appears at a critical time in the history of the religious New Right. After the heady euphoria of the 1980 Presidential election and eight years of orientation to the political process, the religious Right needs to reevaluate its purpose for political involvement.

The seduction of power for the Evangelical preacher is both objective and subjective: a tantalizing goal to strive for, but a corrupting force that can eviscerate the moral integrity of Evangelicalism.

The authors call for a "cobelligency" on the political scene: alliances with other religious groups sharing similar views on a sociopolitical issue to effect legislative or judicial change. The risks of political involvement without a "sharpened biblical focus" are: Evangelicals becoming only another political party; loss of the church’s spiritual mission; and "the politicizing of Christianity [rather] than the Christianizing of politics."

Presented in a very readable manner, the authors’ discussion of the problem of political involvement and their proposed solutions warrant consideration (Fleming H. Revell, 192 pp., $12.95). Ralph Mawdsley

THOUGHTS FOR MEN ON THE MOVE
by Warren W. Wiersbe

Originally published under the title Byways of Blessing, this book is a collection of one-page meditations. Each has a short Scripture portion and, similar to The Daily Bread, a brief commentary to help the reader assimilate and apply the Scripture just read.

In explaining his purpose for such a book, the author (possibly best known for his “BE” series of New Testament commentaries) states: "How our churches need men of God today! Men who love the Word and obey it; men who have a burden for souls and seek to win them to Christ; men who fear God, hate sin, and lead their families in the will of God."

Not meant as a replacement for personal Bible study or lengthier, quality time with the Lord, Wiersbe has prepared this for those times when normal haste can prevent longer study. In less than five minutes the reader may have a thought of encouragement, strength, and so forth, to carry him through the day (Moody Press, 157 pp., $5.95).

Howard Erickson

WISDOM FOR THE GRADUATE
by Lawrence O. Richards

Concerned for the graduate, Lawrence Richards has authored a collection of pithy information on topics ranging from Achievement to Failure Anxiety to Happiness, and Engagement and Singleness. Wisdom for the Graduate provides an alphabetical listing of bits of knowledge that the graduate will find helpful in the months and years ahead as he journeys over unfamiliar paths.

Richards covers over 70 topics in a concise, meaningful manner, weaving Scripture and scriptural principles throughout. His intent is not to provide an exhaustive study of each topic, but to offer the graduate some thought-provoking guidance in the decisions of life (Zondervan, 128 pp., $6.95). Pauline Donaldson

THE COMPLETE FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR YOUNG COUPLES
by Larry Burkett

Larry Burkett has done it again. By targeting readers who need to get started on the right foot, he should have an enormous impact on the financial security of Christian couples. This book is appropriate for newlyweds and for those who have been married for a while but do not yet have their financial house in order. If you have read Burkett’s other books you will recognize some of the material, but the old verbiage is supplemented by new chapters aimed specifically at the target audience. Since in Burkett’s words, “Mismanagement of money accounts for the majority of divorces in America today,” this book would be an excellent gift to help ensure the stability of a friend’s or relative’s marriage (Victor Books, 228 pp., $11.95). Paul Barringer

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE
by Beverly Bush Smith and Patricia DeVorss

“Be not unequally yoked” is a scriptural command. Therefore, is it possible for women who find themselves in this situation to live a fulfilled life? The authors both struggled with this problem for years, and they offer practical, biblically based considerations for women whose husbands are unbelievers.

Caught in the Middle deals not only with the loneliness felt by women who attend church services and functions alone, but also with the frustrations of seeing their chil-
Parents, Kids, & Sexual Integrity
by Donald M. Joy

There is a common misperception among young people and their parents about the frequency and normalcy of premarital sex. The misperception is that everybody is doing it, when in fact only 27 percent of 17-year-old girls and 48 percent of 17-year-old boys have had a sexual experience. The source of the misperception is unclear, but its impact is obvious. Standards of sexual behavior for all young people have been lowered.

Donald Joy wrote Parents, Kids, & Sexual Integrity specifically to address this lack of good knowledge among Christian parents, and to provide a moral and scripturally based approach to understanding the role of sex in the family.

This is not a book for cowards. The most valuable sections of the book are the very ones most likely to provoke a reaction among some Christian parents. Joy's presentation of a biblical perspective on adolescence is most valuable, as are his descriptions of the family "types" most likely to experience problems in the area of sexual development and behavior.

You will read many new things, and some may be thought-provoking to the point of being troubling, but 99 percent of those who read Parents, Kids, & Sexual Integrity will be glad they made the effort. Strongly recommended (Word Books, 206 pp., $11.95). DRM

CARE GIVING
by John Gillies

The famous black baseball player Satchel Paige reportedly said that his philosophy of life was, "Don't look back. Something might be gaining on you." Paige was right, and what is gaining on all of us is the aging process, for ourselves and for our loved ones.

John Gillies wrote Care Giving to help people who give care to the elderly, by offering practical advice on everyday problems the elderly face. No pie-in-the-sky "golden years" nonsense, this book talks about choosing a nursing home, personal hygiene, even funeral arrangements. Highly recommended (Harold Shaw Publishers, 212 pp., $7.95). DRM
Fatherhood—
A Godly Responsibility
by Tim and Beverly LaHaye

Fatherhood is coming back into popularity! In a recent national poll, 72 percent of the men indicated that being a father was very important to them.

A survey of counselors revealed that in their opinion, one of the most significant causes of emotional insecurity in children is the lack of a close, loving relationship with their fathers.

In many of our inner-city homes the lack of a strong father image is the greatest single problem in the family. The list goes on.

Never has it been more important for men to take seriously their role as father. God has given men a special place in the lives of children from around ages 3 to 5 until they are adults, and even after they marry and have their own children.

In many of our inner-city homes the lack of a strong father image is the greatest single problem in the family.

June 1989 43
How to Choose a Life Partner

So you want to get married someday. That’s a great idea! God has designed us for relationships and wants us to enjoy the fantastic relationship we can have with a person to whom we are committed in marriage.

As a married man who has watched lots of people “fall in love” (I put this in quotes because I think it’s a poor description of what happens) and get married, and as a person who has counseled many couples before marriage and after marriage, let me give you some specific steps/suggestions in making this second most important decision you’ll ever make—second only to whether or not to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour.

Realize men and women need each other. Gladys Hunt tells us, “Men and women need each other to fully appreciate what it means to be human. . . . We need the insights, the outlook, the expression of each other. That’s why God puts us in families. He lets us observe the possibilities of maleness and femaleness in personal expression.”

Gladys is not saying we all have to get married, but that we need each other to be fully human.

Ask yourself the question, am I ready to get married? My friend Steve Hayner, a leader in the Engaged Encounter movement says, “It’s more important to be the right person than it is to find the right person.” Will you make a good mate?

If you don’t love yourself you’re going to have a hard time loving someone else. Being responsible financially and being able to handle conflict are also important.

Talk to God about the areas where you feel you are weak. Read some books. Talk to more mature leaders. Prepare yourself in those areas.

Do you know what you are looking for? God can, and sometimes does, surprise you with a person who has qualities you had not considered.

And you will need to be flexible in what you look for in a mate. But it is important to do some thinking about what qualities you admire in a potential life partner.

I trust you will place the highest value in marrying a Christian. In Scripture God says we are not to be unequally yoked together, and He is specifically talking about marriage.

Are you dating? God doesn’t drop spouses out of the sky, and in our culture parents don’t arrange marriages. You arrange your own. Dating is valuable. It helps you in your ability to communicate with a member of the opposite sex. This is important since in marriage you will need to communicate, and you will be living with a member of the opposite sex!

As you date you will test and learn social skills and realize your likes and dislikes, while discovering your own attractiveness. You will find that someone besides your mother can actually like you!

Are you conducting yourself with integrity in the dating situation? In other words, are you behaving yourself? You can be rushed toward marriage with the wrong person by your behavior on a date. Watch the physical contact and be careful of what you say. Telling a person “I love
you" too soon can cause real problems.

