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Capital punishment for all capital offenses?...

William Baker failed to address one issue that seems vitally pertinent concerning capital punishment in his recent feature article (March). Perhaps he would respond to this letter.

Even a surface reading of the Old Testament reveals quite a number of 'capital offenses' other than murder. This is a fact of which Dr. Baker is well aware. I will not insult him by citing the crimes or references.

My question is this: Is Baker equally supportive of capital punishment for offenders of all of the biblically based statutes where capital punishment is cited as applicable for violators? That is, should we execute rebellious, incorrigible children, adulterers and adulteresses, and so on?

These are sincere questions, not posed rhetorically or sarcastically. If Baker does not favor capital punishment for all biblically capital offenses, I would be interested in his explanation.

Michael Wyndham
Mobile, Alabama

Author William Baker's response:
The best way to begin an answer is to call attention to something I state in the original article. One could have inferred from what I said about the relation of the law of Moses to capital punishment that parts of the Mosaic legislation are not in force, while others, like the moral law, are.

The multiplicity of capital offenses in the Mosaic Law are not relevant, because the mandate of Genesis 9:6 is the basis for the practice outside of the theocratic kingdom of Israel, not the law of Moses in Exodus. Since the Genesis 9:6 mandate does not deal with any offense except murder, we can assume that this is all the mandate intends.

Why did the Mosaic Law contain the death penalty for all the Ten Commandments? In a theocracy, unlike any other form of government, the divine King is establishing His requirements in conformity to His character. In such a situation He may be communicating the fact that all sin is equally offensive to Him. The Talmud, however, indicates that Israel's lack of obedience was reflected, among other things, in its failure to carry out the death penalty according to the biblical requirement. Few people were actually put to death for any reason.

In my article I appealed to the Mosaic Law in principle for the biblical concept of justice ("eye for eye"). Perhaps this use of the Mosaic Law led some readers to think that I was basing my conclusions regarding capital punishment on the Mosaic Law. Instead, I was using the Mosaic Law within the boundaries of what I believe are sound hermeneutical principles, what the apostle Paul may have meant by his words, "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully" (1 Tim. 1:8).

The hermeneutical principle I rely on is that if the New Testament removes something from obligation, I seek for that which should nevertheless remain in the specific Old Testament Scripture that is of abiding value or authority: some kind of principle that can be applied today, because Paul taught that all Scripture is "profitable" (2 Tim. 3:16). For example, Numbers 35:29-30 requires that two eye-witnesses present testimony for any conviction to be valid. In the absence of sophisticated crime detection and investigation, Israel needed that rather rigid law. Today, however, the principle that is contained may be sufficient for our purposes: make sure the evidence for conviction is solid and unequivocal.

The final test for my view that the Mosaic legislation is not the basis for the mandate of the death penalty today is in the inferential evidence from the New Testament. Unlike many features of the Mosaic Law that are explicitly set aside (sacrifices and priesthood), the application of the death penalty to numerous offenses receives no direct reference in the New Testament.
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I believe Jesus’ discussion regarding hate and murder in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:21-22) goes back to the Genesis 9:6 mandate and its limitation of the death penalty to murder alone. The “judgment” to which the murderer is subject (5:21) is clarified by the word counsel (or Sanhedrin) in verse 22. The significance of this is that the Sanhedrin would have recommended the death penalty at that time in history, while in Old Testament times they would have theoretically pronounced the death penalty. No other sin, as far as I know, is given the death penalty in the New Testament.

Glad to see someone speak out...

I am glad to see someone speaking out about the way Pat Robertson conducted his campaign, and about where our priorities ought to be as God’s people.

For some reason, born-again Christians do not realize how we alienate “non-religious” Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. In most cases, both groups are lost—and we have lost. Humanly speaking, we have lost our ministry to many of them because we have made an issue out of their party affiliation and their particular platforms rather than Jesus Christ.

As one who was saved out of 26 years of a strict Roman Catholic background, I am well aware of the things that can keep someone from sharing and believing the gospel.

Many of God’s people fail to realize that a raft of Republicans are lost and will share eternity with a raft of Democrats. God has left us here to share Christ with both groups, baptize them, teach them the Word, and allow the Holy Spirit to help them discern the times in which we live.

J. Aloysius Hopson III, Senior Pastor
Marcus Hook Baptist Church
Linwood, Pennsylvania

Christians caught up...

I am one of those people who thought Pat Robertson should run for President even before he announced his intentions. America needs people like him in government.

The last paragraph of Truman Docklar’s “Thunder on the Right” (April) requires further comment. I agree with his statement that “God is not a Republican,” but there is more to this concept than appears in the editorial.

I attend a Baptist church, most of whose members are adamant Democrats. These people, born-again Christians all, are against abortion, pornography, and homosexuality. They are for a strong defense, traditional family values, and returning God to public schools. Yet they would vote for the Antichrist himself if he ran on the Democratic ticket.

They are caught up in all the press-fomented propaganda that tries to tear down any “right-wing” ideas; all the un-American, nonsensical viewpoints of the Democrats are on the tips of their tongues. Yet, in their private lives, they are more Conservative than most people.

Why? Because the polarization of people along political party lines is an emotional issue. Millions of people vote Democratic or Republican simply because Grandpa was a Democrat or a Republican. They do not really think deeply about the issues, only about what the party gurus tell them is the current party line.

But Christians should not let themselves be caught up in emotional issues of this nature. They owe it to God and to their country to think about what they are voting for, not what party they may subconsciously favor.

Whatever name a party goes under, whether Republican, Democrat, Communist, or whatever else, no thinking Christian can in good conscience vote for a party whose platforms are favorable to abortion, pornography, homosexuality, or radical Communist sympathizers. Nor can any thinking Christian vote in good conscience for a platform unfavorable to strong national defense, traditional family values, and returning God to public schools.

No one can refute those statements via any biblical quotation whatsoever, because they are simply irrefutable. To paraphrase a famous document, “We hold these truths to be self-evident.”

Granted, God is not a Republican; but neither is the Devil. You and I both know that if the Devil were a U.S. citizen he would vote straight Democrat.

Robert W. Young, Jr.
Golconda, Illinois

Editor's note: We apologize for an error in our April Biography, “John R. Mott” (p. 24). The sentence, “In the summer of 1886 Moody held a conference at Mount Vernon, Massachusetts,” should have read, “In the summer of 1886 Moody held a conference at Mount Hermon, Massachusetts.”
Richard Lee speaks out on an issue of critical concern:

Compassion.

The compassionate heart is moved by pain and heartache. It seeks out the unlovely and offers freely to those who can give nothing in return. It lacks the diseases so common to artificial, self-serving attitudes. It loves with a costly love. It rejects pride, desiring more to understand than be understood. It realizes that Christ's honor hangs in the balance of one's actions and attitudes.

Considering the priority of a compassionate heart, Francis Schaeffer wrote:

"Orthodoxy without compassion is the ugliest thing in the world." He was right, of course. To simply believe the right things without acting the right way is not only inconsistent but unconscionable. Voices — audible and silent alike — call out to us for help each day. The truly compassionate heart listens . . . and acts.
If ever we needed to understand that God's church is triumphant, it is today. Everybody is predicting the demise of the church. They tell us on network news that Bible-believing Christianity is sick unto death. All the experts are writing and editorializing that the death knell has been sounded. The warrant has been signed.

The people of God in 400,000 churches in this country, and in hundreds of thousands of churches worldwide, are wondering, "Is the church of Jesus Christ injured mortally?" The answer is No. The attacks and blows from Satan today are only a few among literally hundreds down through the ages.

In Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 Solomon said a long time ago, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us."

Yes, the church has many problems today. But these problems are not unique. The early church faced the same basic problems and issues. You would think that the Holy Spirit instructed Luke to write the Book of Acts for 1987, 1988, and 1989—the year behind us, the year we are in, the year ahead. You would think that he was actually writing it for us today, and of course he was.

For example, in Acts chapter 5 we have the story of the hush money cover-up. Ananias and Sapphira had a little secret deal going. They decided to lie to the Spirit of God, lie to the church, and they lost their lives because of it.

Then in Acts chapter 6 there was internal dissension, an unholy war. This particular one was caused by the widows.

There was the prosperity theology problem, the greedy promise of health and wealth, in Acts chapter 8. Simon the sorcerer wanted to buy the gift of God with money.

There were false prophets in the church in Acts 20. If you want to add 1 Corinthians 5, there was a church sex scandal. Paul wrote a book dealing with it. There is nothing new under the sun. You and I need to know that sin in the church did not begin in 1987 and 1988. Ever since human beings have been on this earth we have had sin and we have had problems. And as long as we are here there will be human problems.

Listen to the sad but stern warning Paul gave to a group of church leaders in Acts 20:28-30. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Think of the cults and the Eastern religions and the gurus and the weirdos that have religions going today. Somebody said, "Do you think so-and-so can start over and get a new crowd?" Sure he can. PT. Barnum said, "There's a sucker born every minute." And that is true in the world of religion. Think of something bizarre, and there will be some bizarre nuts who will follow you.

One of the most important and far-reaching events in the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ occurred at the base of Mount Hermon, the highest mountain in Israel. There, in Matthew 16:18, our Lord said, "Upon this rock [upon Myself] will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Now Christ is gone. Two thousand years ago the crucified and resurrected Saviour, in full view of His 11 disciples, was caught up into heaven from a small windswept hill overlooking the old city of Jerusalem. But before He left He promised them that His church would survive all attacks, be they of human or hellish origin.

He also promised them that the Holy Spirit would be sent to instruct and empower the church. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

He promised them that the Saviour Himself would be with His church. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). If Jesus is with us to the end of the age, the end of the world, what else do we need?

When the Communists took over Red China there were, as best we know, a million saints. Forty years have passed. China is opening. The saints are going back in there now and making a witness for Christ. After 40 years of persecution there are now 50 million saints in China.

Yes, we must address the problems in the church today. But, no, the church will not die or be destroyed. We will learn and grow. This old anvil of God's grace, the church of the living God, has worn out all the hammers and is still triumphant and strong.
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Let God Be Magnified!

Those four words boomed across the auditorium whenever my friend Bill Sheehan, who was a vigorous prayer warrior, led the congregation to the throne of God in prayer. Bill never began to pray without first reminding us that God was to be magnified.

Prayer can never truly begin in each of our hearts until our overarching desire is that the name of God be glorified. But most of us don’t even consider that when we pray. We immediately jump into personal needs, with little consideration that the name of God be glorified.

Christ gave a model prayer to His disciples in Matthew 6:9-13, when He said, “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

In this passage Christ briefly outlines how we ought to pray, giving us not necessarily the words, but the guiding principles to apply when we pray. Christ briefly outlines how we ought to pray.

Notice that half of the prayer deals with adoration and half deals with petition. The first half of the prayer has nothing to do with asking God for anything. Rather, it deals exclusively with our adoration or worship of God. “Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.” The latter part of the prayer deals with our specific needs. “Forgive us our debts. Give us our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation.”

Between the introduction, “Our Father which art in heaven,” and the first expression of adoration, “Hallowed be thy name,” there is a large step of spiritual maturity. As we pray to One who is our Father, we appreciate what He does for us in that relationship. But when we bow our hearts and pause to hallow His name, we recognize God not for what He does, but for who He is. We literally say, “May Your name be made holy. May Your name be set apart. May Your name be made sacred. May Your name be sanctified.”

Before the first thought of bringing our personal requests to the God of the universe, we must give Him His rightful place in our hearts. He deserves preeminence. He deserves first place.

The ultimate purpose for our existence is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31). How does this relate to our prayer lives and to our lives in general?

When we come to God in a spirit of adoration and pray, “Hallowed be thy name,” we are saying, “I have needs, Lord. I need daily bread, and forgiveness. I need You to keep me from temptation, to deliver me from evil. The people I love have needs and I must pray for them. But before I even get to the basic necessities of my own life, I come, God, to honor You, to praise You, to magnify You, to let You know that far beyond my own personal needs, the inner consuming desire of my heart and life is that Your name be glorified.”

When we pray in this way we remind ourselves that the glory of God is of greater significance than our own needs. Now, that may be easier to say when everything is falling in place in our lives (although we must also be careful to give God the glory in good times). But it is tough to pray like that when we are desperate and hurting, dealing with a family situation, a major illness, or the loss of a loved one.

Job lost almost everything—children, property, possessions, friends. His wife’s advice was that life was not worth living, and Job might just as well curse God and die and be done with it. But in his utter desperation Job recognized that the glory of God was of greater importance than his own personal struggle, and he cried out, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21).

In Semitic culture a person’s name identifies or reveals that person’s character. In the names of God we discover who God is and how He relates to us as His creation. As we hear Job cry out that the name of God be blessed, we realize that his affliction brought him to a deeper understanding of the character of God. He said, “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee” (Job 42:5). In spite of the bad advice he got from others, Job chose to magnify the name of God.

Prayer begins with a giant step of spiritual maturity, and it says this, “God, whatever You choose for me, I recognize that Your glory is of greater significance than my own needs.”

And when life is going smoothly we cannot forget that God is responsible. We have nothing unless God allows it, and He is to be glorified in all things. “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty” (Rev. 15:3).

We can all relate to God because of what He does for us. But God wants us also to relate to Him for who He is. In our personal relationship with Him as our heavenly Father, as we adore Him, as we bring our needs before Him, may we remember that He is the sovereign God of the universe. “Let God be magnified!”

by Edward G. Dobson

"Let God Be Magnified"

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Disgraced Preachers

The Word Is Malpractice

by Daniel R. Mitchell

Malpractice is a term applied to individuals in the professions who violate the legal or ethical code they vowed to uphold. A lawyer who misrepresents the truth in court may be censured or disbarred. A medical doctor who violates the Hippocratic oath may lose his license to practice medicine. Doctors who dupe ailing patients with placebos and false promises, lawyers who fraudulently fleece clients, or engineers who design defective buildings could injure many unsuspecting people. When this occurs legitimate professionals are obliged to sit in judgment on them. Failure to do so casts suspicion on all. If a widow is to open her bankbooks with the confidence that her accountant is not going to pilfer money out of her accounts, the profession must have a reputation for policing itself.

We may not always agree with the standards used. For example, some states consider chiropractors to be quacks and will not allow them to practice, while other states impose no restrictions at all. Many people travel great distances to receive innovative cancer treatment disallowed in their own countries. Nevertheless, when a life-threatening disease strikes I take comfort in the knowledge that my doctor cannot practice medicine unless his peers consider him to be knowledgeable, responsible, and trustworthy.

If a doctor loses his license because of malpractice, he still has every right to receive the best medical service he can find if he needs it. If a lawyer is disbarred, he still has the right to legal council. That is, they still have the right to the benefits of their professions, but they may not practice them.

Malpractice is the term we must also apply to professional ministers of the gospel who violate their trust. Preachers who raise money for themselves and not the work, who use people instead of serve people, who lust for power and sex and status, and who use their platform to satisfy their greed violate the code of the spiritual elder (1 Tim. 3). People who are guilty of these and worse offenses cannot continue their work without making a travesty of the ministry.

Ironically, disgraced preachers still have supporters. They say God has forgiven him. We must do the same. He wept and repented on national television. Now we should restore him. Why is this wrong? It is wrong because forgiveness and restoration are not equivalents. Forgiveness is a benefit of the gospel and available to all believers, as well as to sinful preachers. But restoration to official ministry is another matter.

The privilege of preaching the gospel is reserved for those who have met the biblical standards for church leadership. An ordination examination for ministers corresposdeds to the bar exam for lawyers. It is the church’s way of certifying those who officially represent Christ, expound God’s Word, and exercise spiritual leadership in the church. When a person violates the trust given to him with his ordination we must withdraw it. A disbarred lawyer needs more than forgiveness to practice law again. A disgraced preacher also needs more than forgiveness to be restored to the pulpit.

Is the standard for the preacher of the gospel any less than that of the medical or legal profession? Absolutely not! Indeed, there is no higher calling. We must correct the crisis in confidence that is generated by the present situation. More is at stake here than just the credibility of an offending preacher. When we fail to impose discipline, fallen preachers drag every minister of the gospel—indeed the gospel itself—into the mire with them. Legitimate preachers and church leaders must call each other to accountability and demand compliance with God’s standard for ministry.

This is not a new problem. The church has had to fight against corruption and secularism almost since its inception (read 1 and 2 Corinthians). The scandalous reputations of the itinerant preachers of medieval Europe and the Old West still haunt us. But several factors aggravate today’s situation to an unusual degree.

Much of American Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism exists without any hierarchical or denominational oversight. Every church does what is right in its own eyes. If the local congregation does not have the inclination or the power to oust its wayward pastor, they often do nothing. Unbelievably, I recently heard of a pastor who threatened his congregation with a “visit in the night” by strong-arm men if they ever testified against him in court. In the absence of any denominational authority there is
virtually no control over this sort of abuse.

