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Did you read that cover article in TIME magazine a few months ago on the New Age Movement? What a sad, odd mixture it is: An important truth (the spiritual realm exists, beyond the material realm), plus lots of superstitions, and practices based on Eastern religions. The Hindu foundation of the whole thing is seen in quotes like these: “You are God. You are, each and everyone, part of the Second Coming.” “Everybody is God, co-creator of the universe.”

But since I was already somewhat familiar with their teachings, what struck me the most was something else. Over and over the article revealed why people are flocking into this movement. What explains this growth? What are people seeking as they turn to a religion like this? Notice the following statements (the emphasis in the quotations is mine).

(1) “Maybe it is time for people to know they have HELP” (from outer space). Feeling their inadequacy and weakness, folks yearn for help. Feeling awfully lonesome in a cosmos which science says is vast and empty, people hope something or someone exists out there who can and will come to our aid.

(2) “Many people see themselves as living in a pretty meaning- less world, and there is a profound cry for MEANING.” Yes, life’s riddles are deeply perplexing. Why is there life? Why death? Why pain and why pleasure? Why love and why hate? Is there any sense to it all? Do I as an individual matter? Does my life have significance?

(3) “People are latching onto a BELIEF SYSTEM to get CERTAINTY where there is no certainty.” Yes, various philosophies and religions give differing answers to question #2, the meaning of life. But which answer is right, and how can we know for sure?

(4) Shirley MacLaine, the best known prophetess of the movement, said: “I’m just a human being TRYING TO FIND SOME ANSWERS ABOUT WHAT WE’RE DOING HERE, WHERE WE CAME FROM AND WHERE WE’RE GOING.” We are back to the question of meaning, as it relates to our origin and destiny. Does history have any purpose? Is it going somewhere? Or is everything just some kind of sick joke?

**WE HAVE THE ANSWERS!**

Don’t those statements make your heart ache? How profoundly sad it is that people remain ignorant about life’s most basic questions, when God has revealed the answers.
Help from outer space? Yes—"my help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." "Come to me, all who are burdened and weighed down, and I will give you rest." "You were sanctified, you were justified in the name of Christ and by the Spirit of our God." On and on we could go.

Meaning in life and in history? Knowing what we're doing here, and where we came from and where we're going? Oh, aren't you thankful for Genesis 1-3, and the first half of Ephesians, and the closing chapters of Revelation (among other passages that could be mentioned)?

Certainty? Having assurance about what we believe in and hope for? Praise God for fulfilled prophecies, the testimonies of transformed lives, and most of all an empty tomb and a living, present Savior.

A belief system to help us find coherence amid the chaos of various beliefs and ideas regarding what is true and what is right? Well, Paul's letter to the Romans would be a good place to start. And getting a bird's-eye survey of God's plan of redemption through the ages is a big help, too.

Friends, we have what the world is looking for. Oh, I don't mean we have all the answers to all the questions that agitate human hearts and minds. We too face many perplexities—that promising young life snuffed out by brutal murder; that Christian woker dying from cancer; that elderly saint lying month after month in a coma; etc. No, we don't have all the answers to life's mysteries and agonies, and we should not cockily pretend that we do. I believe this is one of the basic lessons of Ecclesiastes: don't think you know it all. Yet, despite the mysteries and agonies, on the basis of what we do know, it just makes sense to fear God and keep His commandments and trustingly leave life's heartbreaks and inequities with Him.

And despite our limitations, it's still true: we have what people are yearning for. Let's share it with them freely. Sadly, many of them don't want it enough to receive it, for men love darkness rather than light. But others are true seekers, and when we tell them of the Way they will respond with joy, "Finally I have found Him! At last my heart has found Life and Truth and God!"

Theme: PARENTS AND CHILDREN

"DADS"

C. Dennis Kaufman

Some men are running from it. Others are throwing up their hands in despair. Still others harbor a growing anxiety deep within where no one can see.

What is producing these unhealthy reactions? Fatherhood!
In case you have not noticed, we live in an age where it is becoming more and more complicated to be a good dad. The changing roles of women in our society have produced a chain reaction in families that has left many men confused and frustrated. As the world has become more corrupt, we find it more difficult to trust our children. We become paranoid when we stop to consider all the awful things that can happen to kids these days. Thus, it is tempting to tighten the reins upon young people who need to be experiencing more independence. Leading a family in the midst of such chaos is a challenging responsibility.

I am very grateful that at times like these we can turn to some timeless principles revealed in Scripture. Let me share with you three attributes of our Heavenly Father that I believe will help all of us in the monumental task of fathering.

**UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**

We live in an extremely competitive society. It is a place where you can easily get the message, “you’re no good.” The beautiful, the athletic, and the high achievers are rewarded while many of us average folks feel “tossed aside.” Even the church can get trapped in this madness. We call it “works righteousness,” and it puts us on the treadmill of trying to earn God’s approval. Not surprisingly, families also suffer from this conditional kind of love, where grace is absent.

From the time children are born, parents are susceptible to the “comparison syndrome.” My child walked at 3 months! My kid could tell time at one year! Well, that’s nothing, my child came out of the womb knowing her ABC’s! Pardon my exaggeration. We must ask ourselves if this pushing of our children to achieve is for their well-being or our ego. And what if our children do not meet our standards, what then?

The Lord makes no such errors. He models an unconditional love which is a basic need for all of us. Certainly God encourages us to give our best for His sake, but at the same time He realizes we are children. His love for us is not a fluctuating emotion that leaves us unsure and anxious about His fatherhood. The Bible, again and again, reassures us that God loved us while we were sinners and there is nothing that can separate us from His compassion.

Fathers today must make every attempt to reproduce this grace in the home. The maturing process is smoother when we are loved because of who we are rather than for what we do.

**DISCIPLINE**

Balance is important for dads. Love without discipline can produce brattish results. Discipline without love can yield angry, broken-spirited people. The Lord places a high premium upon both nurture and admonition (Eph. 6:4).

Please understand that the word “discipline” is not just punishment. It includes chastening, but in a broader sense involves training. We often speak of the discipline of an athlete or a soldier. The apostle Paul uses both of these analogies to describe the growth process in Christ.
In Hebrews 12:1-13, the writer skillfully portrays God’s discipline of His sons. He leads us through various hardships that we may experience a harvest of righteousness and peace. To withhold discipline is clearly seen as a non-loving behavior.

In my counseling ministry, I have observed many parents who work so hard to please their children that they shun this vital element of discipline. There is an incredible drive within many of us to have our children like us. We think we can produce this desired end by doing everything they want. Not so! The kids that often grow up most angry at their parents are those who in adolescence and young adulthood find they are ill-equipped to deal with life. Children who grow up without limits set by their parents are those who are most susceptible to alcohol/drug problems and unsuccessful marriages.

Fathers play a key role in moving their children from the dependence of the crib to adulthood where they can be capable of independent thought, good judgment, and faith in God.

**GIVING GOOD GIFTS**

In such familiar verses as Mt. 7:11 and James 1:17, God is heralded as a giver of good gifts. This is also a part of His exalted role as Heavenly Father, and a tremendous quality for dads to imitate.

I am not talking about giving a Corvette on the Sixteenth birthday, or designer jeans, or even a private phone. Not everyone can give those, nor would some want to. Some of the finest presents we can give are a spiritual heritage, love, concern, a listening ear, empathy, fair limitations and restrictions, consistent discipline, a good education, and the gift of our time. Some of my best memories are those of spending time with my dad. He gave me a part of himself as he taught me how to hit a ball, play golf, and catch fish. The toys and the clothes and the gadgets will wear out, but the relationships between father and child can be special as long as we live.

God has given us His Son. To those who are in Christ, He gives the gift of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, He knows how to give good gifts to His children. It is my prayer and hope that dads today can also give the greatest gifts. May the Lord give us strength to be Christ-like role models and help us guide our children toward eternal life in Jesus.

**THE FINE ART OF MOTHERING**

Leslie B. Flynn

A school teacher was giving a lesson in fractions. “Johnny, suppose there were 7 in your family–5 children, and a mother, and a father–a total of 7. And suppose there was pie for dessert. What fraction of the pie would you get?”

Johnny answered, “One-sixth.”

“But you don’t understand,” replied the teacher. “Don’t you know about fractions?”