**Are you infatuated or in love?** Unfortunately, God doesn’t usually supernaturally intervene with lightning bolts or stars in your eyes to let you know, “This is the one.” You gradually come to know someone, and you begin to believe you would love to spend the rest of your life with that person. But you need to be careful that your feelings are based on love, not on infatuation. Dr. Ray Short, a sociologist, has spent much time considering the love/infatuation issue. Take a look at the chart he has developed, taken from his book *Sex, Love, or Infatuation.* Study the clues he has provided to help you distinguish feelings of love from infatuation.

**Fish or cut bait.** You’ve been going with someone for a long time, and you are in love, and that person meets most of the qualities you’re looking for in a spouse. The next logical step is marriage. You are ready biologically. You are ready emotionally and psychologically. And you know that if you don’t take the next step it is probably better to break up because the relationship will begin to disintegrate. Now seems the time to make a move. But obviously there must be balance in the situation. What if one of you still needs to finish school? And you will both want to hear your parents’ wishes in this decision. After considering these things, you might come to the realization that marriage will have to be postponed. You will then need to adjust the amount of time you spend together and the amount of affection you display.

In summary, you choose a mate with your head and your heart. You choose a mate in cooperation with God. You trust Him in the situation, but you take the steps, you take the initiative to find that special someone in your life.

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**Eight Clues to Distinguish Infatuation and Love**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clue</th>
<th>Kid Stuff/Puppy Love</th>
<th>The Real Thing/True Love</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many things attract you?</td>
<td>Few, though some may be strong.</td>
<td>Many or most.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did the romance start?</td>
<td>Fast (hours or days).</td>
<td>Slowly (months or years).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How consistent is your level of interest?</td>
<td>Interest varies, comes and goes; many peaks and valleys; not consistent or predictable.</td>
<td>Evens out; gets to be dependable, consistent; can predict it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does it end?</td>
<td>Fast, unless there’s been mutually satisfying sex.</td>
<td>Slowly; takes long time; you may never be quite the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does distance do to the relationship?</td>
<td>Withers away, dies; can’t stand the added stress.</td>
<td>Survives; may even grow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do quarrels affect the romance?</td>
<td>They get more frequent, more severe.</td>
<td>They grow less frequent, less severe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about and refer to your relationship?</td>
<td>Much use of I/me/my; he/him/his; she/her/hers; little feeling of oneness.</td>
<td>Speak of we/us/our; feel and think as a unit, a pair; togetherness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s your ego response to the other?</td>
<td>Mainly selfish, restrictive; “What does this do for me?”</td>
<td>Mainly unselfish, releasing; concerned for other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Sex, Love, or Infatuation* by Ray E. Short.
Wet Oatmeal Kisses

Or, “You guys get outside and find yourselves something to do. And don’t slam the door!” And they don’t.

You’ll straighten their bedrooms all neat and tidy, toys displayed on the shelf, hangers in the closet, animals caged. You’ll yell, “Now, I want it to stay this way.” And it will.

You will prepare a perfect dinner with a salad that hasn’t had all the olives picked out and a cake with no finger traces in the icing, and you’ll say, “Now this is a meal for company.” And you and your husband will eat it alone.

You’ll yell, “I want complete privacy on the phone. No screaming. Do you hear me?” But no one does.

No more plastic tablecloths stained with spaghetti. No more dandelion bouquets. No more iron-on patches. No more wet, knotted shoelaces, muddy boots, or rubber bands for ponytails.

Imagine. A lipstick with a point. No need for a baby-sitter for New Year’s Eve, washing clothes only once a week, no PTA meetings or silly school plays where your child “stars” as the tree. No car pools, blaring stereos, forgotten lunch money.

No more Christmas presents made of library paste and toothpicks. No wet oatmeal kisses. No more tooth fairy. No more giggles in the dark, scraped knees to kiss, or sticky fingers to clean. Only a voice asking, “Why don’t you grow up?”

And the silence echoes, “I did.”

The baby is teething. The children are fighting. Your husband just called and said, “Eat dinner without me.”

One of these days you’ll explode and shout to the kids, “Why don’t you grow up and act your age?” And they will.

Author Unknown
Vacation was over. We gave up camping another night when we realized we could be home by midnight. Within moments of arrival we were in bed. It felt good to be home. As I mused over the previous 20 days, I concluded that we had experienced the perfect family vacation. Natural parks provide much for the family. Glacier, Yellowstone, and the Grand Tetons were awesome, educational, and adventurous for us all.

Keith and Seth, first up the next morning, noisily hunted for food. Flynt, my husband, had hoped they would sleep longer, but they wanted to see their friends. At least the girls were quiet.

We dozed another hour before the twins, Kara and Korrie, began to stir. Wearily, we got up and went to the campfire. We nibbled on anything edible for breakfast while unloading our paraphernalia.

Then I started the washing and Flynt went grocery shopping. With so much to do—unloading, washing, mail, weeding, lawn-mowing, and whatever—I half wished we had not hurried home.

I brought a basket of unfolded clothes into the family room and dropped to the couch. Seeing my Bible on the coffee table reminded me that for three weeks it had been untouched. I rationalized that God understood about vacations. We had not neglected Him totally. We attended an outdoor worship service in Yellowstone the first Sunday of vacation. The sermon was not memorable, but the forest created a lovely “cathedral.” The birds’ rendition of “How Great Thou Art” seemed so appropriate.

Flynt asked if anyone had brought a Bible on the trip. No one had. Some nights around our campfire we sang choruses, and then Flynt would pray. Keith found an old devotional quarterly left from a previous trip. We read some from that. God understood. I knew He did. His smile of approval was on us because everything went so well.

Those thoughts did little to ease my guilt. Perhaps doubting my Bible-reading time for a while would help. Exhaustion was consuming me, but I would read at least one chapter in the quietness.

It was soothing to handle my beautiful Bible again. Flynt had given it to me on our 15th anniversary and I treasured it.

Confused, I reached for Flynt’s Bible and found the same volume had little worth. I’m not sure precisely when weariness overcame my conscious thought. But in opening my Bible, I was stunned. Where were the words? Frantically, I turned the pages, but they were empty. No words anywhere. Had something been wrong with the printer’s ink? There was an explanation somewhere.

The thought of sending it back to the publisher was disheartening because of Flynt’s loving words written inside. But without God’s words, the volume had little worth.

I began grabbing secular books. They had print. Printer’s ink? There was something I had ever existed. Didn’t God have any Word for mankind? For my family? For me? Surely there was a John 3:16, wasn’t there? Nothing made sense.

Suddenly it struck me that our family must have missed the rapture while on vacation. I trembled as that thought penetrated my being. Maybe God had withdrawn His Word from the world, along with the Holy Spirit.

Scalding hot tears ran down my cheeks. I broke out in a cold sweat and my heart pounded. Fear and hopelessness overwhelmed me. I screamed, “Jesus! No! Please don’t let it be true!” The next thing I remembered was Flynt shaking me and calling my name.

Awakening, I immediately looked down at the Bible in my lap. The pages, wilted by my tears, were filled with words... God’s Words! I could read, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”

My heart flooded with thanksgiving. Everything else seemed unimportant in comparison to God’s Word that moment. Tears continued, but joyful ones.

Flynt waited patiently for me to tell my dream. By his expression I knew he shared my guilt. Together we asked for God’s forgiveness. We promised Him that we would never take a vacation from Him or His precious Word again. And we never have.

Hazel J. Brown
I would like to be assigned to preach a local church revival for Brazil ’89. I will bring a team of ______ people for personal evangelism during Brazil ’89.

Please send me complete information about how I can join you for Brazil ’89.

Dr. Nilson Fanini, the Billy Graham of South America, will co-host the Crusade which will be preceded by 1,000 revivals in local churches. Pastor, you may preach one of these revivals, August 13-16, 1989. Send for your application today – and invite your layity and young people to join you for this spiritual event of a lifetime.