A second factor confronting today's church is the general corruption of our culture. Paul wrote as he did to Corinth, and not to Thessalonica, because Corinth was "sin city" and Thessalonica was a quiet coastal town. The believers in Corinth had to cope with problems that saints in more respectable communities did not. Likewise, immorality, materialism, secularism, and corruption permeate our culture. And the church has not been exempt from this influence. Living clean in Corinth is always more difficult. This does not mean we should relax our standards. It means we should enforce them all the more. It might also mean we have a shortage of qualified leaders.

Then there are the media ministries. Today's technology enables man to communicate more effectively than ever before. Theoretically we can speak to the entire world at once. This has been the dream of every preacher since the Great Commission nearly 2,000 years ago. No wonder gospel preachers seize on this medium! But there are inherent and serious dangers here. How does one qualify a "paid religious broadcast"? The station manager is certainly not trained to make such judgments. Then there is the medium itself. The television preacher is not only capable of incredible outreach, he is also untouchable. And along with this, in many cases, he is answerable to no external authority, with the exception of the Internal Revenue Service.

A national television evangelist with tears streaming down his face confessed to his audience, "I have sinned against you, you who remain nameless and faceless and whom I will never see." This is an awesome statement when we consider the millions of lives personally and profoundly touched by his preaching. But this is the nature of the medium. This does not happen in a local church. There, if the pastor blunders he must face his flock—and the music. In other words, he is much more answerable to those whom he serves.

What can we do? Before any solution will be too little or too late, the church must accept responsibility for its leaders and restore confidence. People have a right to know that the gospel and those who preach it are honorable and worthy of their trust. We must distinguish between forgiveness and restoration.

Forgiveness is always available to those who are rightly related to Christ. However, restoration to ministry is governed by the same standard imposed for elevation to ministry.

First Timothy 3:1-7 is explicit. This passage deals with the candidate's abilities to lead, teach, and minister. It especially addresses his relationship and reputation with his wife and children. The biblical principle is this. If you do not have respect in a small circle, don't enlarge the circle! You must acquire your reputation the old-fashioned way—you must earn it. This takes time and commitment, not just tears.

Denominational leaders responsible for qualifying ministerial candidates must give much greater attention to these standards. We simply cannot accept weak or questionable candidates. Likewise, the preacher who violates his trust starts over at ground zero. He must rebuild his reputation in and outside his home and the church. This cannot happen in a few weeks. Reputations, like the giant redwood, grow very slowly. It takes years. And when they are cut down they can never be expected—in one lifetime—to grow as tall. This control is not to punish the offender. It is to protect the gospel, the church, and all who labor faithfully in God's work.

Independent churches must also address the problem of their vulnerability where no higher court of appeal exists. Perhaps one solution would be to organize independent councils comprised of pastors and leaders of sister churches. These could serve as advisory boards for member churches. The pastor would have to submit to the scrutiny of such a board whenever evidence is brought to light reflecting on his character or qualifications for service. This also holds the congregation accountable in situations where there is reluctance to take appropriate action. Paul exercised such authority over the Corinthian church, exhorting them to deal with the sin in their assembly or else he would come down and do it for them (1 Cor. 5).

The structures for such boards probably already exist in loose "fellowships" of churches and ministeriums organized for mutual encouragement. Such councils would then serve the same function as the state bar does for the legal profession. The preacher would then be answerable to a body of his peers, as he should be, and not function as a law unto himself.

Policing media ministries is more difficult. No one in America is about to advocate governmental control of ministry. Again we must police ourselves. This is where an agency like the National Religious Broadcasters is helpful, establishing an independent agency to "accredit" legitimate ministries and provide appropriate standards for them. Station managers could appeal to such a board when examining specific programming for airing. Preachers who refuse to undergo such scrutiny or who fail to measure up would simply be denied.

The problems are as varied as the churches and ministries. Here of course we are not concerned with doctrine but with purity and credibility. We must expect those in positions of spiritual leadership to be faithful to their calling. If the lost cannot trust the preacher, how can they trust his message?

If we do not police ourselves the government will not likely step in and dictate control. Instead, station managers who choose not to air religious programs, and viewers who opt to watch something else, will dictate new policies.

In short, we need to go back to the biblical standards for ministry, and we must strictly impose these standards on candidates for the ministry. We must view failure to maintain these standards as ministerial malpractice worthy of public censure and/or removal from ministry. The crisis in confidence threatens us all. Failure to take appropriate action will surely lead to continued widespread skepticism. Unless we take immediate action, we stand to lose the most powerful communications medium ever devised.

June 1988 15
Train Up a Child
And Don't Forget to Nurture

by David W. Anderson

Dean, a 16-year-old boy brought up in a Christian home, suddenly becomes quite rebellious—fighting with his brother, sister, and mother. His performance in school decreases severely. He manifests his anger toward the church, the school, and most authority. At the same time, he is a tenderhearted boy who seems to want to do right.

Sixteen-year-old Lisa contemplates and attempts suicide. She is miserable in most aspects of her life and sees “boyfriends” as a way out of her misery. Although she had been a faithful and involved teenager within the church, she now feels uncomfortable and disinterested. Her school performance is unsatisfactory, and she is dangerously close to pursuing immoral behavior as an outlet for her frustration.

Bill is a handsome son of a preacher. As he nears college age he displays a rebellious attitude. He has been drinking, even to the point of trouble with the law. He seems cold toward the faith and basically disrespectful toward those in the ministry. His lifestyle does not reflect the standards and beliefs of his upbringing.

What has gone wrong with these young people? Why are they not peacefully living the Christian life they once upheld? In all three of these real-life cases, the teenagers are reacting to improper relationships with their parents. Neglect, ridicule, inconsistency, divorce, and other problems have become prevalent in these three families, and the children are being affected.

These occurrences are not rare. Youth counselors agree that the most common problem surfacing among teenagers is not sexual promiscuity, chemical abuse, or even suicide. By an overwhelming margin the most frequent difficulty in the life of the modern teenager is the relationship with his parents! There are a few exceptions, but the great majority of adolescents who come for counsel regarding one of the more publicized problems such as sex or drugs, reveal that their real problem is with their parents.

The Word of God has relatively few direct commands to parents regarding their relationship with their children. Numerous guidelines, principles, and axioms can be rightly derived from Scripture, but specific commands to parents are few.

One blatant transgression of these commands plagues us time after time, yet it is so subtle that it goes undetected, unconfessed, and therefore unresolved. Even in a day when our churches are filled with believers who have attended family seminars, and our libraries are stocked with books on relationships, and our pulpits regularly extol the virtues of building solid Christian families, we still experience a deluge of broken homes. We pay strict attention to all the principles of family life that we have learned, and we strive to be faithful in our devotional life, yet the
When we provoke our children to wrath we sow a seed for spiritual cancer that will erode the fiber of their lives.

most common pitfall is not in mechanics, but in spirit. The tendency for parents to “provoke their children to wrath” is the one shortcoming that continually manifests itself in parent-child relationships.

The Bible is full of insightful principles and guidelines relating to human interaction. Regarding our children, the Bible tells us to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4); teach them the Word of God (Deut. 6:7); discipline them to instill right and wrong (Prov. 13:24); and provide the necessities of life for them (1 Tim. 5:8).

These directives are summarized and coupled with a promise in Proverbs 22:6. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” The tragedy is that our young people are departing, and in alarming numbers. Why? One reason is that we neglect the very promise we claim for comfort, by our continual violations of the command, “Provoke not your children to wrath” (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21). To ignore this warning is to create a flawed training process for the child, and consequently to produce a flawed product.

When we provoke our children to wrath we sow a seed for spiritual cancer that will erode the fiber of their lives. The Bible warns of this devastating potential in Hebrews 12:14-17. Provoking to wrath creates a fertile soil in which the poisonous weed of bitterness can grow. Notice the dangerous progression described in this passage: lack of God’s grace and graces in your life, trouble and anxiety, defilement of others (v. 15); moral impurity and temporal values (v. 16); vanity and futility (v. 17). This deadly spiral affects teenagers by the thousands, producing a society in which 47 teenagers per hour attempt suicide! I have counseled hundreds of young people and adults who have experienced the devastating force of bitterness in their lives. If left unresolved, bitterness can destroy the home, the character, and any hope of contentment. Because of this destructive chain reaction, many young people in Christian homes are coping with the same feeling of frustration that causes their unsaved peers to consider suicide; quite frequently their conclusions are the same.

The encouraging news is that overcoming this formidable problem does not require a master’s degree in psychology. Provoking our children to wrath is not as much a matter of what we do as it is a matter of what we convey by what we do. It is not strict regulations, but rather sterile relationships that produce bitterness and resentment within our children. Any parent who has a sincere love for his children can create a positive atmosphere in which those children are able to develop strong emotional, mental, and spiritual characters.

“’My parents are too strict!’” is not the most common complaint among bitter teenagers. The most common descriptions of discontent are:

“’My parents don’t trust me.’”
“’My parents don’t listen to me.’”
“’My parents don’t care what I am doing.’”
“’My parents do everything for my brother and nothing for me.’”
“’My parents just don’t understand.’”
"My parents don’t have time for me."
"My parents don’t live together."

Young people do not usually resent rules and regulations if they are supported by a loving, consistent relationship. They may not agree with the rules, but they can accept them. But a child cannot accept the perception that his parents do not love him, and a child senses that through subtle habits in the parents' behavior. Parents communicate negative impressions to their children through such habits as neglect, suspicion, favoritism, not listening, suppression, harshness, criticism, lack of praise, lack of affection, and pressure.

Provoke not your children to wrath! The importance of this warning is seen in both the relationship a child has to his parents, and in the command for which the child is accountable. The child is to obey his parents. Through this obedience he not only learns about life, but he also pleases the Lord. When we provoke our children through sterile relationships, thus instilling bitterness and promoting disobedience, we prevent them from developing in three vital areas: personal contentment, social interaction, and spiritual obedience. Parent and child are a team with clearly defined roles. Their team relationship brings the greatest fulfillment when it functions as it was designed to function.

Rebellious teenagers are rebellious for a reason. They do not simply choose rebellion because it is in their hearts. More often than not they are rebelling against something in particular. Most of the stubborn, uncooperative young people I have spoken with are not rebelling against authority for authority's sake, but are rebelling against the relationship they have had with authority.

We must correct our assumption that people sin only because they are consumed with lust, greed, and pride. Our pride is the root of sin, but there are practical factors that promote sinful behavior. If we desire to correct behavior, we must be concerned with all the factors involved.

The Bible gives us clear insight into this problem of sin in a very familiar passage of Scripture. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

We do not choose to sin because we have to—because of some uncontrollable urge—we choose to sin because we want what that sin can offer! In other words, we love sin because it temporarily fulfills some need in our life.

As parents we must be on guard that we do not create a lasting situation in which our children are being provoked to wrath, thus prompting the reaction of bitterness.

This problem of bitterness is so paramount that God warns us to diligently guard ourselves against it (Heb. 12:14), to refrain from provoking it within our children (Eph. 6:4), and to avoid friendship with those who are bitter (Prov. 22:24-25). When bitterness enters the heart of a child it will usually manifest itself in rebellion. The most effective method of handling bitterness in our children is not to approach the situation as if it were WAR, but to confront it in love. If we seek to overcome rebellion by conquest we will merely drive it underground. The best method of eliminating bitterness is to establish a proper relationship, thus leading to repentance and restoration of fellowship.

The parent is often caught off guard to this newly developed rebellion, by being unaware of the fact that as the child's individuality increases in adolescence the parent-child relationship must both change and strengthen. At this time the parent usually increases regulations in an attempt to harness the child's behavior and attitude. This can provoke a great deal of wrath within the child if the regulations are not accompanied by relationship. This does not mean that every conflicting situation is a provocation to wrath. In every authority-subordinate relationship there will be occasional tension, especially when one party is an adolescent, and the other is afflicted with normal human shortcomings.

Bitterness usually sets in when conflicts remain unresolved, or when they are approached apart from a caring relationship. In certain instances the child rebels because of his own pride and independence, but if we consciously guard and build our relationship with our children those times can be confronted and resolved harmoniously. We teach obedience through instruction. We ensure obedience through discipline. We enhance obedience through consistency. We validate obedience through example. We promote obedience through relationship.

Bitterness usually sets in when conflicts remain unresolved, or when they are approached apart from a caring relationship.

The true process of bringing up a child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord is far more than religious instruction, firm discipline, and clear regulations. To properly train up our children, we must provide an atmosphere of love, encouragement, example, friendship, authority, learning, and spiritual fervor. Each child will respond differently to any given home situation. Therefore, the parents must be sensitive to the individual emotional needs of their children.

Flaws in parent-child discipleship methods are not always seen immediately. Sometimes aberrant behavior does not manifest itself until the child is a teenager. Then we wonder what went wrong. We must develop this relationship from the first days of our child's life. Rarely does one individual act promote bitterness within the child, unless that one act is immoral or perverted. More often, the overall atmosphere created in the home over years is responsible. Some doctors tell us that from within the womb babies learn to be comfortable or tense in the presence of their fathers because of the conversation heard during pregnancy!

Naturally we cannot dictate attitudes to our children. Children are accountable to God for their behavior. The decision of how to act and react is theirs, but we have the privilege and obligation to ensure that they have the best environment in which to make these decisions. As long as we "train up" our children in accordance with the Scriptures, avoiding the tendency to provoke our children to wrath by lovingly guiding them in the way they should go, we can rest assured that as they grow old they will not depart from it.

David W. Anderson is assistant pastor of Millgrove Bible Church in Alden, New York.
More than Rings, Coins, and Baby Teeth

by John R. Cionca

We've been robbed! Returning home from a three-week vacation, we found cupboards opened, appliances moved, the basement door ajar. The usual sense of welcome and rest in our house was swept away by the uneasy, sinking feeling of loss as we cataloged the missing belongings.

A call to my insurance agent revealed my coverage would replace the clock radio, telephone, and jewelry boxes the burglars carried away in a pillowcase. Unfortunately, no kind of coverage could replace the personal items that were gone.

My high school and college rings—I hadn't worn them for more than a decade, but had saved them faithfully for my children, Ben and Betsy. A collection of bicentennial silver dollars, halves, and quarters. A medicine bottle filled with Ben's baby teeth, every one except the one he swallowed. We'd systematically collected them to present as a gift when his own children began teething.

As I reflected on those priceless losses, my thoughts turned to my children's remaining time at home. In eight years Ben will pack his things for college; a year later Betsy will follow. Soon after that they may marry, or move to another part of the country. I asked myself, "What legacy do I really want to leave my children?"

More than rings or coins and baby teeth. My honest desire was to leave them a great part of myself. I want their legacy to include some examples, characteristics, and experiences that will last them a lifetime. I want them to have:

A Dad of Prayer. I remember as a child seeing my mother sitting on the edge of her bed, reading her Bible. Similarly etched on my mind is the image of my father kneeling beside his bed in prayer before retiring each evening. Prayer has been a rich part of my heritage.

As Ben and Betsy get older they will also benefit from a dad whose prayer life is visible. I'm not advocating a pharisaical practice to impress some spectator, but I am becoming more intent on providing opportunities for my children to see me, other adults, and even older teens in prayer.

Our family gives thanks together before meals, and we pray faithfully each night before the children retire. But recently I also drew them close at appropriate moments to pray for Auntie Bonnie in the hospital, Mom at her meeting, and a crisis on the news.

A Dad of Purpose. Last week I changed brake pads, fixed a toilet, sealed the driveway, and hung wallpaper. There's nothing wrong with getting the most out of each day. In fact, the Bible tells us that there is a time for everything under the sun. Housework is important, recreation is beneficial, but in the midst of all my worthwhile activities, I must remember the words: "Beware of the barrenness of a busy life."

My children need the legacy of a dad whose life is directed by a clear purpose. They must see more than just an effective executive managing daily demands. While a treat at the Dairy Queen is a good investment, they also need to see my check written for world relief. While playing catch in the backyard is enjoyable, they must also sense the joy I feel...
when praising God in a spontaneous song.

I want Ben and Betsy to recognize the overarching purpose in my life, the primary goal that gives meaning to daily particulars. Whether we're playing trumpets, painting a widow's house, or helping at the church work day, I hope they discover my main purpose in life is to honor God through praise and service.

A Dad of Patience. We have all heard the terms introvert and extrovert. I have another way of categorizing people: the dictators and the wimps. I tend to err toward the dictator extreme. Every one of my tools has a proper place on the workbench, and I'm ready to court-martial any kid who misplaces them. I expect neat manners, courteous speech, clean bedrooms, and acts of kindness showered between my 9-year-old and 11-year-old. In other words, I expect perfect kids.

But that's obviously unrealistic. No child will ever be perfect. A parent cannot ignore problems, nor should we avoid corrective discipline. However, we can guard our reactions.