“I know about fractions, and I know about mothers, too,” remarked Johnny. “Mother would say she didn’t want any!”
A mother's love is proverbial. During inspection on a weekend outing, a scoutmaster found an umbrella hidden in the bedroll of a young camper. Puzzled, the scoutmaster asked, "Why did you bring an umbrella on a scouting trip?" The tenderfoot sighed, "Sir, did you ever have a mother?"

**MANY SKILLS**

Think how many skills a mother must possess. She must know something about teaching, interior decorating, cooking, dietetics, psychology, hygiene, social relations, clothing, household equipment, and a host of other things. Isn't it strange how we elevate careers and lower homemaking to the commonplace? If a woman teaches someone else's children, if she decorates some other home, if she becomes an institutional menu-maker, or if she nurses the needs of others, she is given professional status. But if she fills these roles at home, she's "just a mother." All too often, a mother's many skills are overlooked.

**LONG HOURS**

Motherhood also demands long hours. This is especially true if a woman must also work outside the home.

"Nobody knows of the work it makes
To keep the home together,
Nobody knows of the steps it takes,
Nobody knows—but mother."

Yes, mothers work hard. And they should be honored. A mother provides good physical and material care for her children; she gives them large doses of tender, loving care. She sees to it that they do their homework and learn their lessons. But does that discharge her responsibility?

**LASTING INFLUENCE**

A mother's job is far more than providing for the temporal welfare of her children. She must give moral and spiritual care as well. A mother was once asked, "Do you do any writing?" "Oh, yes," replied the mother. "I'm writing two books—'John' and 'Mary.' My business is to write on the minds and hearts of my children the lessons they will never forget.

Profound is the influence of a mother—"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Since a child is soft and impressionable, a mother largely shapes her child's values and morals.

**SPIRITUAL STRENGTH**

The task of mothering would be overwhelming if not for an unfailling Source of help. The key to successful mothering is having a personal relationship to God. The Bible says that God's son, Jesus Christ, died for our sins and rose from the dead to offer us this relationship: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Once you have been born into the family of God through faith in Jesus Christ, you can call upon God as your Father for help to meet your every problem and need.

Then, with this as the starting point, it is your joyful responsibility to bring up your children in a truly Christian home. God wants to help you in the fine art of mothering!
A MOTHER'S QUESTION

SHOULD A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WOMAN STAY HOME?

Bonnie Angel

As a working mother, I began to wonder, What is a mother's position toward a job outside the home? I am concerned about how to live a worthwhile life. My Lord admonishes me to be a good steward of the talents he has given me. How should I handle it when he has given me an ability that is salable in the career market and he has also given me children at home?

I know that there are times when women must work. But what of women who work for a second income? The advantages of this income are rewarding and desirable. It may mean a new car, a summer vacation, a new wardrobe or ham sandwiches instead of peanut butter. None of these reasons is particularly worldly or carnal.

I have four children, and for years I worked. There was a time when it was an absolute necessity, but then I continued because it had become a pattern of life for me and I couldn't imagine how we would get by without my salary.

But the Lord began to lead and direct my thoughts. It seemed that everything I read would point out situations and problems that stemmed from a woman's absence from the home. One day in his sermon our pastor mentioned that a little child sitting on the floor playing with his blocks isn't impressed that his father is out late making $50,000 a year for him. He is only impressed if his father is on the floor playing with him. Naturally I substituted "mother" into this statement and heard the message loud and clear.

Then I read a short inspirational message by Peter Marshall called the "Keepers of the Springs." The words rang in my ears: "The modern challenge to motherhood is the eternal challenge—that of being godly women... We hear about... beautiful women, smart women, sophisticated women, career women, talented women... but so seldom do we hear of a godly woman. ... I believe women come nearer fulfilling their God-given function in the home than anywhere else."

At this time in my personal devotions I was studying the book of Luke. Chapter 12 asks, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time?" This text turns out to be pretty descriptive of motherhood. I pondered... my Master is God. I am training my children to be His servants. Then I read, "It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns."

I am to receive God's favor for keeping on with the task at hand, being a good steward of his servants. This Scripture goes on to describe the advantages and disadvantages of doing what the Master puts in our charge. It warns us not to slack off because we think it will be a long time before Jesus returns. I tried to evaluate my rea-
sons for working. I weighed what I was gaining by what I was giving up. Would the condition of my job or the condition of my children be more important if I knew Jesus would return in one year?

The inner conviction grew until I knew that I had to act. I was a successful businesswoman. I had reached several new plateaus for women in my field. The temptation to stay was great.

I discussed my feelings and conclusions with my husband, and we prayed about it together. We discussed the things that we as a family would be forced to give up without my income. It was not a simple decision. But I gave my notice at work and began to ease out of my responsibilities.

That was a year and a half ago. Life has not been all a bed of roses, but looking back, there have been many more blessings and positive achievements than negative ones. The time has flown by, and I smile as I recall many of the things that I have learned.

Those first few moments when the children come home from school are so dramatic: the breathless account of the mean dog down the street that they worried about... the pride of accomplishment in the papers they hold tightly in their fists... the time of debate and analytical discussion over their teachers' seemingly unfair actions. Each day I become better acquainted with my children's thoughts, questions and needs.

The most noticeable need for my presence at home has come from my teen-agers. After being home for a short time I received a comment from our son that dynamically gave me assurance that I was where I belonged. I had given him some minor instruction, and he snapped back, "I've already raised myself. Why are you trying to tell me what to do now?"

It wasn't a pleasant thing to hear, but it has halted all thoughts of going back to work for a few years!

An unexpected problem flowed gradually into my life and almost drowned me before I realized what was happening. When people find that you are not working, they think you have time for everything and you can easily become busier than when you were working. I had to learn to say "no"!

Each age group has been able to inspect the new generation and say, "Things aren't as they used to be," but I am appalled at the variety of attractions that are offered to children today. Children, like all of us, look for somewhere to be loved and needed. This warmth can be counterfeited at the game center, the bowling alley, the school playground, the park or in the van parked down the street. I am more convinced than ever that it takes a mother's full-time giving of love, encouragement and support even to come close to competing with what the world offers.

Another thing that I always thought I needed was the challenge of the career world. Now I have found that balancing the budget on one income instead of two takes all the skill, planning and effort of any fulltime job. A text that has sustained me through many dark moments this year comes from Matthew 6 where I am told to lay up my treasures in heaven and not on earth. Devoting ourselves to
our homes and families is definitely a step in laying up our treasures in heaven. The checkbook will humbly prove to us that we aren't laying them up on earth! And even though our tithe is smaller now, I like to think that Jesus is blessing it and multiplying it as he did the loaves and fishes.

I know that as a Christian I am admonished to become active in fighting the moral issues of our day. I must be different from the world, and a marvelous place to start is at my own address!

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Building Memories

Jane Landreth

"Remember that church picnic we went to last summer? We had so much fun. I hope we have another one this year."

"This is the best birthday I've had. I'm going to remember it forever."

"Remember when we made that big snowman on the hill? That was fun. Let's do it again sometime."

I am sure you have heard words similar to these as your children have recalled the pleasant memories that they have had. Many times our children's conversation is sprinkled with, "Remember when ..." or "I'll always remember ..." Children enjoy remembering the good times that they have experienced.

Unfortunately, not all the memories that our children remember are pleasant ones. But whether they are good or bad, memories are important in shaping our children's lives.

As parents, we can recall incidents from our own childhood because of the impact they had on us. And now, we build memories for our children by the things we do, the way we act or react, the words we say and the tone of voice we use, and the impressions we give. It is important for us, as parents, to help our children have pleasant memories. What kind of memories are we building for our children? Are they positive or negative memories?

What will your children remember about your family life? Will they remember the fun times like the picnics, walks, hikes and ball games played together? Will they remember the bike rides, the camping trip, the visit to the museum, or just the relaxed afternoon in your own backyard? Will they remember the conversation with genuine listening and understanding? Or will they recall the busy schedules, hurrying from one organization to another, from a committee meeting to the committee work or to the social obligations, leaving very little time for them?

We, as parents, must achieve a healthy balance of our time, with time planned to enjoy our family. We must take time to laugh together, cry together, and even to "clown around" together.