For Complete Information, write Bailey Smith Ministries, P.O. Box 450649, Atlanta, GA 30345 or call (404) 938-0333
rest time
is not waste time

by Charles Spurgeon

In the midst of a long stretch of unbroken labor, the same affliction [depression] may be looked for. The bow cannot be always bent without fear of breaking. Repose is as needful to the mind as sleep to the body. Our Sabbaths are our days of toil, and if we do not rest upon some other day we shall break down. Even the earth must lie fallow and have her Sabbaths, and so must we. Hence the wisdom and compassion of our Lord, when He said to His disciples that they should go apart “into a desert place, and rest a while.”

What! when the people are fainting? When the multitudes are like sheep upon the mountains without a shepherd? Does Jesus talk of rest? When scribes and Pharisees, like grievous wolves, are rending the flock, does He take His followers on an excursion into a quiet resting place? Does some red-hot zealot denounce such atrocious forgetfulness of present and pressing demands? Let him rave in his folly. The Master knows better than to exhaust His servants and quench the light of Israel. Rest time is not waste time. It is economy to gather fresh strength. Look at the mower in the summer’s day, with so much to cut down ere the sun sets. He pauses in his labor—is he a sluggard? He looks for his stone, and begins to draw it up and down his scythe, with “rink-a-tink—rink-a-tink—rink-a-tink.”

Is that idle music—is he wasting precious moments? How much he might have mown while he has been ringing out those notes on his scythe! But he is sharpening his tool, and he will do far more when once again he gives his strength to those long sweeps which lay the grass prostrate in rows before him. Even thus a little pause prepares the mind for greater service in the good cause. Fishermen must mend their nets, and we must every now and then repair our mental waste and set our machinery in order for future service.

To tug the ear from day to day, like a galley slave who knows no holidays, suits not mortal men. Mill streams go on and on forever, but we must have our pauses and our intervals. Who can help being out of breath when the race is continued without intermission? Even beasts of burden must be turned out to grass occasionally; the very sea pauses at ebb and flood; earth keeps the Sabbath of the wintry months; and man, even when exalted to be God’s ambassador, must rest or faint, must trim his lamp or let it burn low; must recruit his vigor or grow prematurely old. It is wisdom to take occasional furlough.

In the long run, we shall do more by sometimes doing less. On, on forever, without recreation, may suit spirits emancipated from this “heavy clay,” but while we are in this tabernacle, we must every now and then cry halt, and serve the Lord by holy inaction and consecrated leisure. Let no tender conscience doubt the lawfulness of going out of harness for a while, but learn from the experience of others the necessity and duty of taking timely rest.

Edited by David Otis Fuller. Copyright 1945, Zondervan.
How to Dig into the Word of God

Conclusion

In completing our series on studying the Word of God we present two final rules. Try to interpret or learn the meaning of the contents of the passage. Four procedures may assist us in doing this. Note the context, that is, the section preceding and following the passage. Note the grammar and syntax, or the orderly arrangement of words in a sentence. Use cross references. And use extra-biblical sources such as Bible dictionaries, Bible encyclopedias, and commentaries. Please turn once again to 2 Kings 5:1-4 and carry out the first three procedures by yourself.

By noting the context (in this case, the three previous chapters in 2 Kings) we discover that at no time prior to the incident recorded in the narrative did Elisha ever heal anyone with an infectious disease of the skin. Yet when we come to verse 3 we read that the young girl positively affirmed that the prophet in her own land would heal Naaman if he would go to him there.

Examining the grammar and syntax is also important. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 indicate that Elisha traveled from one place to another. But the maiden’s use of the present tense when she said to her mistress “the prophet that is in Samaria,” informs us that Elisha was at his home in the capital city of her land. Therefore, when Naaman left his own country to see Elisha, he did not have any qualms that the prophet might have gone away on some distant mission. Now make use of cross references. Take the words “leper” and “leprosy” found in verses 1 and 3. If we compare other biblical references to lepers and leprosy (i.e., Num. 12:10), we see that there is not a single occasion of a person being healed of this condition except by divine power.

Where did our heroine obtain the faith? How did she know that her poor, distressed master could have such certainty of a cure? From the New Testament we know, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). But then we must ask, from which source did the captive maiden receive the message?

Evidently, when the marauders raided the land and took the little maid captive, there was at least one home in Israel where the parents diligently taught their child the Word of God. But they never realized how the precepts of God’s eternal Word would serve as an anchor for her in the stormy trial that was going to overtake her. Neither did they conceive how the Lord would use their child as a mighty instrument leading to the physical and spiritual healing of Naaman.

Although God in His own wisdom and sovereignty had permitted the young girl to go through so much suffering, her testimony clearly reveals that she had never lost her faith in Him.

But the faith of the Israelite girl and her submission to the will of God in her time of testing do not in themselves explain how she could have had such a message for Naaman in his need. Obviously the Lord Himself must have spoken to her in some unmistakable way which He has not been pleased to reveal to us.

The effect of the girl’s words upon Naaman, described in verse 4, provides a fitting climax to this brief passage. Humanly speaking, the maiden’s assurance to Naaman’s wife that there was a certain cure for her husband was incredulous. The distressed man must have gone all over the land of Aram in the forlorn hope that somehow he might find a physician who could heal him. Now however, in spite of the fact that a cure was utterly impossible, he accepted the statement of the captive maiden as worthy of credence, so much so that he even went to the king and reported it to him. Surely only the Lord could have caused the great commander of Aram’s army to accept such an assurance of healing from a most unlikely source.

After you have done your own work in the text and have exhausted every means of your own, you may want to...
see what God has revealed to others who have given careful study to the Scriptures. Your pastor could probably assist you in selecting the best available materials for this purpose.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, apply the truths of the passage to your own life. Here are a few practical applications we have derived from our study of the passage.

- If I am a parent, I have a special obligation to teach the Word of God diligently to my children.
- In order to be used by God I must be little in my own sight.
- I must always have the right attitude toward others, no matter how wrongly they may treat me.
- God can turn great tragedy into blessing when I am submissive to His will.

As you add more applications of your own, let the Spirit of God speak to your heart and pray that He may enable you to carry through with them.

James Braga

Profile of a Christian Layperson

— TANYA CREVIER —

Nothing about Tanya Crevier is typical. A farm girl from Jefferson, South Dakota, she has toured the United States and performed alongside the brightest stars in professional sports. At 5 feet 3 inches tall, she commands a starring role in a game designed for giants. She looks much younger than her 34 years and attracts young people in swarms.

How does she do it? Tanya Crevier is the world's finest female basketball handler. With sprightly music for a backdrop, Tanya greets her audience with a smile and adroitly spins a basketball atop her finger—no mean feat for the most talented observer. But then Tanya encourages the ball to dance across her arms, across her shoulders, drop to her knees, and leap into the air. The Harlem Globetrotters would be impressed.

But Tanya has scarcely begun. Another ball joins the first. They both spin, drop, dance, glide, and slither according to her commands. A third ball joins the first two, and she juggles them as if they were grapefruit, dribbles them simultaneously, and pauses in mid-throw to shake the hand of a distinguished person on the platform behind her.

She says she became interested in basketball handling in the seventh grade. Her older brothers (she has five brothers and five sisters) were good athletes, and they had seen the antics of basketball handler George Schauer. "I saw him and began to practice what he did," says Tanya simply. She became good enough with a basketball to play for South Dakota State University and two professional basketball teams—the San Francisco Pioneers and the Iowa Cornets.

Now Tanya travels nine months of the year presenting her routine at school assemblies, camps, churches, colleges, and basketball clinics. "What I do is a tool to gain people's respect and attention," she explains. "My greatest opportunity comes when I am able to share Christ one-on-one with kids."