My children need to experience peace with God, peace with each other, peace with their friends, and peace with me. There have been times when I've been upset with the kids because they've "disturbed the peace." Yet honest reflection leads me to admit that too frequently my reaction was more disturbing than their initial infraction.

Recently, Ben and Betsy were an hour and a half late returning home from school. Barb and I were worried and drove through the neighborhood looking for them. We eventually found them playing in the school yard.

My normal reaction would have included reading them the riot act, with a voice elevated in pitch and decibels. But on this occasion I quietly asked them to go home and subsequently discussed with them the consequences of disobedience.

For Betsy it meant missing her basketball game that evening, for she still had homework, piano lessons, and errands to run. For Ben it meant we would not work on his model airplane, for he too had responsibilities. Surprisingly, their attitudes during the two-day grounding that followed were peaceful. I believe they reflected the patience I had shown.

The legacy I desire for my children includes a father who accepts them, empathizes, and responds with patience.

A Dad of Play. All too soon our children will begin to drive, date, attend college, and eventually set up their own homes. For now, as children, they enjoy a stage of life that can never be recap-

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Since our burglary, I've set to work to build a legacy for my children that can never be taken away. I've called Ben to point out a Scripture portion; I've asked Betsy, "Can we talk about it?" when she was having a bad day. I've even endured a horrendous wrestling match in the family room.

There are still times when I tarnish that legacy. But I have determined by God's enabling to leave my children more than jewelry or coins. My prayer is to leave them the legacy of a godly father, one who above all else, reflects their Father above.

John R. Cionca is dean of students at Bethel Seminary, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

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Words and Music by Wayne Watson

Somewhere in the world today
A little girl will go out to play
All dressed up in mama's clothes
At least the way that I suppose it goes.

Somewhere in the world tonight
Before she reaches to turn out the light
She'll be prayin' from a tender heart
A simple prayer that's a work of art.

Somewhere in the world out there
That little girl's learnin' how to care
Pickin' up her mama's charms
Or maybe, swingin' around in her daddy's arms.

Somewhere in the world to be
Though the future's not real clear to me
Their's could be a tender love
Grounded in eternal Love above.

And I don't even know her name
But I'm prayin' for her just the same
That the Lord will write His name upon her heart.

'Cause somewhere in the course of his life
My little boy will need a Godly wife
So hold on to Jesus, baby, wherever you are.
Wayne Watson
Finds Inspiration at Home

by Martha Harper

A warm kindness radiates from Wayne Watson's eyes as he talks about his sons, Neal, 11, and Adam, 7. They influence his music, his lifestyle, and his ministry. In fact his children inspired him to write the song “Water-Colored Ponies” for which he recently received a Grammy nomination for “Best Male Gospel Performance.”

Watson limits his travels to about 100 nights a year ministering as a Christian musician. But as a devoted husband and father, his first ministry is to his family. They do not travel with him because it is easier for him to adjust back into the home scene than for the children to be uprooted. When at home Wayne focuses on his family. They make time to do favorite things like playing ball and going places together. Simple pleasures mean a lot to Wayne. “I just enjoy being home to meet them at the door after school and spend time talking with them.” He praises his wife, Lynn, who takes control when he is on the road.

Wayne grew up in a Christian home and was saved at the age of 9. He appreciates the example of his Christian parents and concentrates on being an example to his children. “They need to learn the values and Christlike characteristics that people can have when they love the Lord, and I know they are watching me to see how Daddy responds to things,” he said.

In 1976 he graduated from Louisiana Tech University with a degree in vocal music. For two years he tried to say the right things to the right people to make his ministry happen. Because of this he experienced severe physical problems due to stress. In 1980 he turned his ministry over to the Lord. The stress disappeared and the ministry grew.

To help maintain his relationship with the Lord, Wayne attends his home church in Houston, listens to taped sermons, and studies the Word. “I don’t believe there is any substitute for studying the Word of God,” he said.

“The most difficult thing about my lifestyle is the irregular schedule. No two days are alike. If I’m not in church on Sunday people assume I am out doing a concert. It would be very easy for me to hide, but I want to be accountable to Christians who will confront me when I’m wrong. We have a Bible study group that has met for three years on Tuesday nights. They are very dear friends who I feel accountable to spiritually, and I need that,” Watson said.

His commitment as a gospel communicator is to sing songs with depth. His songs express integrity and touch the needs of the listening audiences. As a songwriter he feels his best work comes from dealing with people. He does not write to manufacture emotion.

“I get excited knowing that people go home from a concert not necessarily happy but motivated to grow more in the image of Jesus. I would not do this for anyone but the Lord. I wouldn’t leave my wife and kids a hundred nights a year to go out and give people a nice warm feeling. I want to know that my being away from home is not just to put food on the table. I want to know that it has eternal significance. Even when things don’t go well, it’s very gratifying to know that the Word will go forth and that God will use it.”

He has produced six albums, Workin’ in the Final Hour, New Lives for Old, Man in the Middle, The Best of Wayne Watson, Giants in the Land, and Water-Colored Ponies. His second album earned him Dove Award nominations for “Male Vocalist of the Year” and “Best Inspirational Album of the Year.” Water-Colored Ponies recently received the Dove Award for “Best Contemporary Album of the Year.” In May he began work on a new album to be released in November.
For twenty years, I have committed my life to the authority and sufficiency of the Word of God. In 1968, when I accepted the call to be Pastor/Teacher of Grace Community Church, I never imagined the extent and impact of ministry we would experience.

As I have endeavored to minister the Word through expositional teaching and preaching, God has richly blessed. What has happened over these two decades can only be seen as a sovereign work of God.

Today I believe we are on the threshold of even greater things. Certainly not because of me, but because of the power of God's Word. I have seen Him bless His truth not only through a dynamic local church, but also in a world-wide media outreach, a flourishing college and seminary, a unique missions ministry, and extensive services to church leaders. Each of these ministries has its own strengths, but in concert with the others there is multiplied capability for advancing God's kingdom. With the desire to accomplish the most possible for Christ's sake, we are uniting these ministries under one banner: The Master's Fellowship.

The Master's Fellowship actually wasn't my idea. Quite honestly, it was a vision born in the hearts of several individuals. These dear friends and co-laborers shared their vision with me. After much prayer, God gave us clear direction which has led to the formation of The Master's Fellowship.

The Fellowship has four clearly defined areas of emphasis: **Communications, Education, World Outreach, and Church Resources**.

Through **Communications** we are spreading the Word through **Grace to You** radio, audio cassettes, videotapes, and literature. Through **Education** we are training tomorrow's leaders at The Master's College and The Master's Seminary. Through **World Outreach** we are fulfilling our Lord's command to make disciples of all nations, preparing missionaries at The Master's Mission training base.

Through **Church Resources** we are equipping and enriching church leaders and their flocks. In conjunction with the founding of the Fellowship, we are introducing **Masterpiece**, a new magazine for the Christian family.

The Master's Fellowship is devoted to God and dedicated to helping the entire body of Christ. It embraces many people serving through many ministries. It embraces the priority of integrity in every facet of life. And it embraces you.
We all know that divorce has become the fashionable way to deal with marital conflict in the past three decades. Books such as Creative Divorce have described it as the start of a brand new life that was in the "best interest" of the entire family. But that is patently untrue. Divorce is devastating, not just for the children but for their hurt and angry parents, too.

Divorce is not the answer. Those who seek that "solution" often jump from the frying pan into the fire! Don't permit the possibility of divorce to enter your thinking. Even in moments of great conflict and discouragement, divorce is no solution. It merely substitutes a new set of miseries for the ones left behind. Guard your relationship against erosion as though you were defending your very lives. Yes, you can make it together. Not only can you survive, but you can keep your love alive if you give it priority in your system of values.

The society in which we live actively mitigates against marital stability. There are dangers on all sides, and we must defend ourselves with all our energies. I think it would be healthy to name the great marriage killers. Any one of the following evils can rip your relationship to shreds if given a place in your lives.

**Overcommitment and physical exhaustion.** Beware of this danger. It is especially insidious for young couples who are trying to get started in a profession or in school. Do not try to go to college, work full time, have a baby, manage a toddler, fix up a house, and start a business at the same time. It sounds ridiculous, but many young couples do just that and are then surprised when their marriage falls apart. Why wouldn't it? The only time they see each other is when they are worn out! It is especially dangerous to have the husband vastly overcommitted and the wife staying home with a preschooler. Her profound loneliness builds discontent and depression, and we all know where that leads. You must reserve time for one another if you want to keep your love alive.

**Excessive credit and conflict over how money will be spent.** Pay cash for consumable items or don't buy. Don't spend more for a house or car than you can afford, leaving too few resources for dating, short trips, baby-sitters, and so forth. Allocate your funds with the wisdom of Solomon.

**Selfishness.** There are two kinds of people in the world, the givers and the takers. A marriage between two givers can be a beautiful thing. Friction is the order of the day, however, for a giver and a taker. But two takers can claw each other to pieces within a period of six weeks. In short, selfishness will devastate a marriage every time.

**Interference from in-laws.** If either the husband or wife has not been fully emancipated from the parents, it is best not to live near them. Autonomy is difficult for some mothers (and fathers) to grant, and close proximity is built for trouble.

**Unrealistic expectations.** Some couples come into marriage anticipating rose-covered cottages, walks down primrose lanes, and uninterrupted joy. Counselor Jean Lush believes, and I agree, that this romantic illusion is particularly characteristic of American women who expect more from their husbands than they are capable of delivering. The consequent disappointment is an emotional trap. Bring your expectations in line with reality.

**Space invaders.** I am not referring to aliens from Mars. Rather, my concern is for those who violate the breathing room needed by their partners, quickly suffocating them and destroying the attraction between them. Jealousy is one way this phenomenon manifests itself. Another is low self-esteem which leads the insecure spouse to trample the territory of the other. Love must be free and it must be confident.

**Alcohol or substance abuse.** These are killers, not only of marriages but of people. Avoid them like the plague.
Pornography, gambling, and other addictions. The human personality is obviously flawed. It has a tendency to get hooked on destructive behaviors, especially early in life. During an introductory stage, people think they can play with enticements such as pornography or gambling and not get hurt. Indeed, many do walk away unaffected. For some, however, there is a weakness and a vulnerability that is unknown until too late. Then they become addicted to something that tears at the fabric of the family. This warning may seem foolish and even prudish to my readers, but I've made a 20-year study of those who wreck their lives. Their problems often begin in experimentation with a known evil and ultimately end in death . . . or the death of a marriage.

Personally, I've not permitted myself to even taste certain vices, knowing that I can never become addicted to something if it is not granted a toehold in my life. For example, Shirley and I have gone to Las Vegas without ever putting a nickel in a slot machine, even though two rolls of coins were provided with hotel reservations. I refused to use them for the same reason the hotel manager gave them to me. He knew if he could open the door to insignificant gambling I might walk through it. But I wouldn't play his game. Likewise, Shirley and I are teetotalers when it comes to alcohol. I know many people enjoy wine with their meals—and that is entirely their business. But neither we nor our children will ever have a problem with alcohol if we take an absolutist position in reference to it. Obviously, I am not in a position to recommend that everyone do as we have done, but there would be fewer divorces if others did.

As a member of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, I listened to testimony by those who thought they could jazz up their sex lives with obscene materials. They discovered that the stuff they were watching quickly began to seem tame and even boring. That led them to seek racier, more explicit depictions. And then they journeyed unexpectedly down the road toward harder and more offensive materials. For some, not all, it became an obsession that filled their world with perversion and sickness. And how did it happen? The door was quietly opened and a monster came charging out. My point is this: The restrictions and commandments of Scriptures were designed to protect us from evil. Though it is difficult to believe when we are young, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). If we keep our lives clean and do not permit ourselves to toy with evil, the addictions that have ravaged humanity can never touch us. It's a very old-fashioned idea. I still believe in it.

SEXUAL FRUSTRATION, LONELINESS, LOW SELF-ESTEEM, AND THE GREENER GRASS OF INFIDELITY. A deady combination!

BUSINESS FAILURE. It does bad things to men, especially. Their agitation over financial reverses sometimes sublimes to anger within the family.

BElIIEVING MARRIED TOO YOUNG. Girls who marry between 14 and 17 years of age are more than twice as likely to divorce as those who marry at 18 or 19 years of age. Those who marry at 18 or 19 are 1.5 times as likely to divorce as those who marry in their twenties. The pressures of adolescence and the stresses of early married life do not mix well. Finish the first before taking on the second.

These are the bloody marriage killers I've seen most often. But in truth, the list is virtually limitless. All that is needed to grow the most vigorous weeds is a small crack in your sidewalk. If you are going to beat the odds and maintain an intimate, long-term marriage, you must take the task seriously. The natural order of things will carry you away from one another, not bring you together.

Let me put it another way. Not far from where I was born, the mighty Mississippi winds its way through the countryside. It is a beautiful river but has a will of its own. Approximately 70 miles from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the government is fighting a tremendous battle to keep this powerful river from changing its course to a shorter and steeper descent to the Gulf of Mexico. If the Mississippi has its way, the results will be catastrophic for cities and farms on the downward side. The entire topography of southern Louisiana would change. The port cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge would lose their waterfront and their way of life. A town called Morgan City would be flooded into oblivion. Engineers estimate that billions of dollars of property would be destroyed if this battle is lost, and the outcome is still in doubt.

In some ways, the battle to save the family is like that. Without considerable effort and expenditure of resources, the banks will overflow and the landscape will be ruined. That's the world in which we live. Only one or two marriages in ten will generate the intimacy so desperately sought.

How will you beat the odds? How will you build a solid relationship that will last until death takes you across the great divide? How will you include yourselves among that dwindling number of older couples who have garnered a lifetime of happy memories and experiences? Even after 50 or 60 years, they still look to one another for encouragement and understanding. Their children have grown up in a stable and loving environment and have no ugly scars or bitter memories to erase. Their grandchildren need not be told, deliberately, why "Nana and Papa don't live together anymore." Only love prevails. That is the way God intended it to be, and it is still possible for you to achieve. But there is no time to lose. Reinforce the riverbanks. Brace up the bulwarks. Bring in the dredges and deepen the bed. Keep the powerful currents in their proper channels. Only that measure of determination will preserve the love with which you began, and there is very little in life that competes with that priority.

Adapted from Love for a Lifetime by James C. Dobson. Copyright 1987, James C. Dobson. Published by Multnomah Press. Used by permission.
by John D. Strain

"S" he tucks the sheet in too tight at the foot of the bed and it's uncomfortable."

Harry and Wanda were on the way to divorce court because the sheet was too tight at the foot of the bed. Their marriage was like a tattered old rag about to be thrown in the garbage. For whatever reasons, they were not communicating about this domestic problem.

Seeking counsel offered the only hope of rescuing a marriage that had degenerated into an incessant war of ugly words. Through cautious probing, first with Harry and then with Wanda, the counselor discovered that tight bed sheets had caused the downward spiral of their marriage. Like a Polaroid picture developing before his eyes, the story slowly came into focus.

As Harry prepared for bed each evening, he began to grumble and complain, talking only to himself. "Dumb sheets! Why does she have to do the sheets this way?"

Wanda, feeling left out and hurt, would become angry. "What's wrong with him? He starts this every night." Succumbing to anger, she rejected her husband's amorous advances.

"Is anything wrong, dear?" Harry would ask in ignorance. "Nothing's wrong, but there will be if you don't leave me alone!"

Marriage without open lines of communication will almost always be disappointing, riddled with sadness and problems. Lack of communication may be the most prevalent problem in marriage today. But the problem need not continue. The following suggestions may be all the assistance most marriages need.

Stop lying and start telling the truth. How often do husbands and wives tell their mates that nothing is wrong when a list of grievances is destroying their marriage? You know the excuses you have used. Your wife wouldn't understand anyway. Your husband just won't listen, so what is the use? Have you ever thought about the lie involved? Problems can never be solved when mates refuse to be honest with themselves and their partners.

Attack the problem, not the person. Married couples are prone to attack one another when a problem develops. Each mate must get his say, and neither will accept blame for the difficulty. Assaulting each other may be easier than confronting an intangible irritation, but personal accusations will never solve the problem. On the contrary, it will get bigger. Bitterness will continue to build. Harry's problem increased every night as he put his feet under the covers, because he was attacking his wife instead of the problem.

How much anxiety and anguish could have been avoided if the first night home from their honeymoon, Harry had just said, "Honey, this sheet is just too tight for my big feet. Do you mind if we leave it a little loose when we make the bed each morning?" (If Harry volunteers to help make the bed, and does his side, the problem is solved.)

Listen! We like to focus on ourselves. Listening requires patience and time, qualities lost in this age of quick solutions for every problem. Husbands and wives are often so busy that there is no time to sit down and discover each other's burdens.