What words or sentences will stand out most when our grownup children look back on the memories? Will they be:
“I haven’t time right now.”
“It’s your homework finished?”
“Quiet down. I can’t hear the TV.”
“How much is it going to cost me?”
“Get in there and clean that room!”
Or will they hear the more positive statements such as:
“You certainly did a good job!”
“Yes, I’ll find some time.”
“Let’s do this together.”
“I’m certain we can work something out.”
“I’m sorry.”
“I love you.”

What will your children remember about your church life? Perhaps one of the reasons children who have been reared in church drift away is that going to church has never been a pleasant experience. Can you say, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord”? (Ps. 122:1). Or are you rushed on Sunday morning, gulping down a bowl of cereal, grabbing your Bible, making certain the children are clean, and racing for the car? Do you tie the children’s shoes, comb their hair, and argue on the way to church?

Our family has tried to begin Sunday morning with a relaxed atmosphere. Many of the Sunday chores are done the night before. On the way to church and again on the way home, we say memory verses and talk about the pleasant things that took place at church. By doing these things together, our hearts are prepared for worship and our thoughts are focused on God.

How do your children see you at worship? Are you praising God with thanksgiving in your heart, or do they sense your concern about the Sunday dinner, plans for company or other problems? What do you teach them by your attitude during the hymn singing, offering time, special music, the Bible message and the hymn of invitation?

After church, do you “roast” the preacher, let the children criticize the teachers? Do you show disrespect for fellow Christians?

Remember, our children are looking to us for examples. How will our church life influence them?

What will your children remember about your Christian life? Does your Sunday morning Christianity carry you through the week? Do your children see you reading the Bible daily? Do they see you stopping and praying over problems that arise in the family? Do you search the scriptures for answers to problems?

We, as parents, need to teach our children that God cares and listens to all our concerns—even the smallest problem. We need to search with them to find answers to their problems on drugs, drinking, divorce, sex, violence and other issues that they face in growing up.

Building memories is a fragile business. Our children will not be able to remember all that we say or do. But they will remember the attitudes and ideas that are really important to us as we lead them and emphasize their importance. Whether consciously or unconsciously,
good or bad, useful or worthless, we are building memories for our children every day.

Building memories takes time and effort. What will your children remember 20 years from now? What will they remember about you? What will they remember about God?

—From Christian Focus

**Exciting Family Devotions**

Charlie Shedd

The lady was into politics. Big. She was stumping the state for her favorite candidate. Morning, noon, night, she would tell everyone she could corner how to mark the ballot. Nothing the matter with good people in politics. We need them. But maybe somebody else does too. In her case it was one lonesome husband, and three little children asking, "When will mommy be home?"

Late one night like 1:00 A.M. she came in exhausted. She threw off her shoes, sat down in the big chair, wiggled her tired toes. Then with a mighty sigh, she said, "We're going to sweep the state." To which her weary husband came with this classic: "Why don't you start with the living room?"

Most of us need to be brought up short like that now and then. It's so easy to forget where we ought to begin. Right here at home, and right here with number one.

So you want your church to be Bible-centered? For starters, how about a Bible-centered family?

The most fun thing we do at our house is family devotions. It's our time to celebrate God's love for us together and each of us individually. It takes place at our evening meal. We begin with "Interesting Things." Each person shares some special moments from the last twenty-four hours. It might be a home run or a good grade. Maybe it's the new girl down the block. Something nice somebody said. An unexpected phone call. Perhaps it's traumatic—the report of hurt feelings, tough luck which came somebody's way.

There's a twenty-five cent fine for anyone who won't share his most interesting thing. This has been voted by the family. But the "cop-out" almost never happens.

Sometimes this takes only a few minutes during the meal. Sometimes it leads to lengthy discussion, debate. After we've finished the circle, anyone who wishes can have seconds. And it's one beautiful time for all of us.

You will sense immediately some of the great things which come out of this practice. One is that every member of the family opens his soul a little to every other member. Each of us can see what's going on inside the other person's heart. Even during the "cave years" (14-18) this sharing keeps some of the roads open.

We don't have our blessing until well into the meal. Phone calls, ball games, dates, door bells—these we have always with us. And
a thousand other things make it tough to get the whole gang together quickly. So rather than fight it, we decided to allow some flexibility. Our philosophy is "Come as soon as you can."

When everyone arrives and we've all had something to thank God for, somebody says, "Hey we haven't had the blessing." That's the signal to join hands for a traditional grace.

Where does Bible study fit into this picture? We're only half through when we've completed interesting things. Now we take turns for the evening Bible lesson.

We've had meditations from baseball, from a movie someone saw this week. Magazines, current events. Mind-blowing books like the one on space travel. Psychic experiences of dogs and cats. (Why does a cat leave its home in St. Petersburg, Florida, walk for two and a half years to LaJolla, California? Of course he does it because the family he loves left him behind with friends. How many miles had he really walked to get there? At least two thousand, maybe three. Explanation from one of our family small fry, "Either somebody is lying or God can talk to cats!")

Any family which cares enough can have a fine time creating their own devotions.

But when we review the many things we have done, one stands out. This is our Bible study together which we have continued for years. We recommend it heartily as one beautiful way to family togetherness.

At the end of our Bible lesson, whoever leads that night closes with his own prayer. It may be silent prayer. Or he asks that we hold hands for sentence prayers. Sometimes we pray the Lord's prayer.

A couple of other items should be noted. One is that we have a family understanding about this particular time. We have all agreed that we'll do all we can to guard these moments.

That leads to a second matter of importance. We don't aim to do this every night without exception. There are times when we're all busy, or most of us. Every night with no exception we have our interesting things. But sometimes on busy evenings, we say the Lord's Prayer and the gang scatters. There are even times when we break with the pronouncement, "The Lord knows we're in a hurry. Pray on the way."

However you do it, I think it's an exciting goal—make your family devotions the most fun thing you do. We can develop the world's most vital Bible study unit right here in our own home.

My book Is Your Family Turned On? comes straight from the minds of American young people. My publisher and I gave away $2000 in prizes to the college, high school, and junior high set who would write us essays on "Why I Don't Use Drugs." Ten basic differences between user and nonuser surfaced. Number one: The nonuser looks back on his family with warm feelings of togetherness.

Here's one paragraph from a college freshman:

"The reason I don't use drugs is that I don't care all that much what the kids around me are trying to get me to do.
The thing that matters more to me is my family. I'm always remembering how we would sit around the table and talk about everything. Then somebody would read from the Bible. We would get quiet for a while and talk about that. I think it would be wonderful if more families did this.

Wouldn't it?

(The book from which the above article is taken has an appendix containing 14 sample outlines of Bible stories as they might be used in family devotions. Here are two of them:)

**HE DID IT...IT'S NOT MY FAULT**

*Reading*: Selections from Genesis 3

*Verse for group think*: Genesis 3:12—"Don't blame me. It was the woman. She took a bite and passed it to me."

*Discuss questions on excuses, alibis, finger-pointing*:

Why do we like to shift the blame to somebody else? Who do you usually blame when you're in trouble? Do you have any idea why you pick on this person? Are you trying to be too perfect? Is that why it's hard for you to admit it when you're wrong? Would it help you to understand what it really means when the Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"?

*Final question*: Do you really think you'd be loved less if you said, "I did it"?

*Conclusion*: Goal for our living—honesty with God, with ourselves, with others.

*Closing prayer*.

**STAY TURNED ON TO THE WORLD AROUND YOU**

*Object*: Use some tiny flowers for centerpiece. After reading the Scripture, study the flowers together.

*Reading*: 1 Kings 4:25-34

*Verse for group think*: 1 Kings 4:29—"Solomon was very smart. He used the mind God gave him in a wonderful way. He was interested in everything."

*Thoughts*: Although Solomon was a very busy king, he wrote three thousand proverbs and more than a thousand songs. He studied animals, birds, fish. He also had a thing about trees, and even tiny little flowers growing in the cracks of the wall.

*Additional objects*: different kinds of seeds

*Questions for discussion*:

How many wonderful things did we overlook today? How can we keep from getting so busy that we miss these things? Tomorrow everybody bring some interesting little thing, something easily overlooked for our discussion.

*Close* with sentence prayers.