Individuals or groups interested in having Tanya Crevier's astounding presentation should call (605) 966-5762, or write: Tanya Crevier, RR1, Box 6, Jefferson, South Dakota 57038.

Angela E. Hunt

CHURCH NEWS

The GARBC (General Association of Regular Baptist Churches) will hold its 58th annual conference June 26-30 at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus, Ohio.

The New York Gospel Outreach Staff is burdened over the urbanization of America and the projected return of veteran missionaries from the field by the year 2000, accelerating the need for laborers for urban ministry.

Through BREAD '89 (Biblical Revival through Evangelism And Discipleship) NYGO will offer a week packed with specialized training and street time for evangelism, making the training practical.

"New York is the best place in the world to train spiritual leaders for world evangelism. The world has been brought here to us. Kids can cross multiple cultures without leaving the borders of the United States," says Tom Mahairas, president of NYGO and pastor of Manhattan Bible Church.

Churches, youth groups, teens, and colleagues from all over America will participate June 25 through July 1. Information is available from NYGO, 401 West 205th Street, New York, New York 10034, or call (212) 567-2276.
Ted Baehr
Taking Every Thought Captive

"Trying to ignore movies and television has proved counterproductive," says Ted Baehr, chairman of the board of Good News Communications in Atlanta. "We need to occupy the motion picture industry by producing entertaining movies from a biblical perspective, so every thought, including those communicated through this mass medium, is taken captive for Him."

Baehr, 42, knows the film and television industry from the inside out. He has been active in producing, directing, and hosting television programs since 1972. As producer and host of two weekly PBS television series, Baehr was nominated for an Emmy award and won the Chicago Intercom Gold Plaque and the Religion in Media "Angel" award.

The son of an actor and actress whose stage names were Robert Allen and Evelyn Peirce, Baehr entered the film industry and produced television programs that were "moderately nonmoral." But in 1975 a friend challenged him to read the Bible. "As I was reading it to tell her what was wrong with it, I became convicted that this Jesus was not the one I had heard about, but the real God of the universe," recalls Baehr. The gospel message changed his life, and immediately he moved from secular projects to biblical projects for secular stations.

Today, Good News Communications produces several types of programming, including a nine-part series on the Bible, "People and the Book," which looks at the impact of the Bible on civilization. His company also publishes MOVIEGUIDE, a newsletter for parents who seek biblically based reviews of current movies.

He began publishing the MOVIEGUIDE newsletter and doing a MOVIEGUIDE radio feature when, in February 1985, George Gallup, Jr., summarized a study of the media habits of Christians. To Baehr's surprise, the study revealed that most Christians watch the same television programs that non-Christians watch, sometimes adding to that media diet a dose of religious programs.

Baehr realized that with guidance and instruction, Christians could influence producers to produce movies and programs with pro-Christian values. The idea is not without precedent and is founded on historical fact. In 1933 a Catholic cardinal saw an advertisement for an offensive movie and asked his church to boycott Warner Brothers. Faced with the alienation of a large segment of the moviegoing public, filmmakers honored the wishes of religious people, and the Legion of Decency was formed to benefit filmmakers and moviegoers alike. Other churches joined the effort, and the Legion and Protestant Film Office influenced the motion picture industry for 35 years.

Those who opposed the churches screamed "censorship." It was not censorship, explains Baehr, because the studios really wanted to find movies that helped include the Christian audience, reportedly the largest group of American society. The years of the Legion and Protestant Film Office were good years for films and for Christian audiences. In 1959 Ben Hur saved MGM from bankruptcy, just as The Ten Commandments had saved Paramount from a similar fate in 1956. A Man Called Peter, a movie based on the life of Senate Chaplain Peter Marshall, was a tremendous box-office success. It should not have been surprising, but heads of motion picture studios were amazed when Chariots of Fire, a film about a Christian Olympic athlete, Eric Liddell, pulled Warner Brothers from the brink of financial disaster.

From 1933 until 1966 every
Hollywood script was read by Catholics, Southern Baptists, and others in the Film Office. But in 1966 each member of the organization withdrew for different reasons. The members, according to Baehr, "forgot that man is sinful and we are the salt of the earth. They took the salt from the meat and consequently films began to rot." Many members simply gave up and resigned themselves to the belief that all movies were bad and Hollywood was beyond redemption. "That's like saying that because you can get an obscene phone call we should all remove our telephones," says Baehr.

The burden of discretion was shifted from the movie studios to the audiences, and in 1968 the Motion Picture Association of America established the Motion Picture Code's rating system.

The movie studios were still cautious about offending Christians, but they were understandably perplexed when two movies, one that took the name of Jesus in vain and another that showed bare breasts, were given awards by the National Council of Churches. What do Christians want? they wondered. With how much sex and violence can we titillate an audience before Christians will take a stand?

"It began with Bonnie and Clyde in 1966," says Baehr, "and it has continued until now we face The Last Temptation of Christ. Bonnie and Clyde indicated that audiences were ready, willing, and able to accept gruesome violence. One of the things that drives up the box office is the curiosity factor. With The Last Temptation we nearly run out of taboos to violate. My greatest fear is that Christians are going to continue to be apathetic, allowing decadence to grow until our society collapses as a result."

In his newest book, Taking Every Thought Captive, Baehr explores mainlining, the result of movies and television programs that lodge themselves in our minds and encourage mass mimicking. "If people see suicide, rape, pillage, and plunder on the screen, we are going to have suicide, rape, pillage, and plunder in our society. If movies and television get worse, our society is going down with them. We can't turn our backs. We have to redeem the industry.

How? "The issue of The Last Temptation may be our last chance. We need to make a concerted effort to join together in a boycott against the company. The companies have to know that Christians actually care. Universal is watching the protest and they are amazed that so few are protesting. If they think we don't care, they will decide to do worse. If we don't boycott Universal television, the 'Cosby' show, Spencer Gifts, Cineplex Odeon Theatres, An American Tale and E.T. videos. Universal will not realize they cannot offend people without suffering severe consequences. If we can make our presence felt, they're going to have to come to us, and we need to reinstitute the Motion Picture Code.

"Those who believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God should be on the front line of spiritual warfare to take every thought captive in our society. I think the most important thing we can possibly do is stand for Christ in the marketplace and not just in our own churches. Pat Boone spoke in Atlanta recently and asked why there weren't more Christians out there standing against The Last Temptation. We are Christ's body on earth. He stands in us, and we are supposed to take a stand against evil. We are the salt of the earth, and since we removed ourselves from the motion picture industry I've been amazed at how quickly the meat has rotted."

Baehr, an emphatic, ne'er-say-die type, is not easily discouraged. But when faced with apathetic Christians, he admits frustration. "Many Christians don't understand that God takes His stand in His congregation. If we retreat at this point, the body of Christ is retreating. We need to go forward."

Other groups are not shy about using their economic pressure to influence movies and television. Representatives of the Gay Rights movement, the National Organization for Women, and Planned Parenthood regularly review movies and television scripts. These groups are now doing what Christians did 30 years ago — affecting the industry.

Why can't Christians, who surely outnumber these special interest groups, use our voice and our economic power to do the same?

"There are good movies and there are bad," says Baehr. "We need to vote financially for the good." Baehr also advises parents to tell their children about movies, so they can stand up to peer pressure. "That's one reason we do MOVIE-GUIDE," he says. "It helps teenagers to tell their peer groups why a movie is wrong, and it helps them make decisions. Some movies are insidious even when they don't have sex and violence. For instance, Willow contained no sex or violence, but contained a child sacrifice and revolved around sorcery, which God abhors. Movies that give a worldview contrary to the biblical worldview are not to be recommended.

"Christians must become involved. We can't hide from the evil in the world. A friend of mine homeschools his kids, but a kid across the street slipped one of the boys a dial-a-porn phone number, and the father didn't discover it until he received a huge telephone bill. My friend then realized it doesn't do any good to be passive. You have to go out there and make a statement."