Norman Wright, in Communication: Key to Your Marriage, has a chapter titled, "What Was That I Never Heard You Say?" He suggests that one way to enhance communication in marriage is to listen more, and talk less. Communication is not a one-way transaction; listening—that produces understanding—is essential.

Try it. Sit down with your mate after dinner tonight and ask how the day went. Or take a long walk, just the two of you. Ask questions. Then listen. Focus all your attention on the most important person in your life. The response may surprise you.

Talk today. This encompasses two

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ideas. First, keep current. A pastor told me of a husband and wife who came for marital help. When asked what the problems were, one of them pulled out a little spiral notebook with the dates and descriptions of every offense committed by the other—over a 10-year period. Most of them had never been mentioned, just stored away for future reference, creating more and more bitterness.

"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," Paul instructed the church at Ephesus (Eph. 4:26). Take care of today's problems today. Talk them out. Apologize when necessary. Care enough about your mate and your marriage to risk open communication when something is tearing the fabric of your marriage. Honest, timely communication can help. Start today. Each of us has to begin somewhere. Past mistakes do not prevent any couple from going to work on their marriage today.

The Bible speaks of a husband leaving the home of his father and mother and cleaving to his wife, holding on to her as though they were glued together.

The Scripture goes on to say, "And they shall be one flesh." This may be suggesting the weaving of their separate lives into one life. Communication is the thread that holds those two lives together while the Master Weaver creates a beautiful tapestry. The weaving can begin today, if you choose to start.

Harry and Wanda agreed to work on their problem before going to divorce court. The commitment to try to save their marriage added new flavor to a marriage gone sour. The weaving of their two lives into one continues. The sheet is loose at the foot of the bed, and Harry has stopped grumbling.

John D. Strain is a Baptist pastor in Wheaton, Illinois.
Jonathan Goforth
China's Great Evangelist

by Bernard R. DeRemer

Late one night a tired college student, trudging back to his room after witnessing in the slums, noticed a light in a basement window. Always seeking (or making) opportunities to present the gospel, he tried the door. Finding it unlocked, he entered—to face a group of gamblers. One of them asked his name. "Goforth," he replied. The men broke into hearty laughter, but pushed aside their cards, and the strange nocturnal visitor seized the opportunity to preach Christ in a most unusual setting.

This was only one of the many remarkable experiences of Jonathan Goforth, a man destined to become perhaps China's greatest evangelist. As a student at Knox College, he ministered extensively in the slums. Once he visited 17 brothels on one street, leading a number of girls to Christ.

Goforth was born in 1859 near Thorndale in western Ontario, Canada, and grew up on a farm. He was saved during a church service at 18, and immediately began seeking avenues of ministry: Sunday school teaching, tract distribution, and starting a Sunday evening service in a schoolhouse.

At first Goforth wanted to be a lawyer and politician. However, reading the Memoirs of McCheyne profoundly influenced him toward full-time Christian service, but he rejected all thought of the foreign field. After hearing D.L. Mackay of Formosa, and reading J. Hudson Taylor's classic China's Spiritual Need and Claims, he experienced his definite call to become a foreign missionary.

They sailed for China in 1888. For years they labored to gain a foothold in an unfriendly land. Indeed, China seemed to become more and more anti-foreign during this time. Nevertheless they settled in the province of Honan and laid the foundations of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in central China.

Goforth's great strength was in training Chinese evangelists and preachers. He would open and establish a station, then leave nationals to carry on. Itinerating was his settled policy.

When Wang Fengao came to the Lord, early in his ministry, Goforth greatly rejoiced at this notable conversion: "His testimony has this effect upon the people. They think that since this scholar . . . comes out boldly in defense of the gospel as the only possible way of life, there must be something to it. The increasing interest dates from his giving witness to the truth."

Later the Goforths realized a long-felt desire—opening a station at Changte. Yet in a very short time severe trials came in the form of great floods, with water in the mission compound six to eight feet deep. The Goforths lost most of their earthly possessions, but learned to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods (Heb. 10:34). The tragedy prepared them for worse trials in years ahead.

When the demands of the seeking crowds, building operations, and other duties seemed to bring the Goforths to their physical limits, they began praying for an assistant. The next day Wang Fulin, a converted opium slave, appeared at the mission seeking employment. What a pitiful spectacle he was: emaciated, a racking cough, in beggar's rags. His family was so destitute they had to eat leaves to survive.

Soon, however, he was cleansed, clothed, and seated in the chapel preaching to a large audience! A noted doctor and a wealthy landowner were the first-fruits of his ministry, which lasted for three years—until the Lord called him home.

Goforth's great strength was in training Chinese evangelists and preachers to do much of the work. He would spend a few weeks opening and establishing a station, then leave nationals to carry on while he went to new fields. Itinerating was his settled policy.

The political situation in 1899 and 1900 became daily more threatening. Now all missionaries were to feel the terrible impact of events far beyond their control. Many lives would be lost and incalculable suffering inflicted. Fearing that all foreigners sought to bring about the
partition of their beloved country, the Chinese arose in fury, in the brief but awful Boxer Rebellion during the summer of 1900. They swept like a whirlwind across northern China in an elaborate plot to 'murder or drive out every foreign devil' and stamp out every hated foreign influence. Volumes have been written about this episode, including Rosalind Goforth's powerfully challenging *A Thousand Miles of Miracle*, but perhaps the full story can never be told.

This time Goforth and his family lost all their possessions and suffered severe injuries. Angry, demonic mobs bent on massacre and destruction repeatedly interrupted their long journey to the safety of the coast. His attackers actually thought they had killed him, but he miraculously escaped with his family.

The Goforths' four children then ranged in age from 8 months to 9 years. The party totaled 11 adults and five children, with a few servants and carters. Their travel in rough carts, with illness, injuries, often inadequate food, water, and medical supplies, must rank among the greatest missionary sagas of all time.

Here and there sympathetic nationals did relieve their suffering and provide barely enough food and medicine to sustain life. Thousands of nationals and nearly 200 missionaries died in what has been called "the greatest martyrdom of missionaries in this century."

In the providence of God they escaped to Canada, where Goforth repeatedly told the story of their great deliverance. In less than two years, he was back on the field. His family joined him later. Goforth's motto was "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. 4:6). He had always emphasized the Holy Spirit's work, but as he approached 45 he began to feel a strange restlessness. Though he was surely a remarkably successful missionary, he was never satisfied with just touching the fringe of Christless multitudes. Some of the works of Charles G. Finney, A.J. Gordon, and S.D. Gordon came into his possession, and Goforth studied the Holy Spirit more and more intensively.

The result was even greater usefulness and wider fields of service. He traveled to Korea in 1907, during that country's marvelous visitation of the Spirit of God. He brought back the spirit of revival to China, then to Manchuria. Afterward, calls for revival missions poured in from all over China. Deep conviction of sin, confession, restoration, and conversion spread across the land.

One account noted, "It is becoming more difficult to bring the meetings to a close. Indeed, it is one long meeting, lasting all day, with intermissions for food." Sometimes late night or early morning hours found small groups still pouring out their hearts to the Lord.

Opportunities for games and sports rarely came to Goforth, but on some of his many voyages he was able to enjoy deck hockey and shuffleboard. Such contacts with those who usually avoided missionaries provided opportunities for effective witness.

In 1916 Charles G. Trumbull, editor of the *Sunday School Times*, led Mrs. Goforth into a deep spiritual experience. The following year the Goforths ministered at American Keswick and other points, their first prolonged contact with Christians in this country.

During the early part of this century, Modernism made great advances at colleges in the homeland, and eventually its deadly effects appeared on the field. Goforth's reaction was best described in one word—*intolerant*. "If you saw one undermining the foundation of a structure you and others . . . had given the best of their lives to build, would it be intolerant to use every ounce of strength in combating the wrecker?"

In 1925 when the church union movement in Canada divided their denomination, the Goforths chose to remain with the Presbyterian Church of Canada. They left their mission in Honan, which the United Church took over, and began work anew in Manchuria.

The Goforths surely experienced their full share of suffering. In addition to the awful injuries and other agonies of the Boxer Rebellion, 5 of their 11 children died in childhood. Goforth himself was afflicted with colds, typhoid fever, malaria, jaundice, and pneumonia. Even after being stricken with blindness, he remained on the field until general ill health finally forced him home—at 74.

Goforth spent his last two years in Canada, traveling and preaching up to the final day of his life. Shortly before, he had rejoiced at the prospect that the next face he would see would be his Saviour's.

At the funeral service in Knox Church, Toronto, on October 10, 1936, a great company gathered to honor the coronation day of this great servant.

**Bernard R. DeRemer** is a free-lance writer in West Liberty, Ohio. Quotations from *Goforth of China*, by Rosalind Goforth, used by permission of Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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**Indispensable Factors in Revival**

*by Jonathan Goforth*

A missionary once remarked apologetically to me, "I have always longed for revival; but my station is so out-of-the-way that it is impossible for me to obtain the services of an evangelist." As if the Spirit of God is necessarily limited in His workings to a select few! That peer of evangelists, C.G. Finney, believed that any body of Christian people, provided they wholeheartedly and unreservedly carried out God's will, could have revival. D.L. Moody was continually urging that Pentecost was merely a specimen day. Whether it takes a day or whether it takes a fortnight, the principle is clear that any group of seeking Christians may receive the full blessing of Pentecost.

We may be sure that, where there is a lack of the fullness of God, it is ever due to man's lack of faith and obedience. If God the Holy Spirit is not glorifying Jesus Christ in the world today, as at Pentecost, it is we who are to blame. After all, what is revival but simply the Spirit of God fully controlling in the surrendered life? It must always be possible, then, when man yields. The sin of...
unyieldedness, alone, can keep us from revival.

But are we ready to receive Him? Do we value the Giver and the gift sufficiently? Are we ready to pay the price of Holy Ghost revival? Take prayer for example. The history of revival shows plainly that all movements of the Spirit have started in prayer. Yet is it not right there that many of us wilt and falter at the cost?

The mighty spiritual upheavals in Reformation times came largely as the result of prayer. It is said of Luther that he could get anything from God he asked for. Mary Queen of Scots had a greater dread of the prayers of John Knox than of all the armies of England.

Finney depended more upon the prayers of Nash and Clary to bring down Holy Ghost revival than upon his own resistless logic. So accustomed are we today to the Laodicean condition of the church that the all-pervading influence of prayer in Finney’s time amazes us. By 1857 Finney was seeing 50,000 a week turning to God. In many cities there was no building large enough to hold the prayer meetings. At that time the Fulton Street prayer meeting started in a side room in a church, and in a few weeks had taxed the capacity of the entire building to the utmost, and had even overflowed to neighboring churches.

In 1858 Spurgeon called his great congregation together and said, “The Spirit of God is saving multitudes now in the United States. Since God is no respecter of persons we will pray until He sends similar showers of blessing upon our land.” The mighty revival of 1859 was the answer. Moody, it is said, would not accept an invitation to conduct a mission unless he were given positive assurance that the way would be prepared by prayer.

In the south of Wales, shortly before the great revival there in the early years of the present century, 300 prayer groups were formed. Wales, in fact, became almost like one great prayer meeting. What was the result? Within two months 70,000 turned to the Lord.

We are convinced, too, that all movements of the Spirit in China which have come within our own experience, may be traced to prayer. After one particularly moving series of meetings a missionary remarked to me, “Since the Lord did so much with our small amount of praying, what might He not have done if we had prayed as we ought?”

We wish to affirm, too, that we can...
Feeding the hungry in the heart of Texas

Ernie was a CPA in Los Angeles with all the trappings of success. His career was on a roll. He had a family and a fine home in the valley. And a low breaking point. One morning, Ernie left his car on the freeway and walked away from it all.

Now Ernie sleeps under a bridge in Austin, Texas. He is one of nearly 2,000 homeless men, women and children in this capital city. Each has a different reason for being on the streets. All share the common bond of hunger.

A personal mission

Ernie's homeless and hungry are Reverend Frank Deutsch's spare-time personal mission. And with his off-hours he accomplishes more than many do in a lifetime.

Frank Deutsch is a full-time home missionary and a consultant for the 97 churches of the Austin Baptist Association. Also under his wing is a community center in Hispanic East Austin which offers day care, a free food pantry and emergency funds for housing and medicine.

In his free time, Frank runs the Austin Baptist Chapel, a soup kitchen—and personal ministry—which he opened in an abandoned East Austin taco house.

15,000 meals in the first year

In the first year Frank served more than 15,000 nutritious noon meals to Austin's hungry. All on weekends and holidays, when other social services were closed.

Gleaning surplus from this land of plenty

America throws away 20% of the food it produces. This statistic may seem disgraceful, but Frank turns surplus into blessings, and redeems food before it is wasted.

He is a spunky bargainer, haggling with supermarkets, distributors, and a network of service organizations. He shops food banks for canned goods at a nickel per pound. And from what he gleaned, he prepares a stew rich with meat and vegetables, and serves it with fresh-baked biscuits, tortillas, bread, brownies, iced-tea and fruit juice.

Making an individual difference

At 6:00 A.M., on weekends and holidays, Frank fires up an old commercial
cookstove and sends the temperature in the soup kitchen soaring well over 100 degrees. Volunteers set tables, pour tea and offer up steaming bowls of stew.

They serve without passing judgment, with no strings attached, no mandatory pre-meal preaching. There are hungry people to be fed. Period.

Frank's mission is proof that an individual can make a difference. His message is that the only way we can conquer world hunger is by starting now, in our own backyards.

Sharing the commitment
Reverend Deutsch's reward is an enriching self-fulfillment found only by serving God. But Frank has a family, a mortgage and a future to consider. And like nearly all ministers, his pay is lower than that of those with comparable education and professional training.

That's why a group of dedicated Christians started Presbyterian Ministers' Fund back in 1717. So clergy, and their families, could turn to a colleague for sound financial counsel.

Today, PMF offers affordable insurance and financial security to religious professionals of all faiths who continue to make a daily difference. From the missions of the West Indies to the soup kitchens of East Austin, we share the passion and commitment of all ministers and religious professionals.

Rev. Frank Deutsch spends his spare time feeding 15,000 hungry people a year in a soup kitchen he opened in Austin, Texas. His inspiring story is just one of an ongoing series from Presbyterian Ministers' Fund about the commitment of ministers.
entertain no hope of a mighty, globe-
encircling Holy Spirit revival without
there being first a back-to-the-Bible
movement. The Author of the Bible is
being greatly dishonored these days by
the doubt cast upon His Word. It must,
indeed, be a cause of intense grief to Him
that the Book which alone testifies of the
Lord Jesus should be so lightly esteemed
by man. Unless the Bible is to us in very
truth the Word of God, our prayers can
never be naught but sheer mockery. There
never has been a revival except where
there have been Christian men and wom-
en thoroughly believing in and whole-
heartedly pleading the promises of God.
When Luther got the Scriptures
translated into German, that country was
lost to Rome. Moody did not possess the
truth the Word of God, our prayers can
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During my student days in Toronto
my one weapon, in the jails and slums,
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If God the Holy Spirit
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Finally, the call to revival must be a
call to exalt Jesus Christ in our hearts as
King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is
like an Everest peak, rising from the level
plain. There must be room only for Him,
if we would have Him dwell with us at all.
Every idol must be smashed; every
darling Isaac laid on the altar; every urge
of self denied. Then only can we expect
the larger fields to open before us.

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my one weapon, in the jails and slums,
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It is said of Muhammad, the great
Moslem warrior, that in his trail of
conquest through Northern India it was
his practice to destroy all idols that fell
into his hands. He came at last to the city
of Guggeratt, where there was an idol
that was held in unusually high esteem
by the people. The chief Notables of the
city came to the general and pleaded with
him that he would spare to them this one
idol. He might do as he wished with the
others, they said, but if he took this god
from them, too, they might just as well
die. They pleaded with such intensity
that, for a moment, the heart of the con-
querror was touched. It seemed more
than heartless to bereave these poor
people of what was apparently life and
death to them. Then he remembered his
vow to spare not one idol. The will of
Allah was plain. He had a sledge ham-
mer brought to him, and with it he dealt
the idol one terrific blow. To his amaze-
ment there poured from the rent in the
image a stream of jewels and precious
stones. The people had hidden their
treasures in the image, hoping to move
the conqueror to spare it. Consider what
his loss would have been if he had stayed
his hand at the sacrifice of that one idol.

Of course there have been Christian
men and women who have never known of
the schools, but he did know
that the Book which alone testifies of the

Finally, the call to revival must be a
call to exalt Jesus Christ in our hearts as
King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is
like an Everest peak, rising from the level
plain. There must be room only for Him,
if we would have Him dwell with us at all.
Every idol must be smashed; every
darling Isaac laid on the altar; every urge
of self denied. Then only can we expect
the larger fields to open before us.