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GOD'S POWER NOW:

We Love Our Mongoloid Child

Mary Baker

December 30, 1955, was a day never to be forgotten. Our little
daughter Joanna was born. We knew she would be our last child, and
we especially wanted a girl. So she was wonderfully beautiful to me.
My delight at the first glimpse of her made me oblivious to the whis-
pers of the doctor and nurse nearby.

They immediately told my husband that she was a Mongoloid,
but advised him not to tell me for a while. During the first few weeks
of her life I often wondered if something were the matter with her.
She seemed so listless at times. It was almost a relief when I was told
that she was a Mongoloid, though I didn't really understand that
word.

What is a Mongoloid? We read all material on the subject that
we could find and found varying characteristics. Some are complete
idiots; other Mongoloids are capable of simple repetitious tasks.
Some live in a stupor; others are extremely active and interested in
everything going on around them. A recent study in England re-
vealed that Mongoloid bone marrow cells have 47 chromosomes.
The proper number for man is 46, whether the cell be in the liver,
marrow of bones, or the surface of the skin. The cause and preven-
tion of the extra chromosome is, as yet, unknown. A Mongoloid child
resembles other Mongoloid children more than his own brothers and
sisters. The skull is foreshortened, the nasal bridge flattened, and the
folds at the corners of the eyes and palms of hands are strangely
creased.

Before our daughter's birth, we had prayerfully considered selling
our farm and moving to South America, where there was an oppor-
tunity for farmers to settle and witness for Christ without having to be
trained as missionaries. We now felt this was not the Lord's plan.

Since the little life entrusted to us was responsive and in her
limited capacity would be able to learn, we felt it our responsibility
to keep her with us in the United States near available help. Now that
she is seven years old, we see again and again it was God's will for
us to stay here.

The first problem that confronted us was whether to keep Joanna
at home or place her in an institution. We firmly believe that this is
a question each family, after seeking wisdom from the Lord, must
answer individually. The advice of well-meaning, yet uninformed,
people on the subject should not be allowed to sway the decision.

Most people recognize that there exists no substitute replacing a
family's love for these children. They respond best and develop to
their fullest capacity when surrounded by a family group. However,
from the experience of others, we anticipated the child's frustration in
trying to compete with normal children. In addition we had to con-
sider the adjustment of our other children to a retarded sister.
After visiting an institution and talking to its director, we decided, at least for the present, that Joanna would benefit most from our home life and the love of our family. Greatly influencing our decision was the lack of spiritual environment in the institution. If at some time Joanna should be capable of putting her trust in the Lord, she would probably never do so there. Keeping her at home would give us the opportunity of training and guiding her spiritually. Her present interest in spiritual matters, though limited, has borne this decision out.

Our other children, Linda, now 16, Patricia 14, Daniel 12, and Nathan 10, were told from the beginning that Joanna would never be normal. They have been a real help with her and have accepted the added responsibility she has brought to them. Ultimately, I'm certain it will make them more mature, understanding, and compassionate adults.

Through these seven years we have praised the Lord that Joanna is one of the more fortunate Mongoloids. Physically she is shorter than other children her age. We were told that perhaps she would not walk until three years of age. She walked at two. She has fed herself very well since about three.

She sometimes outshines her brothers and sisters in manners, saying “please,” “thank you,” and “excuse me.” In the past few months she is putting words together in phrases and short sentences, and will try to say any word. Very loving and lovable, she is eager and pleased when praised for an accomplishment.

Retarded children are usually musical, and this can be a way of reaching them in the spiritual realm. “Jesus Loves Me” is Joanna's favorite song and she sings it while playing. Saying a prayer even before eating a snack is a must for her. It consists of “God, thank food, Amen.” I think God must be more pleased with this little prayer than with many of our long and complicated ones. She always wants to say her prayers at bedtime, and in family devotions she says, “My turn?” This usually consists of naming her school friends and the bus driver.

Accepting the fact that one's child is abnormal is hard to do. At first it was easy to dismiss it from our mind. However, as she grew and we continually compared her with other children, we finally had to admit the fact to ourselves. I believe that this will be a problem that we will have to face over and over throughout the years.

It is said that a larger percentage of mothers of retarded children have mental breakdowns. I can readily understand why these things happen if you brood about your frustration and do not commit everything to the Lord. In my own case, daily personal devotions are a must to arm myself for the discouragements that arise so often. This experience has drawn me closer to the Lord and made me rely more fully on Him in all matters.

Though new problems frequently arise, it is wonderful to belong to the Lord Jesus and to know that He is interested. He entrusted Joanna to us and He will strengthen and help us to carry out His will for her life.

Our church has been a great encouragement to us. The anxiety
of whether we will be socially accepted in various groups is a strain, but so far we have not felt ostracized to any extent.

From the time Joanna was two weeks old she has been in church with the rest of the family. Nursery attendants and Sunday School and Children’s Church teachers have never seemed impatient with her. Many of the church family seem truly interested in Joanna.

We can thank the Lord for the more enlightened age we are living in, especially in regard to mental illness and mental retardation. Sunday School classes for retarded children are now being organized in some churches and will bring many handicapped persons to Christ. Parents, seeing others interested in their subnormal child, will more readily attend church and listen to the Gospel message.

At the present time Joanna attends a half-day nursery school for handicapped children at a Cerebral Palsy Clinic in Ithaca, N.Y. It has made her much happier to be with other children of her mental level and has helped much in her progress.

Though life would be so much simpler without a Mongoloid child in the home, truly we could not visualize life without ours: Joanna, a bundle of love, a mimic, a complete musical instrument in herself, a creation of God.


* * * * * *

Building Better Christian Families

by Fred W. Schott

“FAMILY COMMUNICATION”

Take note of this: be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. —James 1:19-20

Several years ago a survey was conducted in Omaha among couples who were seeking divorce. The reason given more than any other was “communication problems.” Problems in communication as a reason for divorce scored higher than money problems, sexual infidelity, incompatibility, and a lot of others.

Not only a problem for couples, poor communication is at the root of many other kinds of family problems. Problems with in-laws and other relatives are usually matters of communication. At the root of many self-esteem and discipline problems lies the inability of parents and children to 1) honestly express their thoughts and feelings, and 2) truly understand the thoughts and feelings of others.

Communication problems also make life difficult for people who
want to build Christian churches, or "families" of faith. Jesus also experienced communication problems. Throughout the Gospels one can sense Jesus' frustration at not being clearly understood. Often he spoke eloquently, only to sense He had not gotten through. Jesus was also the master of communication. Sometimes He was able to sense what was on the heart of one to whom He ministered, without words ever being spoken. This ability also seemed to keep Him one step ahead of His frustrated enemies. What we learn from the Master about communication, more than anything else, is that it is often hard. Jesus struggled and worked hard to understand and to be understood. Christian families must also be willing to struggle and work hard at communication.

Once again the scriptures give us a great deal of help with this important area of family living. Examples and instruction on effective and truthful ways of relating to one another are found throughout the Bible. I have found the books of Proverbs and James to be most helpful and to speak most directly to the importance of good communication.

Books and study courses abound today on how to be a better communicator. Many of them are excellent and give us much to think on. One of my frustrations as one who teaches communication skills is that I rarely have enough time to do an adequate job. My limited goals usually become, to point out its values, whet the appetite of those in attendance, and hope that they follow-up by reading the books I recommend and at least try some of the techniques that have been suggested.

That is why I love James 1:19-20. In these two short verses James succinctly summarizes what most people need most to learn. "In other words," I often tell my parenting and couple communication classes, "if you go away with nothing else, remember these three things." James basically says the same thing: "Take note of this," before giving the best possible advice on communication for his time and ours.

First, says the Apostle, "be quick to listen." In my opinion, if more people could focus on listening, a lot of other problems would take care of themselves. It is ironic. In our age we do a lot of listening to TV, to radios and stereos, and at the movies. But, of course, all of this kind of listening has made it all the more difficult to listen to each other.

Second, "be slow to speak." One thing we learn from Jesus is that He carefully chose His words. He never shot from the hip. As a young Jewish boy He astounded His elders with His knowledge of the scriptures. I am sure He learned early to appreciate the wisdom of Solomon's Proverb (10:19), "Where there are many words, transgression is unavoidable. But he who restrains his lips is wise."