What are parents to do? Recently a Christian mother allowed her 10-year-old son to attend Bull Durham, thinking that the R-rated movie was about baseball. While the film does concern a minor-league baseball team, it primarily revolves around a woman and the two men she seeks to master sexually. It contains a scene where a man is tied to a bed and seduced. Is this fare for a 10-year-old? Is it fare for anyone?

For parents who wish to know more about the films their kids rent, buy, and view, Ted Baehr has written The Movie & Video Guide for Christian Families (Thomas Nelson Publishers). Whether or not your family attends movies in theaters, you are exposed to movies on videocassette, on television, and in the homes of friends. This book will enable you and your family to make wise choices about which movies to support. A new volume is published each year.

June 1989 53
FamilyNet Captures Today's Audience

FamilyNet, “The Family Television Network,” offers a wide variety of original family entertainment, including sports, movies, and syndicated programming. Presently carried on 74 independent television stations, FamilyNet reaches a potential 17.5 million households. FamilyNet is also on over 100 cable systems with a total potential subscriber count of 3.6 million. Here are just some of the shows you can see on FamilyNet.

“ACT IT OUT”
Abortion, teen pregnancy, date rape, suicide, and AIDS are just a few of the subjects of this unique, audience-interaction program. Actors portray real-life situations on the screen; then the characters answer questions from the live studio audience.

“BACKSTAGE WITH GARY MCSPADDEN”
Singer-composer Gary McSpadden talks shop and probes the personal lives of celebrities of stage, screen, and television. Viewer mail, man-on-the-street interviews, performance videos, and “home movies” all work together to uncover what goes on behind the scenes in the lives of the stars.

“OVER-THE-HILL GANG”
Doug Oldham says, “You’re as old as you feel, and as young as you think.” Doug has a way with folks over 50, and that’s who this show is created for. Far from being sluggish, this fast-moving program sometimes swaps rocking chairs for roller skates. You’ll meet skateboarding septuagenarians and marathon-running octogenarians. Doug’s mellow style of singing and folksy storytelling endears him to all ages. You’ll want to be a member of the “Over-The-Hill Gang”—no matter how young you are!

“GOSPEL MUSIC CELEBRATION”
The greatest performers of traditional and contemporary gospel music gather for inspiring concerts in a “camp-meeting” setting. Hosted by Mack Evans and Don Norman, regularly seen by millions on “The Old-Time Gospel Hour” the show includes segments on the origins and history of gospel music. “Celebration” is destined to become the flagship program of this ever-popular musical genre.
Debate Team Ranks Ninth in Nation

While the athletic teams at Liberty University were getting their first taste of competition on the Division I level, another squad on campus was making its mark nationally.

For the first time in its nine-year history, the Liberty University debate team has earned a place among the nation's elite in forensics. The LU debaters, under the direction of first-year coach Brett O'Donnell, entered the month of April ranked ninth in a poll put out by the American Forensics Association, the governing body for collegiate debate competition.

But O'Donnell, a former Liberty debater who coached at Penn State University before returning to Lynchburg, believes better things are in store for future rankings. "We could be in the top seven," he said.

The coach's optimism seems to be justified by the awards brought home by his team. In every tournament this season Liberty has won at least one team award and/or an individual speaker's award. The numbers include an impressive 10 total awards at a tournament at George Mason, and 11 trophies at the United States Naval Academy. Since rankings are figured on individual performances as well as on team performances, the LU team has good things to look forward to.

Leading the squad this year is the varsity team of senior Janet Pierpoint and junior Lisa Lundquist. The Pierpoint-Lundquist team earned a bid to compete in the Debate Nationals, March 30 through April 3 at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. They were one of only nine teams chosen to represent the nation's Seventh District, which stretches from Pennsylvania to North Carolina and is considered one of the toughest debate districts in the country.

But the varsity team is not the squad's only bright spot in 1988-1989. O'Donnell points out. For Liberty to get to where it is now, everyone on every level (varsity, junior varsity, and novice) had to do his job.

"It's been a building process over a number of years," O'Donnell said. "We've been able to recruit those with high school debate experience, and we've also been more consistent.

Liberty's consistency has led to non-district victories against Harvard, Dartmouth, the University of Pennsylvania, Boston College, Wake Forest, and the University of North Carolina. Within its district, Liberty has become a member of what O'Donnell calls the "Big Five": George Mason University, George Washington University, James Madison University, the Naval Academy, and Liberty.

Inmates Respond to LBN's Gospel Music Presentation

"Can we sit on the second row?" some of the inmates at Buckingham Correctional Center asked, as prisoners enjoyed the concert and fellowship presented by the Liberty Broadcasting Network Singers and Orchestra. Their eagerness for entertainment was evident as they gathered in the prison's multipurpose room for a concert given in mid-March as part of an LBN outreach series.

"The people who attend our concerts are there out of curiosity, for fellowship, or strengthening in the Lord," Director Michael Wells said. "Giving the gospel is like selling, and music is one means of getting people out to hear it. A live band really adds to the so-called "normal" music concerts often given in prisons," Gary Simms, director of Liberty Prison Outreach, said.

The inmates' tapping feet, clapping hands, smiling faces, and laughter during the concert were good indications this type of ministry works.

"When I look out into this type of audience I see people who are faced with the fact they are hurting. I often find stronger Christians behind bars than out on the streets, because they're faced with having to live their faith daily."

"In the television ministry setting we are ministered to by the congregation, and we don't often see the results from the follow-up programs and letters. But we know we have an impact," Wells said.

Some in the group are former Truth members and have previously participated in prison concerts. A few look back on their first experience as somewhat intimidating—especially when the iron doors closed behind them.

Regardless of where they perform, "Men will be blessed if we fulfill our responsibilities as worshipers of God," drummer Tony Buszek said. "Our purpose is to bring praise to the Lord."
LU’s Student Nurses: Trained to Make a Difference

As a nurse, Linda Miller knows that bedside manner is an important part of meeting people’s needs. But as a Christian nurse, she realizes that not all pain is physical, a point she emphasizes as chairman of Liberty University’s two-year-old nursing program.

“When LU’s student nurses go to a hospital or nursing home, they each do a care plan dealing with the body, mind, and spirit,” Linda says. “It’s a perfect time to lead people to the Lord. They’re wide open.”

Linda’s commitment to excellence and to Christian nursing has not gone unnoticed by the more than 100 young nurses in the program. Many are training to become medical missionaries; the rest are learning to witness in their hospitals or nursing homes.

“We want quality Christian nurses throughout society,” Linda says simply. “We teach students about the Christian nurse and tell them about values and ethics.”

Linda credits much of the program’s success to a dedicated and maturing nursing faculty. Linda’s staff grew from two professors to three in the spring of 1989, and she expects three more additions for the fall semester. Meanwhile, Linda and faculty members Sharon Rahilly and Dea Britt are completing their doctorates at local universities.

Linda Miller says that a special “friendship” shared by the faculty and students has helped both groups work together more easily. “Nursing is different from any other major on campus,” she says. “The faculty and students are so close. We try to keep it really open, so the students feel they can come to us if they make a mistake.”

She adds that things were much different when she was in nurse’s training. “The teachers were so intimidating; you didn’t want them to know you made a mistake.”

But Christian ideals and good student-faculty relationships do not make the course loads any easier, a reality LU’s nursing students face daily. Besides taking classes such as anatomy and chemistry for two semesters, students are required to have one semester of nutrition and pathophysiology. Additionally, each student spends time in a hospital or nursing home, practicing the skills learned in the classroom.

“The classes are hard and the expectations are high,” says Mary Long, a sophomore nursing student. “The teachers are tough. They want us to know our stuff and know it well. We not only have to pass their tests, but we also have to pass the state boards.”