It is said of Muhammad, the great
Moslem warrior, that in his trail of
conquest through Northern India it was
his practice to destroy all idols that fell
into his hands. He came at last to the city
of Guggeratt, where there was an idol
that was held in unusually high esteem
by the people. The chief Notables of the
city came to the general and pleaded with
him that he would spare to them this one
idol. He might do as he wished with the
others, they said, but if he took this god
from them, too, they might just as well
die. They pleaded with such intensity
that, for a moment, the heart of the con-
querror was touched. It seemed more
than heartless to bereave these poor
people of what was apparently life and
death to them. Then he remembered his
vow to spare not one idol. The will of
Allah was plain. He had a sledge ham-
mer brought to him, and with it he dealt
the idol one terrific blow. To his amaze-
ment there poured from the rent in the
image a stream of jewels and precious
stones. The people had hidden their
treasures in the image, hoping to move
the conqueror to spare it. Consider what
his loss would have been if he had stayed
his hand at the sacrifice of that one idol.

Was there ever such an incomparable
opportunity for Christian leaders to get
rid of their ecclesiastical idols and bring
themselves into heart contact with the
unsearchable riches of Christ as at the
Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in
1910? Missionary leaders had come from
all parts of the world. It was the confi-
dent hope of many that a new era in mis-
sions had dawned. The subject for the
last day was—"The Home Base." It pro-
vided visions of endless possibilities.
The home churches, empowered by a
mighty Holy Ghost revival, would send
out men fitted as were Paul and Barna-
bas. With their enormous resources in
men and means the world would be

Alas! It was only a dream. Never have
I experienced such keen pain and dis-
appointment as I did that day. Of the
many who addressed that great mis-
sionary gathering, not more than three
emphasized God the Holy Spirit as the
one essential factor in world evangeliza-
tion. Listening to the addresses that day,
one could not but conclude that the giv-
ing of the gospel to lost mankind was
largely a matter of better organization,
better equipment, more men and
women. Symptoms, indeed, were not
lacking that a few more sparks might
have precipitated an explosion. But no,
the dethronement of the idol of ecclesias-
tical self-sufficiency was apparently too
great a price to pay.

But, brethren, the Spirit of God is
with us still. Pentecost is yet within our
grasp. If revival is being withheld from
us it is because some idol remains still
enthroned; because we still insist in plac-
ing our reliance in human schemes; be-
cause we still refuse to face the
unchangeable truth that "it is not by
might, but BY MY SPIRIT!"

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Ben Armstrong
Strong and Faithful Defender

by Angela Elwell Hunt

"A strong and faithful pulpit is no mean safeguard of a nation's life," wrote John Hall. Ben Armstrong would agree. For 20 years he has been executive director of the National Religious Broadcasters, an organization dedicated to helping defend and promote the strong pulpit that presents the gospel on the airwaves—Christian broadcasting.

In a booklet called "Religious Freedom and the Federal Communications Commission," Ashton Hardy and Lawrence Secrest write, "It is the duty and responsibility of every religious broadcaster to man the watchtowers to prevent the otherwise certain erosion of our religious liberties." Who is this Ben Armstrong, who mans the tower for all concerned about Christian radio and television?

He is a deeply religious man who considers "finding the Lord at age 12" his greatest opportunity. The man who most influenced Ben Armstrong's life was his father, a pastor, who "never spoke or lived stereophonically."

Ben Armstrong's children find him a worthy role model. A son and daughter work with him at NRB. Another daughter counsels battered wives. He is a faithful husband. He and his wife, Ruth, recently celebrated 40 years of marriage.

At 63, Armstrong has a colorful way of thinking aloud, expressing his thoughts dramatically and effectively. He served as a pastor for eight years—his voice is a counselor's voice, friendly and kind, but his words are a preacher's words, strong and to the point. He is obviously well-educated. He holds a Ph.D. in mass communications from New York University.

How did Armstrong develop an interest in broadcasting? "As a pastor in Paterson, New Jersey, I was impressed by the city's radio station, WPAT. That station could draw more people to a sale at a department store than I would have in my church for weeks. I felt the power of radio."

Armstrong resigned his church and worked as director of radio for Trans World Radio. For eight years he was consumed with presenting the gospel on the airwaves. Then another opportunity arose. National Religious Broadcasters, formed in 1944, was experiencing rapid growth and needed an administrative officer. They sought Ben Armstrong, and in 1966 he became the first executive secretary of the NRB.

After 20 years with NRB Armstrong is still going strong. "I'd like to be like Louis Paul Lehman, a pastor who died in his pulpit during his Christmas Eve service. He had always said that's how he wanted to go, and that idea was inspiration to me. I don't like the idea of retirement."

Armstrong's greatest pleasure over the past year has been observing new developments and growth in Christian broadcasting. "We're growing exponentially rather than additionally," he explains. "And the growth is now more explosive. We are averaging one new
Christian radio station per week and one new Christian television station each month.”

Christian broadcasting has not achieved its 21 percent growth rate without difficulty. With growth has come detractors, enemies of the gospel who would seek to eliminate Christian broadcasting altogether.

For example, in 1985 an appeals court dismissed the “must-carry” rule that had been required of cable companies. The “must-carry” rule simply stated that local cable companies must carry all local television stations, including Christian, educational, and public stations. With the dismissal of the “must-carry” rules, local television stations found themselves competing with the Playboy Channel, HBO, home-shopping networks, CNN, and others for the available cable slots.

The resulting hue and cry from independent television stations resulted in a compromise: a cable system must carry local independent stations only if the cable system offers over 20 channels and if the station has at least a 2 percent audience share. Christian stations, which rarely subscribe to ratings services, may find it difficult to prove they have a 2 percent audience share. “The National Association of Broadcasters won on that compromise, and PBS won,” says Armstrong. “The only losers were Christians.”

If Christian television is to survive, individual stations must be strong in quality and support. When asked what he would do if someone gave him a million dollars, Armstrong did not hesitate. He would like to establish the NRB Fund, a million-dollar “war chest” to provide money for the inevitable legal fees necessary to defend the rights of religious broadcasters. “We want to provide for the defense of the gospel on the airwaves,” he states succinctly. The NRB has won difficult cases in the past. However, on the “must-carry” issue “we simply capitulated,” says Armstrong. “We didn’t have enough money to pay our lawyers.”

Defeats on issues like the “must-carry” rule are discouraging, but Armstrong’s greatest frustration arises from a lack—the opportunity for world evangelization and the lack of financial resources.” And from flab—“divisions in evangelical circles,” he adds as an afterthought.

“We have documentation to prove that we are living in the most crucial time in human history,” continues Armstrong.

“Our greatest challenge is to reach secular man. We have penetrated, reasonably well, within our own various groups, but we need to work on penetrating the secular mind. The biggest problem has been inattention. We’ve been ignored. People are bored by what we do in church. We need to come together on the fundamentals of the faith, the inerrant Word of God, and the need to reach out to modern man—those are the most important issues of our day.”

Last year Armstrong received the coveted Gold Angel Award from RIM in Los Angeles. He enjoys bringing people together, and his efforts have resulted in a united base of support for Christian broadcasters. “The best thing about my job is working with people who love the Lord and are united on the need for presenting Christ using modern technology,” says Armstrong.

As long as the National Religious Broadcasters remains united and alert, our nation will be guaranteed a strong and faithful pulpit on the airwaves.
To Discipline or Not to Discipline... When Angry

by Tim and Beverly LaHaye

During the question session at one of our recent Family Seminars, we were asked, "Is it wrong to discipline my children when I am angry?"

Today that question comes up frequently. All over the country parents are losing their children because of "child abuse" accusations. When that is true it usually results from discipline applied in anger. Disciplining in anger is a common problem.

Anger is the most harmful and probably the most powerful emotion with which we humans have to cope. It is probably the most destructive force families face today. When we do anything under the motivation of anger, we are prone to overdo it. That is particularly true of child discipline.

The problem is, most parents do not feel like following through with necessary discipline unless they are angry. They do not realize that when they correct a child in anger, they emote that anger, and the child knows their spirit is wrong from a Christian perspective. That frustrates the child. Frankly, we think the Bible speaks of this when it says we are not to "provoke our children to wrath."

Besides, we are not convinced that the best discipline is spanking. Oh, we know the Bible teaches it, particularly for rebellion of heart. But restriction is often just as effective. Sitting on the bed for 30 minutes can often provide more learning for an active, strong-willed child than a spanking does, particularly if he knows that the next time it will be extended by 15 minutes. Most kids get the message before you reach the two-hour restriction level.

But what should a parent do when his child needs a spanking and he is too angry to administer it properly? Very simple—just wait! The anticipation does Johnny almost as much good as the spanking. When you have calmed down, apply the rod of instruction to the seat of understanding. Hopefully, it will contribute to Johnny's "training." At least he will know you love him enough to spank him when he deserves it.

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Prov. 29:15). "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24).

Strawberries and Christians—An Allegory

Every year before the local strawberries get ripe, grocery stores sell strawberries shipped from far away. Although they are not as good as freshly-picked ones, they are better than no strawberries.

Some of these berries grow to be very large and look so good, but alas, they are hollow and hard inside. Others are big, look super, and are tasty too! Then there are the small, not-so-impressive strawberries that surprise us with their sweetness and flavor.

Christians are like strawberries. Some maintain a high visibility and look like they are doing so much for the Lord, but inside they are like the hollow and hard strawberries.

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal. 6:3). Other Christians may be quite active in their church, seem bigger than life, and what they do is backed up by a spiritual testimony to the glory of God. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). Still others are small, seemingly insignificant Christians who do their jobs without fanfare, are never recognized publicly, but stay sweet and live their lives in accordance with the Scriptures. They will have a great reward in heaven.

Any of us may at a given time be like any of these strawberries. We should not attempt to go beyond the place where God has led us, nor should we sit back, look pretty, and do nothing. Instead we should at all times seek God’s will for our lives. After all, wouldn’t you rather be like a handful of small, sweet strawberries, than a box full of large, hard ones that do not taste as good?

This summer as you sample your jams, jellies, shortcakes, and enjoy fresh strawberries in many ways, remember to stay in sweet fellowship with the Lord.

Mary Boyd Alley
Fred-Watching

Some people creep through forests to watch birds. Other folks take boats to look at whales. I’m a Fred-Watcher.

For almost a decade I have followed Fred’s response to just about everything that happens in church. If a soloist sings flat, Fred’s slightly balding head tilts, and his neck stretches as if he could push the note back on pitch. Let the preacher use a mediocre illustration and Fred’s pudgy, 33-year-old face twists into a wrinkled fist.

Fred Norwich’s goal in life is to give a nonstop commentary on every event the world sees. If it happens, Fred has a critique. You have sat behind people like that, women who see the dangling threads instead of the new blouse, or men who mumble all through Bible class about a car parked over the lines in the parking lot. That’s Fred.

My grandfather had an old range bull who gave new meaning to the word ornery. ‘Ain’t nothin’ but a thunderbolt goin’ to change that bull.’

Sunday morning the thunderbolt hit Fred. Nathaniel, 8-year-old flag-carrier of the Norwich name, had a down-center spot in a Mother’s Day skit. Nate had three different passages because he was loud. But clear.

No sooner had the door beside the pulpit opened than Fred began squirming. About a dozen third-graders staggered in, their eyes on the audience instead of the steps. Fred’s hand jerked up and pointed toward the steps. “She’s gonna...” he whispered just as the lead girl, dressed as a grandmother, fell over her granny skirt. “They should have rehearsed those kids better.”

From then on Fred sat bent forward, his gaze never leaving Nate’s performance. “Linda Jo, just look! Can’t he comb his hair better than that?”

“Nate!...come on, Nate, look up!” “That’s not the way you pronounce ‘uttermost’!” “Too loud, Nate!” “Speak up, Nate!”

It’s not that Fred intends to harm his family. What is that old phrase, “He means well”?! Somewhere Fred got the idea that his family had to be perfect. And in all honesty, he tries for perfection himself. He overworks at his job. He overworks at his church assignments. He has tried so hard as a neighbor that he has alienated half the block.

Finally the skit ended. Fred slumped back against the pew, exhausted from running the world. Linda Jo beamed as Nate walked carefully down the three pulpit steps and back toward his family. Several people on the ends of pews leaned out to smile and compliment Nate and the rest of the children on their epic triumph.

That was when Karen, the 5-year-old, turned her shining eyes on her father. “Daddy,” she whispered excitedly, “I want to be like Nate when I grow up, and tell all these people nice stories.”

Fred frowned at his daughter. “Then you’d better learn to look up and speak up and think about what you are doing. Nate had a bunch of problems.”

Karen’s smile faded. She shrugged slightly and looked at Nate sidling proudly into the pew. “Doesn’t God like Nate when he works as hard as he can?”

That’s when the thunderbolt hit Fred. Fred sat on the outside end of his pew, out of the sightline of most of our congregation. He watched Nathanial edge across to his place next to his mother. Pride glowed out of Nate’s eyes, or it did until he saw his father. Then the smile vanished and he sat down. He waited for the criticism that would come as surely as night follows day.

I have been watching my friend react to everything, spoken or acted, for years, but this was the first time he had no answer. Fred slumped against the end of his pew. He had seen joy and pride vanish the instant his son looked at him, and with a rush he remembered all of the other times the people he loved more than life itself had cringed away from his harsh criticism.

That Sunday morning all the overwork that never satisfied, all the criticisms that never helped, finally reached the top of the dam.

I have felt sorry for animals that were hit by cars, and for kids going into the hospital for surgery, but I found a new kind of pity as I watched the “scales fall from Fred’s eyes,” to use a biblical phrase. I thought he was going to hyperventilate as he reached across his two girls and pulled Nate over to sit next to him. I could not hear what he whispered, but it must have been tremendous, because Nate’s head shot around, and a smile like a desert sunrise spread across his face.

Fred-Watching would never again be as spectacular as in the past!

Jack Boyd
Is Dad Home?

"Is Dad home?" dangled frequently at the other end of our telephone line during my first 36 years of mothering. After Middle Son totaled our Volkswagen "bug" during his high school years; while he camped on a mountain ridge in 1972, and lightning strikes shook him a bit; during a crisis in college chemistry; when his knee gave out, abruptly and completely, on a recent backpack trip.

I listened repeatedly to that question—"Is Dad home?"—in the late afternoons when our three children dashed in from school with a special need or burning question that only their dad could answer. Knowing my husband's status as Important Person in their young lives always pleased me.

Dads and daughters often begin a special love relationship the moment Baby smiles unhesitatingly at her new father. This unique relationship usually continues through the dollhouse and braces and teenage-lunacy stages, into forever.

Our only daughter is now 30, but she carries in her wallet an ancient snapshot, taken at the beach. The photo shows 3-year-old Susan at the ocean's edge, walking hand-in-hand with her daddy. They are obviously enjoying one another. Susan's choosing that particular picture from her childhood communicates so many past, present, and future feelings.

Even now, telephoning against the background scenario of small children, Susan often inquires, "Is Dad home?" And I smile as I realize anew how important these two are to one another.

She acknowledged that truth nine years ago, when she whispered a loving farewell in my ear, following her wedding: "... and take good care of Daddy. You know he's going to miss me even more than you will, Mom." Perceptive young woman, our daughter!

"Is Dad home?" I have never felt slighted or second-best because of those words. I am glad my now-grown children still want to hear their dad's voice and comments, want to share their lives with him. I suspect this desire has flourished because the years have only reinforced youthful feelings that Dad could and would fix anything, from tangled fishing lines to complicated questions about income tax forms.

I am thankful that my husband has also helped our children to know—by words and by example—that their heavenly Father is always home, that God is even more available than the loving dad they delight in down here.

A Father's Beatitudes

Blessed is he who is given the ability to discern between needs and wants and the wisdom to choose wisely, for he and his family will reap the rewards of prudence.

Blessed is he whose feet leave the soiled problems of his workday at the doormat of our Lord, for he will discover room in his heart to listen to the needs of others.

Blessed is he who dries the dishes of despair with the towel of tenderness, for he will find no lack of comfort from Him who loves us all.

Blessed is he who foregoes the round of golf to become companion to his children, for a legacy of memories is bequeathed in these happy hours.

Blessed is he who trims the hedge of misunderstanding between himself and his neighbor, for the blossom of friendship has a sweet and lasting fragrance.

Blessed is he who mends the toys of disillusionment with the permanent bond of love, for he mirrors the handiwork of God who hath remade our damaged frame.

Blessed is he whose home is built upon the Word of God, for his roof will be shingled with happiness and all who pass by will see the goodness of the Lord.

Ricks L. Falk. Reprinted from Decision. Used by permission.
An excerpt from Wise Words for Little People by Kenneth N. Taylor

Who took care of Daddy when he was just a lad? Your grandma did, and grandpa too, so show them you are glad.