James' third piece of advice, "be slow to become angry" ties it all together. People who do not listen are quick to jump to conclusions. They often become angry. Then they say things that only make matters worse. Good listeners learn to put their feeling on hold for a time while they first work to understand the other person. Often
by listening first they find that they do not have as much to be angry about as they first thought. Listening helps them to more carefully choose their words. Usually with fewer words they say things that genuinely help the situation.

People who are slow to anger usually understand that there are other emotions lying below the anger. For example, most parents are angry when a teenager comes in very late at night. Good communicators understand that their primary emotions are more likely to be worry, anxiety, fear, hurt, and disappointment. All of these primary emotions are what make us angry. Parents who are quick to become angry do little if any listening at such a time. They usually say too much and, without realizing it, "act out" of their emotions.

Parents who understand good communication will first hear their children out. Then they will choose their words carefully. Often they find it effective to "report on" their primary emotions. Example: "I'm relieved that you are home safely. But, I am hurt and disappointed that you disregarded the curfew that we agreed on. You'll have to do something to make up for it. Be thinking about it. I'm confident we can come up with something tomorrow. Good night."

Little more needs to be said, especially if a parent has taken the time to listen. Compare this careful selection of words with the usual tirade of questions, insinuations, threats, guilt trips, lectures, and warnings usually spoken by understandably upset parents, usually spoken in anger, sometimes yelled, and often followed up with no action at all.

In summary, we learn from the wisdom of Solomon, the instruction of James, and the example of Jesus that communication has to do with learning how to listen, how to speak, and how to deal with our emotions. By careful study and practice and through the special help of the Holy Spirit all of us can be better communicators. By becoming better communicators we will not only be better parents and spouses but better employees and employers, better kingdom workers and church members, better helpers and counselors, and better neighbors and friends.

Questions to Think About:
1. Think back to the last time you were angry. What were the underlying or primary emotions that made you angry?
2. Compare James 1:18-20 with Ephesians 4:26-27. Is communication a key to controlling anger? Why or why not?
3. If we are "slow to anger," how do we keep from letting anger build and seethe until it explodes?

WISDOM FROM CORRIE TEN BOOM:

"Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"

"When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away your ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer."

"We never touch the ocean of God's love so much as when we love our enemies."
Dear Nieces and Nephews:

May 1988

Statistics show that the first big flurry of divorces occurs about 3 years after the wedding. There is a good reason for this, and it has to do with the way we have romanticized the marriage business. We go into the marriage with an inaccurate perception of what our mate is really like, (a fantasy, really), and only a vague notion of what love and marriage are about.

When a young man says, "I love you, will you marry me?", what he is really saying (if he could understand himself) is: "You make me feel so significant and important, I want you to go on making me feel significant the rest of my life". And what she really means when she says "I love you, too; yes, I'll marry you" is more like: "You make me feel so secure and so loved, I want you to go on making me feel secure and loved the rest of my life."

Our attitude and perceptions are often very self-centered, and our fantasy of what the other person is like usually wears off in about three years. While we are courting, we put our best foot forward, and are anxious to please, but after being married a couple of years our true self begins to emerge into the light of day, and then our partner sometimes doesn't like one bit the person that begins to show.

That's where true love comes in. The agape kind, the kind that requires an unconditional commitment, an act of the will—the kind that loves even when the "beloved" acts very unlovable! 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 tells us what the characteristics of this true love are:

**LOVE IS:**
- Patient
- Kind
- rejoices with the truth
- bears all things
- believes all things
- hopes all things
- endures all things

**LOVE IS NOT:**
- not jealous
- does not brag
- is not arrogant
- does not seek its own
- is not provoked
- does not take into account a wrong suffered
- does not rejoice in unrighteousness

Now look at those "is not" items and ask yourself: How many of these characteristics are those of self-centeredness? And the right center of a successful marriage is not self, but God.

If you center your life about serving God, He will pour out into your hearts His love (the agape kind of love), enabling you to exercise all the things that love is (in the first column) toward the most unlovable boor, who is exercising all the selfish things in the second column! Does that sound like a terrific strain? But if you are both Christians, you can make smoother progress together toward some very happy times, because exercising the love described above will enable you to grow into mature, stable and happy people.

Your Aunt Betsy and I enjoy hearing about all the new great nieces and nephews that keep appearing on the scene. Write and tell us about how they are doing.

Love from Uncle Cecil
"The Christian Response to being Treated Badly"

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. On the contrary: If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:17-21, NIV).

It is a shame how many Christians quote “An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth” as an excuse for “getting even” with someone who treats them badly. Any careful reading of such Old Testament passages will show that the Scripture is speaking of public justice, not private revenge. And Paul here quotes from the books of Law (Deut. 32:35) and Poetry (Proverbs 25:21, 22) to show that we should respond in quite a different way. And in four verses in this chapter (14, 17, 19, 21) he says we should not let our enemy’s actions drag us down to his level. When God has His writers of the Bible repeat something, it is something He considers very important and He wants to be sure we have an opportunity to see His way of taking care of such matters.

"Do not repay anyone evil for evil" means exactly that, whether it is another Christian acting in an unchristian manner or a non-christian acting according to the flesh. A fine antidote is given immediately—“Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.” Let us never forget that those who don’t know the Lord do know us—and they will learn more from how we act than from what we say. If you work among “unchurched” people, you probably would be surprised if you could find out how they look to see if you are going to act any differently than they do. Acting in the spirit of our passage has made many persons investigate the teaching about Christ to see what makes the difference. Give a good witness wherever you are and whatever the circumstances.

There are times, of course, when it will not be possible to “live at peace” with some people. But the Lord wants to be sure that it is not your fault, so Paul says “as far as it depends on you.” But he immediately gives the third of our warnings not to take revenge. He does not, however, leave the matter to let evil triumph—he says “leave
room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord." God is perfect in every conceivable way and He is a God of justice; He will see to it that all things are made right. When a man tries to "get even" he means to take revenge, but of God this verse says "It is mine to avenge." Real justice will be done, and maybe in such a way as to lead the enemy to become a Christian. He knows so much better than we do just exactly how to handle these problems.

Verse 20 is one that is interpreted in many ways, but we do not have to take up anyone's interpretation. Simple notice that if we respond to evil by doing good for the evil-doer, good will result. Your very action may be the thing that leads him to Christ, but even if it doesn't, that will affect him for good and the Lord will be able to handle the matter in the way pleasing to Him and for the most good.

Our last verse, then takes up the matter for the fourth time and tells how one can really be an overcomer—"overcome evil with good." Many will say, "But that isn't natural." I agree, but we are not "natural" in that sense; we have been reborn from above and the life that we live now should be different from the "natural."

I hope this short summary of these five important verses will make a better Christian of me, and you. And if you are not a Christian, you should be reminded that God is good, that He wants you to come to Him through faith in His Son Jesus Christ, and then to give you an eternity that will be so wonderful that human words could not describe it. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," is as good an admonition as it was in Paul's day. Trust Christ to save you; you can't save yourself.

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Should a Christian engage in social drinking?

No. There is too much danger to himself and to others.

I readily concede that the New Testament condemns drunkenness, not drinking in limited amounts which does not result in drunkenness. It speaks of not being given to much wine (1 Timothy 3:8) instead of commanding total abstinence. Some have taken this to mean the social drinking is acceptable. To draw such a conclusion is to make several errors, however.

One of the errors is that social drinking does not result in drunkenness. Many of the alcoholics of today are people who started out as social drinkers. Many of the accidents on the highway are caused by people who think they are only social drinkers. Let's face it—
social drinking can be hard drinking, and often is. The surroundings in which it takes place do not mean that the drinker does not become drunken. It is a very false assumption that says social drinking is always limited and that the sin of drunkenness does not occur.

Another error is that of assuming that, since at least some Bible wines were intoxicating (else no need to warn of the sin), any intoxicant today is just as acceptable. This ignores the high alcoholic content of those drinks generally used today. Bible wines were probably not nearly so potent as the wines of today, not to speak of the other modern carefully refined high-percentage alcoholic drinks of other sorts. It is much easier to drink to excess in our modern situation.