So why continue in a major that requires so much hard work from teachers who sometimes seem impossible to please? Because you care about people, and you want to make a difference in their lives for Jesus Christ, Mary concludes. “The main thing I want is for the patients and workers to see the difference in me, and to find out what that difference is,” she says. “In a way, I consider myself a missionary here in the States serving Him.”

Liberty Godparent Home Celebrates Life

The Liberty Godparent Home opened its doors to the community on May 13 for “A Celebration of Life.” This annual event offered the home a chance to show its new facilities to the public and to present exactly what it is doing in its fight against abortion.

“Dr. Falwell dedicated the new building to the Lord and joined in the celebration of what has been accomplished toward ending abortion.”

Tamara L. Pugh
John Lofton speaks to a student while visiting Liberty University. He told the story of a teacher who was forbidden to read his Bible silently in class while his students did their work. Lofton noted that the deciding court stated that even silent reading had profound influence on children because it served an “improper religious purpose.”

“You can use it [the Bible] for a secular purpose, like a doorstop or to prop open a window,” he said. “But you can’t use it for what it is, the Word of God.”

Lofton labelled many public schoolteachers as “the proselytizers of a new faith... using a classroom instead of a pulpit.”

The columnist’s solution to the problem faced by the nation’s Christians in the media and any other job is to “fear God more than men... You will, of course, be called ‘narrow-minded bigots.’ But the broad way is a six-lane, pedal-to-the-medal way to hell. And belief [in hell] is not a prerequisite for entry.”

The students of Liberty University’s journalism department got a mini-seminar of sorts when two of the country’s most respected Christian writers came to Lynchburg recently.

Joel Belz, editor of World magazine in Asheville, North Carolina, started things off with a required Tuesday-night meeting. Belz talked to the students about the ups and downs of starting your own magazine, and then fielded questions from the group.

Belz came to Liberty through a program sponsored by the Evangelical Press Association. The EPA pays for individuals with member publications to address the students of both secular and Christian colleges and universities.

Wednesday he spoke in journalism classes on a variety of topics, including a lecture on “Christian Courage in Journalism.”

While Belz works strictly with religious publications in North Carolina, John Lofton, one of Christianity’s big guns in the press, also took the chance to give his views on the nation’s media situation.

Lofton, a nationally known columnist with the Washington Times, spoke the next day at Liberty’s regular Wednesday chapel service on the subject of “The War against Jesus Christ in the United States.” He noted that the world’s basic attitude toward Christianity is, “Christian, shut up!”

“The only problem is that we cannot shut up,” he added. “Our Lord commanded us to tell the world.”

To support his views Lofton cited several instances of how the world has eliminated God and replaced Him with “human potential.” The results speak for themselves, as illustrated in a recent list of top reasons for student suspension in one public school system: alcoholic beverages, arson, possession of firearms or explosives, possession of controlled substances, physical abuse, threats of physical abuse, and theft.

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**June**

2 — LIGHT travels to Brazil and other South American countries

2 — Graduation at Liberty Godparent Home

14 — Dr. Falwell speaks at the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, Las Vegas, Nevada

19 — Dr. Falwell speaks at the Grand Hotel Convention Center, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

21 — Dr. Falwell speaks at First Baptist Church, West Palm Beach, Florida
Something revolutionary is happening in the world of television. People are turning off TV that’s predictable, and they’re coming over to something new and creative. FamilyNet will soon be airing new, original programs especially for the millions who are saying, “The family is the most important part of our lives. We want television that reflects our values!”

REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAMS
Our 24-hour program schedule offers a wide selection of excellent family shows, including music, women’s shows, sports, outdoor adventures, children’s shows, health and fitness, movie classics, inspirational and issues-oriented programs.

A BIG REVOLUTION TO COME
In the coming months, you’ll see more original programs on FamilyNet. It’s already happening, with FamilyNet Sports™, shows for young adults, music programs, TV shopping, family dramas, and more. It’s all part of the growing FamilyNet Revolution.

COME ON OVER!
If your local cable system isn’t offering FamilyNet, call them and ask for it. If you’re a home dish owner, come on over to Galaxy III, Transponder 23 and start enjoying FamilyNet today!

Watch “The Pastor’s Study” on FamilyNet. Monday through Friday at 9 a.m. (LIVE), 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 10 p.m., 1 a.m. And, “The Old Time Gospel Hour” on Saturday at 7 a.m., 11 a.m., 11 p.m., and Sunday at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m., 8 p.m., and 12 midnight. (All times are eastern).
A Big Winner in Las Vegas?

The annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination with nearly 42,000 churches and church-type missions and almost 15,000,000 members in its ranks, convenes June 13-15 in Las Vegas. Over 30,000 messengers will gather for the 149th year of the convention's history to decide on the important office of the presidency, now held by Jerry Vines, co-pastor with Homer Lindsey of the mammoth First Baptist church in Jacksonville, Florida.

During the 10th anniversary of the so-called Conservative takeover of the convention's highest leadership, the prize to win is the presidency with its far-reaching appointive powers. Each year the chief elected officer, usually a pastor, appoints new members for the Committee on Boards, as a certain percentage rotates off. In turn that board appoints a Committee on Committees and the appointive process filters down, replacing in each case the members whose terms expire that year, until the trickle-down results in a majority everywhere, of trustees, directors, or other officials who reflect the views of the top leadership. Eventually, through the rotation and appointment process, the six seminaries and some 20 boards and commissions wind up under the board direction of Conservatives.

To some extent that has happened, as was planned 10 years ago, by a resurgent Conservative movement in the convention, led by prominent pastors such as Adrian Rogers of Memphis, Tennessee; Bailey Smith of Oklahoma City; Jimmy Draper of Euless, Texas; Charles Stanley of Atlanta; and in recent years again by Adrian Rogers and now Jerry Vines.

Since Conservatives, who believe in biblical inerrancy and the other great doctrines set forth in the Southern Baptist "Faith and Message" document of 1963, are a majority across the nation, many felt that the trends toward theological Liberalism in the seminaries and institutions could be curbed.

At stake is the expenditure of $140,000,000 or more of Cooperative Program funds for the convention's national projects and foreign mission outreaches, a considerable portion of which, the Conservatives felt, was underwriting preachers, teachers, and missionaries who do not believe in biblical inerrancy, and who are open to Modernist trends in theology and practice.

Not really secretive about their efforts, the Conservatives ran into considerable resistance from alleged Liberals and so-called Moderate-Conservatives, who charged that the whole effort was simply politically motivated.

Two strong guiding voices in the national effort to bring the entire convention back to a "Fundamentalist stance" have been Paige Patterson, associate pastor of Dallas's First Baptist Church with W.A. Criswell, and Houston Judge Paul Pressler.

Conservatives insist the issue is doctrinal; Liberals claim it is a political contest to see "who rules whom."

Conservatives insist the issue is doctrinal; Moderates or Liberals and even some professing Conservatives with excellent doctrinal credentials,
claim it is a political contest to see “who rules whom.” The controversy has been unabated for a decade. Last year staunch Conservative Jerry Vines edged out Richard N. Jackson of the huge North Phoenix Baptist Church in Arizona by only 349 votes out of tens of thousands cast.

Although Conservative doctrinally, Jackson believes that there should be room enough for everybody now in the convention, and that anything that smacks of divisiveness should be overruled.

When in 1987 the rotational and appointive process finally brought a majority of Conservatives to the board of trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in North Carolina, President Randell Lolley resigned, along with Dean Morris Ashcroft and several other faculty and staff members. They charged that “academic freedom” was at stake, since the trustees indicated that any future professors hired must believe in biblical inerrancy.

Some of those formerly associated with the school are participating in founding a new “Moderate” seminary in Richmond, Virginia.

Numbering some 44,000 people, the recently founded Southern Baptist Alliance, a Moderate faction, expressed support for the new school. Talk persists that the group may leave the convention.