In this picture you can see the children talking to their grandmother and grandfather. They are having a happy time. God wants you to make your grandparents happy because they took good care of your mother or father many years ago. You should say “Thank you” to your grandparents for all they have done. One good way of thanking them is to make them happy. You could write a letter or talk to them on the telephone. Maybe you can visit them or invite them to come and visit you. That will make them happy, and God will be happy too.

A Bible verse for you to learn. An old man’s grandchildren are his crowning glory. Proverbs 17:6

Wise Words for Little People gives a good opportunity for parents to discuss Christian principles with their child. (Tyndale House Publishers, 52 pp., $6.95)

Wise Words for Little People, by Kenneth N. Taylor, presents colorful illustrations and lessons from the Book of Proverbs. The book is meant to help a child answer the questions that follow each chapter.

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee (Exod. 20:12)
Oliver North Challenges
LU Grads “Seize Today. Make a Contribution.”

Over 12,000 students, faculty, and special guests, who gathered on Liberty University’s athletic field, turned their attention to the platform as Dr. Jerry Falwell began his introduction of the 1988 commencement speaker. The atmosphere was electric, the crowd eager to express appreciation to their guest.

“Some have asked,” said Dr. Falwell, “Why invite an indicted man to speak to Liberty University students? We serve a Saviour who was indicted, and convicted, and crucified. Down through the ages courageous men and women have been willing to pay a great price for what is right and good—and in this case, freedom. . . . It is my great, great honor to introduce a patriot, a marine, a husband, and father—a great American—Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North.”

The assembled throng burst into an uproaring standing ovation. Oliver North obviously had an audience that was enthusiastically with him at this his first public speaking engagement since the Iran-Contra hearings.

In the process of attempting to acquire 2 million signatures on a petition directed to President Reagan, encouraging him to pardon North, Dr. Falwell joyously reported to North, the commencement audience, and viewers watching the live broadcast on the LBN/FamilyNet network that over 600,000 were already recorded, well on the way to the goal.

North’s expression of appreciation for being invited to this commencement endeared him yet the more to those in attendance. “I am honored and deeply touched that you should invite me to spend this very special moment in your lives with you. Your warmth and wonderful welcome has indeed tempered the sadness that I feel on leaving the Marine Corps. . . . I appreciate the joy and love that radiates from everyone here gathered. It reflects your achievements, your success in a day you will always remember.”

North’s firm belief in the importance of the family was apparent throughout his speech. “Faith and the solidarity of the American family remain the foundation of freedom in this country,” he said. He reminded the graduates, “Thank your parents. Tell them that you love them. Tell them that you understand the sacrifices that they made to educate the child that God let them give life to.”

He went on to confess, “When I sent my biography to [the] Reverend Falwell for the introduction today, I said that my honest preference was to be introduced as the husband of one and the father of four. I said that because that part of me is so much more important than what I have already done and whatever else I will do.”

Reflecting on what he has already done he stated, “Certainly I did not choose to be caught in the middle of a bitter political dispute between the Congress and the President over the content of foreign policy.” As he spoke of being accused of helping the Nicaraguan resistance, efforts to rescue American hostages, and trying to prevent other terrorist attacks he said, “Those accusations are not a brand—they are a badge of honor!” Again the crowd stood as one, expressing their support in cheers and applause. Betsy, his wife and best friend, beamed.

Gathered with the thousands who came to honor the 1988 graduates were numerous representatives of local and national media. North, who had retired from the Marine Corps the day before, remarked, “Today I am out of work for the first time in a quarter of a century. I must say as I look at all the media gathered here in front of us, it’s nice to see the attention they are paying to the plight of the unemployed.”

Addressing graduates, he said, “I suppose some of you may well be wondering what advice a former marine, out of work, chased and hounded by an independent council and congressional committees, can have for a graduating class. Well, I might say go to law school. On second thought, for an extra measure of protection, go to divinity school!”
"But I am serious about more education. When you accept your degree today, don't think about it as the end of the line. You'll shortchange yourselves. In an age when doctors must understand the law, and lawyers must know medicine, when... great ventures like spaceports are being planned for the near future, you have no choice. Learning must become a lifetime pursuit."

"We must all expand our knowledge and learn to master our tasks if we're going to move this country forward to greater liberty and prosperity and peace in the twenty-first century."

"We can use technology in real stewardship over God's creation... if we make the right choices... What we learn and how we apply that knowledge, which paths we follow, all hinge on the beliefs that guide us, on the values we live by, and on the kind of people we really are..."

"I'm looking out at you, thinking I know what kind of people, men and women, are graduating from Liberty University in 1988. Honest, upstanding, trustworthy, and confident—and more."

North challenged the graduates concerning their part in the future of America. He reminded them that we are "a people born free, with the belief and the faith to remain one nation under God. That... is the core of our being and we dare never forget it... The Constitution says that there must be a separation between church and state. But there must never be a separation between religion and America..."

"You appreciate the special challenge that comes with blessings so rich. What is your challenge? In a word, I think that challenge is responsibility. Responsibility to yourself, responsibility to your families, and responsibilities to your country... You must leave here determined to live to your highest potential, to use those special talents God gave you—and you alone."

With the simple eloquence evident throughout the Iran-Contra hearings, North went on to say that the graduates must elect men and women to high office who hold to the ideals that made our nation great. "We need a better Congress." And he furthered his challenge by proposing that they become those men and women in high office.

"What you must do is each morning look in the mirror and resolve to yourself, 'I am going to seize today. I am going to do the very best I can to ring this day dry of every opportunity to make a contribution.'"

He left them with a note of encouragement, holding his Bible high. "I know your generation can win, because I've read the last chapter of this Book!" With a salute, he concluded, "God bless you on your journey. Semper fidelis."

Following the commencement, President Guillermin conferred a doctor of humanities degree on North. Dr. Falwell distributed diplomas to over 900 graduates, as he and Oliver North greeted each one crossing the platform.

"America's strength has always been based on faith in God and the courage of our people. The two are inseparable." Senator Jesse Helms brought this admonition to Liberty University's 1988 graduating class during their baccalaureate service on May 1.

Senator Helms used the story of David and Goliath as recorded in 1 Samuel 17 as the basis for his message on the courage needed "to stand up for divine principles that deserve to survive."

He identified some aspects of courage as: courage in self-discipline, enabling individuals to "just say no to immorality, and deceit, and irresponsibility"; the courage of innovation; and the "courage to be faithful to God."

Recounting negative factors within today's society, and comparing them to nations that have collapsed because of rampant immorality, he stated, " Courage does not flourish in such societies. It dies." But he held hope for the future. Looking out over those who would graduate the next day, he said in conclusion:

"Love, honor, duty, faith, principles, courage. Aren't they all tied together? These are the things that made this country great in the first place. And, if we will reinstate them as our priorities, proudly, without hesitation, without timidity, without embarrassment, I think America's era of greatness will again make us what someone has called 'that shining city on the hill.' I have the feeling you're going to make it happen."
Dr. Simmer presents a Bible to prisoners who complete discipleship training.

### Good News for Prisoners

William L. Simmer, the first person to earn a master’s degree in counseling from the Liberty University School of LifeLong Learning, recently reenrolled for an M.A. in religion.

Bill founded Good News Jail and Prison Ministry in 1961, after serving for two years as chaplain for the Fairfax (Virginia) County Jail. He now serves as president emeritus and a member of the board of trustees for Good News Ministry.

“Good News Ministry, the nation’s largest supplier of prison chaplains, is unique in that we place a full-time chaplain in a facility, and pay his salary and benefits, so he can daily counsel and provide Christian activities—not just hold a weekly service. He becomes a pastor to the people—ina mates and workers. Our chaplains usually have an office in the maximum security area of the prison,” Simmer said.

More than 100,000 prisoners have enrolled in the Bible courses written especially for prisoners by GNM. Some lessons have been translated into Spanish. GNM workers—including nearly 7,000 volunteers—counseled more than 69,000 inmates on a one-to-one basis, graded over 238,000 Bible lessons, and saw more than 15,000 salvation decisions in 1987.

“We want workers who are role models to prisoners and who are respected by prison officials. We have a Bible teacher who is a federal judge. Volunteers at the Arlington County Jail have included an Air Force general and the spouse of the secretary of the Navy,” Simmer said.


Upon Bill’s “semi-retirement,” the Simmers went to Hawaii, where he taught graduate and undergraduate level courses, studied at the University of Hawaii, and earned an M.A. in Christian education from International College and Graduate School of Theology.

Bill Simmer will lead a Correctional Chaplaincy Seminar at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary August 1-5. For more information contact the Associate Dean of the School of Religion, Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia 24506.

The Heard distributes gospel booklets in Mexico.

### The Heard Moves South

The Heard—a group of fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders—and 10 adults from Thomas Road Baptist Church spent an exciting week in Mexico on their ninth annual missions tour. During spring break the group, under the direction of Herb Owen, stayed at a Christian camp, Rancho La Paloma, near the small village of Huachichil, south of Saltillo, Mexico. The camp is run by Marty and Jessie Starling, missionaries supported by Thomas Road Baptist Church.

The 25 children raised their own expense money for the trip. They participated in Sunday morning worship services at the Starling’s church in Saltillo, which was built by a team of Liberty University students on a previous missions trip. On Sunday evening The Heard ministered in Huachichil, and on Tuesday in the town of Tunal. There they distributed gospel booklets, sang, and presented a puppet program using a script written in Spanish by LU students.

Herb Owen described the threefold goal of the tour. “First, we wanted the kids to see another culture. Second, we wanted to give them the opportunity to see firsthand what missionaries really do. And we wanted the kids to be involved in evangelistic work as they distributed gospel booklets in Spanish and sang.” At each service, Owen preached through an interpreter. This first glance at cross-cultural ministry will certainly have a lasting impact on the children, some of whom may one day become missionaries themselves.

Laurie McCauley

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**CALENDAR**

**June**

12-17—TRBC Children’s Ministry Camp Ocean Atlantic

19—Dr. Falwell speaks at Shades Mountain Independent Church, Birmingham, Alabama

20—Dr. Falwell speaks at the Grand Hotel Convention in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

26-July 1—TRBC Children’s Ministry Camp Disney

June 30—Dr. Falwell speaks at Word of Life, Schroon Lake, New York
LBN Joins with New FamilyNet TV Network

On April 4, 1988, the "flagship" programs of Liberty Broadcasting Network linked up with FamilyNet, the Family Television Network, on GALAXY III satellite, Transponder 23.

"The Pastor's Study" and "The Old-Time Gospel Hour" join other popular inspirational and entertainment programs in the FamilyNet lineup.

LBN will cease 24-hour operation on the SATCOM satellite, but will continue providing inspirational programs on FamilyNet, according to David Lewis, LBN's director of marketing.

"Joining hands with FamilyNet on the GALAXY III satellite allows more people to receive our programs, because of its high quality signal," Lewis said. "We are totally committed to one mission—to put together innovative television programs for the entire family, programs with a strong, uncompromising spiritual message," he noted.

The 24-hour schedule provides an excellent choice of the best, most respected inspirational programs, music, women's shows, sports, outdoor, children's, health and fitness, movies, and issues-oriented programs. Look for more new, original family-oriented programs coming soon on FamilyNet.

"The Pastor's Study" and "The Old-Time Gospel Hour" reach over 1 million cable homes through FamilyNet alone, and over 9 million potential homes through UHF, low-power TV stations, and satellite dish owners. FamilyNet expects to increase its number of cable subscribers by 3 million by the end of 1988, according to Lewis.

FamilyNet was founded by Dr. Jerry Falwell, who has recruited a team of creative television professionals under the leadership of Atlanta businessman Jerry Nims. Leading FamilyNet's "creative revolution" is LBN President Warren Marcus, who produced and directed the highest-rated syndicated religious program in TV history, "Don't Ask Me, Ask God," seen by over 17 million people.

If you have a home satellite dish FamilyNet invites you to "come on over" to the GALAXY III satellite, Transponder 23, and enjoy quality inspirational and family entertainment programs. If you subscribe to cable ask your cable company about receiving FamilyNet.

For a free program schedule write: FamilyNet, PO Box 2251, Lynchburg, Virginia 24501.

Flames Win All-American Honors

Completing their best overall season ever, the Liberty Flames men's and women's indoor track teams finished with four of their athletes receiving All-American honors.

Paced by All-Americans Annie Fairchild and Lori Lingenfelter, the Lady Flames finished seventh in the NCAA Division II Indoor National Championships at the University of South Dakota. Fairchild, a senior from Dallas, Texas, placed second in the 1,500 meters running 4:33.23.

Lingenfelter, a sophomore from Pittsburgh, ran for a third-place finish in the 800 meters (2:15.40).

The men who won All-American honors representing Liberty were Gerald Swann, a junior from Orlando, Florida, and James Wilson, a junior from Fort Washington, Maryland. Swann's time of 47.88 in the open 400 brought him All-American honors for the second consecutive year. Wilson cleared 7'1/4 in the high jump on his first trip to national competition, securing a third-place finish and All-American recognition. The Liberty men finished 12th overall in the national championship.

LM

On Easter Sunday Dr. Falwell presented Brother R.C. Worley with a plaque dedicating Liberty Mountain's "R.C. Worley Prayer Chapel." On March 27 he presented Mrs. Bill Sheehan with a plaque in memory of her husband to dedicate the "Bill Sheehan Prayer Chapel" at Thomas Road Baptist Church.
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by Ronald E. Hawkins

Stress is the lot of those who feel impotent to change themselves and others.

by Rona W. E. Hawkins

Making the Crooked Straight,

Stress is the lot of those who feel impotent to change themselves and others.

Stress is the lot of those who feel impotent to change themselves and others. Coming to see me as a “last resort,” they express their frustration at failing to achieve their desired end.

Second, they are burdened about themselves. They see no way to experience forgiveness for past deeds. They believe their futures to be bleak and see no bright tomorrow filled with meaning and purpose. Hence, they are restless, sleepless, and stressed to the point where they complain that life no longer holds any great meaning.

Luke, the physician-author, offered timely and excellent advice for the treatment of stress. His advice, if heeded, can do much to alleviate the suffering of God’s people and assist us with the maintenance of joy, a believer’s most valuable treasure.

In Luke 5 we read a touching story of friendship, faith, and forgiveness. Several men were greatly exercised over a sick friend. Having exhausted all other human means, they sought to lay him before Jesus. Undoubtedly, they reasoned that the greatest thing they could do for their friend was to get him to the feet of Jesus. Faith for them was no ethereal theological construct. Simply, it was the settled conviction that if they could get their friend to the feet of Jesus, the Lord would meet the deepest need in his life. You know the rest of the story. That is exactly what Jesus did. He healed the man inside and out. Their ministry of intercession and undiminished resolve to get their friend into the presence of Jesus should inspire us to do likewise.

Stress can be greatly reduced if we would practice putting the cause of our stress at the feet of Jesus. As I counsel with people I frequently see them doing many things to coerce others into compliance. I seldom hear the overstressed talk of committing those for whom they are burdened to the care of Jesus.
In my own life I have recently experienced the joy of such a commitment. Our oldest son went for a year and a half with a broken wrist. Scores of casts and one painful operation later, it remained unhealed. Finally we scheduled a second surgery and asked Christian friends to join us in placing his need daily at the feet of Jesus. A wonderful peace filled us during those days of intercession. The stress from worrying and waiting left us. We did the best thing we could possibly do. We prayed. The pronouncement from the doctors that the wrist was healed came one week before the scheduled second operation. God did that! We helped by placing the boy before the feet of the only One in the universe who could meet his need.

A second source of real stress is uncertainty over what to do about the past or the future. Luke introduces us to a woman in chapter 7 who was a prostitute. She falls in love with Jesus Christ and is marvelously saved. This woman shares two experiences in common with many.

**First, she has an infamous past over which she feels great sorrow. Jesus tells her that, without equivocation, her sins are all forgiven. Every day and night of her sinful past is gone under the obliterating power of divine forgiveness. To be in Christ is truly to be a new creation with all of the old sins passed away. At the feet of Jesus she learns of a free and total pardon—total forgiveness for the past, rooted in a vibrant relationship with Jesus in the present.**

**Second, she sees no future. As an ex-prostitute, she feels that no man will take her for a wife. How will she support herself if she no longer practices the sins of her past? Where will she live? I am certain that these fleeting thoughts crossed her mind as she made her journey to the house of the Pharisee and placed herself in full repentance and worship at the feet of Jesus. All of these stresses, burdens, and questions dissipated as Jesus gave to her the greatest of all possible gifts. He bestowed salvation and peace upon her as He said, “Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.” The woman, like the friends of the sick man, was motivated by one overriding thought. If I can just get to the feet of Jesus, the deepest needs in my life will be met and my stress will be resolved. What was true for these biblical characters is true for us as well.