A third error is that of assuming what may have been permissible in those simpler times is always to be exercised as a right. The apostle Paul imposed certain restrictions on himself on given occasions for the sake of others. He renounced what he might have done without sin in order to avoid offense to weaker persons. Even if some drinkers today manage to discipline themselves and never become drunken (and I suspect their numbers are really very few), their drinking buddies may not be so strong. Moreover, in our day of better water supplies, more knowledge of preservation of food and drink, and a variety of healthy drinks available, there is really no need for the intoxicants. We can hardly consider our situation in these matters to be the same as in New Testament days. We live in high pressure times when the problems created by drinking are increased, and the dangers are increased. We are dealing with a potentially more dangerous matter in our day.

Although the Bible did not in so many words condemn all use of intoxicating wines and command total abstinence for Christians in the early days, I believe its principles will impress us with the wisdom of such a course in our day. When I consider the grief that has come even from so-called social drinking, the damage to one's body, the expense to the habit, the loss of testimony before an unbelieving world, the lack of positive good, the danger of falling into sin, or of leading others into sin, it is hard to see why any Christian would want to drink alcohol, even socially. I suspect that a careful examination will generally reveal such a desire arises from indulgence of the flesh, not from a desire to be a better Christian, or from wanting to be as much like the world as possible, not from wanting to be more Christ-like. Even the fellow who drinks moderately so as to be a "good guy" and to talk to certain classes of sinners is probably deceiving himself more than he is anyone else, including those he proposes to reach.

Am I responsible for the wrong done by the company or business I work for? And what if I am helping make products that will be used for evil, how far does my responsibility go?

There is no simple answer to this question that will fit every circumstance. Obviously there is a broad area involved here that calls for human judgment, wisdom, and even information about the business of the sort that may not be readily available. It is quite
possible to be in a big organization that has multiple interests, holdings, and aims—some of which are praiseworthy and some objectionable. Or one may be engaged in manufacturing a product which will be used in both good and bad ways. The good uses may outweigh the bad, or they may not. The Lord recognized that we are in the world and are going to do some elbow rubbing with people who will not all be motivated by Christian ideals (1 Cor. 5:9-19). We are not to avoid all association with unregenerate people. Surely we are not responsible for every evil deed done by others in the same company or business we may work for. We are not responsible (unless such is our position within the organization) for the improper, unethical policies that may be adopted by a company. We are not responsible for every use which people will make of products we may have helped manufacture. Jesus' instruction to His followers to pay their taxes (Luke 20:21-25) shows we are not responsible for all the uses or misuse which may follow.

There is another side to all of this, however. The Christian should stand for righteousness, engage in that which is good, and keep a clear conscience in all that he does. This will mean that there are some jobs he will not hold, some products he will not make, some practices he will not adopt, and some callings he will not accept. Drawing the lines of distinction will not always be easy and will call for a great deal of toleration even between Christians. He will need both sensitivity and sense. He certainly will need a good Bible-educated conscience. Even then the decisions will not all be easy. Suppose my company wants me to give short measure or weight. I must not hide behind the excuse that someone else "ordered" it. This matter is wrong, so as a Christian I refuse to do it. That may get me fired, but it was a relatively easy decision to make. The issues were clear. But suppose my refusal does not get me fired, and I am shifted to another unrelated job where I do not do the weighing or measuring. Should I go on working for a company that engages in such a practice? This is a more difficult question. Does my continued association with the company give an approval of the evil? Should I actively try to get the matter corrected? Maybe in some cases there is no legal violation, only a moral one, or solid proof may be lacking. We suspect that too many Christians do not let their colors show as they ought in such situations. On the other hand, where is the company or business that is morally perfect? We cannot resign from the world. And these problems can even be extended beyond employment to the matter of buying stock or patronizing the business.

I know of no magic formula to decide some of the dilemmas. Each case pretty much has to rest on its own merits, and each Christian needs to be concerned with his own conscience and to some extent with the attitudes of church and society. How do others feel about the job, product, or service? Does he appear to be a hypocrite? As difficult as such decisions are, we must not make an artificial separation between our secular life and our spiritual life as though they are unrelated.
We arrived in New York December 6. It is wonderful to be back in the states with brethren and friends in the Lord and to see our family again. One highlight was our family reunion. There were 22 of us—our six children together with their mates and seven little ones, plus my mother. We had a wonderful week together over Christmas.

Early in January we went South to spend two months in Louisiana visiting 16 congregations plus Woodstock Park in Jacksonville, Florida to share with them the things the Lord has done in Zimbabwe. We very much enjoyed the fellowship, renewing of old acquaintances and hospitality. Most of our remaining months will be spent in visiting churches in the Kentucky and Indiana areas until our scheduled return to Zimbabwe the end of November.

NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE:

Bro. Bob Morrow did not get to stay as long as originally planned, but had to return the end of February because the authorities refused to renew his visa. Nevertheless he was able to accomplish a lot of good beneficial teaching and preaching during those three months. Bro. Daniel Kubvarunô, a leader in the Mbare congregation, has agreed to live in our house at Rockwood to look after things until our return. He reports that recently they had a one-day youth meeting at Rockwood for children in grades 1, 2, and 3. They had 120 children from the Harare City churches. April and May is camp time. Three camp weeks are scheduled for this period.

Of our eight church buildings in the City of Harare, four of these are on land leased from the city. The churches own the buildings, not the land! Recently the city reversed their old policy of only leasing church sites and has offered to sell the land to the churches. We need to take advantage of this.


James Ashley
Solomon Islands
April 1988

In January I visited a number of villages to invite people to come to a meeting about the Sa’a translation. The meeting was quite an event; we expected people from 19 villages to come for two days, and we had to arrange for their transportation, housing, and food. In preparation we bought 50+ pounds of rice, a case of Navy Biscuits (hard tack), and lots of tea. I also went fishing four times; one time I hooked a shark, but it bit through the line and got away! Another
day some young men and I went spear fishing and brought up a 3-foot giant clam. Even so I wasn’t sure that we had enough, but the chief assured me that the village would help with the food, as well as provide housing for everyone who might come. We used our “new” Toyota pickup to bring people who could be reached by road, and we provided gasoline for those who came by motorized canoe. A total of 35 men came. ... They formed a Sa’a Bible Translation Committee to help us in making decisions concerning spelling and key words, fundraising to pay translators, and reviewing the translated Scripture portions. They also selected three men to serve as translators: Richard, Timotheus, and David. (My position is technically that of an advisor and not that of a translator.)

We came to town in mid-February for a three week grammar workshop. Its purpose was to help translators (and advisors) discover more about the structure of their languages. We asked Richard, Timotheus and David to attend as part of their training.

Each day the workshop began with a devotional led by one of the participants. I had been wondering how David would handle this as it seemed to me that his faith was only nominal. When his turn came he gave his testimony. He had been afraid we might ask him to work with us. So he had avoided us, but had lacked peace this last year. He had wanted nothing to do with our big meeting, and when the day came he had headed for the beach to chop firewood. As he went it began to rain—by the bucketfuls. We were wondering why the Lord allowed such a heavy rain, but David knew that God was telling him to forget the firewood. He needed to be at the meeting! Yet he resisted and just sat on the beach in the pouring rain; only when the chief sent a boy to fetch him did he finally come. When the men asked him to be a translator, he accepted, but his reluctance was obvious. Now, though, he was excited about being part of the Sa’a translation team. With tears in his eyes he closed his testimony, asking for our prayers as God continued to work in his life.

I was really convicted by his testimony, as I had resigned myself to work with him as he was, not expecting God to mold him into something more usable. Praise God “who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us.”

We will continue to work on language learning for most of this year. We will also continue working with our translators in further training, so that we will all (hopefully) be ready to start work on the New Testament by next year.

Bob M. Yarbrough’s Report re: Shichiro Nakahara

News came at the end of February, after a series of tests, that Shichiro’s cancer had spread throughout the body and the doctors had given him less than six months to live. He was aware of this diagnosis when I arrived at his home on March 19.

The first impression was of the noticeable weight loss since I had seen Shichiro last summer. He had dropped from about 170 lbs.
to under 140 lbs. His faith in the Lord was strong however, as was his wife’s and family’s. (The church congregation is aware of his problems and have made plans to continue with the work while Shichiro has been so sick.) He has required much bed rest and is presently in a weakened condition. We had a very good visit, but it was obvious Shichiro was exerting every ounce of energy and strength to carry on. One very joyous occasion was the wedding of the oldest daughter Annette. It was a beautiful wedding and Shichiro did a marvelous job with the ceremony—considering the circumstances. Annette has married a fine Christian young man, Yujiro Uza, whose father is also a missionary to his own people in Okinawa. Both Annette and Yuji are American citizens and plan to make their home in the Los Angeles area.