Almost at the same time, about 100 invited Southern Baptist Conservatives assembled in Atlanta to discuss the upcoming Las Vegas convention. All former SBC presidents since 1979 were present except Bailey Smith, who was speaking at Liberty University, hosted by Jerry Falwell.

Adrian Rogers sized it up. “The meeting was not primarily a political meeting. It was an exhortative meeting, a revival meeting, a soulwinning meeting, a meeting to discuss the state of the convention.”

Jimmy Draper of the First Baptist Church of Euless, an original supporter of choosing Las Vegas as the 1989 site for the convention, reported on the evangelistic plans to harness convention messengers in a soulwinning, door-to-door campaign of witnessing in conjunction with the meeting.

One highlight, as reported in nearly all the SBC papers, was the playing of a tape recording of the confrontation February 22nd between Richard Jackson and Judge Paul Pressler in the Southern Baptist Convention Building in Nashville, after an open meeting of the SBC Executive Committee of which Pressler was a member. Jackson attended as an observer.

The immediate issue, and one of the prime matters of contention to be handled at the Las Vegas meeting by all the messengers, involved the Executive Committee’s vote (42-27) to establish a “Religious Liberty Commission” in Washington.

Pressler was for it, but Jackson, though a nonvoter, was vocal in his opposition.

For the last 50 years a trans-denominational effort called the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has represented many Baptist groups in Washington, upholding separation of church and state and taking stands on various issues. Southern Baptists have provided the majority of its support.

During the last two years Conservatives led in the establishment of a Public Affairs Commission through which representatives to BJC are named. Some argue that Southern Baptists need their own voice however.

Taking sharp issue with the new Religious Liberty Commission idea, Jackson accosted Pressler in the hall before a coterie of reporters, who gave considerable coverage of the event, including articles in SBC state papers.

Accusing Pressler of not being honest when indicating that he hoped 90 percent of the new RLC funds would be passed on to the Joint Committee, Jackson countered a request from Pressler for an apology for “slurring his character” by repeating four times, “You don’t have one!”

Jackson indicated that the $1,000,000 his church gives annually to the Cooperative program demanded that he get involved.

The conversation, heated at times with charges of who was causing disunity, ended when Pressler told Jackson, “I love you, my brother. I am going to pray for you.”

“Thank you,” Jackson replied.

Later, talking to the Baptist Standard of Texas, Jackson from Arizona opined that present SBC leaders are “more interested in establishing a lobby in Washington than reaching people for Christ.”

Jackson stated that he is considering leading his church to go “independent” or possibly to cut drastically Cooperative Program support.

Noting that Jerry Falwell, an independent Baptist, was on the program for Wednesday, June 15th, as a speaker for the annual conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, a subsidiary group that meets when the regular convention is not in session, Jackson reported that some had asked him to introduce Falwell.

He responded, “Not until he becomes a cooperating Southern Baptist. . . . Who would have thought in 1980 that in 1989 Jerry Falwell would be preaching at a Southern Baptist Convention meeting and Richard Jackson would be considering being an independent Baptist.

“Down that road [of establishing an SBC lobby in Washington] I can’t go. If the convention goes down the road of church interference with the state or overconcern about Washington, DC, I am not going. I am a die-in-the-wool church/state separationist.”

Many known Conservatives, such as Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, are opposed
to this new Religious Liberty Commission.

Would Jackson challenge Vines for the presidency? "Probably not," comments Southern Baptist James C. Hefley, a journalist and author of three books, the "Truth in Crisis" series, documenting the 10-year Moderate-Conservative conflict. "At this point [April] there is no candidate to oppose Vines. The moderates know they could not win with one of their own.'

Hefley said, "Jackson told me that he did not want to serve on a board. He wanted to be 'chairman of the Committee on Boards.'"

Hefley also wondered why Jackson was opposed to having a non-Southern Baptist, such as Jerry Falwell, at one of the convention's subsidiary meetings.

"Last year in San Antonio," he reported, "another subsidiary meeting, the Southern Baptist 'Women in Ministry,' featured 'a liturgical dance group from a Roman Catholic institution on their program.'" He had read no objections by anybody in Southern Baptist papers.

Unless a prominent candidate surfaces to oppose Vines, another year of Conservative leadership seems evident.

Conservatives believe that if a denominational Moderate, or even a theological Conservative like Jackson or Pastor Winfred Moore of Amarillo, Texas, is elected, immediate steps to downgrade the powers of the presidency would be undertaken, resulting in there being no way to counter Liberal trends, always cropping up in SBC institutions.

On the positive side, between 30,000 and 40,000 witnesses for Christ in Las Vegas could have a powerful effect. Apparently many more years (if ever) will be required to turn the convention as a whole back to a more Fundamentalist stance, but another year of Conservative leadership by advocates of inerrancy will guarantee the continuation of their program.

Since the press will be there in great strength and everybody will be watched closely, hopefully no Baptist messengers will be carried away under the pressure of temptation to try a hand in winning something else in Las Vegas.

Just prior to press time, Dan Vestal, pastor of the Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta, announced his candidacy for the SBC presidency. For 12 years Vestal pastored the First Baptist Church of Midland Texas, the largest contributor to the Cooperative program in 1988, giving over a million dollars. Meanwhile, President Jerry Vines of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Florida, has suggested that action on the new SBC lobbying agency in Washington be postponed for at least one year in order to focus attention on witnessing and evangelizing during the Las Vegas conference, rather than on controversial issues.

James O. Combs is editor of the Baptist Bible Tribune.
Fatherhood
continued from page 20

anything," he recalls. "I thought it was natural to go in and show Dad my drawings. He would go over them and I'd try to make mine like his. He was constantly setting a standard, and that is important for an artist to grow.

"My children draw all the time," he smiles. "Our closets are filled with sketch pads. Claire draws relationship-oriented pictures centered around people and stories, but Max is all action—dinosaurs, wars, bombs, planes, boats."

Once Glen noticed that Max seemed withdrawn and depressed. He brought in a picture. Glen automatically reached for it and made suggestions on how to improve it. "I saw the defeat on his face," says Glen. "I realized that while Claire wants input and correction, Max was struggling with being my son and his grandfather's grandson. The kids at school were expecting Max to draw like us, and when he couldn't they would laugh."

Being a father isn't easy, but it is a challenge Glen enjoys. "I think the best thing about being a father is having a chance to shape my kids' thinking. I love to see them look at a situation and think it through the way I would, or to think about Christ."

Many things the kids have said have become fodder for their grandfather's cartoon strip. Glen admits his walls are plastered with "Family Circus" strips that originated with his kids, just as he and his four siblings were the basis of many strips a generation ago.

Bil Keane began another tradition that Glen has continued. "I love bedtime with the kids," he smiles, "and the idea of a captive audience. Dad used to tell us stories about Teeny, a guy the size of your thumb. Although we knew he was make-believe, we'd never admit it. Dad would take some prop, some tiny household object, and spin a story around it. Then he'd pull it out of his pocket at the end and we'd be wide-eyed as he'd say, 'And here's the matchbox Teeny used to escape.' How could we deny that Teeny was real when Dad had the proof right there?"

For relaxation the family takes their two Basset hounds walking through the fields on which they plan to build a house. "You might feel miserable," he smiles, "but when you see those dogs running, you can't help but pick up some of their glee."

Whether he is considering his work or his home, Glen enjoys meditating on the words of Psalm 16:2. "'I said unto the Lord, You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing.' I know that anything outside of God is empty. As long as I am abiding in Christ, everything in life, even the trials, are good. "The Christian life is a lot like animation. You can try to live a Christlike life under your own power, but it will not be sincere or real. But when Christ actually lives in you, there's something genuine that people can believe."
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Coalition Challenges Tough Federal Antiporn Law

A new federal law imposing severe penalties on child pornography and obscenity producers is unconstitutional, a coalition of booksellers and filmmakers contends.

The groups say the Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act interferes with their rights to produce and distribute material including any sexual conduct.