Stress is the lot of those who feel impotent to change themselves and others. Undiminished and abounding stress is the lot of those who reason that the greatest thing they can do is to rely on their own wisdom and strength. What is your burden? The past, the future, a husband, wife, son, daughter? As disciples of Jesus Christ, when we have done all we can, we have only just begun. We can then go to the greatest resource we have available and lay others and ourselves at the feet of Jesus, who is the Christ, the Lord of glory.
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Retirement Plans for Pastors
by Paul Barringer

Many ministers glibly dismiss the subject of retirement with a quick reply like, “I don’t ever plan to retire; I’d rather burn out than rust out;” or “I’ll be preaching the day I die.” Those are commendable goals, but suppose you lose your voice or mental faculties or become crippled? What if you just need to slow down a little one day? If you have a large congregation, they may keep you on as pastor emeritus. However, few churches can afford to have such ministers on the payroll.

Somehow you have got to strike a balance between the walk of faith and the teaching of passages like Proverbs 21:20, “There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.” Clearly God’s will for most people is to save something for a rainy day.

For many, an IRA (Individual Retirement Account) may meet your needs. That will be the case if $2,000 per year is the most you can afford to save, or if that will provide an adequate retirement income.

But if you wish or need to put away more, there is a retirement plan that will allow you to do so. Officially termed a salary reduction plan, it often goes by its technical name—403(b)—derived from the section of the Internal Revenue Code where the rules are found.

The plan should be able to provide the necessary forms including the reduction agreement. Several types of custodians are available: banks, insurance companies, brokerage firms, and mutual fund companies. The latter, especially no-load families of funds, typically offer lower fees and better selections of diversified investment products.

Paul Barringer is an independent financial planner who heads Financial Advisory Services in Lynchburg, Virginia.

BIBLE FACTS
And I saw a new heaven...

1. There may be a tabernacle (Rev. 15:5; 21:3).
2. There will be no temple (Rev. 21:22).
3. There will be no sea (Rev. 21:1).
4. There will be no tears (Rev. 7:17; 21:4).
5. There will be no sickness (Rev. 22:2).
6. There will be no pain (Rev. 21:4).
7. There will be no death (Isa. 25:8; 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4).
8. There will be no more thirst or hunger (Rev. 7:16).
9. There will be no more sin (Rev. 21:27).
10. There will be no more judgment upon sin (Rev. 22:3).
11. There will be no need for the sun or moon (Rev. 21:23).
12. There will be no night (Rev. 21:25; 22:5).
13. The city will be the bridegroom’s gift to the bride, Christ’s church (Rev. 21:2, 10).
14. It will be shared by saved Israel (Heb. 11:10, 16).
15. It will be shared by the holy angels (Dan. 7:10; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11).
16. The Father will be there (Dan. 7:9; Rev. 4:2-3).
17. The Son will be there (Rev. 5:6; 7:17).
18. The Holy Spirit will be there (Rev. 14:13; 22:17).

Harold L. Willmington. This list is the fourth in a series of facts about heaven. Adapted from Willmington’s Book of Bible Lists, published by Tyndale House Publishers.
Eric’s teacher studied his drawing of the day’s Sunday school lesson. He had drawn a car with a driver and two passengers in the back seat.

“Eric, what does this have to do with our lesson about the Garden of Eden?” his teacher asked.

“Why, that is God driving Adam and Eve out of the garden,” he replied.

At Christmastime, a 5-year-old stood gazing intently at a porcelain nativity scene. Finally she asked her mother, “Where’s that fat man?”

“Who do you mean, honey?” her perplexed mother asked.

“You know, the one in the song—round John Virgin,” the little girl answered.

These examples of misconceptions are typical of wrong ideas students may get when teachers use words alone to convey ideas. There are many alternatives to using words only. The imaginative teacher uses a wide variety of audio and visual aids, as well as class participation, to clarify lesson material, hold the students’ interest, and help apply the lesson. Various methods of teaching will give direct, meaningful experiences from the lesson context. With level 1 representing the least interesting and level 10 the most interesting, here is a sample lesson about a missionary in Mexico, illustrating some things the teacher could do at each level.

**Level 1, Words or Verbal Symbols.** Simply tell the class about Tom Messenger and his work.

**Level 2, Visual Symbols.** Draw stick figures or shapes to portray the missionary, his family, and his mission field. Use a map of the country.

**Level 3, Recordings or Still Pictures.** Use snapshots, prayer cards, or slides. The students get a better idea of what Tom is like and the kind of work he does.

**Level 4, Motion Pictures or Television.** Present movies of the missionary’s work, perhaps with a taped sound track.

**Level 5, Exhibits.** Plan an exhibit of items peculiar to that mission field: a sombrero, pesos, a cactus plant, and a Spanish Bible; or an exhibit of a miniature village like the one where Tom lives, showing the adobe houses, dirt streets, the town well, and the tiny cinder-block church Tom has built.

**Level 6, Field Trips.** An entire Sunday school class probably could not visit Mexico, but they could visit a mission field closer to home—a city mission, a Christian camp, or a Spanish-speaking church.

**Level 7, Demonstrations.** Teach the class some choruses in Spanish, similar to those Tom uses in his church.

**Level 8, Dramatized Experiences.** Drama makes experiences more realistic to the student. The teacher may write a script showing some of the cultural differences between Mexicans and Americans. After practicing, the class might put on a play for the entire church, thus encouraging their interest in missions.

**Level 9, Contrived Experiences.** Try to create an experience that is as much like real life as possible. Give details about a typical day in Tom Messenger’s life in Mexico. Then ask each student to spend a day pretending to be a missionary. During that time, the students would eat the same kind of food Tom eats, follow his schedule, avoid amusements not found in his small village, and so on. The next week they would report their experiences to the class.

**Level 10, Direct, Purposeful Experiences.** Always try to incorporate this level. In our sample lesson, the class could adopt Tom and his family as a class project and correspond with them, as well as send care packages. Have the class keep the church family informed about their missionaries by installing a bulletin board in the foyer with photographs, letters, and current needs of each missionary. The class might start its own missionary outreach to a nursing home, jail, or juvenile home. Students actively involved in projects will be more interested in missions than students who sit passively listening to words. Incorporating these experiences into a lesson takes hard work and imagination, but it is worth the effort when the students are excited and their lives are being changed. Next time you prepare a lesson, be creative and banish the ho-hums from your classroom.

---

Gail D. Robinson
Sunday School Servant
Frederick G. Ensign

Great milestones of church history include 1812, when the American Sunday School Union (now the American Missionary Fellowship, oldest home mission in the country) was established. Its remarkable ministry was to push the founding and expansion of Sunday schools nationwide and to promote teacher training.

Frederick G. Ensign ranks as one of the union’s foremost forces. He was born in 1837 in Pennsylvania, of Puritan ancestry, and grew up on the prairies of Illinois during the great westward migration of the last century.

After serving with the U.S. Christian Commission (a YMCA affiliate) during the Civil War, he joined the ASSU at Chicago in 1870, where he would lead the work in five Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley states.

In the aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, D.L. Moody asked Ensign to help rebuild the YMCA (then a major evangelistic enterprise). Ensign contributed significantly toward raising some $375,000—a tremendous sum in those days and times—for the YMCA and other Moody projects.

For 35 years Ensign served as northwest district superintendent of ASSU, where he was successful at securing competent men as missionaries and raising the necessary funds for their support.

Originally money came from friends in the east; later Chicago’s businessmen were challenged to support the spreading work. Without modern mass communications media, Ensign told of hundreds of churches, thousands of ministry workers, and tens of thousands of conversions that resulted from the society’s earlier work.

With multitudes of immigrants pouring into the area from all over the world, Ensign declared that this territory offered tremendous opportunity for service and even greater fruit.

Highlights of ASSU achievements under Ensign include:
- 16,700 new Sunday schools established.
- more than 3.5 million scholars reached.
- 125,000 Scriptures placed in homes.
- 57,000 professed conversions.
- 14,000 churches formed.

After a brief illness in 1906, Ensign went to be with the Lord. What rich rewards await this ever faithful saint at the judgment seat of Christ.

Sound in the Church

The cassette tape format has become an integral part of the church sound system. Services, in part or in whole, are recorded for duplication and distribution. The copies, usually available at a token price, are used for individual study or given away for evangelistic purposes. Special music tapes may be produced if a church has appropriate talent. Playback of prerecorded accompaniment tracks is popular with many vocalists.

Establishment of a tape ministry requires three basic purchase categories: one or more tape decks, a duplicator, and the tape itself.

Two types of cassette decks are appropriate for mastering. One is a professional product such as would be used in a studio. There are only a handful available, and they are higher in cost than most churches can justify, $1,000 to $2,500 retail. That leaves a myriad of consumer decks from which to choose. Virtually all of these consumer decks will make good recordings, but few have the optimum combination of features, such as real time indication, Dolby C, HX Pro, separate headphone amplification, remote control potential, and of increasing popularity, auto-reversing. If auto-reversing is desired, be sure it is activated by photosensing of the closing leader before it gets to the heads. In that manner, you only miss a syllable or two during the turnaround.

Dual cassette decks do not make acceptable duplicators unless you have the patience of Job. The choice of duplicators is a function of the quality desired, the output capacity required, and the budget. The key issue is music. If only speech is to be copied, any of the audiovisual-type duplicators advertised in church magazines will suffice. If music is to be copied, all of the audiovisual duplicators fall far short of acceptable. Their flutter (short term pitch variations) performance is abysmally bad, and flutter is the one audio defect that even the most untrained listeners can easily detect. Simply stated, if music is to be copied, a professional audio duplicator, not an audiovisual...
product, is essential. The cost is higher, but the superior audio quality and the greater reliability are well worth the difference.

No one would burn fuel oil in a Ferrari. Most churches, however, will utilize budget tapes in their recorders and duplicators that not only perform poorly, but shed oxide that contaminates heads, guides, and rollers.

Using such tapes twice, once for the master and once for the copy, only compounds the problem with two generations. Premium tapes from major brands offer vastly superior performance to most bulk tapes, but are perceived to cost much more.

However, clever shopping can yield premium tapes at close to budget-tape prices. The better tapes should be used, at least for the masters, to insure quality results.

John Westra

For help with specific questions about church sound systems, call John Westra at (800) 222-6460.

This year the North American division of Overseas Missionary Fellowship celebrates 100 years of Christian work in Asia. The mission was begun in England in 1865 as China Inland Mission. Hudson Taylor later challenged North American Christians to join with him in reaching the millions in China’s interior, where no denominational organization had ever worked.

Fourteen men and women responded and sailed to China with Taylor in October 1888. OMRF missionaries eventually worked in every province of China until they were forced to leave the country in 1949. They then began ministry in surrounding Asian countries.

Today OMRF continues its ministry in Asia, bringing contemporary solutions to contemporary problems. In Taiwan, missionaries minister among the workers pouring into the factory zones at a rate of 10,000 per month. In Japan, one OMRF couple is pioneering an alcohol and drug rehabilitation program. In Hong Kong, OMRF staff are evangelizing the thousands of taxi drivers.

Foremost and above these special outreach ministries, OMRF continues the hallmark of its strategy: the support of existing churches and establishment of local bodies where none exist.

Throughout 1988 OMRF is celebrating the anniversary of this significant event in church history by holding special banquets and rallies, and through publications, audio-visual productions, and radio spots. They are praising God for the work accomplished.

The original missionaries who sailed to China with Hudson Taylor in 1888.

George Wilson, consultant and past vice president to Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and Harold Beatty, treasurer/director of accounting of Wycliffe Bible Translators, each received the 1988 Christian Management Award during the 11th annual Christian Management Institute in Miami, Florida.

Christian Ministries Management Association presents this annual award for outstanding contributions to the field of management, based on criteria that include "a significant contribution to the development and advancement of Christian management theory and practice."

Family Forum '88, sponsored by Concerned Women for America, Eagle Forum, Family Research Council, Free Congress Foundation, and Moral Majority, will be held in Atlanta July 14-16, prior to the Democratic National Convention, and August 11-13 in New Orleans for the Republican National Convention.

The conference features general sessions and workshops with members of Congress and other elected officials, and leaders in the pro-family movement. The purpose of the forum is to influence political parties by stressing the importance of the traditional family as the basic unit of society.

For information write to Family Forum '88, 721 Second Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002.
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SIBLING RIVALRY IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD
by Jay E. Adams

This is a useful book on sibling (brothers and sisters in Christ) rivalry in the modern church, by a well-known counselor and authority on church life. Adams makes his points through skillful use of biblical illustrations, showing for example that the feelings between Cain and Abel, resulting in the world's first homicide, were based on sibling rivalry. As in his other books on church life, Adams provides practical information to help resolve struggles between brethren in the church.

The author's mixing of childhood sibling rivalry with adult rivalry in the church may be a bit confusing. He states that sibling rivalry is not a natural part of childhood, because Jesus did not experience such feelings. But the Bible is silent on much of the childhood of our Saviour, and of course Jesus was sinless, a quality none of our children can claim to possess.

In spite of the mixed metaphors, Sibling Rivalry in the Household of God is worthwhile for those interested in church polity. But note, this is not a book on children and their experiences with sibling rivalry. (Accent Books, 155 pp., $7.95) David R. Miller

BEYOND GRADUATION
by Denny Rydberg

Beyond Graduation is a practical book for high school graduates. The author begins with remembrances of his graduation as he explains the difference between “commencement” and “graduation.” (The first “signals beginning or starting up;” the second “indicates you’ve finished the race . . . run the course.”) Each of the 15 chapters gives helpful hints and advice on facing life on your own. Topics such as risktaking, decision making, managing time, forgiveness, choosing a life partner, and others are addressed.

Of special interest are columns scattered throughout, entitled “What I’d Do Differently.” These tidbits present personal thoughts from people like Ruth Senter (author and editor of Christian Life) to offer graduates insight into what is important in life.
...Of course not! Without the wheels it cannot be used as a vehicle of transportation. That’s like the Bible without the Prophetic Word. Christians that don’t heed the Word of Prophecy are just existing. They don’t know where they are going. Revelation, the last book of the Bible, makes the purpose of prophecy very plain, “To show unto his servants things that must shortly come to pass.” It also says, “Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy.” For these simple reasons we should read the Prophetic Word so we can know what will happen in the near future.

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In spite of the book's content being all black and white, the design is very attractive and lively. A nice gift for a graduate or college student. (Zondervan Publishing House, 143 pp., $12.95)

Cindy B. Gunter

**FINDING THE RIGHT PRESCRIPTION**

by Jack Eckerd and Charles Paul Conn

Jack Eckerd's *Finding the Right Prescription* is another autobiography by a successful Christian businessman. The largest section of the volume is devoted to Eckerd's account of his creation of the Eckerd Drug chain. He feels that three early business decisions underlay the success of this corporation. They were: pioneering ventures in senior-citizen discounts, two-for-one film offers, and legally contesting Florida's Fair Trade (price-fixing) laws.

He devotes considerable detail to his political career. Eckerd fought as a Republican candidate for governor of Florida twice, and senator once. He also served under President Ford as senior administrator of the General Services Administration.

Finally Eckerd discusses his conversion process, which occurred through the aid of Charles Colson and other close friends. Then he shows how that altered his business methods. The most famous example of the latter being his decision that his stores voluntarily remove Playboy and related pornography from their shelves. (Fleming H. Revell Company, 190 pp., $12.95)

**Homer H. Blass**

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Because of the book's poor organization, I had special difficulty following his spiritual growth, since it is never clear when early grandmotherly influence ended and his personal commitment to Christ as Saviour began. However, if you like the current crop of business success stories, you will find this enjoyable reading. (Tyndale House, 244 pp., $10.95)

**HHB**

**WITNESSING WITHOUT FEAR**

by Bill Bright

If you were starting a business and wanted advice, you would go to someone who had been successful, and had a pioneer record. Bill Bright and Campus Crusade have a record of great success in winning people to Christ and follow-up of converts. With over 16,000 on staff and millions won to Christ, when Bill Bright speaks, people listen.

The book is Christ-centered. Bright's emphasis on presenting Christ and the gospel without getting detoured into debate is excellent.

The book is practical. Most do not witness because they don't have the tools. The *Four Spiritual Laws* is a superb tool everyone can use and yet add his own personality into the presentation. There is a very good section on how to handle common objections.

The book is logical. Bright points out that with the ones you contact frequently your approach should be less direct, and he admonishes, "go slow." He asks, "What is the most important thing that ever happened to you?" The answer, of course, is receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. What then is the most important thing you can do for others? Introduce them to Christ, obviously.

The book is illustrative, as the Gospels themselves, with very lucid stories and examples of points emphasized.

The book is balanced. The need of the witness to live a spiritual life and love people is so important. Then the need of follow-up to teach new converts how to walk in the Spirit is stressed and taught.

The book is simple. Perhaps the most important thing in the book is the warning against "presentation fatigue," the danger of being too complicated in presenting the gospel. This book is the heart and soul of Campus Crusade. It is a must for any soulwinner. (Here's Life Publishers, 215 pp., $795)
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Death Act Dies in California

A ballot initiative that would have allowed terminally ill patients to receive a lethal injection has been defeated in California.