Another very happy and spiritually uplifting event occurred on Sunday morning, March 20, with a dedication service for Shichiro’s son Michiya, age 22. Michiya has dedicated himself to the mission work there in Shizuoka and to continue in the work his father began, regardless of the outcome of Shichiro’s condition. He has dedicated himself to the church there and they likewise to him. Michiya will continue in his studies at Osaka Bible Seminary. It is approximately two hours from home by train and he will be home at least one weekend per month to preach. Michiya conducted part of the Sunday service and the Wednesday night Bible class while I was there. He did a very capable job. Other men in the congregation will preside at the other services, so Shichiro feels confident that the mission work will continue in his absence or if the Lord calls him home.

Shichiro’s doctors in Shizuoka are sending him to a special cancer hospital in Tokyo, about 100 miles away, for a full month of chemotherapy. He is to enter the hospital sometime around April 10 for thirty days of treatment. Teruko plans to travel to Tokyo by train once per week to stay the day with him.

We had an anointing service at Shichiro’s bedside as he claimed the scripture passage from James 5:14. Both prayers and tears were offered in abundance to the Lord. We believe that the Lord can intervene in Shichiro’s present physical condition. I have witnessed that in the lives of my own parents. Shichiro’s faith in the Lord is strong, and he is trusting the Lord to do what is best since he is His child. The Lord loves Shichiro far more than any of us could ever love him.

We wish to close by making you aware of some very specific prayer requests:
1) Pray for Shichiro’s physical condition that he might be healed of this disease. Pray that his faith might remain strong in the Lord.
2) Pray for Teruko, Annette, Stephanie, and Michiya as they are naturally very concerned for their loved one.
3) Pray for the church in Shizuoka City, that they may stand steadfast in the midst of the problem.
4) Pray for Michiya as he prepares himself to do the work of the Lord, that he might not get discouraged. The work there is so difficult!
How shall I my Savior set forth?
How shall I His beauty declare?
Or how shall I speak of His worth?
Or what His chief dignities are?

Like that singer, we must confess our inability fully to set forth the glories of the Son of God. For try as hard as we may we shall always fall short of an adequate expression of the praise, honor, and dignity due to be accorded the matchless Son of God, by whose stripes we are healed.

To deal specifically with a single aspect of the sinless Son, let us consider his power. Power anywhere is to be reckoned with and respected. On turbulent Galilee, He manifested His power over the winds and waves; by His repeated feeding of the multitudes from a scanty source, with a surplus remaining greater than the original supply, He demonstrated his power over foodstuffs; by His sustained silence while the chief priests accused Him before Pilate, He showed His power of self-control. When the herd of swine rushed down the steep and perished in the sea, He manifested His power over demons even while granting their request. When He interrupted the funeral procession in the village of Nain and restored the widow's son to life; when He stood at the Lazarus tomb in Bethany some time after the funeral and spoke that corpse into life, He demonstrated his power over death as He unmistakably did again when He triumphantly emerged from the new sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, as previously foretold. Our Christ had power and He still has power.

Will our hearers please constitute themselves a court for a short time while we ask some of our Lord’s contemporaries to pass briskly before us and tell us what they thought of Jesus Christ? These two horrible personages now appearing are the Gadarene demoniacs who addressed Him as the Son of God. Poor Judas, whose greed of gold led to his utter ruin, in his last remorseful moments confessed that he had "betrayed the innocent blood." Next you hear the Judaean governor, Pontius Pilate, telling the chief priests and the rulers that Jesus had done nothing worthy of death; "I find no fault in this man." Herod Antipas, who administered Roman justice in Galilee, stands before us and pronounces Him faultless in the points at issue. Are the members of the court out there visualizing these proceedings as the military captain in charge of the execution, who had watched the marvelous man expire with prayer and pardon on His lips while the earth quaked and the rocks cracked and split, solemnly declared: "Truly this was the Son of God"? Next to appear before us is doubting Thomas with all his doubts dispelled by the unmistakable identification of the crucifixion marks, and he humbly and reverently...
says: “My Lord and my God.” The testimony you next hear comes from the weeping Mary: “I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even he that cometh into the world.” The man now walking out to address us is Nathaniel, the guileless Israelite, who is saying: “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art king of Israel.” From the chosen twelve, we shall ask a representative to speak and Simon Peter boldly announces, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” In any fair court, a man is allowed to speak for himself. Blessed Lord Jesus, give us a word: “Before Abraham was born, I am. * * * He that hath seen me hath seen the Father”; “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” To complete these testimonies, our listening court hears the God of heaven rending the stillness of the skies with the words: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” And thus we have gone from the demoniac representatives of the lower regions to Jehovah, the Inhabitant of Heaven, who is everywhere present. The testimony of all these classes from the lowest possible to the highest possible is of the most complimentary order.

You may name whom you will of the great of earth and there is at least another name to be mentioned in comparison. There is Paul, and there is Peter. If you name Dante, some one suggests Milton. Similarly Tennyson and Browning, Wesley and Whitfield, Spurgeon and Beecher may be associated in comparison, as may also Alexander and Caesar, Luther and Wyckliffe, Washington and Lincoln; but the name of Christ has no counterpart among the other great names of earth. He stands alone in solitary grandeur like a magnificent mountain dressed in snow! Jesus Christ, the incomparable.

The writer of Hebrews sets Him on a pedestal which could not be higher. Even a brief consideration of the opening verses reveals that God appointed Christ “heir of all things.” He could not be heir of any more than that. Through Him, God “made the worlds.” We are told He is “the effulgence” (the outshining, the radiant splendor) of God’s glory; “the very image of his substance.” It is He who “upholds all things by the word of his power.”

We revert to the praises Paul was pouring forth at the opening of the Colossian letter. God has “delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.” In this Christ, and in Him alone, “we have our redemption,” which is explained as “the forgiveness of sins.” He is the image of the invisible God, a commentary on “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” He is declared “the firstborn of all creation—a grand priority—in whom were all things created” whether they be heavenly or earthly things; things as visible as the majestic mountains and things as invisible as the electric current or the force of gravitation—all things have been created through him and unto him, which sounds like John declaring, “All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that hath been made.” Again, the Colossians are told “He is before all things and in him all things consist”; that is, “hold together.” Jesus Christ is the mighty power by which
all things in the universe are “permanently framed together.” Moreover he is the head over all things to the church.

In the Scriptures, the exaltation of Christ repeatedly includes calling him God. Isaiah foretold seven hundred years before the advent that he should be called “Mighty God, Everlasting Father,” and Matthew quotes Isaiah in reference to our Lord: “And they shall call his name Immanuel,” the syllable “el” signifying God and Immanuel meaning “God with us.” Roman emperors wore the title, “great god and savior,” which form Paul pours full of holy meaning when he designates the Lord as “our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Heine, the German poet, describes a banquet of the gods where, in the midst of the feast, a pale-faced Jew with blood upon his brow and a heavy cross upon his shoulders appears, whereupon the gods vanish. And in every field, on every continent where Christ is adequately presented, the gods which are no gods disappear. We would that our imitation of the matchless life of Christ were more exact so that the masses would think more both of our Christ and of our Christianity.

Just as the arrows on road signs point the way, there are certain “Beholds” in the Bible which direct us profitably to the great central character of all Scripture. Pontius Pilate said: “Behold the man” and therein is a sermon on “the man Christ Jesus.” John the Baptist said: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” The writer of Hebrews wants us to “consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.” “Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and Savior.” Because Christ, when “existing in the form of God, counted not the being on a equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself... becoming obedient even unto death, yea the death of the cross”—because of this—“God highly exalted him, and gave unto him a name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name!
Let angels prostrate fall!
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

“I will sing of my Redeemer,
And His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross he suffered,
From the curse to set me free.

“I will tell the wondrous story,
How my lost estate to save,
In His boundless love and mercy,
He the ransom freely gave.”

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'TIL HE COMES

David Corts

Three years ago, I had the privilege of touching base with more than a thousand of our churches (Independent Christian Churches). My evaluation is that there remains a continuing interest in evangelism across our brotherhood, but there is one ingredient missing from the average church. It is a passion for the souls of men.