The law states that anyone who produces material containing sexual activity or "lascivious exhibition" must maintain records verifying that the actors or models involved are at least 18 years old.

In addition, the law—a product of former Attorney General Edwin Meese's pornography commission—states that any distributor who is charged with obscenity violations and fails to keep such records will be presumed to have used minors.

"It is plainly impossible to comply with this statute," Richard Emery, a lawyer for the nine-organization coalition, told the New York Times. "It requires that at every level of the creative process...each person—the publisher, the printer, the stock house, the photographer, and the photo lab—must identify on a firsthand basis the age of every person depicted in a pose that contains frontal nudity or sexual activity."

The law's challengers also oppose a provision granting the government power to seize all business-related assets from a bookstore owner found guilty of selling two obscene books. The groups say this harsh penalty will cause bookstore owners to stop stocking photography books, sex education manuals, and other works including sexual images.

Justice Department officials, however, say such fears are unfounded, since the forfeiture provision must be applied in proportion to the area of the store used in the violation.

Conservative Christians Seen as Political Force into 1990s

COLUMBIA, S.C. (RNS)—The agenda of Conservative Christians who burst onto the American political scene 10 years ago will continue to influence U.S. politics well into the 1990s, according to a leading Liberal Christian opinion-maker.

Speaking at a conference on "Southern Religion/Southern Press April 5 in Columbia, Rev. James M. Wall, editor of the Christian Century, sketched a striking contrast between the politically vibrant, committed Religious Right and what he views as politically listless mainline churches.

Simon Introduces Measure Requiring Collection of "Hate-Crimes" Data

Senator Paul Simon has introduced legislation into the Senate requiring the federal government to keep statistics on crimes motivated by hate.

The measure, and a similar proposal introduced into the House by Representative John Conyers, would require the attorney general to collect information about crimes based on a prejudice against a person's sexual orientation, race, or religion.

A similar bill was introduced last year, but it died in the Senate when Senator Jesse Helms objected to the inclusion of homosexuals with other minority groups. He says the legislation is a starting point for future homosexual rights legislation.

No federal agency is currently responsible for the collection of such statistics, but several private organizations claim hate-crime violations are increasing.

In fact, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith says crimes motivated by prejudice were more common last year than in any of the previous five years. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force claims incidents of violence against homosexuals rose from 4,946 in 1986 to more than 7,000 in 1987.

Judge Rules Salvation Army Cannot Fire a Witch

The Salvation Army cannot fire an avowed witch, a federal judge ruled.

U.S. District Judge Dan M. Russell said the Salvation Army violated Jamie Kellam Dodge's constitutional right to freedom of religion when it fired her after learning she used the organization's copying machine to reproduce Satanic-Wiccan rituals.

Judge also said the Salvation Army was at fault in the August 1987 firing because the agency accepts federal funding.

Dodge's $1.25 million lawsuit sought compensation for embarrassment, humiliation, pain, and suffering. In addition, the suit asked that she be reinstated to her former position at the Salvation Army's Domestic Violence Shelter.

A decision on compensation awards was not made at the time of the ruling. An attorney for the Salvation Army says the organization is debating an appeal.
Appeals Court to Determine Whether Students Can Aggressively Share Christian Faith

A federal appeals court will determine whether students attending a Dallas high school have a constitutional right to aggressively share their religious beliefs on campus.

For years, a group of Christian students attending Dallas’s Skyline High School met informally on school grounds to study the Bible and share religious beliefs. The group became more active in 1984, however, frequently passing out tracts and using bullhorns to encourage their peers to accept Christ. After school officials insisted that this proselytizing on school property stop, the students filed suit against the district, alleging a violation of their constitutional right to free speech. Further, the students argued that their rights under the federal Equal Access Act were violated. The act requires public high schools to allow Bible clubs to meet on the same terms as other student groups.

A federal district court ruled in 1987, however, that the students had no constitutional right to witness on school grounds. Later, the court amended its decision to state that the Equal Access Act was inapplicable because it did not include student-led religious meetings that involved “large crowds, loud and disruptive speech, and the use of bullhorns.”

Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor says she regrets the political use of her reference to America as a “Christian nation” in a letter to Arizona Republicans.

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“Like many Americans, I was surprised to read about your letter...suggesting that three Supreme Court decisions have held that the United States is a Christian nation,” Kropp said in a letter to O’Connor.

Kropp says the “Christian nation” movement is a recent development and is a sign of “religious intolerance.”

In her letter, however, O’Connor cites portions of three High Court rulings that she says do depict America as a Christian nation.

In one of those rulings, handed down in 1892, the Court said, “We are a Christian people and the morality of the country is deeply engrained upon Christianity.”

High Court Turns Down Appeal in Hiring of Chaplains for Hospitals

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review a dispute over whether public hospitals may employ chaplains. In a one-line order, the justices rejected the appeal of three Iowa residents who claimed the employment of chaplains by publicly supported hospitals violates the First Amendment’s religion clauses. The High Court’s action leaves standing a decision by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals that upholds the constitutional right of public hospitals to employ chaplains.

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Supreme Court Justice Regrets Political Use of “Christian Nation” Reference

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In one of those rulings, handed down in 1892, the Court said, “We are a Christian people and the morality of the country is deeply engrained upon Christianity.”
I recall well growing up as a Jewish girl in the forties and fifties listening to prayers in school every day. Most of the daily prayers (usually from the Old Testament, especially the Psalms) were as appropriate for Jews as they were for Christians. Admittedly, being the only Jewish student in most of my classes did cause some uncomfortable feelings, particularly at Christmastime. But they were short-lived and minor compared to the discomfort of confronting pop quizzes and flunking algebra tests.

If parents would instill in their children a love and respect for their own faith, and teach them to cherish their own religious identity, then later on, their exposure to other faiths would not be threatening. Our children must have knowledge if they are to grow up to have an understanding and tolerance of others. Lack of it breeds distortions, biases, and distrust.

Let's examine the worst-case scenario of the child of atheistic or non-Christian parents being forced to listen in school to a prayer about God, Christianity, or Jesus Christ. Surely he would survive long enough to get home and tell his parents about the experience. And since these parents are raising their child in a country that is predominantly Christian, they might even see this as a valuable part of their child's education. If, on the other hand, they were disturbed by it, why couldn't they simply explain to the child that 90 percent of the people in our country believe in this God, and that is fine, although they do not.

Most polls indicate that 70 percent to 90 percent of Americans support voluntary school prayer. Even if we were to grant that some of the minority opposing it may experience some discomfort with school prayer, prohibiting it is clearly a form of tyranny by a small minority over the majority.

The Secular Humanists reveal their true intolerance, however, by opposing not only voluntary prayer, but even an innocuous "moment of silence." The suspicion that one child might use that moment to silently pray is the height of paranoia, absurdity, and genuine meanness.

Not surprisingly, the extremes to which these people have gone to remove God and religion from our schools have begun to backfire. Recently, a group of educators and public officials met to discuss a disaster they, themselves, had created—the lack of values in our schools and the distortion of history that comes about when textbooks omit any mention of religion, as most have. Hopefully they are now beginning to notice a connection between the prevalence of drugs, violence, rape, arson, suicide, and the use of weapons in our schools on the one hand, and the lack of morals and spiritual values being taught there, on the other hand.

The antireligious bias perpetuated by a small number of Secular Humanists in academia, the judiciary, and the "prestige" media, has promoted a society where amoral and immoral influences are allowed but moral and religious ones are not. We must fight this destructive prejudice by electing morally responsible public servants who interpret the Constitution in the spirit in which it was written, not as an instrument for antireligious activism. For our children's future, and the future of our nation and society as a whole, we dare not give up the battle until the freedom to voluntarily pray is returned to our school children.

by Suzanne Peyser

I Suzanne Peyser is a member of the Board of Directors of the Holyland Fellowship of Christians and Jews, and former vice president of Montgomery County (Maryland) Board of Education.
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