The Humane and Dignified Death Act, sponsored by a Los Angeles-based, pro-euthanasia organization, needed more than 372,000 petitioners to have the initiative added to the ballot this November. But the initiative received just over 200,000 signers, gathered primarily by the Hemlock Society, an organization supporting the "rights" of patients to "ask their doctors for help in dying."

Had the act passed it would have allowed patients to sign a directive "instructing his or her physician to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining procedures or, if suffering from a terminal condition, to administer aid-in-dying." The patient would have been able to receive the "aid-in-dying" only if he was terminally ill with less than six months to live.

The Death Act was similar to euthanasia practices in the Netherlands. Eugene Sutorius, a lawyer for the Dutch Voluntary Euthanasia Society, said thousands die annually in the Netherlands from either lethal drugs or injections administered by doctors. Sutorius, who was speaking at the Seventh Annual World Federation of Right-to-Die Societies in San Francisco, said it is impossible to give an exact number of euthanasia deaths in the Netherlands because many doctors, to avoid legal complications, still report the deaths as "natural" rather than "doctor administered." Though euthanasia has been ruled legal by Dutch courts, doctors are still hesitant of being brought to trial for giving aid-in-dying.

Sutorius said euthanasia became legal in the Netherlands as a result of a 1973 court case that gave doctors guidelines on when lethal injections or drugs may be administered.

The court guidelines required that there is evidence the patient requested the aid-in-dying; that the patient has a thorough understanding of his choices of treatment; that the patient's suffering is unbearable and irreversible; the patient need not be terminally ill; and the lethal injection or drug must be administered by a qualified physician.

Though more than 300 court cases have been filed against doctors who have "euthanized" their patients, only 90 per cent of these cases ever reach the courts. Currently, only seven doctors have gone to trial for wrongfully administering aid-in-dying, and among these only one has been sentenced to jail.

The practice in the Netherlands does differ in some aspects from that which is being advocated in the United States. In the Netherlands a patient, as mentioned, need not be terminally ill. In fact, the patient need only demonstrate that his "mental or physical suffering is unbearable." Furthermore, the patient need not prove medically the suffering is unbearable, only that the patient perceives the suffering to be so, establishing, in effect, legalized suicide.

Legalized euthanasia does not apply to psychiatric patients in the Netherlands. But Sutorius said many are asking, "Why don't psychiatric patients have the same rights as everybody else?" Primarily, psychiatric patients are not included because that would smack of Hitler's eugenics program to purify the human race.

Sutorius said there are seven reasons why the Netherlands are the first Western country to practice active euthanasia. Foremost is that the Catholic church is weak in the Netherlands. "It makes it easier to set up our guidelines and see how far we can go," Sutorius said.

Also, the Netherlands does not have to deal with the stigma of Nazi Germany which other European countries would have to overcome.

But the Netherlands' active euthanasia program came under heavy criticism recently when a Dutch doctor admitted giving deadly pills to terminally ill youngsters with cancer.

"Doctors should not participate in the execution of people. There's not much difference between doing it with a lethal injection or a .45."

—Dr. Laurens White
“Mental defectives do not have a right to life, and therefore might be killed for food—if we should develop a taste for human flesh—or for the purpose of scientific experimentation.”
—Peter Singer

Cancer specialist Tom Voute admitted giving the fatal pills to about six teenage patients a year. Voute raised controversy because he did not always supervise his patients’ death (having sent many home to die) and because he did not always obtain the consent of the children’s parents before handing out the pills.

Though illegal in the United States, active euthanasia is not uncommon. Active euthanasia occurs when a doctor administers the death agent, such as a lethal injection. Passive euthanasia occurs when a doctor simply withdraws life-support equipment.

In a survey of California physicians conducted by Tom Johnson and Associates on behalf of the National Hemlock Society, 23 percent of the doctors replying said they have taken steps to bring about the death of a patient who requested it.

Furthermore, 69 percent agreed that it was sometimes right to hasten a patient’s death. If active euthanasia were legal, 51 percent said they would practice aid-in-dying.

There is apparent support for active euthanasia among the public as well. In a Roper survey conducted in 1986, 62 percent said aid-in-dying should be legalized. Surprisingly, opinions were very consistent regardless of a person’s sex, education, political affiliation, political philosophy, or geographic area. The only significant difference was based on race. Only 46 percent of the black population supported active euthanasia.

The Humane and Dignified Death Act in California was supported by the California State Bar Association. The association argued that it supported the initiative because there was no requirement that physicians or patients who objected would have to comply.

On the other hand, the California Medical Association opposed the Death Act. Dr. Laurens White, president of the CMA, said doctors ought to give “care in dying” not “care in killing.” Speaking at the World Federation of Right-to-Die Societies, White said many patients may not be happy with their terminal plight, but this does not mean “doctors should solve this human frailty by killing people.”

White added that many patients who request death on Monday may want to live on Friday, that a doctor’s prognosis is not always accurate, and that “doctors should not participate in the execution of people. There’s not much difference,” he said, “between doing it with a lethal injection or a 45.”

The World Federation for Right-to-Die Societies conference was held just three weeks prior to the signing deadline of the Death Act initiative.

The conference, in part, was supposed to alleviate fears concerning the initiative, but it failed to address two important problems of aid-in-dying.

The first is surrogate decision making. That is, the problem of third parties making life-and-death decisions for mentally incapacitated patients. No mention was made of such possible abuses as a wife arguing for withdrawal of life support or administration of lethal injection of an AIDS-infected husband. The wife could be embarrassed, angered, or hurt that her husband had been hiding homosexuality, or drug use, or that he may have transmitted the disease to her.

Secondly, the conference ignored the statements of some who would like to apply lethal injections to a broader public. Professor Peter Singer, a moral ethicist, has stated that we have an obligation to kill humans who have failed to reach “moral personhood” (Matters of Life and Death, 1980, Temple University Press). The term “moral personhood” applies only to humans who have certain qualities of life, such as the ability to reason, anticipate the future, and lead productive lives. Those humans failing this standard lose their “moral personhood” and may be killed.

Argued Singer, “This involves holding that mental defectives do not have a right to life, and therefore might be killed for food—if we should develop a taste for human flesh—or [and this might appeal to some people] for the purpose of scientific experimentation.”

Joseph Fletcher, a pioneer in the right-to-die movement, stated, “Humans without some minimum of intelligence or mental capacity are not persons, no matter how many of their organs are active, no matter how spontaneous their living processes are.”

Of idiots, he says, “They are not, never were, and never will be in any degree responsible. Idiots, that is to say, are not human.”

When asked why these two problems with active euthanasia were ignored, Derek Humphry, director of the conference, said these issues were appropriately addressed at previous conferences and “there was no need to go over them again.”

The Death Act initiative was also opposed by the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force in Steubenville, Ohio.

In a prepared statement delivered at the World Federation of Right-to-Die Societies conference, the Task Force stated, “Simply by facts of demographics, by the year 2000, 35 million Americans over the age of 65 could be affected by euthanasia laws and policies. In an age of cost containment, quality of life judgments, attitudes that reflect ‘better dead than disabled,’ ‘better dead than dependent,’ ‘better dead than old,’ we cannot risk unleashing a deadly epidemic of killing—even in the name of compassion.”

—Joseph Fletcher

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James Dobson Resigns from Pregnancy Panel

James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family; William Pierce; and Terry Olson all resigned March 3 from an advisory group to the Panel on Teen Pregnancy Prevention, established by the Department of Health and Human Services.

According to Otis Bowen, secretary for HHS, the teen pregnancy panel was created with the goal of "helping teens to gain the courage and the self-respect they need to say 'no' to sexual involvement."

Yet three advisory group members: Dobson; Pierce, president of the National Committee for Adoption; and Olson, associate dean at Brigham Young University, found that the panel members were ignoring Bowen's directives by endorsing more sex education and the distribution of contraceptives.

According to Dobson, the panel members "have ignored [Bowen's] charge and substituted their own ideology and course of action—that is, the wholesale distribution of condoms to teenagers, supported by so-called value-free advice about sexuality."

In his statement to the press, Pierce observed, "The panel and its statements do not reflect the secretary's thinking...nor, we think, the thinking of most communities, most parents of teens, and most organizations who deal with teens at the local level. Therefore, further participation would be inappropriate, and we have written the secretary today, resigning as a resource member."

Olson expressed similar concerns about the pregnancy panel. "They [the panel members] have adopted an ideology which not only goes against Secretary Bowen, they have gone against current research; they have gone against what is practical; and they have gone against common sense."

Christian Groups Will Refrain from Teaching in Public Schools

TAZEWELL, Tenn.—Claiming a "victory for the separation of the church and state," a lawyer here says he has succeeded in keeping two religious organizations from conducting Bible sessions in the county schools.

The Children's Bible Mission Ministries and Sports World Ministries have agreed to settle a federal lawsuit and refrain from "religious proselytizing during public school hours on public premises."

CBM's attorney, Larry Crain, says the religious groups agreed to settle the case because of a new policy passed in November by the local county school board. That policy states that children will be allowed to leave school property at specific times to receive religious instruction on private property.

However, organizations interested in conducting private Bible studies must first make a request to the county school board. Prior to granting the request, the school board reserves the right to consider the content and location of the lessons, as well as how the children will be transported to and from the meetings, says Dennis Peters, superintendent of Claibourn County Schools.

Still, Crain is pleased with the decision. "CBM has no interest in going back into the schools" since the board's ruling, he says.

Pet Cemetery Cremates Fetuses

MILWAUKEE—The owners of a pet cemetery here used their facility's crematorium to dispose of human fetuses for years, city officials discovered recently.

The Pet Lawn Cemetery has been ordered to halt the practice, which the Milwaukee Building Inspection Department says violates zoning laws regulating the disposal of "medical waste."

However, Richard and Sara Bernier, the cemetery's owners, say they actually believed the procedure was legal. They also say they had disposal contracts with local abortion clinics.

Fetuses allegedly were not burned with the bodies of dogs and cats, and the owners say the ashes were disposed of in a proper manner. However, the discovery that fetuses were being burned in the ovens outrages many local pro-life groups.

Ironically, "The pets get the tombstone, the flowers, and the funeral, and the aborted babies are treated like garbage," says Monica Migliorino, director of the anti-abortion organization Citizens for Life.

Others compare the practice to the cremation of Jews during World War II. City officials have given the couple 30 days to stop the practice.

Supreme Court Urged to Uphold Adolescent Family Life Act

The Reagan administration is urging the Supreme Court to uphold the Adolescent Family Life Act.

The act, which was recently struck down in U.S. District Court, allows the federal government to make payments to religious groups that promote sexual abstinence among teens.

However, it has evoked harsh criticism from the American Civil Liberties Union and other proponents of abortion. These groups derisively refer to the act as the "federal chastity act" and claim it violates constitutional separation of church and state.
In March, Solicitor General Charles Fried asked the Supreme Court to reinstate a key portion of the law allowing the government to continue providing the organizations with federal funds.

"The statute is plainly constitutional on its face," he says.

However, ACLU attorney Janet Beneshof disagrees. "In the hands of religious authorities, it can be misguided," she says. "Our position is that this is a statute that funds religious organizations to teach sex education.

"Since you can't fund these organizations to teach math, this is unconstitutional. They're blatantly funding religious groups to teach not only religion, but anti-abortion propaganda,'" she told the Associated Press in March.

In Supreme Court legal briefs, the government acknowledged "problems" with the legislation, but says they have been corrected.

Eighty-two organizations presently split approximately $10 million in federal funds. A ruling on the case is expected before the Court convenes for its summer break in July.

Activists Claim Victory When Hospital Bans Elective Abortions

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (RNS)—Anti-abortion activists here are claiming a victory after their persistent picketing and letter-writing (combined with a successful campaign to divide a medical staff) apparently led to a decision by the board of the Saint Paul-Ramsey Medical Center to ban elective abortions.

"Saint Paul-Ramsey became the most picketed and controversial hospital in the nation," said Franciscan Brother Paul O'Donnell, president of Pro-Life Action Ministries, which has demonstrated at the hospital since 1985.

Some have questioned the constitutionality of the March 23 vote to ban elective abortions, which are permitted under federal law. Others criticized the decision because it was based on a concern about hospital image and the loss of business caused by the activities of the picketers. The ban will not become effective until the proposal can be discussed by the hospital's parent organization, Ramsey HealthCare.

The acting chairman of Ramsey HealthCare, Ramsey County Commissioner Ruby Hunt, said that hospital officials agreed to her request that the ban be delayed. She said it is unlikely that her board will try to reverse the hospital board's decision.

Hal Norgard, a county commissioner who sits on the medical center board and supported the ban, said financial concerns were of paramount importance. "Every time you have people picketing... it hurts business," he said. "I feel it's a matter of survival."

Saint Paul-Ramsey is a quasi-public hospital with links to the city and county. It receives several million dollars a year from the county to provide medical care for poor people. It is one of the region's largest abortion centers, and it is the primary referral center for abortions for women in the second trimester of pregnancy.
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Let's Join the War on Drugs

by Truman Dollar

Recently in the city of Detroit an 18-year-old boy, whom Detroit papers dubbed Rick (White Boy) Wershe, was indicted for running a massive drug ring. His organization reportedly was the largest organization in the Detroit area. His bond was set at $200,000. Within 24 hours he was free on bail. Such stories have become common in America.

ABC News called the American drug problem a “plague upon our land.” Ted Kopel said, “Twenty-five million Americans are involved in some form of illegal substance abuse.” The Wall Street Journal reports that one in six U.S. workers uses drugs. Americans spend between $15 billion and $20 billion each year on cocaine alone.

Drugs are available in virtually every American city, within easy reach of every citizen in major urban areas—Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Detroit, Miami. Crack cocaine is affordable for junior high school kids, currently at three dollars a vial. Modern-day Mafias, often centered around ethnic ties, create massive and effective distribution systems. Teens are systematically recruited because laws favor youthful offenders, and young people find profits of $2,000 a day irresistible.

The drug scourge has reorganized America. It touches everything and everybody. A recent Justice Department study reported that 79 percent of all criminal defendants tested positive for drug use. The profits are so astronomical that comparisons with prohibition are ludicrous. Respected businessmen, banks, police officials, and heads of state, such as General Manuel Noriega in Panama, have been involved. The U.S. government admits that its enforcement efforts barely impact the drug traffic, even though it reports seizing over $500 million worth of illegal drugs in 1987 drug arrests.

Government officials fighting violent teen drug groups in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York liken the battle to guerrilla warfare with an economic motive. Jamaican gangs alone have become involved in over 800 murders. Drug gangs routinely use automatic weapons—AK-47s and Uzis. Urban police use automatic pistols to even the odds. Without exaggeration, this war in our land threatens our national security—our survival. Some believe the drug traffic is far more threatening for America than is President Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua or the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.

Strangely, while American Fundamentalists organize to oppose abortion, pornography, and attacks on the traditional family, we sit on the sidelines like spectators during this national drug threat.

While American Fundamentalists organize to oppose abortion, pornography, and attacks on the traditional family, we sit on the sidelines like spectators during this national drug threat.

local governments in their efforts to reduce drug demand.

We must be vocal. Every pulpit must vociferously oppose drugs. Christian schools must teach students about the effects, dangers, and long-term costs of drugs. But Christian schools and pastors preaching sermons against drugs cannot do the job alone. We must bring in physicians, law enforcement officials, former addicts, and others who know the price to be paid for a life ravaged by drugs.

We must encourage our church members to support officials who are aggressive in the war against drug trafficking. We should support mandatory sentencing for drug pushers and big-time dealers.

We must encourage government and industrial leaders in their testing programs. The ACLU fights every move of those involved in programs to stop illegal drug use. We must wholeheartedly support efforts to win the war on drugs.

Fighting the war on drugs is not capitulation to a “social gospel.” It is fighting sin. Every drug addict needs Christ. If the gospel has no power to deliver drug addicts, it is not worth presenting to every creature. Indeed, no amount of social gospel will solve this problem. Jesus is the answer. Our only hope for victory lies in getting the gospel to every addict.

But churches must also support drug rehabilitation. The Bible has the answer. Secular drug counseling services frequently use methods and principles that Bible-believing Christians oppose. We must build and staff programs for former drug addicts that are based on godly principles.

Tom Mailairas of Manhattan Bible Church has begun a valiant and effective program, but he cannot do it alone. He is only able to treat 30 addicts at a time. We need 1,000 programs like his to make any impact. We need to help Mailairas.

Involvement is difficult and it is costly, but we cannot avoid it. Every life that hangs in the balance is a soul for whom Christ died. We are our brothers’ keepers—and the keepers of our nation. We cannot allow this plague to continue its relentless ravaging of our land and people.
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