So many worthy projects compete for one's energy and attention in the Christian world. As long as one doesn’t compare them with the important tasks of evangelism or nurture, it is easy for him to remain undisturbed. Our consciences are not bothered because we are doing something that seems worthwhile.

We need to add zeal to our interest in evangelism. This passion of which I speak is the absolute conviction that without Jesus Christ a man will not go to Heaven. It means one may recognize that an acquaintance is a nice person, a good-deed neighbor, a congenial boss, or a clean-speech associate, but if he has not submitted to the lordship of Jesus Christ he is lost.

My search for a theme (for the North American Christian Convention) raised a question, "How can a sense of urgency be communicated?" What theme would raise the level of awareness of the attenders and make them say, we need to do the work of Christ now? While searching through the Bible I happened on to one subject that most of us in the Christian churches do not stress strongly—the second coming of Christ.

The teachings concerning the coming of our Lord serve as a backdrop for everything that is done in the New Testament. It is mentioned more than three hundred times, not as a preoccupation for debate, but as a fact which creates a compelling need for personal holiness, a sense of urgency for the lost, and a joyful anticipation that the Bible calls the "blessed hope."

Here then is the theme that has the making for a great stirring of enthusiasm for evangelism as well as an awakening to the other ministries of Christ. It serves as a backdrop to all the activities of the church. The preoccupation with the second coming that has one working out the specific details of when, how, and who is not encouraged by the Biblical writers. Neither will it be by our sermon subjects. We will not ignore, however, some important issues that affect our understanding of the matter. We will allow the reality of our Lord's coming to serve as an incentive to do God's work and to do it now!

—Condensed from Christian Standard, March 6, 1988

“We must not be fatalistic. We must believe that individual Christians can intervene in the course of world events and change history.”—Brother Andrew

“Character is what you are in the dark.”—D. L. Moody

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In a remote area of southern Bangladesh, 50 terrorists captured and tortured two men they thought were government spies. A Bible and a copy of the Four Spiritual Laws were found in the men’s belongings, corroborating the fact that they were there only to show the JESUS film. The men explained God’s love and forgiveness to the terrorists, then showed them the film. Every member of the group indicated a desire to receive Jesus as Lord. The change in their lives was immediate. The converted terrorists arranged film showings throughout the area and provided protection as the team members showed the film ten more times.

C.C.Y.B.B. News:

The next quarterly youth rally will be on Saturday, June 4th, at Southeast Church of Christ in Jeffersontown, Ky. from 9:15 to 3:00. The Rally is sponsored jointly by the LaGrange and Southeast youth groups. Featured at this rally will be a skit contest, a “wheel of blessing” contest, and special speakers Greg Seneff and Norman Leach.

The Portland Rally was a huge success with 150 people registering and 195 people at lunchtime! Because our hearts were touched by Bro. Broadus and the film “Nickoli”, the offering at the June rally will be used for missions abroad. If anyone needs information about the June rally, the September rally (at Highway Church of Christ) or would like to host a rally, please contact James R. Embree, 402 Church, Sellersburg, IN, 47172, phone: (812) 246-4504 (a local call from Louisville).

Locust Street Church, Johnson City, Tenn.:

Bro. Robert Garrett, of Zimbabwe, was with us on April 17 for a report on his mission work there. Then on the following days (Monday thru Wednesday) he brought revival messages.

Robert was born to missionary parents in what was then known as S. Rhodesia. He spent some of his younger years in the States getting an education, and some of you will recall that he worked for a period with the Mountain View Church of Christ. Most of his adult years have been in Africa. Joy, his wife, is formerly from Louisville, Ky. They are in the U.S. on a furlough and are visiting among the churches.

Fisherville Church of Christ:

In March our worship services averaged 70 for the first time in years. Recently, our young adult activities have picked up. For the past six months we have been having young adult Bible studies and in February we began a Young Adult Sunday School class. We began working with the youth 2 years ago with 6 kids and now are having 20-25. Because of the increase in our youth we purchased a van last year. On April 24 the youth were in charge of Sunday night services and on April 29, 30 we are planning a retreat at the Antioch campgrounds with the young adults in charge.

—Sam Marsh

Reports from Manila, Philippines:

Central Bible Institute is in its last week of classes (Mar. 2) for this school year. 2 of our former students started ministering in churches in or near Manila, and another one is pioneering a work in a nearby province.

At the San Francisco church (Manila suburb) we now have a training program called ACCEPT: Active Christians Committed to Evangelize Today. We hope the whole church will be active in evangelism. We must work double time in the Philippines, for the time may come when people will not be as receptive as they are now. Or perhaps it will mean imprisonment or death for us to preach the gospel.

(Letter from David Moldez)

One of the downtown Manila churches averages 150-200 people every Sunday. Their “daughter-church” in Navotas averages 60-70 each Sunday; they moved from one house to another due to lack of meeting-space. Two more feeding programs for poor children will
be started there soon. (Letter from Jimmy Yee)

One of the churches in the provinces had some problems and divisions, yet the Lord is overruling and blessing. Herman Moldez visited and preached for one of the groups, and "was awed by what God has done. In spite of the problems, they have grown. Their new chapel is full, with more than 200 attending." A daughter-church they recently started has about 80 members, and is led by a young man who just graduated from C.B.I. (Letter from Herman Moldez)

Louisville, KY:
The Lord challenged and strengthened us at Portland Church of Christ (plus a good number of visitors) during our recent renewal conference. Bro. Dave Reagan brought valuable lessons based on the revival in Judah under King Josiah. He also shared insights on the way God overhauled the character of the apostle John—and how He can overhaul us, too. Other lessons were on prayer and on our need to surrender all to Christ so that He can fill us with the Holy Spirit. A number of believers came for personal recommitment to the Lord & to receive counseling, and 1 girl was buried with Christ in baptism.

Turkey Creek, La., Church of Christ:
Bro. Glenn Baber held a gospel meeting at Piedmont Church in Dallas, Texas March 6-9. He also conducted a Sun. School teachers' workshop while there.

The monthly Ministers' meeting was held here at the church March 14, with eleven men attending. They had a nice time of fellowship.

Our visitation program seems to be working well, as we have seen some good results. We are working even harder as we are looking forward to our meeting with Bro. Valdetero April 10-13, our Ladies Fellowship Day April 23 and our V.B.S. June 6-10.

—Woodrow & Velma Johnson

CORRECTION:

Last month's W&W had a mistake re: our new subscription price. The price for a yearly subscription (11 issues) is now $6.00. But the cost is reduced to $5.50/copy if a bundle of 10 or more copies is mailed to the same address.

Bryantsville Church of Christ:
The Bryantsville Church of Christ and Rosehill Farms, Inc. are continuing to work together in making available high lysine corn for those that are hungry, especially for children in under-developed countries. During 1987, 1600 bags have gone to Haiti and to Honduras where it has been distributed through feeding programs in schools and in childrens' homes. We are continuing to work through the David Livingstone Missionary Foundation, Inc. who acts as the primary distributor.

Our list of congregations, groups, and individuals who have accepted a part in financing this project has grown to approximately 50. However, just as each of us must purchase food often, we need your assistance again in 1988.

Ila and I as representatives of the Bryantsville Church of Christ and of Rosehill Farms, Inc. speak at every opportunity given to us concerning the project. We have spoken during the last year to several congregations, to service clubs as Rotary and Kiwanis, to farm group meetings, to educational groups, to anyone who will listen. We will be happy to try to arrange to talk to whomever you might suggest. We have some slides of the feeding program in Haiti that we saw last February as well as some of the facilities we are using in growing and processing the corn.

We are able to provide a 50 pound bag of corn for $2.75. If you want to participate in this program in a financial way, contributions should be made to The Corn Fund, Bryantsville Church of Christ, William Hopkins, treas., R. R. 1, Box 271, Mitchell, IN 47446. If your congregation would be interested in growing some high lysine corn or helping in some other way, contact me at R. R. 1, Box 408, Mitchell, IN 47446.

Hollace D. Sherwood
Elder, Bryantsville Church of Christ
Manager, Rosehill Farms, Inc.

(Editor's apology: I meant to run this letter months ago, but mislaid & forgot it!)